BECOMING ‘PEARL HARBOR’: A ‘LOST GEOGRAPHY’ OF AMERICAN EMPIRE

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to Richard Kekuni Blaisdell, a person who has been an intellectual beacon and a moral ballast for me and so many others. I hope that this small contribution might honor his lifelong commitment to improving the lives of the people, protecting the ‘āina, and achieving a decolonial future for Hawai‘i. I also dedicate this work to the memory of individuals now deceased who remain present in my political outlook in some way: Marion Kelly, John Kelly, Soli Niheu, Jamie Oshiro, Helen “Didi” Lee Kwai, James Nakapa‘ahu, Kalei Puha, Walter Kamana, June Shimokawa, Shannan Chan, Richard Pōmaika‘i Kinney, Kalāhikiola Porter, Carl Imiola Young, Ah Quon McElrath, Dewitt Barnett, Joe Franko, Gabrielle Welford, Mahealani Dudoit, and Kiyoko “Big Aunty” Matsuda.
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ABSTRACT

In the last century, geography assumed a position of central importance within the United States’ imperial project. Yet the rise of capitalist globalism was accompanied by a corresponding loss of popular geographic awareness within the United States, a paradox that Neil Smith (2004) has called a “lost geography” of American Empire. Through a case study of the transformation of Ke Awalau o Pu’uloa on the island of O’ahu into what most people know today as “Pearl Harbor” this thesis extends the concept of a “lost geography” by examining the dialectical relationship between the production of a particular place and the multi-scalar articulations of U.S. imperial formation. In short, this study considers how place and empire are mutually constituted in ways that conceal their constitutive social relations. Further, I discuss the “paradoxical” subjectivities that emerge in this process.
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INTRODUCTION

I have driven past Pearl Harbor hundreds of times to get from Honolulu to Wai‘anae\(^1\) or the North Shore and back. Every day, tens of thousands of people make a similar commute from the suburbs to Honolulu, crawling through rush-hour traffic coming and going, and pass by this famous landmark. Yet, aside from obligatory visits to the tourist-oriented Pearl Harbor memorial, very few have visited or seen Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa / Pearl Harbor. How is it that the dominant geographic feature on the southern coast of O‘ahu remains largely unknown: visible at a distance across the wide expanse of the ‘Ewa plain as shimmering fingers of water, yet closed off and hidden, as if an invisible force field were in place? In my involvement with community organizations and grassroots campaigns to counter the destructive impacts of military activities in such places as Kahōʻolawe, Mākua, Waimānalo, Mōkapu, Waikāne, Pōhakuloa, and Nohili, I was always perplexed by how Pearl Harbor felt \textit{kapu}, forbidden, off-limits, both physically as well as conceptually, to critique, protest, or even the suggestion of alternatives. At once hypervisible as a war memorial and tourist attraction, yet forbidden and mysterious, the paradox of Pearl Harbor suggested to me that something important was being concealed, something more than classified secrets or critical military facilities. I became curious to know the genealogy of this land, to understand the discursive and material processes that constitute place, subjectivities, and relations of power. I wanted to understand how this place became so important to global geopolitics and how we might imagine alternative futures for the geography of Puʻuloa, Hawaiʻi, and the Pacific.

Speaking in Honolulu in November 2011, on the eve of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton declared, “we have reached a pivot point” (Clinton 2011). “It is becoming increasingly clear,” she said, “that in the 21st century, the world’s strategic and economic center of gravity will be the Asia Pacific, from the Indian subcontinent to the western shores of the Americas” (Ibid.).

\(^1\) In this thesis, I use Hawaiian orthography unless quoting a source that did not use it. In cases where the English translation of a Hawaiian language source is contemporary, I use Hawaiian orthography in the translated text.
Clinton described building “a more mature security and economic architecture” for a transpacific system rivaling that of the Atlantic, a “free trade area of the Asia Pacific.” “The 21st century will be America’s Pacific century,” she pronounced (Ibid.), invoking both Henry Luce’s "American Century" pronouncement and Halford Mackinder's "geographic pivot of history" thesis. Although Mackinder’s embrace of imperialism is widely discredited within the discipline of geography, his geopolitical ideas have been stubbornly resilient (For example see R. Kaplan 2013). As Mackinder’s biographer Gerry Kearns writes, "Modern echoes of Mackinder's geopolitical imagination are far from accidental. In this manner, politicians, scholars, and conservative thinkers persuasively make imperialism seem inevitable" (Kearns 2009: 260).

Every pivot needs a fulcrum, the support on which a lever turns to amplify the applied force. And Pearl Harbor, as the center of U.S. military power in the Pacific and a symbolic core of the narrative of America as benevolent superpower, is a fulcrum of this pivot. It articulates with military sites across the region that enable the U.S. to “project power” and control large ocean spaces as well as the commerce that flows through them (Figure 2). This geographic dimension seems so natural and obvious that it vanishes into the background, such that a place like Hawai’i becomes merely, as Clinton put it, “America’s gateway to Asia, and one of the loveliest places in the world” (Ibid.). In her depiction, Hawai’i is simply a beautiful portal, a useful opening, signifying an emptiness that bodies, goods, and force move through. But this imagined openness hides the ways that Hawai’i has been conscripted to do the work of imperial formation as a site for the spatial concentration, transformation, and transmission of relations of power. This exemplifies the “contradiction between a spaceless and a spatially constituted American globalism” that Neil Smith (2004: 7) calls to our attention as the “lost geography” at the heart of the American Century.

A fulcrum is the stationary component of a lever, which supplies capacity for work. Whereas the lever supplies motion and force, the fulcrum is a fixed point of support and rotation. As such, it is easy to overlook the invisible work done by the fulcrum to transform and magnify that force. Like a switch, or as Clinton put it, a
Figure 2: USPACOM Area of Responsibility. United States Pacific Command. 2010
gateway, a fulcrum can modulate and redirect these forces. Hawai‘i is a primary site in a complex and articulated network of U.S. military bases, critical infrastructure, and variegated and overlapping legal, economic and political regimes that transform and transmit relations of power across space (Hall 1985: 93). These island sites form crucial nodes in these circuits and fields of power and have become naturalized and taken-for-granted as a part of the spaceless and flattened geography of globalization. Yet it is precisely the perceived smallness of these island sites, their presumed insignificance, which makes them so elusive to observers and so potent in the service of empire.

In recent years, there has been vigorous debate in the popular and academic literature about U.S. empire from across the political spectrum. This debate has touched on whether or not the U.S. is an empire, and if it is, what type of empire (Dalby 2008; Ferguson 2003; Foster 2006; Harvey 2005; Ikenberry 2002). Or if the U.S. is not an empire, then the debate turns to how else to characterize and theorize it (Agnew 2005; Hardt and Negri 2000; Nye Jr. 2011). Some have argued that the U.S. is an empire in decline (Bacevich 2008; Mann 2005; Wallerstein 2003), while others see it as ascendant (G. Friedman 2007). This debate, while necessary, lies beyond the scope of my research interest here. I begin with the premise that the United States represents what Ann Laura Stoler has defined as an imperial formation (Stoler 2006a; 2006b; 2008). She writes that:

“imperial formations” are macropolities whose technologies of rule thrive on the production of exceptions and their uneven and changing proliferation. Critical features of imperial formations include harboring and building on territorial ambiguity, redefining legal categories of belonging and quasi-membership, and shifting the geographic and demographic zones of partially suspended rights. (Stoler 2006b: 128)

Imperial formations should not be thought of as “clearly bordered and bounded polities,” but rather as “scaled genres of rule that produce and count on different degrees of sovereignty and gradations of rights” (Ibid.) They produce “shadow populations and ever-improved coercive measures to protect the common good against those deemed threats to it” and “new zones of exclusion and new sites of — and social groups with —
privileged exemption” (Ibid.). Stoler elaborates on the concept of imperial formation in a more recent article, from which I quote extensively:

Imperial formations are relations of force. . . In working with the concept of imperial formation rather than empire, the emphasis shifts from fixed forms of sovereignty and its denials, to gradated forms of sovereignty and what has long marked the technologies of imperial rule—sliding and contested scales of differential rights. Imperial formations are defined by racialized relations of allocations and appropriations. Unlike empires, they are processes of becoming, not fixed things. Not least they are states of deferral that mete out promissory notes that are not exceptions to their operation but constitutive of them: imperial guardianship, trusteeships, delayed autonomy, temporary intervention, conditional tutelage, military takeover in the name of humanitarian works, violent intervention in the name of human rights and security measures in the name of peace. (Stoler 2008: 193)

In my analysis of Pu‘u‘ola, Stoler’s conception of imperial rule as characterized by fluid modalities and variegated techniques of governance helps me to make sense of the way that Hawai‘i seems to flicker between contradictory geopolitical ontologies: independent nation-state under a prolonged American occupation; a military settler colony of the United States; a political unit of the United States shot through with zones of exception (e.g. “ceded” lands, land deeds “subject to the rights of native tenants,” Hawaiian Home Lands, Native Hawaiian domestic dependent nationhood). Stoler’s framing of imperial formations is supple enough to encompass the contradictory and ad hoc quality of America’s imperial techniques operating in Hawai‘i.

In my thesis I utilize “imperial formation” in both senses: as a category of polity that includes multiple and variegated modes of rule, and as “processes of becoming” imperial. However, for the sake of variety and familiarity, I also use the term “empire” interchangeably with “imperial formation”, with the understanding that both terms encompass the characteristics of the latter. I also consider the useful insights of Catherine Lutz (2006), who calls our attention to micropolitical cultural and social scales of militarization and empire. Further, I am mindful of Paul Kramer’s (2011) sympathetic definition of the imperial as "a dimension of power in which asymmetries in the scale of political action, regimes of spatial ordering, and modes of exceptionalizing difference enable and produce relations of hierarchy, discipline, dispossession, extraction, and
exploitation" (2011: 1349). The study of Ke Awalau o Puʻulua / Pearl Harbor contributes to our understanding of the dynamic, multiscalar processes and social relations that constitute U.S. imperial formation in Hawaiʻi and the Pacific region.

As Neil Smith (2004) points out, although the rise of a global U.S. empire since 1898 was an inherently geopolitical and geoeconomic project, these geographic dimensions have been concealed by the ideology that characterized the globalized capitalist system and an international political order of sovereign states as “a flattened geography [that enables] a politics flattened to the lowest common denominator of American globalism” (Smith 2004: xviii). Clinton’s speech exemplifies this globalism, which celebrates the arrival of this flattened, aspatial world of “security, prosperity, and universal values” (Clinton 2011b).

Not only does this “lost geography” conceal the geographical dimensions of U.S. imperial formation, it also masks the ways that Hawaiʻi and the Pacific region are imbricated within these geographies of power. At key historical moments in the rise of U.S. empire, Hawaiʻi and the Pacific were in the vortex of formative events. The space of the Pacific, which the U.S. dominates through a network of spatially distributed military sites, and relations of imperial power across space and at multiple scales, are dynamically co-constituted. Yet, in contemporary geopolitics, the ocean is often represented as a vast inert canvas, the negative space to be written on by economic flows and fought over with military force while the island nodes that supply capability for that power either vanish from the map or appear only insofar as they are territorially instrumental to larger states.

In his study of the U.S. military colony of Guåhan/Guam, Michael Lujan Bevacqua (2010) argues that the imagined inadequacy, emptiness, and banality projected onto Guam is in fact very potent. He writes, “this banal existence of Guam, which seems to signify little else other than powerlessness, is in actuality a site for the production of American power” (184-185). That is, U.S. sovereignty is in part produced through and simultaneously concealed by the denial of Guam’s sovereignty. Yet, Guam’s traumatic history of colonization and its colonial status also haunts U.S. sovereignty and is Guam’s hidden source of power to disrupt and unsettle discourses of imperial formation.
His analysis is extremely valuable for thinking about the paradoxical discursive operations that are also at work in Hawai‘i to produce sovereignty for the United States. If Guam’s colonial condition is characterized by its banality, then Hawai‘i’s is marked by its hypervisibility and excess as “tropical paradise” and militouristic spectacle (Teaiwa 1999; Gonzalez 2013). Today, the United States military has 119 military sites in Hawai‘i and occupies 230,486 acres of land (U.S. Department of Defense 2012: 34-36). In 2012, 49,110 active duty military personnel and 64,207 military dependents lived in Hawai‘i (State of Hawai‘i 2013: Table 10.04). The combined military population (113,317) comprised 8% of the total state population (1,392,313) (Ibid.: Table 1.33). As Kathy Ferguson and Phyllis Turnbull have observed, “Everywhere you look in Hawai‘i, you see the military. Yet in daily life relatively few people in Hawai‘i actually see the military at all. It is hidden in plain sight” (Ferguson and Turnbull 1999: xiii).

Despite its central role in the formation and maintenance of America’s global hegemony, Pearl Harbor remains under-problematized: a naturalized, taken-for-granted “fact” of military power and of national memory in an aspatial capitalist globalism. Like slavery and the settler genocide of native peoples, the U.S. occupation-annexation of Hawai‘i is treated as one of America’s “supposedly over and done with” events, which continues to haunt the present (Gordon 2008: 19). By using Hawai‘i as a platform from which to dominate the seas, launch invasions, and monitor the flows of global communications, the U.S. seeks to control the circulatory system of the global economy. But we seldom interrogate how and why it came to be this way, and at what cost. Even Smith’s (2004) important historical geography of the American Century glosses over the post-World War II reordering of the Pacific, which figures so prominently in the constitution of contemporary U.S. imperial politics. Although Smith mentions “Pearl Harbor” three times in American Empire, he makes no direct reference to “Hawai‘i” itself or the processes of imperial formation inaugurated there. It is as if Hawai‘i has been reduced to the metonym “Pearl Harbor”, a sign of war. How is it that so much of the U.S. geopolitics depends on this very local geography, and yet remain “lost” even to critical geographers of American empire? If we accept as a given that Hawai‘i and the Pacific are
bound by their “strategic location” to forever be military strongholds of the United States or another imperial state, then it seems to me, we foreclose on the possibility of politics and social change and surrender to a kind of vulgar geographical determinism. One of my objectives with this thesis is to write back against this kind of determinism, to poke holes if you will, in empire’s facade of inevitability and beneficence, and to expose both the horror and violence of these ideological formations as well as the imaginative possibilities for alternative futures.

I also wish to expand upon and complicate the concept of a “lost geography” to consider how Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa is produced as “lost” in multiple senses of the word. First, Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa may be considered “lost” in the sense that the land is no longer held, owned, or possessed by the original land owners or tenants, but not without contestation. It has been dispossessed through the U.S. occupation/annexation of Hawai‘i, the condemnation of land from traditional land owners, the eviction of tenants and resource users, and the violent disruptions of traditional place-based knowledge, material practices, and social relations by capitalism and militarization. Second, Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa has been made “lost” as in something that cannot be found or known. That is, it has been made to disappear from everyday knowledges and practices, just as it has disappeared as a problem for scholars of imperialism. Third, Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa has been “lost” in the sense that it has been ruined or destroyed physically and morally. The shocking transformation from an abundant food source to a toxic site is an example of this ruination. And finally, Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa has become “lost” in the sense of not knowing where one is, where one is going, or how one can get somewhere. The alienation of people from their lands, their cultural practices, and their social relations in the Pu‘uloa region has been profoundly disorienting. However, to be clear, I am not implying that all is lost, as in hopeless, for the future of Pu‘uloa. On the contrary, the living archive of genealogical and historical ties and cultural knowledge related to Pu‘uloa still remains to be accessed and mobilized. There are several initiatives seeking to revitalize Hawaiian cultural knowledges and practices at Pu‘uloa. And while they are still relatively inchoate and limited in their reach, they offer glimpses of alternative
futures. These initiatives are not isolated events; rather they must be understood in the context of other environmental and cultural restoration efforts on military-impacted lands, such as those at Kahoʻolawe, Mākua, Waikāne, and Vieques.

Producing and maintaining a discourse of military and imperial power as good, necessary, and inevitable requires much work. As a war memorial and major military base, Pearl Harbor plays an important role in the U.S. state-building and imperial formation project. As Vernadette Gonzalez notes, “the commodification of Hawai’i as tropics and the USS Arizona Memorial’s commemoration of World War II . . . are mutually constitutive” (Gonzalez 2013: 115). Today Pearl Harbor, the place, has become subsumed by “Pearl Harbor”, the site of the December 7, 1941 Japanese attack. It produces a discourse that seeks to forget as much as it remembers. Representations of the traumatic history/memory and visual spectacle of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor obfuscates America’s own imperial history while reinforcing “myths of American innocence, victimization, and ‘exceptionalism’” (Dower 2010: 15). Framed as an originary act of violence and aggression by an evil and alien enemy, the Pearl Harbor attack psychologically erased the historical context of competing imperialisms and reset the clock of World War II, “establishing American military action as reactive and defensive” (Rosenberg 2005: 15). As the symbolic landscape that represents America’s national innocence, sacrifice, and righteous redemption, the Pearl Harbor memorial site “interpellates [visitors] as consumers/citizens” (Ferguson and Turnbull 1999: 136; See Althusser 1971). But the simple “good versus evil” narrative of the Pearl Harbor myth is destabilized when the legality and legitimacy of the U.S. occupation of Hawaiʻi and the military use of Hawaiʻi as a platform for war are called into question.

In 2010, when the National Endowment for Humanities (NEH) sponsored workshop that sought to broaden and complicate the historical frame of the Pacific War, a controversy erupted over the teaching of literature critical of U.S. imperial ambitions (NEH 2010; Blake 2010; Osorio 2010; Johnson 2010; MOTHAX 2010; Fox News 2010). The incident revealed the potent ideological and emotional investments that constitute “Pearl Harbor” as a sacred place of memory within the United States’ national
mythology. And it also exposed the inherent fragility and instability of this social construction.

For the purposes of this thesis, I step out of the “semitic thicket” (Ferguson and Turnbull 1999: 138) of the Pearl Harbor war memorial site and limit my scope to the earlier formative years of Pearl Harbor’s “birth” as a U.S. naval station and analyze the physical and discursive operations that transformed Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa into Pearl Harbor. The U.S. imperial project in Hawai‘i involved dramatic transformations of the land and society and the production of loyal American political subjects. Between 1900 and 1919, the ahupua‘a (a traditional Hawaiian land division) of Hālawa, in the district of ‘Ewa on the island of O‘ahu was radically transformed by the condemnation of land, the dredging of coral and sediment, and the construction of the Pearl Harbor naval station and shipyard. It was a difficult birth. From the start, the project was fraught with conflict, competing interests, anxieties, inertia, and numerous failures. But with the completion of Drydock 1, the story of Pearl Harbor’s origin became a kind of creation myth for the U.S. Navy, and for the emerging American empire. This thesis will analyze U.S. imperial formation in Hawai‘i through a case study of the physical, political, economic, and discursive transformation of Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa into Pearl Harbor. I hope to take something that is very familiar and make it “strange” so that we might be able to see and understand it in a new way, with fresh eyes. I believe that a critical study of Pearl Harbor can contribute new insights to conversations about the current state of global geopolitics, especially to rethink the assumptions of militarized state-centric security.

As Edward Said (1978; 1994) reminds us, imaginative geographies are powerful and necessary techniques in the constitution of empires. What discourses, social relations, and historical processes were deployed in the transformation of the imaginative and material geography of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa into “Pearl Harbor”, as a place of military power and as an ideologically potent, yet contested place of memory within U.S. imperial formation? In addition to understanding how U.S. actions affected realities on the ground in Hawai‘i, I am also interested in the ways that developments in Hawai‘i acted on and helped to shape the United States. In what ways are Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa/Pearl Harbor
and U.S. imperial formation dialectically produced through their historical and geographical relationship? Furthermore, what were the subject-effects of these geographic transformations for Kanaka ʻŌiwi (Native Hawaiians)? In this thesis I argue that the discursive production of Pearl Harbor as an American imaginative geography was as important a factor as the political, economic, and social forces of its physical construction. These narratives framed Pearl Harbor (1) as either an indespensible resource for the security for the U.S. and Hawai‘i or an inescapable threat to the U.S.; (2) as a crucial site to lay claim to the North Pacific Ocean as an American space; (3) as an engine of economic development and a bountiful source of wealth and prosperity; (4) as the inevitable and natural progression from the primitive Hawaiian past to the modern and civilized American future; and (5) as an embodiment of the myth of death and resurrection. In turn, the material and discursive production of Pearl Harbor was pivotal in the process of U.S. imperial formation and the imaginative geographies it produced.

The transformation of Ke Awalau o Pu‘u‘ula into Pearl Harbor also involved the production of new subjectivities. Specifically, I look at ways that the process of imperial formation and militarization affected the identity formation of Kanaka ʻŌiwi (Native Hawaiians), that is, how the process of building Pearl Harbor interpellated Kanaka ʻŌiwi into American political and economic subjects, as workers, performers, political boosters, and the displaced. My thesis examines the dialectical relationship between U.S. imperial formation that is global in scale and the production of a particular place constituted by multiple and contested actors and meanings. I consider how a particular place, Ke Awalau o Pu‘u‘ula, influences the formation of American empire and how these imperial formational processes act upon and shape this place. Further, I discuss the "paradoxical" subjectivities that emerge in this process.

Methods

This thesis is a historical case study of Ke Awalau o Pu‘u‘ula / Pearl Harbor, giving particular attention to geographical transformations in the ahupua’a of Hālawa and the construction of the Pearl Harbor Naval Station. I concentrate on two moments in this historical geography. The first long moment encompassed the process by which Ke
Awalau o Puʻuloa became a highly charged object of geopolitics, beginning with the intermittent explorer accounts describing Puʻuloa, continuing through controversial cession of Puʻuloa to the United States as part of a commercial treaty, and ending with the U.S. “annexation” of the islands as a “war necessity” during the Spanish American War. The second moment, roughly from 1901 to 1919, began when a foreign government, the United States, took hold of the land and began the radical political-economic and cultural transformations of the Hawaiian geography into an American military space. This period marked the U.S. colonial administration and Americanization program and the origins of the military-industrial political economy of the islands.

I primarily relied on archival sources, including Hawaiian government archives from the Kingdom of Hawaiʻi and Territory of Hawaiʻi periods, the Dillingham and Hawaiian Dredging collections at the Bishop Museum, historical records from Hawaiian Dredging Company, Hawaiian cultural and ethnographic publications, cultural and environmental impact surveys conducted under state and federal environmental impact assessment laws, engineering studies, missionary manuscripts, and historical records of the U.S. Navy and National Park Service. Accessing historical newspaper archives from both the Hawaiian language and English language presses provided a valuable perspective for making comparative analysis. Although I conducted a number of interviews with Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners, former residents of Puʻuloa, scholars, Hawaiian and environmental justice activists, and key individuals associated with the Pearl Harbor memorial, I refer to these mainly to provide cultural, political, and historical context rather than raw data for my analysis of the historical discourses. I participated in several tours and public events at the Pearl Harbor naval base and memorial site and conducted my own field observations of different sites in the ʻEwa region. And secondary sources provided guideposts for identifying archival sources.

The primary method I employed was discourse analysis of both Hawaiian and Euro-American historical texts that draws on post-structural and post-colonial theories. My research is also informed by Marxist political economy and political ecology and feminist geopolitics to understand the material drivers, processes, and heterogeneous
assemblages of actors that were involved in the transformation of Puʻuloa, and the multiple scales at which these elements articulated with one another. This forced me to look for connections between distant events and material local effects to understand how geopolitical and geoeconomic developments can materialize in the concrete physical and social changes locally. I also considered how local events and actors exerted influences on distant others and far off places. Long before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, Puʻuloa was affected by and exerted influences upon the discourses and political economics in distant centers of governance and commerce.

**Chapters**

I begin in Chapter One with a review of historical and theoretical literature and give a description of the Hawaiian cultural geography of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa, including an overview of the site and the cultural meanings and practices associated with it. Since a part of my project is to understand the processes and effects of U.S. imperial formation process in Hawaiʻi, especially the forms of epistemic violence involved in those transformations, I needed to establish a basis for comparison. This chapter focuses on Kanaka ʻŌiwi (Native Hawaiian) epistemologies of place, subjectivity, and history within the geography and historical/cultural/philosophical/legal texts pertaining to Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa, in particular, the moʻolelo (history, legend) of Kaʻahupāhau, the shark goddess of Puʻuloa, and the moʻolelo of Kānekuaʻana, a lizard deity who protected the marine resources there. The moʻolelo of Kaʻahupāhau in particular becomes a key actant in the events related to the construction of the Pearl Harbor naval base, which I discuss in detail in the last chapter.

I draw upon and am indebted to many other eminently more qualified scholars whose cumulative body of Hawaiian ethnographic, historical, and theoretical work laid crucial groundwork for me. I am not seeking to validate the “authenticity” of any particular version of these accounts. Rather I take their heterogeneity as important

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2 In Actor-Network Theory, *actants* refer to either human or non-human actors that are shaped within networks by their relations with one another.
indicators of their vitality as discursive productions. My intent is to read these texts as legal and political texts as well as aesthetic cultural productions while trying to avoid the trap of romanticism or nostalgia. I am interested in discerning common epistemological threads reflected in the narratives and consider the realities constituted by these forms of knowledge.

Chapter Two traces the discursive and material transformation of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa into a geopolitical object of desire. I discuss the appearance of Puʻuloa in early explorer narratives and consider how their gaze began to produce a different kind of object. From initial accounts of a sublime landscape, military planners turned Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa into an object of scientific and military investigation, measurement, calculation, and engineering. The Hawaiian geography was illegible to them. Simultaneously, the white settler sugar planters and business owners in Hawaiʻi strenuously agitated for the integration of Hawaiʻi economically and politically with the United States, a move that met strong opposition from the Native Hawaiian public. The chapter passes over most of the details of the 1893 overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom by white settlers backed by U.S. troops and the disputed “annexation” to the U.S. in 1898 since numerous authors have discussed these events. Instead, I seek to understand how it was possible for American policy makers to imagine that Hawaiʻi, an independent state, belonged to the United States. I argue that the production of imaginative geographies about Pearl Harbor as the key to controlling the vast space of the Pacific ideologically equipped the U.S. to seize the islands.

In Chapter Three, I discuss the processes and assemblages of actors involved in the construction of the Pearl Harbor naval station. This chapter considers how various actors engaged in activities that produced material transformations of the environment as well as articulated discourses of security, destiny, improvement, and civilization that were important to the formation of a military-industrial political economy. It also examines the discursive operations that rendered Puʻuloa abstract, legible and technical: the plastic geographic material that could be remolded into a radically different military industrial landscape. I studied contracts, plans, engineering studies and maps as well as newspaper
accounts to gain an understanding of the processes involved. It was an extremely political and contingent process, much more so than I had previously realized. And it revealed the importance of discourse in shaping the field of political possibility for such a massive project to materialize. This chapter also considers the role of Walter F. Dillingham and his Hawaiian Dredging Company as key figures in the history of Pearl Harbor and the emergent military-industrial political economy.

In Chapter Four, my focus shifts to the micrological: a pivotal event and key individuals involved in the construction of the naval base. In 1913, Drydock 1, a structure that was supposed to make Pearl Harbor the greatest naval station in the world, came crashing down in a pile of rubble after four years of work and nearly four million dollars invested (the equivalent of approximately $95 million today). For many Native Hawaiians, the drydock collapse was poetic justice for the desecration of a site that was considered to be sacred to Kaʻahupāhau, the beloved shark goddess of Puʻuloa. For the Navy, it was a crisis of faith. And for the private contractors, the project was a potentially catastrophic loss. The drydock collapse exposed the fragility of the imperial hubris and the many contingent processes that had driven the project along up to that point. At the same time, it provided an opportunity for recovery and improvement—what Tania Li calls the “improvement of improvement” (Li 2007). It provided a stage on which to enact a national mythology of resurrection from defeat. The event also enabled the U.S. imperial formation to appropriate the Hawaiian moʻolelo and rework it into an origin myth of its own: the legendary birth of Pearl Harbor. David Kanakeawe Richards, a Hawaiian foreman on the construction project played a key role in this transition. He was asked to arrange for a “Hawaiian blessing” to ensure that the drydock would not have any more trouble. He did as he was asked. And the “birth” of Pearl Harbor became legend. But rather than dismiss his actions as deceived or complicitous, I was interested to know more about this man, his agency, motivations and sense of identity, and how he understood his actions. From an analysis of various accounts, including Richards’ unpublished manuscript, I found a more complex agency and subjectivity at work, which the popular accounts ignore.
I conclude by bringing the origin myth of Pearl Harbor full circle to the present. Pearl Harbor is as much a discursive production as it is a physical and material place. It is produced performatively through the reiterative and citational discursive processes that become sedimented in place (Butler 1993). The U.S. government mobilizes Pearl Harbor as a discursive technique of legitimation. But as this thesis will show, this legitimacy may be built on ground as unstable as that which destroyed the first drydock at Pearl Harbor.
CHAPTER ONE

“Alahula Puʻuloa he alahele na Kaʻahupāhau”

Everywhere in Puʻuloa is the trail of Kaʻahupāhau

Pūpū (aʻo ‘Ewa) Shells of ‘Ewa
i ka nuʻa (nā kānaka) Throngs of people
E naue mai (a e ‘ike) Coming to learn
I ka mea hou (o ka ‘āina) The news of the land
Ahe ʻāina (ua kaulana) A land famous
Mai nā kūpuna mai From the ancient times
Alahula Puʻuloa he ala hele na All of Puʻuloa, the path trod upon by
Kaʻahupāhau, (Kaʻahupāhau) Kaʻahupāhau
Alahula Puʻuloa he ala hele na All of Puʻuloa, the path trod upon by
Kaʻahupāhau (Kaʻahupāhau) Kaʻahupāhau

(Traditional. Elbert and Mahoe 1975: 87-88)

Mary Kawena Pukui: Alahula no hoʻi o Puʻuloa (Well known or familiar indeed is Puʻuloa).

Group: (Laughter) Alahula!

Pukui: Alahula. That is, you go through...

Josephine Kealoha Marciel: Some of these modern Hawaiians, you hear them saying aeh, “alahele”. I correct them. I tell, “Not ‘alahele’! ‘Alahele’ is a road. The right word is ‘alahula’.”

Pukui: You go through, and through, and through, and through. There’s no place you don’t go...

(Marciel 1961)

The lyrics in the first epigraph come from the chorus of a popular Hawaiian song Pūpū a ʻo ‘Ewa, which honors places in ‘Ewa and the shark goddess Kaʻahupāhau. The
song, like many Hawaiian songs and chants, is a performative\textsuperscript{3} mapping of the geography of ʻEwa, its major peaks, winds, resources, and deities. The song may be familiar to some as the garish Polynesian revue in John Ford’s \textit{Donovan’s Reef} (Ford 1963), or as the melody to \textit{Pearly Shells}, a sunny love song written by Webley Edwards, host of the popular exoticizing radio program “Hawaii Calls” that ran from 1935 to 1975. On the morning of December 7, 1941, Edwards famously announced, “We are under attack... This is not a maneuver. This is the real McCoy!” (Beheim 2014). In the 1960s, he collaborated with Leon Pober to compose \textit{Pearly Shells} over the melody of \textit{Pūpū a ʻo ʻEwa} (Soria, Jr. 2003). In the 1970s, C & H Sugar appropriated the tune for a television advertisement jingle (“C\&H Pure Cane Sugar Commercial Jingle 1970’s to 1980’s” 2013).

The cultural appropriation of \textit{Pūpū a ʻo ʻEwa}, first as film and music, then as advertising, exemplifies the epistemic violence that has been enacted upon Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa. Lost in the American appropriations of the song are the charged poetics of the original Hawaiian words, with references to lyrical landscapes of winds, mountains, plants, and sea creatures and the powerful and benevolent shark goddess Kaʻahupāhau who protected the people of ʻEwa. Lost too, is the history of the song, anonymously penned as part of a fundraising drive for Kahikuonālani Church, an important Native Hawaiian church in ʻEwa with a history of celebrating Hawaiian traditions sometimes at odds with the white settler church bureaucracy downtown. On one occasion the pastor of Kahikuonālani was chastised by the church bureaucracy for allowing “hulahula” (dancing) in a church fundraising event (Bishop 1905; KAA 1905).

The second epigraph is an excerpt from an oral history interview conducted by Mary Kawena Pukui from the Bishop Museum collection. In the discussion of Puʻuloa and Kaʻahupāhau, the conversation expounds on the significance of the word “alahula”.

\textsuperscript{3} Louis uses “performative” in the sense of performance that produces indigenous landscapes. This differs from Butler’s concept of “performativity [which] must be understood not as a singular or deliberate ‘act,’ but, rather, as the reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effects that it names” (Butler 1993: xii). I utilize both terms at different points in this thesis.
The dictionary defines “alahula” as “a frequented and well-known path; to frequent such; to tread or trample, as on a taboo being broken” (Pukui 1986: 17), but the interview suggests that the word has other connotations of being driven to push through towards knowing someplace or something in an intimate and thorough way. In light of the Pukui interview, the song lyrics may also describe an epistemological approach to the production of Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa as place and space, which I take up later in the chapter. The history of the song Pūpu a ʻo ʻEwa helps to introduce one of my concerns in this thesis by highlighting the gap between the Hawaiian and American ways of knowing, experiencing, and producing the geography of Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa / Pearl Harbor.

In order to do a comparative analysis of the geographic transformations that took place in Pu‘uloa, I must first situate its Hawaiian geography. In this chapter I provide a review of the theoretical literature pertaining to multiple and paradoxical spaces and situate them in conversation with Kanaka ʻŌiwi indigenous epistemological interventions. I provide a brief description of the Hawaiian geographies of Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa and discuss their politics of representation of Hawaiian culture.

In the vast archive of historical, anthropological, archaeological, and ethnographic texts about the pre-contact society in Hawai‘i, much of the literature has tended to treat the Hawaiian cultural geography with nostalgia, as a folkloric remnant of a vanishing culture, a fragile artifact of knowledge to be preserved in museum collections and anthropological literature. Collected, catalogued, interpreted, and safely viewed through the transparent encasements of the western anthropological gaze, Hawaiian culture provides consumers of “Hawai‘i” with a cultural-knowledge commodity and a colorful backdrop upon which more “important” historical events unfold. In the 1970s, the Native Hawaiian cultural and political activism that has been called the “Hawaiian Renaissance,” asserted counter claims to these knowledges and sought to revitalize and redeploy them in contemporary cultural and political practices in ways that unbound these knowledges from their archival restraints.
In this chapter I access fragments of the moʻolelo (histories, narratives, legends, stories) that have been recorded in the Hawaiian historical and cultural archive to provide a brief sketch of the historical cultural geography of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa. I draw on a few key sources, including some of the early Kanaka ʻŌiwi autoethnographies (Pratt 1992) by David Malo (1951), Samuel Kamakau (1983, 1991a, 1991b), and John Papa Ii (1983). These sources provide illuminating, yet partial glimpses into traditional Hawaiian concepts of space and place. While extremely valuable as a repository of Hawaiian history and culture, the English language archive by archaeologists, anthropologists and folklorists writing about Hawaiian culture is nevertheless contradictory (Fornander 1999; Pukui 1944, 1976, 1983, 1986; Beckwith 1981; Handy et al. 1991; Kelly 1989). On the one hand, it contains rich accounts of native knowledge and political agency, much of it based on accounts by Kanaka ʻŌiwi informants. On the other hand, it is an archive laden with coloniality that has contributed to the fixing of our conceptions of “Hawaiian culture” in a state of pre-modern stasis. This archive is limited by its over-reliance on a “canon” of the few authoritative sources that have been translated into English; it forms a historiographical bottleneck that Nogelmeier has labeled a “discourse of sufficiency” (Nogelmeier 2010). Unfortunately, my own limited knowledge of Hawaiian culture and lack of fluency in Hawaiian language necessarily limits my access mostly to English language translations, leaving unexamined the vast Hawaiian language archive. I realize that I risk reifying colonial knowledges by relying heavily on these sources, and that I need to take care to avoid the pitfalls of caricature, romanticism, or nostalgia. Therefore, I offer this qualification: whatever I retrieve from the Hawaiian cultural archive will amount to a partial and incomplete account, but I hope that it will be substantial enough and handled with appropriate sensitivity and care to sketch the outlines of a meaningful critique.

Hawaiian cultural productions about Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa should be engaged as vital philosophical, aesthetic, and political texts that have relevance, not only for making

4 “Coloniality . . . refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations” (Maldonado-Torres 2007: 243).
sense of the distant cultural past, but also for tracing how that past continues to assert itself and interact with the present and the future. By gaining a basic understanding and appreciation of Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa through a lens of Kanaka ʻŌiwi history, epistemology, and place-making practices I believe we can make a more critical intervention into the production of Pearl Harbor as a space and place. I am not proposing a superficial liberal gesture of multicultural inclusion to add local color to the unified master historical narrative; rather I suggest that we need to engage the geography of Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa / Pearl Harbor as a kind of paradoxical space (Rose 1993; McKittrick 2006) and approach its study through what Katherine McKittrick, after Éduoard Glissant, refers to as the “poetics of landscape,” where making geographic sense of the place requires tracing its underside to “enter into, and challenge, traditional geographic formulations without the familiar tools of maps, charts, official records, and figures” (McKittrick 2006: xxii). Gillian Rose describes paradoxical space as “multidimensional, shifting and contingent” (Rose 1993: 140):

   It is also paradoxical, by which I mean that spaces that would be mutually exclusive if charted on a two-dimensional map — centre and margin, inside and outside — are occupied simultaneously. (Ibid.)

   The concept of paradoxical space is similar to Foucault’s concept of heterotopia (Foucault 1984), a kind of non-ordinary space where real and imagined elements coexist. “The heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible” (Ibid.), and are often “linked to slices of time” (Ibid.). Building on Foucault as well as the work of Henri Lefebvre, Edward Soja theorized another concept he called Thirdspace, a space that combines spatiality, sociality and historicality. For my purposes, paradoxical space may be a more useful concept because while incorporating these layered, interpenetrating, and contradictory aspects of spaces as discussed by Foucault and Soja, it more directly engages with feminist geopolitical concern for multi-scalar analysis from the microloogical scale of the body to the global, with ethical concerns of social justice, and with issues of divided and contradictory subjectivity.
Additionally, I propose that one way to access these paradoxical spaces is to utilize the *parallax* (Žižek 2006) between different epistemological and subject positions. As Žižek argues:

an “epistemological” shift in the subject’s point of view always reflects an “ontological” shift in the object itself....The subject’s gaze is always-already inscribed into the perceived object itself, in the guise of its “blind spot,” that which is “in the object more than the object itself,” the point from which the object itself returns the gaze.

To approach this parallax, I draw on a number of scholars who have theorized Kanaka ʻŌiwi indigenous methodologies, epistemologies and ontologies of place. Renee Louis (2008; 2011) introduced the concept of Hawaiian *performative cartographies*, the ways that places are produced and known through cultural practices, performances, and movements through space. Space and place are *enacted*; they are relational productions. Similar to the ways that Apache and Aboriginal Australians produce space and place through their bodily movements and recitations across the landscape, Kanaka ʻŌiwi encoded history, law, art, and meaning into the “text” of the topography and could access these meanings through the recitation of stories, songs, and chants in place (Abram 1996; Basso 1996).

Geographer Katrina-Ann Rose-Marie Kapāʻanaokalāokeola Nākoa Oliveira “situates Hawaiian place by revealing the genealogical interconnectedness of the land, animals, peoples, and gods” (Oliveira 2006: viii). She asserts, “knowledge is ‘rooted in place’” (Ibid.: 10). Furthermore, “Hawaiian epistemologies are reflected in Hawaiian place-making and Hawaiian place-making in turn informs Hawaiian epistemologies. Indigenous knowledge is place based” (Ibid.: 11). While positing a dialectical relationship between Kanaka ʻŌiwi knowledge production and place-making practices, Oliveira proposes an indigenous phenomenological approach based on the embodied and sensual knowledge of place, which resonates with the philosophical writings of Husserl and Merleau-Ponty (Abram 1996). She suggests:

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5 For a discussion of similar Apache place-making practices see Keith Basso’s *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache* (Basso, 1996).
a new framework for understanding Hawaiian ways of knowing from a Hawaiian perspective. This approach will center on nine senses that order Hawaiian knowledge bases: sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell, naʻau (intuition), kulāwi (place), au ʻapaʻapaʻa (ancestral time), and moʻo (connection to past, present, and future). (Oliveira: 22)

However, it is important to note that her phenomenology differs from that of the western philosophical tradition by not assuming as its starting point a subject already alienated from the world.

Oliveira’s research complements the analytical methodology and cultural practice named Papakū Makawalu (Edith Kanakaʻole Foundation: 2013). It is a system which utilizes textual analysis, storytelling, performance, and phenomenological investigation of places. The Papakū Makawalu epistemology is organized along three “realms” or fields of knowledge pertaining to the natural-social-spiritual world based on the Kumulipō, one of several cosmogonic genealogy chants (Beckwith 1981: 232):

*Papahulilani* is the space from above the head to where the stars sit. It is inclusive of the sun, moon, stars, planets, winds, clouds, and the measurement of the vertical and horizontal spaces of the atmosphere. It is also a class of experts who are spiritually, physically, and intellectually attuned to the space above and its relationship to the earth.

*Papahulihonua* is inclusive of earth and ocean. It is the ongoing study of the natural earth and ocean and its development, transformation and evolution by natural causes. It is also a class of experts who are spiritually, physically, and intellectually attuned to this earth and its relationship to the space above and the life forms on it.

*Papahānaumoku* moves from the embryonic state of all life forces to death. It is the birthing cycle of all flora and fauna inclusive of man. It is the process of investigating, questioning, analyzing and reflecting upon all things that give birth, regenerate and procreate. It is also a class of experts who are spiritually, physically and intellectually attuned to things born and the habitat that provides their nourishment, shelter, and growth. (Edith Kanakaʻole Foundation 2013)

“Makawalu”, which literally translates as “eight eyes” (Pukui and Elbert 1986), is a metaphor for an epistemological approach based on a multiplicity of perspectives and senses with which one must engage the world in order to access a more holistic understanding of human society in the world. It is also a methodology of *deconstruction,*
not in the Derridaean sense, but an indigenous method of tracing and analyzing the
relationality and multiplicity of articulated meanings associated with phenomena in
natural and social worlds. It also suggests the heterogeneous and contingent nature of
reality, which can only be accessed through multiple articulated discourses.

As the enormous archive of Hawaiian language sources becomes more available
via online digital archives and the growing number of scholars with proficiency in the
Hawaiian language gain access the information, it is producing a “revolution” in
Hawaiian historiography. The efforts of Hawaiian scholars to access the vast archive of
Hawaiian language sources have yielded fresh insights about Kanaka ‘Ōiwi political
agency and resistance (Silva 2004; Beamer 2008; Arista 2010; Basham 2012). Citing
Foucault, Noenoe Silva (2004) called this “re-discovery” of Hawaiian cultural and
language sources an “insurrection of subjugated knowledges” (5). Hawaiian language
newspapers in the mid-19th Century to mid-20th Century frequently published serialized
accounts of various moʻolelo (historical narratives) and kaʻao (mythical narratives).
‘Ōiwi intellectuals such as Moses Manu, Hoʻulumahiehie, and Joseph Poepoe were
prolific writers in this genre of moʻolelo (historical narratives), which often mixed
legendary accounts with historical reportage and political criticism.

Noelani Arista argues that Kanaka ‘Ōiwi knowledge production reflects an
“aesthetic of poly-semy”, which is “a mode of comparative multiplicity indigenous to
Hawaiian and many other Polynesian languages” (Arista 2010: 7), which mobilizes
kaona, hidden, multiple and layered meanings, metaphors, and poetic references.
Similarly, Houston Wood (1999) suggests the term “polyrhetoric” to describe “the
multiple, shifting, and context-specific meanings” (130) of Hawaiian discourses.

Puakea Nogelmeier describes this multiplicity in the word moʻolelo (history,
literature, story), “a single concept... conveying multiple meanings, encompassing what
in English would be considered as history, ethnography, myth, legend, account,
description, tradition” (Nogelmeier, 2003: 186). Etymologically, moʻolelo is a contraction
of “moʻo” and “ʻōlelo”. “Moʻo” can mean a lizard or reptilian creature or something in a
series or succession, that is, a segmented or articulated form. “ʻŌlelo” refers to language, speech, or utterance. Thus “moʻo ʻōlelo” (or “moʻolelo”) refers to a succession of talk, a continuous or connected narrative, a discourse (Andrews 1865 (2003): 399). With its layered meanings, the word “moʻolelo” is richly suggestive of Foucault’s concept of discourse (Foucault 1979: 27) in the sense that it references the power and performativity of language. Additionally, moʻolelo implies a process by which meanings are produced through the articulations of multiple, situated, and interconnected narratives and speakers; this resonates with Hall’s (1985) concept of articulation, whereby meanings, subjectivities, and material realities are produced through interactions between different cultural elements.

Due to my limited proficiency with the Hawaiian language and knowledges, I cannot fully employ an indigenous Kanaka ʻŌiwi research methodology as suggested by Louis, Oliveira, Arista, and the Papakū Makawalu practitioners. Instead, I use a comparative approach that is informed by their epistemological and theoretical interventions. I hope that by reading the historical texts in a way that places the Hawaiian theoretical concepts in conversation with western critical theory I might be able to make a modest contribution to the study of Hawaiian geography.

"ʻAʻohe pau ka ʻike i ka hālau hoʻokahi" - All knowledge is not taught in the same school (Pukui 1983: 24)

Moʻolelo, then, can be thought of as a narrative by which multiple meanings, method assemblages (Law 2004), relations, and histories interact to produce their material effects on subjects, places, and spaces. John Agnew (1987) has defined three fundamental aspects that constitute place as a “meaningful location”: location (“where?”), locale (shape of the space; the setting for social relations), and a sense of place (the meaning attached to the place). However, place is not simply a static container where human activity occurs, as Doreen Massey reminds us: “What gives a place its specificity is not some long internalized history but the fact that it is constructed out of a particular constellation of relations, articulated together at a particular locus” (Massey
Tim Cresswell agrees that “place is constituted through a reiterative social practice - place is made and remade daily” (2004: 39). In other words, place is a process, not a thing. Furthermore, as Massey argues, place is also constituted through its translocal relationships:

> It is a sense of place, an understanding of 'its character', which can only be constructed by linking that place to places beyond . . . What we need, it seems to me, is a global sense of the local, a global sense of place (1991: 29).

Massey goes further to claim that places can have “multiple identities” which can be “either, or both a source of richness or a source of conflict” (Massey 1993: 65). This relates to the concept of paradoxical space. However, whereas paradoxical space refers more to the contradictory ways subjects exist, experience, and interact within space, Massey refers more to the multiple meanings and identities different actors enact in places and the politics of the interaction between these different senses of place. In Actor Network Theory, this multiplicity is related to multiple ontologies produced by different practices and “method assemblages” (Law 2004). In her ethnography of medical science, Annemarie Mol describes how different realities are *enacted* rather than *constructed* through different social and cultural practices that reflect different subject and epistemological positions (Mol 2002: 44; Law 2004: 56). In a similar way, multiple epistemological positions, social locations, and spatial practices may enact multiple places and spatialities in the same location. The multiple identities of places and the multiple and often contradictory subjectivities we embody in space are mutually constituted.

But places also have a physicality and a fixedness that persist beyond any particular place-making event or process. Meanings become sedimented in the physicality of a place by the reiterative manipulations of space, the movements and flows of bodies, energy, capital, and power, and its constitutive social relations, discourses, and translocal connections. Even when a place is radically transformed physically and discursively, it carries the traces of the past that still act on present meanings and representations. As Richelle Bernazzoli and Colin Flint observe, “while social relations
(and the places they constitute) are dynamic and even sometimes fleeting, new interactions and behaviors that appear in their place are not built on a ‘clean slate’, but instead on the remains of previous ones, inevitably shaped by what came before” (2009: 396). These layers and traces of the past seep imperceptibly into the present or sometimes re-emerge suddenly, unexpectedly, and traumatically in ways that can be disruptive to modernity’s smooth linear temporality.

By shifting between different positions and using the resulting parallax view to analyze Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa / Pearl Harbor, I hope to describe and critique its multiple aspects. But to assert such a parallax is not to lapse into a flaccid relativism. Rather I suggest that we engage in what Mol calls an ontological politics, that is, enacting certain realities over others based on ethical and political considerations. In other words, with regard to the study of places and spaces in Hawai‘i we enter into an ontological politics of place. As Law (2004) suggests, “If truth by itself is not a gold standard, then perhaps there may be additional political reasons for preferring and enacting one kind of reality rather than another. Such, at any rate, is a possibility” (13).

In the remainder of this chapter I explore three themes that emerge from the mo‘olelo of Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa: 1) the translocal production of space and place; 2) ethics and politics in the mo‘olelo of Ka‘ahupāhau; and 3) the place-based ethics of care in the mo‘olelo of Kāneku‘ana. I begin with a brief description of the cultural landscape and the Hawaiian poetics and aesthetics related to wahi pana (storied places), mo‘olelo (connected histories and narratives). I illustrate how place and identity are dialectically produced in indigenous Hawaiian geographic thought.

Articulating Space

In some versions of Hawaiian mo‘olelo, the Hawaiian Islands were born from the sexual union of Papahānaumoku (Papa-who-gives birth-to-islands) and Wākea (god of light, sometimes symbolized by the broad expanse of sky), who are also the ancient ancestors of humans. According to Western scientists, the Hawaiian Archipelago was “born” of volcanoes over the “hot spot” on the Earth’s crust. Geologists estimate that the
Island of O‘ahu was formed around 2.75 to 4 million of years ago when the volcanoes whose remnants are today’s Wai‘anae and Ko‘olau mountain ranges, merged into a single land mass (Ziegler 2002: 18). On the slopes of these volcanoes, the interaction of earth and sky produced life-giving ua (rain) and wai (fresh water) through the process climatologists call orographic lift. The wai carved a twisting complex of gulches and ravines that converged in a main river channel emptying to the south. At the end of the Pleistocene ice age, rising sea levels drowned the lower portions of the river valleys and enabled the growth of a broad shallow reef that ringed the island. Then, under the enormous weight of Hawai‘i island, the earth’s crust buckled and lifted O‘ahu to expose the wide coralline plains of the southern ‘Ewa and Kona districts, creating the fan-shaped inlet that Kanaka ‘Ōiwi (Native Hawaiians) named Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa (the many bays of the long hill).

At sea level, it is difficult to see in its entirety. However, from an elevated vantage point, Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa (or sometimes just Pu‘uloa for short) stands out as the most prominent topographical feature on the southern coast of the island of O‘ahu. The Wai‘anae and Ko‘olau mountain ranges form a broad arc, a long hill, carved with gulches, ravines, and valleys that converge at the central channel leading to the sea; the lochs are arrayed in a fan-like shape, resembling a leaf, hence the Hawaiian language play on the word “lau” which can mean “many” or “leaves”. Its circular, ridged shape lends to its other poetic name, Awāwalei (lei or garland of valleys or bays). In Hawaiian culture, a lei is a garland worn around the head or neck which is given as a sign of love, respect and honor and can symbolize a circle of relations or a beloved person, place, or thing.

Another traditional name for this body of water is Waimomi (pearl waters), which refers to the pipi (Hawaiian pearl oyster, Pinctada radiata) that were once abundant in these waters. Kanaka ‘Ōiwi also referred to pipi as i‘a hāmau leo (fish-with-a-silenced-voice) because people gathering the oysters could not speak “lest a breeze arise suddenly to ripple the surface of the water and the pipi vanish completely” (Pukui 1944: 59).
refers to the behavior of these oysters to snap shut tightly when disturbed, thus blending into the reef. This name was also a poetic way to refer to the people of ‘Ewa.

The name Waimomi suggests the abundance of the natural resources including fresh water and food. “Wai”, the Hawaiian word for “fresh water,” signifies life and is considered to be a kinolau (multiple body forms) of Kāne, the god of fresh water and one of the four main Hawaiian deities. Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa is located in the ‘Ewa district on the island of Oʻahu, which runs from the edge of the reef at a point on the shoreline near the present day Honolulu International Airport to the ridge of the Koʻolau mountains at the eastern edge of Hālawa valley. It continues along that ridge line to a point near Wahiawā, then crosses the Leilehua plain up to the ridge of the Waiʻanae range. After following the ridge line south to the peaks above Kapolei and Makakilo it descends westward to the edge of the reef at Kahe point. The ‘Ewa district is subdivided into twelve ahupuaʻa — Hālawa, ‘Aiea, Kalauao, Waimalu, Waiau, Waimano, Mānana, Waiawa, Waipiʻo, Waiekele, Hōʻaeʻae, and Honouliuli — all of which converge along the shoreline of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa.

Although ‘Ewa is located in the drier leeward side of the island, it enjoys an abundance of surface water and artesian springs that percolate up through basalt, coral, and sediment from deep underground aquifers. Steep river valleys fed by rain from the ridge line of the mountains sheltered wet and mesic forests, while the broad plains and lowlands produced a variety of dry land forests, shrub lands, grass lands, wetland and coastal habitats. This complex relationship between the land, freshwater, and sea water and the fertility generated by these biophysical dynamics created a productive estuary and wetland ecology. Numerous moʻolelo describe how Kāne, the god of fresh water, and his twin brother, Kanaloa, god of the sea, travelled across the landscape to produce sources of water and Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa’s estuarine and highly productive habitat. That

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6 An ahupuaʻa is a traditional land divisions that often, though not always, encompassed a valley or other delineated land area from the mountain to the sea. It was one of the primary political economic geographic units in the Hawaiian land management and tenure system.
Kanaka ʻŌiwi identified so many of these ahupua'a with names beginning with the word “wai”, testifies to the importance of water in this geography.

The fisheries of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa were renowned for their abundance of various types of seafood. According to Handy et al., “These bays offered the most favorable locality in all the Hawaiian Islands for the building of fishponds and fish traps into which deep-sea fish came on the inflow of tidal waters” (Handy, Handy, and Pukui 1941: 469). The environment “provided a greater variety and abundance of edible shellfish, and were famous as the summer home of mullet” (Ibid. 470). Kanaka ʻŌiwi constructed approximately thirty-six loko iʻa (fishpond) and pā (fish traps) in the vicinity of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa (Kikuchi 1973). In 1901, Cobb (1901) reported to the U.S. Fisheries Commission that twenty-four loko iʻa were still in production in Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa, yielding approximately 81,935 pound of fish annually (Kikuchi 1973; Cobb 1901).

The lowlands, fed by streams and artesian springs, “were ideal terrain for the cultivation of irrigated taro” (Handy, Handy, and Pukui 1941: 469). And the deep, steep-sided, forested valleys “were excellent for the culture of yams and bananas” and “the ‘awa for which the area was famous” (Ibid.).

In the moʻolelo of Maihea, a version of which was published in the Hawaiian language newspaper Kuokoa in 1892, the unnamed author tells the story of the gods Kāne and Kanaloa visiting a simple farmer-fisherman named Maihea and bringing abundance to the land. Maihea faithfully prayed and gave offerings to his gods, whose names were unknown to him. Kāne and Kanaloa revealed that they were the unknown gods who heard Maihea’s prayers and came from Kahiki to bless his land and waters. In Waiawa, at Haupuʻu, the present site of Leeward Community College, Kāne and Kanaloa chanted the places and resources of Puʻuloa:
O ka Puhī auanei o Hanaloa,
The eel is perhaps there at Hanaloa,
O ka limu o Kuhia waho,
The seaweed is at Kuhia-waho,
O ka anae o Kuhia loko,
The mullet are at Kuhia-loko,
O ka niu kaukahi o Hape,
The lone coconut tree stands at Hape,
O ka luau o Mokaalika,
The taro leaves are at Mokaalika,
O ka wai o Kaaimalu,
The water is at Kaaimalu,
O ka paakai o Ninauele,
The salt is at Ninauele,
O kalo kaikai [kai koi] o Kamili waho,
The ka-i taro is at Kamili-waho,
O ka uala nahupu o Hanapouli,
The sweet potatoes are at Hanapouli,
Pupu aku i ka awa moi o Kalahikiola.
The awa moi is gathered at Kalahikiola.
Inu awa no na akua mai Kahiki mai.
The gods from Kahiki will drink the awa.

(NK 1892; Translation by Maly and Maly 2012: 92-95)

According to the moʻolelo, the gods blessed Maihea and his wife with a child. The couple named their child Naulaamaihea. When Naulaamaihea was fifteen he was taken on the back of a great whale to Kahiki where he learned the practices of the priests.

A heiau (temple) site in Waimalu was dedicated to him: Naulu-a-Maihea (Naulaamaihea) (McAllister 1933: 104-105 Site 112). In the moʻolelo Kāne and Kanaloa visited another faithful man in Puʻuloa (specifically the land division on the western side of the channel), and built for him the Pāakule (Kapākule) fish trap, which was productive until 1909 when the dredging for Pearl Harbor destroyed the structure.

The moʻolelo illustrates a number of points. We get a sense of the resources that Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa provided and the specific place names where they were found. The story also associates abundance of the land and sources of knowledge with translocal relationships across wide scales. The moʻolelo also models a reciprocal environmental ethic of care as the ideal relationship between the makaʻāinana (commoner) who cultivates the land and the elemental deities that make the land fertile. Maihea feeds his gods and shows them respect, and they in turn endow the land with resources. Other examples of moʻolelo that connect distant places, people, histories, legends, and the physical geography of Puʻuloa include the moʻolelo of the Oʻahu king Moʻikeha who is credited with bringing the first ʻawa plant from Kauaʻi to Hālawa on Oʻahu, and the
moʻolelo about two fishermen who after being blown off-course to Kahiki, return with the first ulu (breadfruit) tree, which they plant at Puʻuloa.

These accounts illustrate how the geographic imagination that produced Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa in the pre-contact period was characterized by a translocal, relational, and multi-scalar spatiality. Kanaka ʻŌiwi created a spatial imaginary, which, like that of their cousins across Oceania, was vast and epic in proportion and at the same time, intimately familiar with the microgeographies of local places. As Epeli Hauʻofa writes, for the peoples of Oceania, the:

universe comprised not only land surfaces, but the surrounding ocean as far as they could traverse and exploit it, the underworld with its fire-controlling and earth-shaking denizens, and the heavens above with their hierarchies of powerful gods and named stars and constellations that people could count on to guide their ways across the seas. Their world was anything but tiny. They thought big and recounted their deeds in epic proportions. . . . Smallness is a state of mind.  
(Hauʻofa 1995: 90)

Hawaiian productions of place and space were the densely entangled, interconnected, genealogical, political, and historical relationships between peoples, places, and worlds, some quite distant. For example, the moʻolelo of Keaomelemele begins with the arrival of the ancestral moʻo (lizard, water spirit) deity Moʻoinanea to Hawaiʻi from a distant land. She divides her body into pieces and from the fragments populates the islands with different classes of beings. The story begins with a recitation of the distant places that maintain a relationship with Hawaiʻi:

Mahele mua. I ka manawa kahiko o keia lahui Hawaii nei, he mea mau i ko kakou mau kupuna ka loaa mau ana ia lakou na ouli o ka ike ana aku i na aina mamao ma ka hema a me ke komohana o na pae moku o Hawaii nei ma ka moana Pakipika kahi a lakou i ke aku ai i keia mau aina o Kahikiku, Kahikimoe a me Kahikiikeapapanu a me Kahikiikeapapalani a me Kuaihelani, Nuumealani a me Kealohilani. The beginning. In the ancient times of this Hawaiian race, it was common for our ancestors to receive portents of knowledge about the distant lands to the south and west of the Hawaiian archipelago in the Pacific Ocean, which is where they knew of the lands of Kahikiku, Kahikimoe and Kahikiikeapapanu, Kahikiikeapapalani, and Kuaihelani, Nuumealani and Kealohilani.
Many of the place-identity formation practices of Kanaka ʻŌiwi are simultaneously citational to deep cosmogonical genealogies as well as to complex networks of social, spatial, and temporal relationships. In the next sections, I discuss two of the prominent moʻolelo associated with Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa: Kaʻahupāhau and Kānekuaʻana. These moʻolelo, read as discursive productions with legal, ethical, environmental, social, and economic dimensions, can help us to comprehend the Hawaiian geography that was disrupted, but not totally erased, with the construction of the naval station.

“He manō holo ʻāina ke aliʻi” - The chief is a shark that travels on land (Pukui, 1983: 87).

The archive and oral traditions contain many moʻolelo about manō (sharks) associated with Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa. In ancient times as well as the present, these powerful animals inspired awe and reverence and sometimes fear. In some traditions, certain manō were considered benevolent ʻaumakua (family or personal god or deified ancestor). There would usually be a kahu (care taker or retainer) who fed and cared for this shark relative. The moʻolelo that interests me here is Kaʻahupāhau (the cape well cared for), who was beloved and celebrated as an aliʻi (chief) and kiaʻi (guardian or protector) of the people of ʻEwa.

The moʻolelo of Kaʻahupāhau is one of the most emblematic stories of the ʻEwa district and the geography of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa in particular. By simply making reference to her name, a speaker or writer can evoke an entire archive of historical, cultural, and geographic knowledge. The name Kaʻahupāhau has been translated as “Cloak well care for” (Pukui 1944). It refers to the majestic feathered cloaks worn by Hawaiian royalty, which symbolizes earthly and divine power. The mention of a chief also implies the people and territory for whom they have responsibility. That such a cloak was well cared for suggests that Kaʻahupāhau was an ethical leader who cared for her people and was beloved in return. The epigraph to this chapter comes from an oral history
interview conducted by the Hawaiian historian Mary Kawena Pukui with several kupuna (elders). The passage makes reference to an ʻōlelo noʻeau (proverb or poetical saying) about Kaʻahupāhau. The word “alahula” means well-known or familiar, but as the passage suggests, it contains connotations of a persistent and relentless movement through space, the act of crossing boundaries and limitations, in the pursuit of knowledge. A powerful place symbol as Kaʻahupāhau also has the potential to unsettle and disrupt the respatialization that occurred after the United States annexed Hawai‘i and began to construct the Pearl Harbor naval station. In later chapters I discuss how this moʻolelo did intervene in the discourse surrounding the construction of the naval station and how the Navy and media appropriated the moʻolelo of Kaʻahupāhau to legitimize the Navy’s claim to Puʻuloa. In the following section, in order to place Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa, I provide a brief summary of the moʻolelo of Kaʻahupāhau from various sources.

Accounts differ on the origin of Kaʻahupāhau. The Kanaka ʻŌiwi historian Samuel Kamakau describes Kaʻahupāhau as having been born a god, the sister of powerful shark deities Kānehūnāmoku and Kamohoaliʻi (Kamakau – Pukui, translator 1991b:73). Another version of the moʻolelo documented by Emerson explains that Kaʻahupāhau and her brother Kahiʻukā were born as human children who were later transformed into sharks:

they wandered away one day and mysteriously disappeared. After a fruitless search, their parents were informed that they had been transformed into sharks. As such, they became special objects of worship for the people of the districts of Ewa and Waianae, with whom they maintained pleasant relations, and were henceforth regarded as their friends and benefactors. (Emerson 1892: 10)

Similarly, in the moʻolelo given to Pukui, Kaʻahupāhau and her brother Kahiʻukā were born human and later transformed into manō by a shark god (Pukui 1944: 57). In her autoethnographic account of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa, Pukui (1944) describes her vivid personal encounters with the moʻolelo and wahi pana (storied places) of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa:

At the age of twelve, I was taken to the cave of Kaʻahupahau, Cloak-well-cared-for. Most of the cave was deep under water. A small plant laden with red berries
hung over the entrance, and when I reached to pluck one, my uncle pulled my hand back quickly and chided me. Those belonged to Ka‘ahupāhau. (Pukui 1944: 57)

Her uncle Akoni Kawa‘a took the young Pukui to visit and pay their respects to other sites associated with Ka‘ahupāhau, including Ke‘a‘ali‘i, a sea cave near the entrance of Pu‘uloa channel and known as the home of a large manō Komoawa, who was one of Ka‘ahupāhau’s sentinels, and Kuhia loko and Kuhia waho, two fishponds in Waiawa named for one of Ka‘ahupāhau’s attendants (Maly and Maly 2012: 87-88). An underwater cave between Keanapua‘a point and Moku‘ume‘ume (Ford Island) was said to be the home of either Ka‘ahupāhau herself, or her son Kūpīpi. Pukui and her uncle were re-enacting and thus mapping the trail of Ka‘ahupāhau by visiting sites and becoming familiar with the places and stories.

One consistent and compelling theme throughout the various versions of the mo‘olelo of Ka‘ahupāhau is the kapu (prohibition) that “no shark must bite or attempt to eat a person in Oahu waters” (Kamakau – Pukui, translator 1991b:73). In Kamakau’s account, sharks from other islands were afraid of Oahu because there was a kānāwai (law) that prohibited the killing of humans: “Oahu was made a kapu land by this kanawai placed by [the shark gods] Kanehunamoku and Kamohoali‘i” (Ibid. Emphasis in the original).

But their sister Ka‘ahupahau broke the law and devoured the chiefess Papio. She was taken and “tried” (ho‘okolokolo) at Uluka‘a [the realm of these gods], but she escaped the punishment of death. It was her woman kahu who paid the penalty of the law because it was her fault—she reviled Papio. The trouble arose over a papahi lei of ‘ilima flowers which belonged to Ka‘ahupahau that her kahu was wearing. [The kahu refused to give it to Papio, and] Papio said, “I am going bathing, but when I come back you shall be burned with fire.” But Ka‘ahupahau devoured Papio before she could carry out her threat, and she was punished for this. That is how Pu‘uloa became a [safe] thoroughfare (alahula). . . This law—that no shark must bite or attempt to eat a person in Oahu waters—is well known from Pu‘uloa to the Ewas. (Kamakau – Pukui, translator 1991b:73)

Ka‘ahupāhau was imprisoned, and after her release she was attacked by other sharks and nearly killed. “But she received help from Kupiapia and Laukah’i‘u, sons of
Kuhaimoana, and when their enemies were all slain, the kānāwai was firmly established” (Ibid.). Here, Kaʻahupāhau broke the law by killing Papio and was disciplined by the other gods. However, they spared her life, reserving the most severe punishment for her human attendant whose anger at Papio had instigated the killing.

Pukui gives a different explanation of the origin of the prohibition on killing:
“Kaʻahupāhau made a law that no man should be harmed in her domain, nor should any shark touch the corpse of one who drowned. This law was the result of remorse over the death of Papio” (Pukui, 1944:57). She continues:

Papio was a pretty girl who used to go surfing at Keahi, a place between Puʻuloa and Kalaeloa, now Barber’s Point. One day she met Koihala, an aged relative of Kaʻahupahau, who was busy stringing kou, maʻo, and ilima blossoms into leis for her beloved shark “grandchildren,” Kaʻahupahau and Kahiʻuka. Papio begged for a lei, which was, according to the standards of that time, a very rude thing to do. Each time she begged, Koihala refused to give her a lei. Papio then went to her surfing and on her return snatched one of the leis from Koihala and went away with a laugh. (Ibid.)

Koihala became angry at Papio and told Kaʻahupāhau all about it. Kaʻahupāhau ordered Papio killed. As she reclined on a rock, “Papio was seized, drawn under water and killed. Then her blood was spewed on the shore not far away, staining the soil there red to this day” (Ibid.).

Later, Kaʻahupāhau felt remorse for killing Papio. She issued a decree that all sharks in her domain shall not destroy, but instead, should protect people. “As flowers were the cause of the trouble she forbade their being carried or worn on the waters of Puʻuloa” (Ibid.: 57-58).

In Pukui’s account, Kaʻahupāhau herself issues the prohibition on the killing of humans as an act of repentance and remorse. Pukui’s account conveys moral lessons about respect, covetousness, the consequences of unrestrained anger and violence, the restoration of pono (justice, balance, goodness), and the sanctity of life. It establishes a self-imposed limit on the power of a chief. The moral is reinforced by evoking vivid
geographic imagery of ‘Ewa’s red soil and by such place names as One‘ula (red or sacred sand).

The different accounts of Kaʻahupāhau also suggest the multiplicity of perspectives and politics within this moʻolelo. In Kamakau’s version, Kaʻahupāhau breaks an ancient law, after which she is disciplined by a governing council. The law is preexisting and imposed by an external authority. Pukui’s account was taught to her by her uncle Akoni Kawa‘a, a native of ‘Aiea in ‘Ewa, O‘ahu. Her version centers on Kaʻahupāhau’s internal moral transformation. These differing accounts may speak to evolving conceptions of justice and morality or contestations of power between different classes, genders, genealogies and geographies. It is also possible that these moʻolelo reflect influences of Christianity. Importantly, the ethical core of the moʻolelo of Kaʻahupāhau is the kapu on killing and the ethic of care.

A test of the law comes when Mikololou, a man-eater, led a large contingent of manō from Hawai‘i, Maui, and Moloka‘i to Ke Awalau o Pu‘uoloa. There are numerous versions of this epic battle between the forces of Kaʻahupāhau and Mikololou, but I will only provide a brief summary here. Depending on the source of the text, Mikololou is from either Kaʻū on Hawai‘i island (Pukui 1944: 58; Pukui and Green 1996) or Maui (Emerson 1892: 11). At first Kaʻahupāhau and her family received the visiting manō with hospitality. But Mikololou’s admiration for the “fat crabs” of ‘Ewa, an expression used only by man-eating sharks to refer to their human prey, alerted Kaʻahupāhau to the evil intentions of the foreigners. The O‘ahu sharks set a trap. In Emerson’s account (1892: 11), Mikololou’s group had already killed several people when Kaʻahupāhau lured them to partake in a feast. After the visiting sharks had feasted and became intoxicated on ‘awa (a drink made from the *Piper methysticum* plant), the manō of Pu‘uoloa sprung their trap. They blocked the channel with nets and ambushed the man-eating sharks. After a ferocious battle, Mikololou was killed. He was decapitated and his body dragged ashore and burned. As his physical form withered away, only his tongue remained. Later, unsuspecting children came along with their dog and dropped Mikololou’s tongue in the water. Mikololou regenerated his body and escaped back to Hawaiʻi Island. This is the
origin of the ‘olelo no‘eau (proverb): “Make o Mikololou a ola i ke alelo,” “Mikololou died and came to life again through his tongue” (Pukui 1944:58; Emerson 1892:11). The expression has come to refer to someone who is able to talk themselves out a precarious situation. Perhaps another way we might think about the symbolism of the ‘ōlelo no‘eau is that Mikololou lived again through language, through the mo‘olelo. It underscores the power of mo‘olelo, of discourse, to revitalize historic events, people and places.

According to Emerson’s (1892:11) account, Mikololou plotted revenge against the O‘ahu sharks, and a great shark-war ensued. Kaʻahupāhau’s forces were victorious once more, earning her the love and respect of the people of ‘Ewa.

The mo‘olelo of Kaʻahupāhau seems to reiterate the attributes the ideal type of benevolent mōʻī (rulers) associated with the history of Oʻahu and provides a set of ethical guidelines for the proper conduct of chiefs and commoners alike. According to various accounts, Oʻahu was once ruled by mythical and ancient line of benevolent rulers known as the Lō chiefs, who outlawed human sacrifice and derived their divine authority from the sacred chiefly birthsite at Kūkaniloko, in the piko (navel or center) of Oʻahu.

Stories of the Lō became a guide for the proper ethical conduct of subsequent rulers. Māʻilikūkahi, the mōʻī of Oʻahu circa 1520 - 1540 A.D. from the Nanaulu lineage, emulated this model of rule and banned human sacrifice. He enforced a policy of generosity with the other chiefs and instituted land tenure systems and practices to increase efficiency and productivity, which helped to establish an era of peace and abundance. Māʻilikūkahi’s reign was remembered as a “golden age” that subsequent rulers aspired to emulate. Kamakau writes:

In the time of Māʻilikūkahi, the land was full of people. From the brow, lae, of Kulihemo to the brow of Maunauna in ‘Ewa, from the brow of Maunauna to the brow of Puʻukua [Puʻu Kuʻua] the land was full of chiefs and people. From Kānewai to Halemano in Waiʻalua, from Halemano to Paupali, from Paupali to Hālawa in ‘Ewa the land was filled with chiefs and people. The chiefs kept themselves apart, ‘oko‘a, and the commoners kept to the makai side of the land...The chiefs and commoners loved him for his great aloha for their children. They brought him goods, waiwai, and vegetable food, ‘ai, and pigs, dogs, fowl, and fish. These were brought as gifts, hoʻokupu, not as tribute levied by the chief,
ʻauhau. They gave these with joyous “hearts,” naʻau—no one hesitated; each “heart” was filled with pleasure. (Kamakau 1991b: 55).

Māʻilikūkahi came to embody the ideal type of ruler who attained power through the path of Lono (god of agriculture, fertility, and peace). This was particularly appealing in light of later rulers who attained power through violent conquest following path of Kū (god of war, building, and politics) (Kameʻeleihiwa 1992: 46-47; Klieger 1995). And when Oʻahu was threatened by invaders from other islands, Māʻilikūkahi led a force to defeat the invaders. Place names in central Oʻahu mark the sites where the invading chiefs fell in battle (Klieger 1995: 56).

The moʻolelo of Kaʻahupāhau resonates with the historical development of early state formations on the different Hawaiian Islands, which was characterized by agricultural intensification, population growth, in increase in political complexity and hierarchy, and intra- and inter-island warfare. One of the significant feats attributed to Māʻilikūkahi was the surveying and marking land divisions on Oʻahu. This helped to better govern, improve efficiencies of production and reproduction, and minimize disputes over land. The names and boundaries of land divisions and the systems of land tenure and production that were established during the time of Māʻilikūkahi are the basis for modern land divisions on Oʻahu (Kamakau 1991b:54-55).

The moʻolelo of Kaʻahupāhau also articulated a discourse of security and protection and the trope of threat from the sea. In her battle with Mikololou, Kaʻahupāhau’s vigilance enables her to detect and defeat the man-eating intruders. However, slippage between the meanings of this moʻolelo and the discourse of security allowed the Navy much later to annex Kaʻahupāhau and to represent itself as her successor in the role of benevolent chief and vigilant guardian. I return to discuss this in the conclusion.

The title of this chapter derives from the ʻōlelo noʻeau (Hawaiian proverb) “Alahula Puʻuloa he alahele na Kaʻahupāhau,” which can be translated as “Everywhere in Puʻuloa is the trail of Kaʻahupāhau” or “Well trodden in Puʻuloa is the trail of Kaʻahupāhau.” According to Pukui (2003), the expression refers to:
a person who goes everywhere, looking, peering, seeing all, or of a person familiar with every nook and corner of a place. Ka‘ahupāhau is the shark goddess of Pu‘ula (Pearl Harbor) who guarded the people from being molested by sharks. She moved about, constantly watching. (14)

The ‘ōlelo no‘eau conveys a sense of Ka‘ahupāhau’s restless pursuit of knowledge of place, her vigilance in protection of the people, and her willingness to go through, to delve into the depths or to transgress boundaries in order to know and govern her domain. In this sense, Ka‘ahupāhau may be read as an embodied epistemology, whereby the geography of Pu‘ula is enacted through this recursive movement through space and place.

Kānekua‘ana and Environmental Ethics of Care

I now turn to another important mo‘olelo associated with Pu‘ula: the mo‘olelo of Kānekua‘ana. According to Samuel Kamakau, “Kanekua‘ana was the kia‘i [guardian] of ‘Ewa, and the kama‘aina [natives] from Halawa to Honouliuli relied upon her. Not all of the people of ‘Ewa were her descendants, but the blessings that came to her descendants were shared by all.” (Kamakau - translation by Mary K. Pukui 1991b: 83). Certain traditions described Kānekua‘ana as having once been a living human whose body was transformed into a mo‘o through ceremony (Beckwith 1976: 126).

In Hawaiian mo‘olelo, mo‘o are ancient and powerful deities of the earth, usually female, and associated with sources of water. Many mo‘o are guardians of fishponds. The mo‘o family is related to Kāne (god of fresh water) and Kanaloa (god of the sea) and is said to have migrated to Hawai‘i from Kānehūnāmoku (Kāne’s hidden island), a place which is simultaneously a floating cloud and a personified descendant of Kāne and Kanaloa (Beckwith 1976: 71). Beckwith describes Mo‘oinanea, the first mo‘o deity, as the child of Kānehūnāmoku and Ka‘onohi‘ula (the red eye). In the mo‘olelo of Keaomelemele (Manu 2002: 99), Mo‘oinanea divided herself into five divisions that eventually became different classes of gods and people. Her descendants include Kū and Hina, deities representing male and female principalities. Mo‘oinanea traveled to live in
Hawai‘i and started the genealogy of mo‘o in Hawai‘i, from which Kānekua‘ana descended.

Kamakau gave a rich description of the abundance attributed to Kānekua‘ana. When there was trouble or food became scarce, says Kamakau, the descendants of Kānekua‘ana “erected waihau heiaus [temple for offerings to mo‘o spirits] for Kanekua‘ana, and lighted the fires [for cooking of offerings] to bring blessings upon the whole people” (Kamakau - translation by Mary K. Pukui 1991b: 83):

What blessings did they obtain? I‘a (fish, sea food). What kinds of i‘a? The pipi (pearl oyster) —strung along from Namakaohalawa to the cliffs of Hōnouliuli, from the kuapa fishponds of inland ‘Ewa clear out to Kapakule. That was the oyster that came in from the deep water to the mussel beds near shore, from the channel entrance of Pu‘uloa to the rocks along the edges of the fishponds. They grew right on the nahawele mussels, and thus this i‘a was obtained. Not six months after the hau branches [that placed a kapu on these waters until the pipi should come in] were set up, the pipi were found in abundance—enough for all of ‘Ewa—and fat with flesh. Within the oyster was a jewel (daimana) called a pearl (momi), beautiful as the eyeball of a fish, white and shining; white as the cuttlefish, and shining with the colors of the rainbow—reds and yellows and blues, and some pinkish white, ranging in size from small to large. They were of great bargaining value (he waiwai kumuku‘ai nui) in the ancient days, but were just “rubbish” (‘opala) in ‘Ewa. Kamakau - translation by Mary K. Pukui 1991b: 83)

Kamakau went on to list the numerous i‘a associated with Kānekua‘ana: transparent shrimp, ‘opae huna, and the spiked shrimp, ‘opae kakala; Nehu pala and nehu maoli (anchovies); mahamoe and ‘okupe (types of molluscs). The abundance of these resources is suggested by the ‘Ōlelo No‘eau: “He kai puhi nehu, puhi lala ke kai o ‘Ewa e, e noho i ka la‘i o ‘Ewa nui a La‘akona” — “A sea that blows up nehu, blows them up in rows, is ‘Ewa, until they rest in the calm of great ‘Ewa-a-La‘akona”) (Ibid.)

Kānekua‘ana was associated with principles and practices of environmental stewardship and reciprocity, as enacted through waihau ceremonies. According to Pukui the pipi, also known as i‘a hāmau leo or “fish-with-a-silenced-voice” was so named because anyone gathering them could not make a sound, lest their breathing rippled the water and cause the pipi to “disappear”. Although western observers attributed the loss
of the pipi to accelerated sedimentation caused by upland deforestation and erosion, Pukui preferred to understand it as “the wrath of Kanekua‘ana that made her take them back to Kahiki” (Pukui 1944: 59). In other words, the loss of the resources was due to the broken covenant of reciprocity and care that had previously maintained the environmental balance.

In Pukui’s account (Pukui 1944: 59-60), an old woman who was a relative of Kānekua‘ana, gathered pipi out of season and hid them under limu (seaweed) in her basket. The konohiki (land manager) found the prohibited oysters and forced the woman to put them back in the sea. But the konohiki did not stop there; he followed the woman home and demanded a fine. She was forced to give the konohiki all the money she had.

Kānekua‘ana was angered by the harsh treatment of the old woman. That night she took spirit possession of a neighbor woman and spoke through this spirit medium to say that she was taking the pipi away to Kahiki as a punishment for the unjust conduct of the konohiki.

This moʻolelo speaks about justice, greed, pono (moral, just, fair, correct) conduct, and ethical environmental and resource management practices. It is also about reciprocity in the relationship between the old woman and Kānekua‘ana, her ‘aumakua (ancestral deity). But it would be a mistake to simply read this as folk tale; in the historical context of its publication, we must also read it as political commentary.

In her research of the wahi pana (storied places) of the ‘Ewa district in Hawaiian language newspapers, Leilani Basham (2012) found references to the disappearance of the pipi in a serialized account of the female heroine Keaomelemele:
From the time when this fish was frequently seen in ʻEwa until recently, perhaps in the years 1850 - 53, which is the period of time when this people (Hawaiians) were decimated by smallpox, this fish began to disappear…At the time that these oysters disappeared, a white jagged, serrated object grew in all of the places on the ocean side of ʻEwa, and the people of ʻEwa named this object a “pahikaua,” which is a sharp, pointed thing.

(Original Hawaiian text by Manu 1885; translated by Basham 2012)

In Mary Kawena Pukui’s translation of the same moʻolelo, the pahikaua is a “white toothed thing,” a sword from Kuaihelani, another mythical far-away land (Manu 2002: 161). Manu used poetic Hawaiian language and combined mythical elements with political critique and journalistic descriptions of historical events. In the quoted passage, the disappearance of the pipi coincides with the smallpox epidemic and with the period of population decline and environmental degradation caused by foreign-introduced feral cattle and the degradation of upland forests.

The article was published in 1885, a year when there was an intense controversy over the renewal of the Treaty of Reciprocity with the U.S. It was in this context of political opposition to granting the U.S. access to Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa that Manu published his series on Keaomelemele. “Pahikaua” literally means “war blade” and is also the name of a type of shellfish (Pukui and Elbert 1986: 300). Basham interprets this to be a poetic reference to the invasion of foreign war ships.

In recent years, the invasion of pahikaua might include the literal the encroachment of invasive species into Pearl Harbor through the movement of ships. In the last ten-year biological survey of Pearl Harbor conducted in 2009, 298 genera or species were collected from 14 sample stations, of which “Ninety-six genera or species, or 32%, of the total taxa found in Pearl Harbor, are previously designated or newly reported as
introduced or cryptogenic (i.e. of uncertain geographic origin)” (Coles et al. 2009: iii).
Some invasive species have transformed the marine environment into alien marine-escapes.

Like the moʻolelo of Kaʻahupāhau, the moʻolelo of Kānekuaʻana emphasizes moral and ethical principles of importance in Hawaiian culture, including practices of aloha ʻāina (love for the land) and mālama ʻāina (care for the land). In this chapter I have attempted to describe the emplacement of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa and the people of this land through moʻolelo and material practices. This production of place and space was a deeply political and poetical process, tied to understanding environmental processes and managing the access to and use of food and other resources. These practices correspond to what some geographers, writing about different historical and geographic settings, have called a “place-based ethics of care” (Till 2012: 8).

In the next two chapters, I discuss the production of a different imperial geographic imaginary and the epistemic violence it entailed. In the first phase, Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa was made into an object of desire and exchange. In the second phase, the space and place was transformed materially and discursively into a U.S. military space. Discourses of security, improvement, and scientific rationality and the rise of a military-industrial political economy materialized in the new Pearl Harbor naval station. I now turn to discuss how Hawaiʻi was first framed by an imaginative geography that made the islands different yet desirable, and came to naturalize the U.S. claim to the islands.
CHAPTER TWO

Producing a Geography of Desire

The main battle in imperialism is over land, of course; but when it came to who owned the land, who had the right to settle and work on it, who kept it going, who won it back, and who now plans its future—these issues were reflected, contested, and even for a time decided in narrative. The power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism, and constitutes one of the main connections between them.

Edward Said (1994: xii-xiii)

It is the key to the Central Pacific Ocean, it is the gem of these islands, valueless to them because they cannot use it, but more valuable to the United States than all else the islands have to give.

General John Schofield (Quoted in Linn 1997: 6)

One of the first operations in the transformation of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa into Pearl Harbor and in the process of U.S. imperial formation was marking this particular site as an object of western knowledge and desire. This entailed the discursive production of an imaginative geography of Hawaiʻi as a geopolitical prize that already and quite naturally belonged to the United States.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Kanaka ʻŌiwi had an extensive and intricate knowledge of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa. Knowledge was encoded into the topography itself and animated through the moʻolelo and reiterative cultural practices. These moʻolelo were at once historical reportage, legal-political texts, and aesthetic productions. The earliest writings by westerners about Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa conveyed a sense of marvel at the productivity of the landscape. They also superimposed military and commercial utilitarian logics that saw the “un-built” environment as “unused” or “wasteland” and calculated opportunities and costs for transforming the space. This is not to say that the traditional Hawaiian geography did not transform their environment or include economic
or military-strategic codings. They did. But the quality of spatial abstraction and geopolitical rescaling were new epistemic features introduced during the nineteenth century exploration discourses.

The earliest published descriptions of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa go back to western explorers, whalers, and traders in Hawaiʻi whose writings offer brief, but tantalizing glimpses of Puʻuloa. The journal of British trader Captain Nathaniel Portlock mentions seeing the branching channels of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa when he stopped on Oʻahu in 1786. Between 1792 and 1794, British Captain George Vancouver made three voyages to Hawaiʻi, where he initiated, but gave up on a survey of “Oporoah” (Puʻuloa). In 1794, Captain John Kendrick in command of the “Lady Washington,” used his gun ships to aid Chief Kalanikūpule to defeat Kauaʻi chief Kaʻeokulani at the pivotal battle of Kūkiʻiʻahu in Kalauao, ‘Ewa. Of his thirteen month visit to the Hawaiian Islands in 1809, British Captain Archibald Campbell provided a more vivid description of Puʻuloa:

Wymumme, or Pearl-river, lies about seven miles further to the westward; this inlet extends ten or twelve miles up the country. The entrance is not more than a quarter of a mile wide, and is only navigable for small craft; the depth of water on the bar, at the highest tides, not exceeding seven feet: farther up it is nearly two miles across. There is an isle in it [Mokuʻumeʻume/Ford Island], belonging to Manina [Marin], the king’s interpreter, in which he keeps numerous flock of sheep and goats. Pearls and mother-of-pearl shells are found here in considerable quantity. Since the king has learned their value, he has kept the fishing to himself, and employs divers for the purpose. (Campbell 1817: 110-111)

In 1825, Lieutenant C. R. Malden produced one of the earliest western maps of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa while aboard Lord Byron’s vessel the Blonde. Lord Byron had sailed to Hawaiʻi to return the bodies of King Kamehameha II and his Queen Liliha who had died in England of the measles. The expedition was also documented by Scotish botanist James Macrae (1922). These expeditions and the accounts written about them began to produce a hazy picture of Hawaiʻi in the imaginations of people around the world.

A milestone in the production of “Pearl Harbor” as an object of geopolitical desire occurred in 1841, when the United States Exploring Expedition led by Commodore
Wilkes conducted an extensive survey the Hawaiian Islands. The Expedition, which lasted from 1838 to 1842, was a major scientific undertaking that spanned several continents and oceans and numerous islands in the Pacific. Wilkes dedicated a lengthy passage to the description of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa, of which I excerpt portions:

In this district is a large inlet of the sea, into which the river Ewa empties; at the entrance of this inlet is the village of Laeloa: the whole is known by the name of Pearl River or harbour, from the circumstance that the pearl oyster is found here; and it is the only place in these islands where it occurs.... Pearl-River Harbour affords an abundant supply of fine fish. Two species of clams are procured here, called by the natives okupe and olepe. (Wilkes 1844: 85)

He described “a large bed of fossil oyster-shells, extending into the bank in a bed from one to four feet wide, and half a mile in length” (Ibid.) which hinted at the biological productivity of the estuary. A sense of Wilkes’ marvel comes through the otherwise dry and distancing prose as he described how shells were “cemented together with soft limestone and a reddish sand, and were so numerous that there was scarcely enough of the cement between to hold them together” (Ibid.).

In contrast to most of the place names recorded by early western visitors of the Hawaiian Islands which tended to be clumsy transliterations of the Hawaiian names, such as “Owyhee” for “Hawaiʻi”, Wilkes chose instead to use only the English “Pearl-River Harbour.” This immediately draws attention to the image of a “pearl”, which suggests something precious, of beauty and perfection, an object of desire.

The observation that was of greatest interest to military and political leaders was Wilkes’ description of the hydrography of Puʻuloa. This text would be cited repeatedly to advance the process of “rendering technical” (Li 2007: 7) the geography of Puʻuloa:

The depth of the water at its mouth was found to be only fifteen feet; but after passing this coral bar, which is four hundred feet wide, the depth of water becomes ample for large ships, and the basin is sufficiently extensive to accommodate any number of vessels. If the water upon the bar should be deepened, which I doubt not can be effected, it would afford the best and most capacious harbour in the Pacific. (Ibid.)
Two years after Wilkes’ report was published, in 1846, the American warship USS Constitution visited the islands. On board, Lieutenant I.W. Curtis saw the strategic value of the lagoon and communicated his observations to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hawaiian Kingdom, Gerritt P. Judd in a secret report. Curtis wrote:

Allow me to call your attention to the vast importance of the harbor at Pearl River, the perfect security of the harbor, the excellence of its water, the perfect ease with which it can be made one of the finest places in the Islands, all combine to make it a great consideration, while immense profits might arise from it. While the harbor was clearing out fortifications could be built, troops could be drilled, the forts might be garrisoned, government or private storehouses built and all the trade drawn there with perfect ease. The amount of money necessary to be expended will be but a feather in comparison with the almost incalculable amount of wealth that will open upon the completion of these objects. Of what importance would the consideration of an expenditure of one or two hundred thousand dollars be in comparison with the immense results? None at all. (Taylor 1912: 69)

While these recommendations were given to the Hawaiian government, the significance of his findings and conclusions were not lost on U.S. planners. Curtis articulated a conception of the harbor as having a dual military and commercial use. This intertwining of military presence and activity with economic profitability is a theme that continues to the present. The descriptions of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa as a ‘harbor’ and ‘fortified port’ by Wilkes and Curtis were aspirational. Through language the imaginative geography of Puʻuloa was framed in functional and utilitarian terms, and as an object of desire.

As Hawaiʻi was increasingly drawn into global political and economic circuits, Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa became a flash point of political conflict. With the end of the U.S. Civil War, Hawaiʻi’s sugar exports to the U.S. suffered. The completion of the U.S. transcontinental railway in 1869 created economic flows to the west coast and stretched the imperial imagination. A number of U.S. officials began to articulate a geopolitical discourse in which Pearl Harbor and Hawaiʻi was seen as naturally and inevitably belonging to the United States. Edward M. McCook, U.S. minister to the Hawaiian Kingdom from 1866 to 1868, believed that a reciprocity treaty would be the first step towards the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands through “quiet absorption” (McCook to Seward, No. 24, May 29, 1867, quoted in Tate 1968: 54). Colonel Zephaniah Spalding, a
secret service agent sent to Hawai‘i during this time to study the reciprocity issue, believed that the inducements offered by the treaty would hasten the “pear” to ripen, and considered it only a matter of time before Hawai‘i would belong to the United States (Tate 1968: 57). Of the Americans who opposed reciprocity, most took the position that such a treaty would delay annexation. Meanwhile, Americans who supported reciprocity believed it would expedite annexation. These two sides were in full agreement, however, that the U.S. would and should own Hawai‘i.

In 1873, Major General John M. Schofield and Lieutenant Colonel Burton S. Alexander sailing aboard the USS California led a secret military geographic survey of the Hawaiian Islands under the guise of a diplomatic entourage. The stated “official” purpose of the cruise was to bring King Kamehameha V to the United States. However the King died before the USS California reached Hawai‘i, and the delegation met instead with the newly elected King Lunalilo. The secret nature of Schofield’s mission suggests that the U.S. government was fully aware that such a survey would signal its territorial ambitions and possibly trigger Hawaiian resistance, which it did.

In his confidential report to Secretary of War Belknap, Schofield wrote, “With one exception there is no harbor on the Islands that can be made to satisfy all the conditions necessary for a harbor of refuge in time of war. This is the harbor of ‘Ewa’ or ‘Pearl River’” (Schofield, 1873: 562). It is “a fine sheet of deep water extending inland about six miles from its mouth...The depth of water after passing the bar is ample for any vessel” (Ibid.). Schofield described the coral at the channel entrance as “dead”, “not growing” (663). He requested that the ship’s captain, Admiral Pennock conduct “a detailed survey of the entrance to this harbor in his examinations and surveys of the harbors of these Islands” (Schofield, 1873: 563). Such a survey would allow “a detailed estimate of the cost of removing the coral barrier (to) be made” (Ibid.). Schofield concluded that Pearl Harbor’s value to the U.S. and world commerce was:

   too manifest to require discussion. It is the key to the Central Pacific Ocean, it is the gem of these islands, valueless to them because they cannot use it, but more
valuable to the United States than all else the islands have to give" (Schofield to Sherman, 15 Feb. 1873, quoted in Linn 1997: 6; Emphasis added).

The objectification of Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa as a geopolitical “gem”, measured and abstracted into degrees and minutes, nautical miles, fathoms, cubic yards, and dollars, illustrates the discursive reduction of Hawai‘i to an object whose only value derived from its perceived geopolitical utility to the United States. The portrayal of Pu‘uloa as a ‘valueless’ wasteland reflected the constitutive othering of foreign peoples and places that was integral to America’s imperial formation process. A valueless landscape could more easily be defaced, transformed, and converted to another use, another kind of place. That Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa was “valueless to them” implies that the Kanaka Ōiwi people themselves were not capable of doing anything of value with that space and that their existing spatial knowledges and practices were of no value.

Whereas earlier western explorers, whalers, missionaries, and merchants typically remarked on the ecological and economic productivity of the Pu‘uloa landscape, the late-nineteenth-century forces of geopolitics and capitalism rendered these geographies illegible, and thereby susceptible to imperial penetration and exploitation. It is cognitively and legally easier to displace and dispossess a “valueless” people with “valueless” spatial practices in the service of advancing a “higher” mission. This is an example of the transit of the spectral “Indian”, whose “savagery” in the colonial imagination disqualified them from having the right to govern or possess territory and justified the legal and physical dispossession of their land (Byrd 2011). It reveals the epistemic violence wrought by hegemonic discourses of security and progress which eliminated Native Hawaiian knowledges, and economic, cultural, and political practices.

Schofield recommended that “jurisdiction over all the waters of Pearl River with the adjacent shores to the distance of four miles from any anchorage should be ceded to the United States by the Hawaiian Government” (Schofield 187: 564), forming a parallelogram of ten by twelve miles, which he believed would be “freely given . . . as a quid pro quo for a reciprocity treaty” (Schofield 1873: 564). He thought that such “action ought to be taken at once to secure to the United States the exclusive right to the use of
Pearl River harbor for naval purposes, and to prepare the way to make annexation to the United States sure in due time” (Schofield 2007: 321).

During Schofield’s mission in the islands, a debate erupted over a proposed Treaty of Reciprocity in Hawai‘i. Since 1848, the Hawaiian government had tried numerous times unsuccessfully to negotiate a commercial treaty with the U.S. to repeal tariffs on Hawaiian exports, especially sugar (HG 3/7/1877). In 1873, Henry M. Whitney, a son of missionaries and the publisher of a pro-American Hawaiian Gazette newspaper, first proposed to King Lunalilo the cession of Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa to make reciprocity more attractive to the United States (HG 2/26/1873). Others with close ties to big sugar joined in the chorus to “offer” the “Pearl River” to the U.S. with its “natural harbor, land-locked, easily accessible in all weathers, deep enough and spacious enough to accommodate whole fleets, with ample back country to furnish supplies, with abundance of fresh water, laid on by nature” (PCA 2/8/1873). All of this was timed to coincide with Schofield’s arrival on January 15, 1873.

These proponents of reciprocity and the cession of Pearl Harbor were engaging in what Anna Tsing calls conjuring, a kind summoning or dramatic performance in speculative enterprises where the “profit must be imagined before it can be extracted” (Tsing 2005: 57). The business leaders in Hawai‘i were generating desire for a fetishized geopolitical commodity, aimed at attracting U.S. military and political “buyers”. The collusion of capital and military interests converted Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa into an object for exchange. As Tate notes, within the white settler discourse in Hawai‘i, the choices were framed narrowly as either reciprocity with the cession of Pearl Harbor or annexation (Tate: 88).

However, contrary to Schofield’s prediction that Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa would be “freely given” to the United States, reciprocity encountered the friction of native resistance. The very suggestion of ceding Pearl Harbor aroused vociferous opposition from Hawaiian nationals. A letter to the editor of the Pacific Commercial Advertiser from “A Native” called the proposed reciprocity treaty “a proposition which strikes at the life
of a nation...a blow aimed at national existence—at national independence” (PCA 2/22/1873). The writer urged Hawaiian nationals to take “most vigorous action . . . to meet the evil” (Ibid.). At a mass meeting at Kaumakapili Church, a primarily Native Hawaiian congregation, speaker G. Rhodes cited examples from history to illustrate “the inevitable consequence of a cession of territory, however small, to a foreign power” (PCA 7/5/1873) would result in a loss of sovereignty. The congregation passed a resolution opposing “the cession of Pearl Harbor in a Treaty of Reciprocity” on the following grounds:

1. That it is the first step towards annexation.
2. The Treaty will operate for the benefit of only a few persons.
3. The Income of the Government derived from imports will be reduced.
4. The taxes on the people will be increased.
5. The experience of other countries has shown the evil of treaties of cession. (PCA 7/5/1873)

Walter Murray Gibson, an American who later became a government minister under King Kalākaua, founded the newspaper Ka Nuhou Hawaii in 1873 to be a platform from which to rally against the Reciprocity Treaty. In a poetic/political editorial written in the exaggerated style of a Hawaiian chant the paper nonetheless exposed the political economic motives behind reciprocity:

He elele papa wau ia oukou,  I am a messenger to you all
Aole e haawi ia Puuloa,  Do not give away Puʻuloa
Aole puni wale i na kalepa,  Do not be deceived by the merchants
He malimali wale no ka lakou,  They are only enticing you
He hoomaemae maka ua ino loko  Clean eyes/face with evil within
He ake hoohui Aupuni no,  They desire to annex the Kingdom
He ake nui no ko lakou pono.  A great desire for their own good
Aohoe manao aloha ia oukou,  Without thoughts of aloha for you all
He poe mahaioi wale ao lakou,  They are impudent people
He hookano, he uiuilani,  They are arrogant and restless with desire
He pipiikoi, he pailani,  They are demanding and spoiled
He ake e pau oukou i ka make.  They want you all to die
I lilo no lakou ke Aupuni.  That the Kingdom may become theirs.
Although a few key individuals within the Hawaiian government with ties to the planter and foreign business interests were strong proponents of ceding Puʻuʻula, the majority of the Hawaiian public and prominent Hawaiian royalty strongly opposed it. Queen Emma, widow of Kamehameha IV, reported that Princess Bernice Puahi Bishop opposed her husband Charles Reed Bishop, who, as the foreign minister to King Lunalilo in 1873, supported the cession of Puʻuʻula. (Kamehameha Schools 1998: 6). Because of the vociferous political opposition, Lunalilo dropped the cession of Puʻuʻula from the treaty. When treaty negotiations resumed in 1874 under King Kalākaua, rumors circulated in Honolulu that the Hawaiian Kingdom might swing toward the British if reciprocity with the U.S. was not achieved. This may have been a tactic to pressure the U.S. into a reciprocity arrangement. The treaty of reciprocity was concluded in January 1875, but without the clause ceding Pearl Harbor. Instead it contained a clause specifying that the Hawaiian government would not lease to another state any port, harbor, or territory nor grant another state any special privileges or rights.

Reciprocity did produce an economic boom for the sugar industry in Hawaiʻi, increasing the planters’ economic and political leverage, and integrating Hawaiʻi’s economy more completely with that of the U.S. west coast (Tate: 118-119). The value of Hawaiʻi’s net sugar output more than doubled between 1870 and 1880 and tripled between 1880 and 1890 (La Croix and Grandy 1997). Sugar exports to the U.S. grew from 21 million pounds in 1876, to 114 million pounds in 1883, to 224.5 million pounds in 1890 (Ibid.). The amount of land in sugar production also grew from 8,500 acres in 1870, to 26,019 acres in 1880, and to 87,016 acres in 1890 (Ibid.). Immigration of contract laborers from China and Japan grew steadily following the reciprocity treaty. This resulted in a dramatic shift in demographics. Whereas the Native Hawaiian population in 1872 was 52,380, comprising 92% of the population, by 1900 their population was 58,931, but made up only 38% of the population. Meanwhile, the
Chinese population grew from 1938 (3.4%) in 1872 to 21,741 (14%) in 1900. And the Japanese increased from 116 (0.1%) in 1884 to 56,234 (36.5%) in 1900. (Ibid.)

The rapid growth of sugar had a cumulative effect on attracting other capital and driving the development of other industries, particularly shipping, communications, and ground transportation, including the construction of a railroad system in the islands. The resulting economic integration has been characterized in ways that make the U.S. annexation of Hawai‘i seem like a foregone conclusion. For example, Tate writes, “powerful economic ties cemented earlier cultural and political relations, and the diminutive island Kingdom became inextricably bound to the great mainland Republic” (Tate: 130). The production of an imagined geopolitical and geoeconomic intimacy helped to prepare the ideological ground for future moves to annex the islands. At the same time, the perceived danger and alienness of Hawai‘i’s demographics stoked racial fear among the white elites.

**Seizing the Pearl**

During the seven year term of the Treaty of Reciprocity, there was growing opposition to the treaty from different sectors within the U.S., particularly from rival sugar producing regions. The spectacular profits of Hawai‘i’s sugar planters was taken as proof that the treaty created an unfavorable balance of trade for the United States. As the treaty came up for renewal in 1884, the idea of acquiring Ke Awalau o Pu‘u‘ula once again began to circulate in Washington, D.C. (Tate:183). On April 14, 1886, the annexationist Senator Morgan proposed in secret session an amendment to the treaty that would grant the U.S. exclusive access and use of Pearl Harbor (Ibid.: 184). The Hawaiian government, which was unaware of this proposed amendment until it was reported in U.S. newspapers, was opposed to cession of Pearl Harbor.

The impasse on the renewal of reciprocity and the cession of Pearl Harbor, created the political opening for the secret group of pro-annexation white settler business and civic leaders known as the Hawaiian League to stage a *coup d’État* in 1887. Under threat of violence, the League forced King Kalākaua to appoint a new cabinet that was
acceptable to the League and to enact a new constitution, which is now commonly known as the “Bayonet Constitution”. The Bayonet Constitution effectively concentrated government power in the hands of a white propertied minority by disenfranchising the majority of Native Hawaiians who did not meet the new property requirements and Asian immigrants who were categorically barred from naturalization on the basis of their “undesirable” race. While acknowledging that what they did was not “legal”, the League justified its actions as moral and necessary by characterizing the monarchy as morally corrupt and incompetent, and utilized their ties with U.S. political, business, and media elites to spread this discourse of improvement (Li 2007). One of the first orders of business upon seizing power was to pressure the King to accept the Supplementary Convention (ratified 1887) to extend the Treaty of Reciprocity. It included a new clause granting the United States:

> the exclusive right to enter the harbor of the Pearl River in the Island of Oahu, and to establish and maintain there a coaling and repair station for the use of vessels of the United States, and to that end the United States may improve the entrance to said harbor and do all other things needful to the purpose aforesaid. (Hawaii-United States Convention 1884)

On September 26, 1887, Princess Liliʻuokalani lamented in her diary, “Today - a day of importance in H. History. . . King signed a lease of Pearl river to U. States for eight years to get R. Treaty. It should not have been done” (Liliʻuokalani 1887). But the effects of this second treaty was much more profound than a lease of land. Contrary to Whitney’s initial claim in 1873 that the cession of Puʻuloa would “defeat and indefinitely postpone all projects for the annexation of these islands to any foreign power” (Whitney 1873), the treaty did just the opposite; it rendered Hawaiʻi, in the words of historian Merze Tate, “a significant appendage of the United States” (Tate 1968: 117). According to Tate:

> The Reciprocity Treaty of 1875 was a perfect example of a commercial and economic negotiation dictated by political motives. It was designed primarily to extend American influence over the Islands and, only secondarily, to secure economic benefits. (Ibid.)
Hawaiʻi’s increased economic dependency on U.S. trade made it vulnerable to even the slightest inflections in the U.S. economy or its trade policies. This became shockingly clear when the McKinley Tariff Act of 1890 removed tariffs on imported sugar while adding a two-cents per pound subsidy on U.S. grown sugar. The price of sugar plummeted, and Hawaiian sugar growers lost any advantages of reciprocity. It led Kanaka ʻŌiwi politicians to call for the repeal of the treaty (Osorio 2013) and drove the sugar planters to intensify their efforts to annex Hawaiʻi to the United States.

The political crisis created by the Bayonet Constitution and the McKinley Tariff set off a chain of events that resulted in the full-scale U.S. occupation of the Hawaiian Islands. In 1893, when Queen Liliʻuokalani sought to reinstate the former constitution, the white settler Committee of Safety with the backing of U.S. marines overthrew her government (Osorio 2002; Sai 2004, 2011; Trask 1999). Although President Cleveland did not recognize the legitimacy of the provisional government, and Hawaiian national resistance to annexation helped to defeat two attempted treaties of annexation in 1893 and 1897 (Silva 2004), the Spanish-American War of 1898 convinced Congress to authorize the occupation of the Hawaiian islands as a military necessity (Coffman 1998; Sai 2011). This event broke the United States’ momentary hesitation to engage in imperial expansion. Since this history has been discussed at length by many other authors, I only mention it to situate my next section. I am more interested in what happened to Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa after the United States incorporated Hawaiʻi as a territory and began to mobilize the resources to develop its infrastructure in Hawaiʻi.

The pro-annexation faction in Hawaiʻi aligned their economic and political interests with those of the United States. During the annexation hearings and later debates over the appropriations for the Pearl Harbor naval station, the Hawaiʻi-based entrepreneurs of U.S. imperialism actively produced narratives to shape the imaginative geography of Hawaiʻi and Puʻuloa for American audiences. Pearl Harbor became the pivot of U.S. policy regarding annexation of the Hawaiian Islands and expansion in the Pacific.
Imagined Intimacy

Naturalizing the U.S. imperial formation process required the production of a sense of familiarity and intimacy between Hawai‘i and the United States. Pearl Harbor became an important element in producing an imaginative geography of the United States as a benevolent imperial power. Hawai‘i was the fulcrum that helped to modulate between different modes of imperial formation and smooth the transition from a continental power to a global sea power.

In 1888, a year after the Bayonet Constitution and the cession of Pu‘uloa, American business leaders in Hawai‘i launched a new tourist magazine *Paradise of the Pacific*, which became a new medium for the haole (foreigners of European descent) settler capitalists to represent Hawai‘i as exotic, but familiar to American publics. In her analysis of *Paradise of the Pacific*, Feeny writes, “Paradise demonstrates how the American community in Hawai‘i represented the Kingdom of Hawai‘i, its coveted lands and various peoples, as it prepared the archipelago to become America’s own tropical paradise” (Feeny 2009: 35). It was a kind of conjuring of a new tropical American frontier, an imaginary infused with libidinal desire, economic opportunity, and masculinist assurances of security. The premier issue editorialized that the renewal the Treaty of Reciprocity with the cession of Pearl Harbor was “a subject of vast importance to the commercial interests of these islands” that “will re-establish confidence and warrant the extension of existing enterprises, and the establishment of new ones” (“Prospectus: ‘Paradise of the Pacific’” 1888). It predicted that the coaling and repair station “may be followed by the introduction of foreign capital for internal improvements, and naturally an increased attraction to the islands by all classes of people in recognition of its political and commercial importance” (Ibid.)

With the necessary outlay by the United States Government in the construction of a coaling and repair station at Puuloa and the introduction of capital and colonists to develop the properties adjacent—some 115,000 acres in all—it will not be long ere the spirit of “the boom of prosperity” will strike other parts of the islands. (Ibid.)
The article also endorsed B. F. Dillingham’s land colonization scheme, in which he sought to attract Euro-American settlers by offering to sell lands surrounding Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa. As a tourist oriented magazine, *Paradise* wove a narrative about Hawai‘i that created the imaginative geography of the islands in the American popular consciousness. The emergence of *Paradise of the Pacific* and other popular representations of Hawai‘i in the U.S. media marked a shift from a more covert imperialist agenda to a more overt incitement of the American public to embrace the imperialist project.

A number of scholars of U.S. imperialism have discussed the importance of Hawai‘i in the imaginative geographies crucial to the formation of an “American” national identity and orientation towards the world. Amy Kaplan argues that Mark Twain’s early encounter with Hawai‘i “Americanized” his “lenses—and blind spots” regarding race relations in the United States and helped to shape a national narrative that bridged the transition from the Reconstruction to imperial expansion of the late nineteenth century (Kaplan, 2005:52). In a comparative analysis of late nineteenth century “possession books”—popular accounts of America’s newly acquired colonies—Lanny Thompson (2010) argues that gendered representations of Hawaiian women (and of Hawai‘i) as different yet desirable—child-like, yet civilizable under American tutelage without the loss of their exotic charm—prepared the nation to imagine Hawai‘i in “a close, intimate political relationship with the United States: complete assimilation and full annexation” (Thompson, 2010: 80). In a similar vein, Adria Imada traced the emergence of traveling hula performances in the U.S. beginning in the late nineteenth century as an imperial technique that produced an “imagined intimacy” (Imada, 2012: 11) between the U.S. and Hawai‘i, whereby the Hawaiian concept and practice of “aloha” was “crudely instrumentalized and appropriated in colonial relations and discourse” (Ibid.: 9) to “naturaliz(e) colonization as benign, mutual, and consensual” (Ibid.: 11). During this same period, anthropological interest in Hawaiian legends and culture, a symptom of colonial nostalgia for “dying” native cultures, produced what Cristina Bacchilega calls “*legendary Hawai‘i*”, which had a similar discursive effect of naturalizing Hawai‘i’s cultural difference as an exotic, yet
Figure 3: “Another Shotgun Wedding, with Neither Party Willing.” Charles Jay Taylor 1897.
domesticated possession of the United States (Bacchilega, 2007: 5). According to Haunani-Kay Trask, these representational practices produced an imaginative geography whereby, “to most Americans, . . . Hawai‘i is theirs: to use, to take, and, above all, to fantasize about long after the experience” (Trask 1993: 180). The combined effect of these representations was an imaginary of a “Hawai‘i” that was “Just five hours away by plane from California,” but:

a thousand light years away in fantasy. Mostly a state of mind, Hawai‘i is the image of escape from the rawness and violence of daily American life. Hawai‘i— the word, the vision, the sound in the mind—is the fragrance and feel of soft kindness. Above all, Hawai‘i is "she," the Western image of the Native "female" in her magical allure. And if luck prevails, some of "her" will rub off on you, the visitor. (Ibid.)

I conclude this chapter by discussing a political cartoon from the late 19th century to illustrate a number of key tropes in American imperial representations of Hawai‘i. The cover illustration for the December 1897 issue of Puck Magazine, entitled “Another shotgun wedding, with neither party willing,” depicts a wedding scene with President McKinley officiating (Figure 3) (Taylor 1897). He is reading from a text entitled “Annexation Policy”. Kneeling before McKinley is the Groom, Uncle Sam, looking resigned to his fate. Next to him is a much younger, half-naked woman representing Hawai‘i. Her features look generically "black", and aside from the flower lei on her head, her dress is not Hawaiian. She looks angry, distraught, ready to bolt. Behind them stands the Jingo, Senator Morgan, cradling the shotgun of “bluster”.

I refer to this illustration because it sums up some of the gendered geographic imaginaries that influenced U.S. imperial policies towards Hawai‘i. In the imaginative geography of U.S. imperial formation, Hawai‘i was usually gendered as feminine, and raced as colored or black. This helps to explain two discursive operations at work historically. Hawai‘i embodied difference, but it also was desirable. Marked as “colored” and “feminine,” Hawai‘i was placed in a subordinate dependent position to the “white” and “masculine” United States. As weak yet desirable, Hawai‘i was vulnerable to the predations of other powerful states. It therefore needed protection that the United
States was obliged to provide. The illustration suggests a prior illicit sexual encounter, and perhaps a pregnancy out of wedlock, which requires legitimation through marriage. Bound together by law in “marriage” to the U.S., Hawai‘i’s difference could now be rendered a “domestic” matter. When the U.S. began to demand access to Pu‘uloa, Hawai‘i could complain, but could not resist those advances. These gendered and raced imaginative geographies of Hawai‘i helped to make conceivable the taking of Hawai‘i and its incorporation into the political orbit of the United States. It also opened the political space for the acquisition of the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico as spoils of the Spanish-American War. However, other discursive productions were called upon to shape the emerging military political economy in Hawai‘i. In the next chapter, I turn to the emergence of a military industrial political economy in Hawai‘i and the discourses that shaped its formation.
CHAPTER THREE

“To bring order of out this chaos”

Contrary to the popular perception that construction of the naval station at Pearl Harbor followed inevitably and smoothly from the annexation of the Hawaiian islands, the project faced many challenges and uncertainties due to various political, environmental, and engineering contingencies. Furthermore, ʻāina needed to be converted into “land” and “real property”. Puʻuloa was subjected to a relentless battery of surveys, probes, and mapping expeditions that made it one of the most thoroughly mapped landscapes in Hawaiʻi; it was made legible, ordered, and abstracted in such a way that enabled the military and industrial transformation of the landscape. This chapter examines several of the dominant discourses that were enacted in the process of developing the naval base. I consider how these discursive practices produced that which it named (Butler 1993: 13).

From 1901 to 1919 an enormous amount of discursive production, political wrangling, and material practices were involved in imagining, garnering public support, winning authorizations, securing appropriations, selecting locations, acquiring land, approving designs, hiring contractors, dealing with setbacks, and ultimately completing the Pearl Harbor naval station. In 1901, the U.S. government began condemnation proceedings to acquire land and fishing rights in Hālawa, Mokuʻumeʻume (Ford Island), and Waipiʻo peninsula. By 1903, the first attempt to dredge the entrance channel was underway. By 1909 several major construction projects had begun: the naval yard, a second, more substantial dredging project to widen and deepen the channel and harbor, and the massive drydock, which was the centerpiece of the new naval station. From the start, the drydock project was bedeviled by delays, rising costs, design changes, flawed construction materials, and engineering and construction failures. In this chapter, I also discuss the important role of industrialist Walter F. Dillingham and his Hawaiian Dredging Company in the initial construction of Pearl Harbor, and how this project
provided the opportunity for Dillingham to grow his corporate empire on a steady diet of military appropriations. As the drydock neared completion in 1913, the entire structure suffered a catastrophic collapse, which put the entire project in jeopardy. For Hawaiians who were critical of the project because of its destructive impact on traditional cultural sites, the drydock collapse was the poetic justice of Kaʻahupāhau. However, the haole media turned the story into a sensationalized account of the legendary birth of Pearl Harbor. I discuss this particular incident in more detail in the subsequent chapter, especially the deployment of Hawaiian culture in the political discourse and the complex subjectivity and agency of Native Hawaiians in an age of rapid cultural, political and economic change.

**Necessary and indispensable**

Although the 1887 Supplementary Convention to the Treaty of Reciprocity conferred to the U.S. the right to develop a naval station at Puʻuloa, the Navy did not commence construction of the base for more than twenty years. An initial obstacle it faced was that most of the lands and fisheries of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa were privately owned and intensively cultivated for sugar, rice, or other farming and fishing enterprises. In 1899, the Navy began making inquiries to landowners to purchase their lands in Hālawa, Mokuʻumeʻume, and Waipiʻo, but their overtures were rejected. Commander Merry inquired about purchasing the land from “Kianapua'a Point to the East Loch” (Merry to Bishop Estate Trustees September 11, 1899. Quoted in Landauer and Landauer 1999: 172) from the Estate of Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, which today runs the Kamehameha Schools and is the largest private landholder in Hawaiʻi. Another landowner, Mr. Brown, a trustee of the John Ii estate flatly rejected the offer, “No! I am absolutely opposed to the United States getting control of my land” (Brown to Merry 8/15/1899. Quoted in Landauer and Landauer 1999:172).

Since the U.S. government could not get landowners to sell, it resorted to exercising its sovereign powers to force its conversion. But first it needed to establish its authority to seize land that the United States had previously recognized as part of another
sovereign country. Hawai‘i and America needed to be bound in law. Hawai‘i needed to belong to the United States. As a number of scholars have pointed out, the joint resolution authorizing the U.S. occupation of Hawai‘i in 1898 as a military necessity could not have legally conferred Hawai‘i’s sovereignty to the United States (Aguon 2012; Sai 2004; 2011). The Organic Act of 1900 attempted to “fix” this problem by redefining Hawai‘i’s political status as an incorporated territory of the United States and purporting to confer to the federal government the authority to alienate land through eminent domain.

The Appropriations Act of March 3, 1901 authorized the Secretary of the Navy to acquire land for a naval station, harbor, and channel defense. The federal government filed a petition in the U.S. District Court on July 6, 1901 to condemn approximately 720 acres along the East Loch in Hālawa ahupua’a, including Keanapua’a point, Kuahua Island, and several miles of Oahu Railway & Land (O. R. & L.) track, for the purpose of building a naval station and shipyard. The lawsuit named the Estate of Bernice Pauahi Bishop, O. R. & L., the Dowsett Company, Honolulu Sugar Company, Honolulu Plantation Company, Chow Ah Fo, John Ii Estate, William G. Irwin, Oahu Sugar Company, and Bishop and Company (Landauer and Landauer, 1999: 176; EB 7/8/1901). The government maintained that “said parcels of land are necessary and indispensable,” that “all of this must be capable of expansion as the future needs of the Government of the United States may demand,” and that “the ground upon which this is based is the claim of the petitioner that the land will be put to a more necessary public use than any to which it has already been appropriated” (EB, 7/8/1901). The government proposed to pay a total of $133,640 for the acquisition of all land title and leases (Landauer and Landauer: 177). The Court issued a decree on December 23, 1901 in favor of the U.S. government (Decree of Court, 1901) awarding $50,737.50 for value of the land and $2,000 for improvements. Although the Honolulu Plantation Company appealed the decision and it eventually settled with the government. However, this was just the first of many government actions to acquire title to the land and fisheries of Pu‘u‘ula which continued into the 1990s (Landauer and Landauer: 177).
Rendering Technical

As Tania Li (2007) has argued in her ethnography of development practices in Indonesia, the project of “improvement” requires two key operations: “problematization, that is, identifying deficiencies that need to be rectified,” and “rendering technical,” the representation of the domain to be governed as intelligible and governable with the appropriate techniques (Li 2007: 53). The project of mapping and charting Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa was an important step in gaining intimate knowledge of the land, and at the same time, rendering the space legible to western planners before any structures could be built (Scott 2009). However, the Pearl Harbor builders would have had to overlay their plans upon a more ancient spatiality and territoriality that had produced a Hawaiian geography long before the arrival of western explorers. As Kamana Beamer (2008) and Donovan Preza (2010) have shown, the modern land tenure system in Hawaiʻi has its roots in the ancient land tenure system based on kālaiʻĀina (dividing the land) and palena (boundary practices). On Oʻahu, the systematization of land divisions and management practices has been attributed to Māʻilikūkahi. The ʻāina (land) was “mapped” performatively through the bodily movements across the land, through the articulation of wahi pana (storied places) and moʻolelo associated with places, and through physical markers both naturally occurring and constructed (Louis 2008). Between 1848 and 1850, Kamehameha III instituted a series of land reforms known as the Mahele, which codified land claims awarded under the old kālaiʻāina and created a system for apportioning rights to land among the Crown, Government, Chiefs, Kuleana (awards to commoners), and Grants. The new land system became a complex hybrid of traditional Hawaiian boundaries, concepts and practices and western property regimes (Beamer 2008; Beamer and Duarte 2006; Preza 2010). However in this conversion, the new land tenure system made an ontological shift whereby land became private property, an object of ownership that was exchangeable and alienable. As land claims were registered, surveyed, and verified, the legibility and portability of this knowledge increased. Yet, in order “to bring order out of this chaos” (Wall 1906:32) and manage all lands and land transactions, the Hawaiian Kingdom needed a comprehensive system of maps that brought all the pieces together.
However, this perception of the traditional land tenure system as “chaotic” is a reflection of the epistemological biases of western cartography and the legibility demands of capitalism and the state rather than the functional requirements of native tenants.

A number of scholars have discussed how cartography was a crucial technology for producing the modern national state (Harley 2001; Scott 2009; Winichakul 2009; Wood, D. 1992). Thai historian Thongchai Winichakul coined the term “geo-body” to describe “the effect of modern geographical discourse whose prime technology is a map” (2009: 17). James Scott elaborated on the formation of “state space” and the importance of rendering populations and territories legible, and thereby governable (Scott 2009: 40). These abstracting and ordering practices were at work in Hawai’i.

The Hawaiian Kingdom initiated the Hawaiian Government Survey in 1871, an unprecedented survey and mapping project which coincided with the debates about the cession of Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa:

The matter of cession of Puuloa or Pearl Harbor to the United States had just come up for action and a survey was ordered. The main triangulation was extended to that part of the island, secondary triangles for the harbor measured, and the shore lines run in with great care by the plane table, making a basic map of said harbor which has been the foundation of all the later work. The U.S. Coast Survey experts, Lieuts. Sands, Cutting and Wilson, executed the soundings for the bar; the map was completed in June, 1873. (Lyons 1903)

As a result, Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa became the object of one of the most thoroughly surveyed geographies in the islands (Figure 4). The maps are beautiful and meticulous in their attention to the details of topography, land use practices, and bathymetry. The contours mark the surveyor’s arduous treks on foot through thorny kiawe, marshy wetlands, garden plots, and jagged rocky outcrops to triangulate and fix distances and locations. The bathymetry reveals the busy movements of the leadsman from point to point, casting the sounding line to plumb the depths of Pu‘uloa for data that might reveal safe passage: depth of the water, composition of the bottom, hazardous obstacles, the strength of the current. All of these intimate encounters with place materialize in the maps themselves; yet the sensory experiences and relationships with place have been
Figure 4: Detail of the Site of the Current Pearl Harbor Naval Station. Drydock 1 was built to the left of Lae Apahu at the bottom left hand corner. Lyons and Alexander. 1873. Hawaiian Government Survey Reg. 1639. Scale 1:12000
practically lost in translation into the cold measurements and calculations of the distant eyes whose main surveyor’s craft. During this mapping phase, gaining intimate knowledge of Puʻuloa involved a process of abstraction and rendering legible for concern was knowing distances, volumes, depths, altitudes, physical properties, and most importantly costs.

**Producing (In)Security**

The construction of the naval base proper was a massive and expensive undertaking. And unexpected contingencies periodically threatened to derail the project. Entrepreneurs of U.S. expansionism worked hard to weave a discourse of security/insecurity, destiny, opportunity, and benevolence in order to impel their project forward. They needed to make Pearl Harbor into a place that was imagined to be necessary, indispensable, and beneficial to the United States. At the same time, the project needed to be depicted as a benefit to Hawaiʻi. In the years from 1904 to 1908, the business leaders and politicians in Hawaiʻi (mobilized through the Chamber of Commerce and the Merchant Association) generated a steady flow of media and political lobbying initiatives to shape the imaginative geography of Pearl Harbor within the United States. In order to convince American publics of the need to invest large sums of money in the construction of the Pearl Harbor naval station, proponents of this project had to produce a different kind of imaginative geography, one that was charged with a sense of urgency, yet could be reassuring with its imagined *geopolitical intimacy*. These discourses shrunk the imagined distance between the U.S. and Hawaiʻi and conflated the interests of the U.S. and Hawaiʻi as one in the same. As Derek Gregory notes, “distance – like difference – is not an absolute, fixed, and given, but is set in motion and made meaningful through cultural practices” (Gregory 2004: 18).

Sereno E. Bishop, son of missionary Artemus Bishop, was a pastor for the Hawaiian Evangelical Association and had worked as a surveyor and cartographer for the Hawaiian Kingdom. An ardent proponent of annexation, Bishop understood the importance of creating an imaginative geography of Hawaiʻi and the Pacific in the minds
of the American public. As a correspondent of the Washington, D.C., *Evening Star*, under the mocking pen-name "Kamehameha”, Bishop’s writings were, in the words of annexationist leader Lorrin A. Thurston, “invaluable as an educative influence on the American public during the interregnum between the overthrow of the monarchy in 1893 and the consummation of annexation in 1898, and were a powerful factor in the achievement of the final result” (Preface to Bishop 1916: 9-10). Bishop is credited with having coined the clichéd appellation for Hawai‘i: “The Crossroads of the Pacific.”

In a 1904 article in the New York City *Independent*, he described the “Urgent Need of Pearl Harbor” to U.S. readers as a necessary step in the “grand destiny of American Pacific commerce and sea power” (Bishop 1904: 383):

> Now by means of its favored and solitary central position, Hawaii is the key point of control of this ocean upon its eastern half, and Pearl Harbor is the key to Hawaii. It is, therefore, of vital and urgent necessity that Pearl Harbor should at once be made tenable and secure. In its present neglected condition it constitutes a strong temptation to a hostile Power to seize it, and gain permanent advantage by robbing America of her natural predominance in the Pacific. (Bishop: 384)

Using geometric metaphors such as “points of control”, Bishop suggested the image of a map with Hawai‘i as a point, surrounded by a zone of U.S. control. And if Hawai‘i was the key to control of the Pacific, then Pearl Harbor, Bishop reiterated, was the “key to Hawai‘i,” a pinpoint on the map to control, and claim the vast space of the Northeastern Pacific. The metaphor of Pearl Harbor and Hawai‘i as the key was increasingly used to ascribe an importance to this geography since Schofield used the term in 1873. Another newspaper reiterated this theme in 1910: “Hawaii was the key of the Pacific, and Pearl Harbor the keyhole” (HS 10/27/1910). This metaphor suggests that Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa has a unique importance and a functionality to unlock or open something.

But themes of defense, control, and security also required their opposite: insecurity and fear. Bishop argued that if Pu‘uloa continued to be “neglected”, it would pose a grave threat to the U.S. because another hostile state would gain control. An unmilitarized Hawai‘i therefore, could become a weapon against the United States,
according to Bishop. Tapping imperial aspirations and ideological currents of Manifest Destiny and Social Darwinism, he touted America’s “natural predominance in the Pacific.” In another passage he reiterated these themes:

Hawaii absolutely controls the situation on the West. Held by an enemy it fatally imperils America. Held by the United States, it is of more value for defense than a whole navy of battle ships and cruisers. Pearl Harbor, once well furnished with naval facilities and made impregnable, renders its owners complete mistress of the North Pacific against enemies. (Bishop: 386)

Again, if Pu‘ulōa were to be taken by the U.S., it would provide not only defense and safety, but would make America “complete mistress of the North Pacific.” However, “held by an enemy it fatally imperils America” (Ibid.). Arguments for the weaponization of Ke Awalau o Pu‘ulōa were framed in the zero-sum binary logic of imperial competition, to dominate or be imperiled. In Congressman Bates’ words, “I believe one of two things is true—that we will have a naval base at Pearl Harbor or somebody else will have it there” (HS 4/21/1908). At the same time, citizens of Hawai‘i, or more specifically, American settler colonists in Hawai‘i, were portrayed as exemplary Americans. U.S. Congressman Campbell said, “No people of this country are more patriotic than those citizens who live under the Stars and Stripes in the islands of Hawaii” (Ibid.).

The entrepreneurs of military buildup in Hawai‘i produced an imaginative geography of Pearl Harbor as the key to security, prosperity and peace, not only for America, but for the vast Pacific and helped to naturalize American imperialism as a virtuous gift to the world, even as it reterritorialized the Pacific as an American space. Stuart Hall’s concept of articulation may be useful here to think about the ways that different actors articulated a discursive web of narratives, interests, and material practices pertaining to Ke Awalau o Pu‘ulōa and how these articulations connected the local with regional and global events and processes.

The claim that the militarization of Hawai‘i was for the sake of world peace enabled the U.S. to proclaim altruistic motives and disavow its own imperialism.
Furthermore, reiterations of Bishop’s analogy of Hawai’i as (America’s) “Crossroad of the Pacific,” exemplified a naturalizing discourse. This imaginative geography evoked warmth, hospitality, multicultural harmony, and a progressive openness to the world, yet simultaneously concealed the history of dispossession of Hawaiian sovereignty and land, the smoldering tinderbox of class and racial conflicts, and the imposition of closed and intensely militarized spaces intended to make O’ahu into a “ring of steel” (General Macomb 1911 Quoted in Lind 1985) or the “Gibraltar of the Pacific” (Taylor 1911: 604).

The emergence of this representation of Hawai’i as a crossroads coincides with the construction of the Panama Canal. Ever since Mahan articulated his grand vision of the U.S. commanding two oceans, Pearl Harbor and the Panama Canal were seen as strategic nodes linking the Atlantic with the Pacific and controlling the global flows of commerce in a vast American oceanic empire. As one newspaper described it,

> Pearl Harbor is so related to our Western coast, to the Philippine Islands and to the western terminus of the Panama Canal that it is the most commanding and strategic point for the control of interests of the United States in that part of the world. (HS 12/1/1909)

For Americans, the perceived threat that loomed over the horizon and fueled the sense of urgency for the annexation and militarization of Hawai’i was Japan. The country was undergoing a rapid industrialization and militarization process of its own and presented the perfect foreign threat against which to justify the U.S. program of military expansion. As early as 1893, Captain Alfred Mahan had raised the specter of the “Yellow Peril” in his article “Hawaii and Our Future Sea Power” (1893. Reprinted in Mahan 1897), although at that time, his primary concern was China. When Japan emerged victorious in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895, Mahan anticipated that Japan would be the United States’ future adversary in the Pacific. Japan’s decisive victory in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), an imperialist war fought over control of Manchuria and Korea, sent shockwaves around the world, especially since this was the first time that a non-European state (read “non-white”) defeated a modern European power. It unsettled the established racial hierarchies of imperialism, and inspired anti-colonial nationalist
movements. By 1910, Japan had invaded and annexed Korea. Its reasons were almost identical to the U.S. rationale for annexing and militarizing Hawai‘i:

(1) to insure her own national safety; (2) to assure enduring peace in the Far East by eliminating one of the most fruitful sources of disturbance; (3) to promote the welfare and prosperity of the Koreans; . . . (5) to consolidate the identical interests of Japan and Korea in the Far East . . . . (Iyenaga 1912: 201)

In the Japanese geopolitical imaginary, Korea was “a spear pointed at its heart” (Ibid.). Similar imagery of the U.S. fleet in Hawai‘i as a weapon threatening Japan was cited by Japanese military leaders prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor.

It is ironic that the discourses of Japanese imperialism so closely mirrored that of western imperialism, the American model of the Monroe Doctrine in particular. Japanese military leaders worked from the same military playbook as well. They studied Mahan and applied his ideas, such as the doctrine of attaining national greatness through overseas expansion, or strategic principles of naval warfare such as *decisive battle* (Asada 2006:26) and ‘offensive-defensive’ actions (Friedman 2001:2). More troubling perhaps, five years before Japan’s invasion of Korea, the United States had given its tacit approval to this move, a stance that was consistent with Theodore Roosevelt’s racial schematic, in which the Japanese were “Honorary Aryans” who had enthusiastically embraced western modernity and were therefore fit to lead the civilizing mission in Asia (Bradley 2009: 242). In 1905, during a stop in Tokyo by Roosevelt’s so-called Imperial Cruise, Secretary of War William Taft reached a secret agreement with Japanese Prime Minister Katsura. Katsura said that Japan would accept U.S. colonial rule in the Philippines. Taft in return expressed “his personal opinion” that:

the establishment by Japanese troops of a suzerainty over Korea to the extent of requiring that Korea enter into no foreign treaties without the consent of Japan was the logical result of the present war and would directly contribute to permanent peace in the East. (Taft 1905)

We can assume that the memorandum’s silence on Guam, American Sāmoa, and Hawai‘i indicate that both parties considered U.S. possession of these islands to be a settled affair. The greatest tragedy is that the spiraling trajectory set in motion by the two
imperial powers in the thrall of Mahan reached a devastating climax three decades later when Japanese bombs rained down on Pearl Harbor.

**Security is Prosperity**

In the political debate over military appropriations for the Pearl Harbor naval station, an alliance of interests formed between the military, business leaders, and politicians; this pattern would continue to dominate political-economic relations pertaining to military spending the islands for decades to come. Despite Pearl Harbor’s strategic importance to the U.S., geopolitics alone was not enough to ensure the project would be funded and built. In 1907, newspapers reported that the Secretary of the Navy Metcalf opposed funding for Pearl Harbor in favor of a naval station in California and that the California congressional delegation believed that the large Japanese population in Hawai‘i constituted a security threat to the project (EB 12/4/1907; EB 12/17/1907).

The proponents of militarization in the islands mounted a campaign to build political support for the appropriations. The Honolulu Chamber of Commerce solicited letters of support from politicians and business leaders from across the U.S. calling for the “fortification of Pearl Harbor, the widening of the channel, the establishing there of a navy yard and government dry-docks,” which were published in one of the establishment papers (HG 10/11/1907). The Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce passed a resolution stating that the Pearl Harbor project was “an absolute necessity for the proper safeguarding of Trans-Pacific commerce” (HS 10/12/1907). The Honolulu Chamber of Commerce even paid for site surveys and borings to provide Congress with data to make better cost estimates (EB 12/17/1907).

Another key element of the political-economy of militarization in Hawai‘i was advocacy by the delegate to Congress, which was provided for by the Organic Act of 1900. From 1903 to 1921, Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana‘ole served as Hawai‘i’s delegate. As a young man, Kalaniana‘ole joined the unsuccessful armed insurrection in 1895 to restore the Queen, was convicted of treason, and spent a year of hard labor in prison. However eight years later, he joined the Republican Party and ran successfully
against the Home Rule Party candidate Robert Wilcox. Like other Kanaka ʻŌiwi in the early twentieth century, Kalanianaʻole was navigating a world that was changing rapidly around him, from a Hawaiian state to an American one. As a high chief, he maintained “an adversarial and competitive relationship to the haole elite” (McGreggor n.d.), but he also sought to work within that foreign system to advocate for Hawaiian people. He is best known for winning passage of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920, which despite its many problems and shortcomings, was intended to provide for the “rehabilitation of the native Hawaiian people [of 50 percent blood] through a government-sponsored homesteading program” (Department of Hawaiian Home Lands 2014). In 1917, Kalanianaʻole convened a group of Native Hawaiian men to found the first Hawaiian Civic Club, an organization dedicated to promoting education, social and economic advancement, good citizenship and progress for Hawaiʻi (Widemann 1980).

Less well known is Kalanianaʻole’s pivotal role in securing the original funding for construction of the Pearl Harbor naval station. In January 29, 1909, he testified before the House Committee on Naval Affairs to lobby for the Pearl Harbor appropriations:

The development of Pearl Harbor is not a Hawaiian proposition; it is a national need. But as my nation gave over its sovereignty to this country ten years ago, we have a right to ask, and we do ask that adequate protection be provided for our islands, so that we could not be captured by a single hostile battleship as could be done today. (HS 10/27/1910)

Kalanianaʻole framed the scope of the issue as a concern for the U.S., then pressed the sensitive topic of the overthrow and annexation seemingly to play to Americans’ sense of guilt or obligation to the Hawaiian people for taking over their country. He also positioned Hawaiʻi as defenseless and in need of American protection. This may seem like a humiliating posture to assume for someone of his rank and past political loyalties, but in the male-dominated political theater of Congress, such a representation played to the patriarchal protective “instincts” of its members and seems to have worked.

In 1908, Congress approved $3.1 million (the equivalent of $78 million in 2012), of which $1 million was initially available, for the construction of a drydock, dredging of
the channel, and building a machine shop, storehouses, and yard development on the
newly acquired land in Hālawa (HS 5/13/1908). Newspaper headlines in Hawai‘i crowed:
“Oahu May Have Greatest Naval Station in the World” (HS 4/21/1908); “Honolulu and
Pearl Harbor Vital Centers of America’s Power in Pacific Ocean” (EB 7/16/1908); and “It
Means a Boom for Honolulu: Pearl Harbor Development” (HS 5/13/1908). One article
that reads like an advertisement for the Chamber of Commerce of Honolulu, featured
various business and military leaders voicing hearty support of the Pearl Harbor
appropriation. A. L. C. Atkinson, a partner with Walter F. Dillingham in the Hawaiian
Dredging Company said, “The opening of Pearl Harbor means impregnable fortifications.
To be protected by Uncle Sam means real protection not only for sugar, but absolute
security for persons and property. Protection spells prosperity” (Ibid.). F. A. Schaefer said,
“The benefit that Hawaii will receive from Pearl Harbor is unlimited. We will now have
something which we never have had before and that is protection” (Ibid.). But as critics
of security have pointed out, a discourse of security always produces its inextricable
prerequisite and complement: insecurity (Neocleous, 2008). In the discourse related to
Pearl Harbor’s origins, we see the convergence of U.S. national security and Hawai‘i’s
economic security.

Kalaniana‘ole established a model for how Hawai‘i politicians engage with the
Washington, D. C. establishment to extract benefits for the islands. By emphasizing the
Hawai‘i’s unique geographic situation, its fetishistic gem-like value to the U.S. military,
and the sacrifices endured by Kanaka ‘Ōiwi and other local groups because of the
geopolitical service Hawai‘i renders to America, Kalaniana‘ole extracted federal
appropriations, not as charity, but as rent and a debt owed by the United States. A similar
discourse has been deployed by other subsequent Hawai‘i representatives to Congress,
but no one refined this tactic more than the late Senator Daniel Inouye, who served in
Congress from 1959 to 2012 and became known as the “King of Pork” for his ability to
secure earmarks for military projects in Hawai‘i (Kirkpatrick and Herzenhorn 2009).

The construction of Pearl Harbor coincided with a massive military-industrial
transformation of O‘ahu island. During roughly this same period, the Army was
constructing Schofield Barracks, Fort Shafter, and numerous coastal fortifications, including Fort Ruger at Lae‘ahi (Diamond Head), Fort DeRussy at Kālia (in Waikīkī), and Fort Kamehameha at the mouth of Puʻuloa. Construction of the Wilson and Pali tunnels were underway as well as numerous reservoirs, water supply systems and roads.

**Conjuring the Military-Industrial Political Economy**

The construction of the Pearl Harbor naval station was a formative event in the transformation of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa as well as a turning point in the political economy of Hawaiʻi. It brought together a diverse assemblage of political, military, and economic actors from which emerged patterns of political economic relations that continue to influence militarization and imperial formation in Hawaiʻi. However, these networks are unstable, contingent, and shot through with contradictions. As Ian Lind (1984) points out “A review of the militarization of Hawaii reveals numerous structural sources of tension between the military and civilian sectors which have persisted over time and which do not appear capable of ultimate resolution” (Lind 1984: 27). Although the interests of the military and the haole elite frequently aligned, there were numerous contradictions and sources of conflict, for example, over land and political power (Ibid.). These points of disarticulation between different actors and interests present opportunities for intervention, organizing, and resistance.

The physical opening of the Puʻuloa channel to larger ships and major construction projects that radically altered the Hālawa shoreline and inaugurated the displacement of Kanaka ʻŌiwi from their sites of cultural and economic practices. It accelerated the elimination of wahi pana (storied places), the places where moʻolelo were encoded and enacted. This period also saw the rise of a military-industrial-political complex that has been a significant driver of development in Hawaiʻi since the mid-twentieth century.

One of the key figures in this military-industrial transformation was Walter F. Dillingham, founder of the Hawaiian Dredging Company. Walter’s father was the industrialist, Benjamin Franklin Dillingham, who founded the Oahu Railway and Land
Company (O. R. & L.) in 1888 (Oahu Railway and Land Company 1961) in anticipation of opening up the rural parts of the islands to “land colonization” and industrial agricultural production. Many scoffed, calling the railroad “Dillingham’s Folly”. But the senior Dillingham was a conjurer, someone who could get others to invest in his ideas and thereby produce a new material reality. Partnering with James Campbell, who commissioned the first artesian well in Honouliuli in ‘Ewa, B. F. Dillingham built up the ‘Ewa Plantation around this new source of water in hopes of generating cargo for his rail line. He also developed the first planned suburban development in Hawai‘i, on the Mānana peninsula, which was named “Pearl City” after the winning entry in a name contest. The railroad eventually connected distant parts of the island and opened them up for development.

In 1901, the young Walter F. Dillingham engaged in his own acts of conjuring. Just back from college, with no money to invest or experience in dredging, W. F. Dillingham formed the Hawaiian Dredging Company with his college roommate and a tugboat captain. He convinced Hackfeld & Company to enter into a $20,000 contract with him personally to dredge a pier slip in Honolulu Harbor. He then used the contract as collateral to incorporate his company, purchase a bond and insurance, and lease the dredge from his father’s company, O‘ahu Railway & Land Company (Dillingham 1951; Melendy 1996).

Dillingham’s Hawaiian Dredging Company won the contract to deepen and widen the Pu‘uloa channel (Contract 1343 1908) and to construct the first Pearl Harbor drydock (Contract 13681: 1909). In 1903, the dredging of the Pu‘uloa channel was one of the first Pearl Harbor projects to get underway in addition to the Marine Corps barracks and the munitions storage sites on Kuahua island. Dillingham’s fledgling Hawaiian Dredging Company secured the channel-dredging contract after the initial contractor was unable to fulfill its obligations (“Letter to the Stockholders of the Hawaiian Dredging Company” 1902). Dillingham called it “a gambling job . . . because nobody could tell us, or anybody, how to hold a rigid drill in the seaway” (Dillingham 1951:13). To solve this technical problem of drilling in rough seas:
We invented a rig that was based on a Japanese toy, and was called "the damned fool rig" because it was so simple after we got it work out. It cost a few thousand dollars to build out of our scrap pile. We drilled the whole job with it, successfully, and saved a lot of money on that so we came out on the whole job very satisfactorily. (Dillingham 1951:13)

Dillingham formed a partnership with the Cotton Brothers company which was leasing the Kingdom of Hawai‘i’s dredge. However, the project ran into trouble before it even began. A strong Kona storm sank the government dredge in the Pu‘uloa channel. Although the sunken dredge was written off as a total loss by its insurers, this “very sad interval” turned into a windfall for Dillingham who bought it for $250 and salvaged parts to build a new dredge he named Reclamation (Dillingham 1951). In the historiography of Pearl Harbor, this incident is the beginning of the resurrection trope. The initial dredging project removed approximately 90,000 cubic yards of mostly sand and loose material and enabled some smaller ships to utilize the harbor for ferrying materials to construction sites. In addition to beginning the capital formation for his company, the contract enabled Dillingham to acquire valuable experience and information, including maps and charts, which would give him an advantage in future projects.

Dillingham was able to increase his profit margins by selling the dredged material to landowners and developers who wanted to fill in the wetlands on O‘ahu and create new land. Hawaiian Dredging would then be paid once for removing unwanted material and paid again for depositing it somewhere else. This business model, made possible by personal contacts in the tightly woven network of Hawai‘i’s business leaders, enabled Dillingham to outcompete firms from the U.S. continent.

The Pearl Harbor projects also brought about large scale transformations of O‘ahu’s landscape and significant changes to social relations. The growth of an industrial sector during the early territorial period coincided with the displacement of many Native Hawaiians who had previously lived in customary arrangements on lands that were formally owned by the government, the crown, or other private landowners. In the aftermath of the 1893 overthrow, customary native tenant rights that had been incorporated into the Hawaiian Kingdom land laws were dismantled as more exclusive
concepts of private property took hold under American law. As a result, many people flocked to the city to find work in the emerging economic sectors.

A labor camp named Watertown was constructed along the Hālawa shoreline near the channel to house Pearl Harbor construction and service workers (HG 2/2/1909). Water was piped from a newly drilled well in Moanalua several miles away, and transportation links were built to connect the construction site to the railroad line and downtown Honolulu. Three-hundred and fifty people submitted applications for Pearl Harbor jobs even before any contracts were in place (EB 8/6/1908). The growing industrial workforce in Watertown generated new challenges and developed a reputation for lawlessness, including a thriving underground economy of gambling, prostitution, and bootleg liquor. Watertown also gained notoriety because of several high profile murder cases.

The development of infrastructure to service the new base also opened up the possibility of commercial or residential development in areas farther from the urban core. And while land speculators sought to take advantage of the increased accessibility of land in ‘Ewa, the Navy suppressed land speculation by acquiring some of the choicest lands through condemnation and denying joint commercial use of the harbor facilities.

Compulsory Hospitality: The Roots of Militourism in Hawai‘i

In 1908, President Roosevelt ordered the Atlantic Fleet to make a round-the-world cruise. It was known as Great White Fleet. Its planned stop in Hawai‘i was a leading story in the newspapers for months. The papers reported on what festivities were being planned; that the city could not afford oiling the dirt roads; that merchants were disappointed that the fleet would not be getting major provisions in Hawai‘i; that civilians should conduct themselves properly to greet the fleet. During the actual port call an entire program of parades, festivities, sight seeing activities and entertainments was organized

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7 According to Teresia Teaiawa, “Militourism is a phenomenon by which military or paramilitary force ensures the smooth running of a tourist industry, and that same tourist industry masks the military force behind it” (Teaiwa 1999: 251)
by a host committee. One of the interesting stories involved the rivalry between two hula matriarchs, Princess Theresa and Madame Puahi, over whose troupe would perform a better show for the visiting sailors. This event took place around the same time that Congress was debating the funding for the Pearl Harbor naval station. As I discuss in the next chapter, Puahi would become a key native actor in the story of the dry dock collapse.

On a discursive level, this event had several effects. First, the White Fleet was a spectacular performance of military might and global ambition by the United States. Second, the highly visible port call in Hawai‘i confirmed Hawai‘i’s strategic importance; during the Fleet’s visit, the haole newspapers published special “Fleet Editions” that were part educational and part promotional. For example, the Evening Bulletin Fleet Edition (EB 7/16/1908) featured a map of the Pacific on the front page (Figure 5). On it were lines connecting Hawai‘i to various other cities around the region. It was a visual representation of the “crossroads” discourse.

Third, the Fleet’s visit provided a stage on which to enact hospitality and a showcase in which to advertise the pleasures and benefits of Hawai‘i to the militouristic consumer; it set a precedent for the ways that Hawai‘i was expected to “service” the military. It would set the normative standard for the expected levels of gratitude, hospitality, and patriotism residents were supposed to display at such events. This pattern continues up to the present. Every May, the Chamber of Commerce of Honolulu sponsors a Military Appreciation Month, featuring all types of promotions and attractions in a performance of Hawai‘i’s enduring love affair with the U.S. military.

Creating New Land

The transformation of Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa into Pearl Harbor required another operation of abstraction and simplification. The surveying and mapping produced an analog of what was “out there”. Now those coordinates and measurements needed to be converted into volumes, costs, techniques, timelines, and turned into a physical structure.
Pouring through Dillingham’s Hawaiian Dredging Company files, I was struck by the degree to which the actual place, Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa did not seem to appear in the documents. Although there were some maps and charts, I mostly found many kinds of legal and engineering documents, scraps of paper, handwritten notes, memos and calculations, spreadsheets, contracts and specifications. For the most part, the documents spoke the languages of economics, engineering, and law. Places with names like Kuahua, Hālawa, Po‘okala, Keanapua‘a, Kahuopala‘ai were being dissolved on paper into measurements and calculations of volumes to be removed, the capabilities of workers and machines, and time and cost estimates.

Meanwhile, materials from other locations were being extracted, transported, and materialized into the new naval base. Lumber and quartz sand were imported from Puget Sound (Snowbarger 1950: 136; Taylor 1911). Stone extracted from the Mō‘ili‘ili Quarry and a new quarry in the Wai‘anae Mountains near Schofield Barracks was crushed and mixed into a million barrels of cement (HS 5/13/1908; Taylor 1911). Tons of steel imbedded in the ground and within the concrete forms became the skeleton of the structure.

As a subcontractor to the San Francisco Bridge Company, Hawaiian Dredging Company built the massive Drydock 1 at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard. It was one of the largest military contracts awarded to a contractor up to that time (Hawaiian Dredging and Construction Company, Ltd. “Military Facilities Projects.”). As Dillingham’s biographer writes, “The dredging company’s early success was closely tied to developing the United States Navy Base at Pearl Harbor” (Melendy 1996: 38). Securing this contract gave Dillingham an opportunity to forge a military-industrial collaboration that continued to transform the landscape of Hawai‘i and the Pacific and generate ever greater profits for Dillingham’s business empire. With his close connections in government, W. F. Dillingham’s companies went on to win large public works projects that transformed most of the south shore of O‘ahu, including the dredging of the Ala Wai Canal and the “reclamation” of Waikīkī wetlands, the dredging of the Ke‘ehi Lagoon and construction of the Reef Runway at the Honolulu International Airport, and the building of Ala Moana
Shopping Center. In 1939, Hawaiian Dredging Company was one of eight companies to be awarded a $1,125,000,000 contract, the largest military construction contract up to that point in time, to construct naval air bases at 28 locations from California to the Philippines. In 1951, Dillingham boasted that he had “reclaimed” 4280 acres, of which 4200 were suitable for residential purposes. At $1 per square foot, he estimated that he “created” $180 million worth of new land for Honolulu (Dillingham 1951: 20).

Dillingham’s story has been framed as tale of heroic capitalism, the risk-taking entrepreneur going up against enormous odds, getting knocked down, but getting back up and ultimately winning. Dillingham’s story highlights the productivity of capitalism. In contrast to the Hawaiian moʻolelo about the creation of islands by Papahānaumoku, a narrative centered on women’s reproductive capabilities and the formation of geographies as processes of reproduction, the Dillingham story highlights the creation of new land through masculinized forces of capitalist production: science, economics, and technology. But his narrative of success is mute on the productive forces of labor. This theme of defeat, persistence, and ultimate triumph, surfaces again in the story of the Pearl Harbor drydock, and has become the narrative arc of the Pearl Harbor attack and USS Arizona memorial.

**Terrors of the Sea**

Before turning to the collapse of Drydock 1, I would like to introduce another discourse that framed nature as a wild and dangerous, yet conquerable Other. This discourse took on a very peculiar form in the trope of the man-eating shark. This trope was persistent throughout the period of the Pearl Harbor construction. In 1900, a local newspaper reported on a shark hunting expedition at Puʻuloa. The headline, “Hunt Terrors of the Sea . . . Great Sport is Anticipated” (*HS* 9/20/1900), captured the tenor of the representations of sharks as man-eating monsters and how hunting them was considered a manly sport. It also cast Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa as a place where danger lurked below the surface.
W. F. Dillingham painted Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa as a dangerous landscape swarming with man-eating sharks for a New York reporter. Although the fish trap Kapākule, as discussed in Chapter Two, was considered a gift from the gods Kāne and Kanaloa, Dillingham did not hesitate to misrepresent and sensationalize the story for the press:

Pearl Harbor in the old days was a great fishing ground, but the sharks were a great enemy to the edible fish, so the Hawaiians built on a reef at the entrance a shark pen. In the one entrance of this there was four feet of water at high tide but at low tide it was impossible for a shark to get out or in. The natives would take goats and old horses, lead them into the pen from the shore side, kill them and anchor them. After a day or two the sharks would be attracted by the odor and they would follow the wall until they came to the opening. By day the time they had had a good meal the tide would have fallen and the natives would then go in and kill them. The dredging project cuts off this pen at the back thus removing what had become a famous landmark. (HS 4/26/1910)

Compare Dillingham’s story to Pukui’s account of actually visiting Kapākule and its caretaker Edwin P. Mikalemi:

There was always a lot of sharks about, but no one feared them. There were times when the sharks were caught in the pond at low tide, but no Hawaiian there ever dreamed of molesting them. Never shall I forget the day when a haole guest of Mikalemi went to harpoon one of the sharks in the pond. My uncle shouted for him to get away from there and swore as I had never heard him swear before. Those sharks were as dear to him as a relative, and he did not want to see them speared any more than he wanted us to be hurt in the same way. (Pukui 1944: 56)

In 1908, a dredge operator named William McGall died when his recreational boat capsized in the surf. The papers reported that “he may have been drowned but it is reported that he was the victim of a man-eater” (EB 6/15/1908). Mikalemi rescued the man’s companion, who was found the next morning clinging to the hull of the boat, but he did not mention a shark attack. However, the article cites other sources who stated that “after the boat had capsized McGall . . . was almost immediately taken by a shark” (Ibid.).

The trope of the man-eating shark also provided a setting for tales of heroic deeds. A 1908 article on the front page of the Sunday Advertiser announced “A Battle with a
Shark,” about a fisherman who was pursued by a large shark that lunged out of the water at his boat (PCA 6/29/1908). It featured a drawing of a giant shark menacing a man in a small skiff. In 1910, the newspapers reported that a Hawaiian Dredging Company diver named Martin Lund, fought off a shark attack underwater with a knife (HG 6/24/1910). Dillingham described Lund as “a giant” whose work “requires not only skill but bravery” (HS 4/26/1910). According to Dillingham:

One day (his diving crew) felt a jerk at the line and hauled quickly and there was Lund slashing away at something near his feet. When they hauled him in a dead shark came up to the surface” (Ibid.)

But Dillingham revealed another key fact that may explain the shark’s aggressive behavior. “The blasts kill large numbers of smaller fish in the waters and every day as soon as the blasting starts the sharks come around looking for food,” he said. “Some times you will see as many as twenty of them at one time." (HS 4/26/1910).

This demonization of manō can be thought of as the abjection of nature to form the “constitutive outside to the domain of the subject” of the West (Butler 1993: 3). Since Hawaiians so closely identified with manō as ancestral deities, the abjection of the shark translated into an abjection of Hawaiians, “whose living under the sign of the ‘unliveable’ is required to circumscribe the domain of the subject” (Ibid.). This discourse made conceivable the symbolic destruction of Kaʻahupāhau, ruler of all the sharks at Puʻuloa. The spectacle of shark killing also demonstrated the capability and power of the state to discipline chaotic nature. Citing Agamben’s concept of the modern “anthropological machine” that relies on the separation and abjection of the “animal” to constitute the “human”, Jonathan Goldberg-Hiller and Noenoe Silva (2011) argue that a mass slaughter of sharks following a fatal shark attack in 1959—the year the U.S. admitted Hawaiʻi as a state—could be read as a spectacular display of state power to discipline the “savage” indigenous Other within neocolonial governance. They write:

The spectacle of the shark hunt was also likely performed for other sovereigns: a continuing sign of Hawaiʻi’s institutional capability and fitness to assume its position as the fiftieth state, one able to conquer its own demons (animal and “savage”). (Goldberg-Hiller and Silva 2011: 433)
In the next chapter, I look more closely at how the construction, collapse, and
reconstruction of the first drydock at Pearl Harbor was a spectacular performance of the
state conquering its (native) demons.
CHAPTER FOUR

The Legendary “Birth” of ‘Pearl Harbor’

“There are some old Hawaiians who believe that the blitz attack at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, was merely a continuation of the bad luck that was initiated when the ground was broken at Pearl Harbor without appropriate appeasement of the native shark gods”

Admiral Chester Nimitz (Proceedings, May 1944: 537).

“It is a fact that we cannot get something for nothing, because it is nothing. And if you do something, it means something”

David Kanakeawe Richards (n.d.: 11).

As Spivak has observed, “The clearest available example of . . . epistemic violence is the remotely orchestrated, far-flung, and heterogeneous project to constitute the colonial subject as Other” (Spivak 1988:76). However, producing these new subjectivities is always an intensive local affair. Similar to Japan’s imperialization program in Taiwan, in Hawaiʻi, the project of Americanization pressed Native Hawaiians to assume the onus of becoming American (Ching 2001: 97). As Butler argues:

“Subjection” signifies the process of becoming subordinated by power as well as the process of becoming a subject. Whether by interpellation, in Althusser’s sense, or by discursive productivity, in Foucault’s, the subject is initiated through a primary submission to power (Butler 1997: 2).

The transformation of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa into Pearl Harbor involved profound transformations in the regimes of knowledge and power that governed life in the islands, changes which produced new Kanaka ‘Ōiwi (Native Hawaiians) subjects in the process. That is, the process of building Pearl Harbor interpellated Kanaka ‘Ōiwi into a new kind of American political and economic subjects. This inaugurated the paradoxical space occupied by these actors.
In this chapter, I focus in on the story of the collapse of Drydock 1 and the processes by which Native Hawaiians were interpellated into new subjectivities through the geographic transformations in which they were involved. I focus in particular on the story of David Kanakeawe Richards, a Native Hawaiian foreman for Walter Francis Dillingham’s Hawaiian Dredging Company who oversaw the dredging of the Pu‘uloa channel and construction of the drydock. He had a long and productive career managing a number of major construction projects that changed the landscape of the islands. When the first drydock collapsed in 1913 just prior to its completion, there were murmurs that the intrusive project had been cursed by Hawaiian deities dwelling in that site.

Richards played a pivotal role in symbolically breaking the hold of the Hawaiian past on Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa and opening the way for the new American and military geography of Pearl Harbor to take root. Yet, he was a complex individual who was trying to practice an ethic of care with his people and his culture in a world where many of the knowledges, practices, and places associated with that culture were dissolving around him. His story of the origin of Pearl Harbor and the ways that it has been represented subsequently over the years provides a telling case study of the transformation of place and subjectivity and the dynamic relationship between structure and agency within the U.S. imperial project in Hawai‘i.

The primary source I rely upon is an unpublished typed manuscript “True Story of the Beginning of Pearl Harbor, Oahu: July, 1909 to December 7, 1941”, “Related by David K. Richards” (Richards n.d.). This paper appears to be the most comprehensive and direct account of the incident by an eyewitness who also played a key role in the “blessing” of the rebuilt structure. It also contains rare personal information, insights, and reflections that are not available in the public archive. I came across this title in an architectural report conducted for the National Park Service as part of its documentation of Pearl Harbor’s historic sites. The report stated that the document was found in the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard records. However, when I inquired there, no one seemed to know about it. I was finally able to receive a copy of the paper from an architectural historian working for the firm that wrote the report for the Park Service.
The manuscript appears to be a transcription of an oral history interview conducted with David Richards, but the date and interviewer are not specified. This document contains grammatical clues and expressions that suggest Richards may have been speaking in Hawaiian Creole English (Pidgin). Spelling errors, in particular with Hawaiian names or Pidgin expressions, are indications that the interviewer may not have been from Hawaiʻi. This manuscript is very similar to, and appears to have been the basis for a 1944 article attributed to Richards which was published in the Naval Institute Proceedings journal, “The Beginning of Pearl Harbor, July, 1909 to December 7, 1941” (Richards 1944). The “Beginning” article has been edited to flow better and make the grammar conform to American English, with Hawaiian and Pidgin spelling errors corrected. However, the piece loses interesting details thrown in by Richards in the “True Story” version. Furthermore, the “Beginning” article omits several pages of what appear to be an autobiographical post-script in which Richards goes into considerable detail about his life and philosophy.

For the sake of brevity I provide a synoptic paraphrasing of the different versions. However, in order to minimize the violence to Richards’ voice and to preserve some of his observations, I will quote extensively from the text. When there are significant discrepancies between the versions, I will discuss them. Additionally, Richards published a series of three articles in the Honolulu Star Bulletin in 1939 about his life “adventures”. I refer to these articles as well, particularly in reference to the drydock incident, because they differ in several places from the later versions.

David Kanakeawe Richards was born in 1874, the son of Antone Richards and Malie Kanakeawe Richards. His father Antone was an immigrant from the Portuguese colony of Cabo Verde, a “Black Portuguese” who became a successful contractor who supervised the construction of the first reservoir in Nuuanu valley (HSB 11/18/1943). Richards’ mother Malie Kanakeawe was a Kanaka ʻŌiwi who traced her genealogy to Kamehameha I and the Kohala region of Hawaiʻi island. Richards recalled learning about his family’s ʻaumakua (ancestral guardian deities), which were the pueo (owl) and the manō (shark). As a teen, Richards got his first jobs working as a deckhand on various
freight ships. He graduated from St. Louis school, a private Catholic boys school, in 1888. With a gift for mechanics and fabrication, in 1898 Richards began working in the growing industrial sector in Hawai‘i, first as a boilermaker for the Honolulu Plantation. Later he worked for the Honolulu Iron Works, Oahu Railway and Land, and the Pacific Oil and Light Company of San Francisco. As an employee of the Hawaiian Dredging Company, he oversaw dredging the Pu‘uloa channel in 1903 and later became a supervisor on the drydock construction project. In his unpublished manuscript, Richards included a long list of machines and techniques he invented to improve the work efficiency, including a “drill rig to drill out on the bar” for the Hawaiian Dredging Company (Richards n.d.: 9), the device Dillingham referred to as the “damned fool rig.”

Richards’ life spanned the transition from the Hawaiian Kingdom to the U.S. territory, from subsistence practices and rich indigenous cultural knowledges to rapid Americanization, industrialization, and militarization. As an early member of the Hawaiian Civic Club he probably knew other Hawaiian elites such as Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana‘ole and John Carey Lane, supporters of the Queen who later took up positions of prominence in the American territory. In Richards’ story, we see the complex and contradictory processes that many Kanaka ‘Ōiwi underwent during the transition from the Hawaiian Kingdom to a U.S. territory.

“Bumbye, too much pilikia”

As the dry dock project was getting underway in 1909, project supervisor George Denison directed David Kanakeawe Richards to measure ten feet square and dig 50 feet deep. Richards picked a crew from Watertown, the labor camp erected near the mouth of Pu‘uloa, and began working four days later. Three Native Hawaiian fishermen approached the site by canoe from Keahi (‘Ewa beach area). A kupuna (elder) in the group asked what they were doing. “Digging a hole 50 feet deep,” replied Richards.

The kupuna, who was almost 87 years old, told the workers to go away from there because the site was sacred. “They belong to the shark goddess Ka‘ahupāhau,” he said. Richards responded, “it meant nothing to the haole of today.” The old man wanted to
Richards asked, “What are you doing over here?”

He replied that he came there to feed his ‘aumakua, Kaʻahupahau, a shark god. I laughed at him for that. I asked him, “Where is that shark? I like to see him when you are feeding him.” He then said that I have no business to ask him that question. (Richards n.d.: 1).8

Richards’ use of the masculine pronoun “him” to refer to Kaʻahupāhau suggests that he may not have been familiar with the moʻolelo, or more likely, that he may have simply used a generic masculine pronoun.

Richards spoke with one of the other fisherman whom he knew previously, a retired police officer named Leialoha. Leialoha revealed that the kupuna’s name was Kanakeawe.9 He explained that once a week they come with fish from Keahi, the shoreline to the west of the channel, to feed Kaʻahupāhau.10 After chanting a prayer, Kanakeawe would dive into the water to feed the shark until all the fish were gone. Then he would offer prayers and catch more fish for his own use.

Skeptical, Richards said that he wanted to watch the elder Kanakeawe feeding his shark. “How big was the shark god?” he asked. Leiahola explained, “When there is no one, the old man would feed the shark.” Richards recounted:

(Kupuna Kanakeawe) came over to me with tears in his eyes and asked me to quit digging till my boss came. I told him, “I can’t do that.”...he said to me that, “You people will be punished severely.” I laughed at him; and they went away, the old man chanting all the way to their canoe (Richards n.d.: 1-2).

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8 In “Beginnings,” the text was changed to say “Living as close to nature as the Hawaiians do, they are loathe to discuss their movements for fear of being overhead by spirits who might have evil designs on them” (Richards 1944: 538).

9 David also carried his mother’s family name Kanakeawe. There is a high likelihood that David Richards and the elder Kanakeawe were related. However, I have not been able to find any evidence of this, nor does David’s story indicate that they recognized each other as family. It is possible that even if they were related, Richards could have chosen to conceal that information.

10 In Pukui’s account, the site of the drydock was the home of Ku-pipi, one of the sons of Kaʻahupāhau (Pukui 1944: 57).
Kupuna Kanakeawe came the next day, this time by land. After greeting each other, Kanakeawe asked again to speak to Richards’ boss, but Denison was not there. He waited all day. Richards invited Kanakeawe to come home with him for dinner. After drinking gin and eating, Richards asked Kanakeawe to tell him the story of the shark god. “He told me the story of Kupuna Ka’ahupāhau after he took another drink” (Richards n.d.: 2):

He said that the shark was so big and old that he can not go out from his home any more, so he depended his life on [Kanakeawe] to feed him once a week. He told me of the secret location where no one was allowed to fish or disturb. He told me when he was able to go out to get his own food, [Kanakeawe’s] grandfather used to ride on the shark to the other islands, and licked all the shark gods of all other islands as Kamehameha did to all the kings of all the other islands. (Richards n.d.: 2)

For nearly four years, Kupuna Kanakeawe came by regularly to try to persuade Richards to stop the destruction of this sacred site. They grew to become friends, and Kanakeawe often brought fish, lobster, and octopus to Richards’ home. “He kept on begging me to move away, not to dig any more at the dry dock,” Richards said. “And at the same time telling me we would be punished severely.” Richards replied, “It can not be done: haole don’t believe in such a thing” (Ibid.). Meanwhile, the dredging continued:

We went down, little by little, to 19 feet deep. I blasted, and nothing came up — instead, it went down. I started to pump all day, but could not reach the bottom. I got a big pump started to pump again. I got it dry, and I went down and found there was a big tunnel, measuring nine feet diameter with red soil from Halawa Gulch, blue lava rocks, river rocks, soft white shiny spring\textsuperscript{11} of water all around it, fresh, brackish and salt water springs. (Richards n.d.: 2)

The project experienced a series of obstacles and setbacks. First the pump broke, then the boiler. Digging was suspended while they were doing repair work. Richards used a clam shell bucket to dig down to 48 feet. Dredging began in December 1909 and took about a year before completing an area 180 feet by 250 feet.

\textsuperscript{11} In “Beginnings,” Richards says that “in the pools of water from the many springs seeping through I found shiny soft, white shrimps”. (Richards 1944: 538)
More workers were brought in from the U.S. continent, including Francis “Dry Dock” Smith, a foreman who had experience building drydocks in California. They formed three crews that worked in shifts driving piles around the clock. Richards was in charge of the night crew. His description of the process is full of details down to the structures and machines used and dimensions of the timbers used for bracing. Richards defined himself by his work.

“A seething whirlpool of water and timbers”

A drydock is a large basin that can be drained or flooded in order to repair large ships. Drydock 1 was designed to be the largest drydock in the world, capable of holding the largest and most modern ships afloat at that time. It was intended to be the centerpiece of the Pearl Harbor naval base, second only to the Panama Canal as a feat of modern marine engineering. This required the excavation of an enormous volume of earth in order to create a channel deep enough and wide enough to hold these vessels. Once the basin was excavated, the walls and floor were built in sections by pouring concrete into forms. As sections were completed, the water was pumped out.

On February 17, 1913, work crews attempted to drain the drydock to test the seal. Kupuna Kanakeawe had died only a few days prior. As they pumped, the bottom of the drydock began to heave and buckle:

Just as the last diver got up and removed his helmet by the tender, section 2 let go its bottom, and section 1 and 3 caved in. The sound of section 2 was like that of the noise of an explosion of tons of black powder. . . . All the heavy timber that you and I would not believe that the water power turn them into splinter or kindling wood. Referring to the time, it rises in four minutes - four years: $400,000. (Richards, n.d.: 3)

As Hawaiian Dredging official Robert Atkinson arrived on the scene, “Dry Dock” Smith told him, “Boys, the job’s blown up. There’s nothing left” (Letter, R. W. Atkinson to WFD, Feb. 18, 1913). Dillingham, who was in San Francisco, learned about the accident in a breathless telegram from Atkinson.
The entire caisson rose at least 14 feet, then suddenly collapsed, sucking in the whole of sections 1 and 3 and wrecking the pump well. Then the whole mass surged toward the sea. The only thing we have to thank Providence for was that no one was killed or even injured. . . Smith. . . ran out along the crib to assist [his workman who had fallen in]. . . Five seconds after the two of them were off the crib, the whole structure collapsed into a seething whirlpool of water and timbers. (Ibid.)

The newspaper reports were equally dramatic: “Drydock explodes” (*HSB* 2/18/1913); “Disaster Overwhelms Pearl Harbor Project” (*PCA* 2/18/1913); and “Pearl Harbor Caisson Lost” (*NYT* 2/18/1913). Atkinson complained about the “long-winded drool” by the mainstream press (Letter, R. W. Atkinson to WFD, Feb. 18, 1913). A week later, the New York Times jabbed, “$3,000,000 Sunk in Mud. Experts Fear That Pearl Harbor Dry Dock Must Be Abandoned” (*NYT* 2/26/1913). The theme of failure was prevalent: “well settled opinion among expert naval engineers that the whole project is threatened with failure” (Ibid.).

Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels summed up the feeling of despair that was cast over the project: The dry dock collapse was “a disaster that shattered all hopes,” as “the engineers, the naval officers and the workmen who had labored with enthusiasm could only stand aside and helplessly watch the fruits of four years of labor and millions of money crushed into a shapeless mass of debris” (Thrum, 1919: 39).

It is interesting to compare different descriptions and reactions to the drydock collapse. Richards first concern was for the safety and well being of his workers: “With the help of God there was no one killed or hurt” (Ibid.). He was concerned about the economic hardship the disaster would bring:

I got orders to lay off those good hard-working men after I had them four years, training them to become skilled men; and they were eating from hand to mouth, and had not reserved for their future days when jobs were scarce. I myself had lived the same way, but I was fortunate I was not laid off. There were about 1,000 men in all told. (Ibid.)

On the other hand, Dillingham’s description of the drydock disaster stands out in contrast. His narrative emphasized the *things* destroyed and the *time* (and money) lost:
At this point the water crushed in the lower members of the cofferdam and rushed into the vortex under great pressure. In five minutes, several million feet of timber were broken into kindling wood, pumps, hoisting engines, concrete mixers, derricks and locomotives were precipitated into the tangled mass of ruins and two years work had been destroyed in less time than it takes to relate the catastrophe.

(Letter, R. W. Atkinson to WFD, Feb. 18, 1913; WFD, “Pearl Harbor,” a paper presented before the Social Science Club of Honolulu, 1928, p. 11, WFD Papers File 126 and Box 35, as quoted in Melendy, 1996: 48)

A few articles in the immediate aftermath of the accident mentioned the moʻoleo of Kaʻahupāhau in relation to the disaster. The Hawaiian language newspaper *Kuokoa*
was one of the first newspapers to mention about the navy’s “trespass” into the domain of Kaʻahupāhau:

He ano kupaianaha a pohihihi no ka hiolo ana o na paa i hanaia e ka ike ame ke akamai o na haole. Aka nae ma ka manao o kekahi poe kanaka Hawaiʻi, ua huhu o Kaahupahau i ke komohewaia ana o kona home, pela i olepeia ae ai kela alahuki moku a lilo i mea ole.  

An air of surprise and mystery surrounds the collapse of the supports constructed with the knowledge and skill of the haole. In the understandings of some Hawaiians, however, Kaʻahupāhau was angry at the trespass upon her home, and it is that which caused the drydock to be torn to pieces and become as nothing.

(NK 2/21/1913, Translation Bryan Kuwada)

In “Kaahupahau’s Revenge,” the editors of the Salt Lake Tribune, citing an earlier article in the Honolulu Sunday Advertiser, seemed amused that Hawaiians blamed the drydock collapse on a shark god (SLT 3/26/1913).

Mary Kawena Pukui described how many Kanaka ʻŌiwi received the news about the drydock collapse:

When a drydock was built at Puʻuloa about thirty years ago, the old timers shook their heads. The drydock was all right, but the location was not good, for it was directly over the home of Kaʻahupahau’s son. The kiaʻi or guardian of the place would resent the intrusion of this chief’s home and disaster would surely result. When the crash came and the dock, well built though it was, fell shattered and broken, it was no surprise to the old timers. In spite of the disaster, no life was lost, for Kaʻahupahau did not delight in the loss of human life... (Pukui 1944: 59)

As a girl, Pukui was introduced to the wahi pana (storied places) of Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa. She visited the Kapākule fish trap, which was destroyed by the dredging of the channel around 1909 (Stokes 1909: 36), and met the caretaker, Edwin P. Mikalemi and other kupuna of the area, including the elder Kanakeawe (Pukui 1944: 56)
The drydock collapse cast a dark cloud over the entire project. There was plenty of finger-pointing and blame-shifting among the parties. The contractors, San Francisco Bridge Company and Hawaiian Dredging Company, argued that they should not be held liable because the disaster was caused by the government’s faulty plans. After extensive analysis of the collapse, the cause of the accident was determined to be a design flaw on the part of the government (Stanford 1916). The concrete bottom was too thin and too light to resist the enormous water pressure against the exterior of the structure. Designs did not take into account the heterogeneous mixture of volcanic rock, sedimentary soils, coral, and underground springs and caverns that made ground behave in unpredictable ways. Ironically, the same underwater caverns, lava tubs, and artesian springs which made Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa a productive resource and a rich symbolic landscape for Kanaka ‘Ōiwi, were the same factors that made the site hazardous from an engineering standpoint.

The contractors were not held liable and were given an amended contract to rebuild the structure. After evaluating a number of alternative designs with the help of Alfred Noble, Past-President of the American Society of Civil Engineers, the Navy decided to proceed with the drydock project but with a radically different design. Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels said that he “almost literally sweated blood in the solving of the Pearl Harbor problem” (Thrum, 1919: 40).

Over a year went by before Congress approved additional funds to rebuild the drydock. Removing debris took another year. The new design was more than double its original length and this time used a novel modular construction method, crushed rock fill to harden the substrate, and much thicker concrete.

As the work of rebuilding the drydock got underway, Dillingham visited the site and spoke with Richards. Richards recalled that Dillingham asked him:

“How much Hawaiian are you, David?” I said “One hundred per cent.” . . . “So you must know then what Hawaiians offer when they complete anything big that
they build.” I told him that I have no percentage. Then he said, “I am more Hawaiian than you are.” I smiled at him and asked, “What is that?” “A white chicken and a pig,” was his quick reply. I laughed, and he went away. (Richards: 4)

Richards’ good-humored banter with Dillingham revealed a hidden transcript (Scott, 1990) in the complicated class, racial, and colonial relations between Haoles and Native Hawaiians. By questioning “how much Hawaiian” Richards was, Dillingham typified the scientific racism of that time which was fixated on the declining Native Hawaiian population and the dilution of Hawaiian blood. Three years after this conversation, the U.S. Congress passed the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920 (HHCA), which set aside 203,500 acres of the former Crown and Government lands of the Hawaiian Kingdom “for the rehabilitation of the native Hawaiian people through a government-sponsored homesteading program” (“Hawaiian Homes Commission Act” 2014). Under the Act, “native Hawaiians”, defined as individuals having at least 50 percent Hawaiian blood, could lease Hawaiian home lands for ninety-nine years at a rate of $1 per year. Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole, Hawaiʻi’s second Territorial delegate to Congress intended the HHCA to improve the health and welfare of the common Kanaka ʻŌiwi. At a time when dramatic changes in land use, rapid urbanization, and the industrialization of the economy were leading to the native displacement and dispossession, proponents of the HHCA believed that the bill would help reinvigorate Native Hawaiians by allowing them to return to more traditional, rural, agricultural lifestyle. However, the program has come under fire from all sides of the political spectrum (Bailey 2009; Kauanui 2008). As Kehaulani Kauanui points out, blood quantum follows a “genocidal logic” (Smith 2006: 68, cf Kauanui 2008: 10) that makes indigenous peoples disappear while simultaneously creating a subordinate class of undeserving indigenous persons.

By answering that he was “one hundred per cent” Native Hawaiian, Richards, who had at most fifty-percent Native Hawaiian ancestry from his mother’s genealogy, seemed to be mocking the logic of blood quantum by proclaiming his identity to be “one hundred per cent” Hawaiian. But when quizzed by Dillingham about the proper Kanaka
‘Ōiwi offering to bless a new construction project, Richards demurred and disavowed any Native Hawaiian ancestry. This allowed Dillingham to assert that his “superior” knowledge of Hawaiian cultural practice made him “more Hawaiian” than Richards. In the unpublished post-script to the “True Story” version, Richards added a clarification: “I have no percentage on that custom” (Richards n.d.: 11, Emphasis added). In the published “Beginning” version of the story, Richards told Dillingham that he “didn’t believe in that” custom (Richards 1944: 540). So, it seems that Richards was saying that his Hawaiian identity was not based on purity of blood or his authentic knowledge of traditional spiritual practices. Rather, Richards derived his Hawaiian identity from his mother’s moʻokūʻauhau (genealogy).

Yet, Richards was haunted by Kanakeawe’s warning, “Bumbye, too much pilikia” (Or else you will have much trouble) (Richards, n.d.: 3). He approached Francis Smith with the idea of doing a Hawaiian blessing for the project, but was rejected as ‘crazy’. Richards described the Hawaiian blessing as analogous to the western tradition of Christening a ship or new building. Territorial Governor Frear and Hawaiian Dredging official Robert Atkinson liked Richards’ idea and encouraged him to find a kahuna (traditional priest, religious leader) to do a Hawaiian blessing for the project.

In both the unpublished “True Story” manuscript and the 1944 “Beginning” article, Richards reported consulting with a woman kahuna named Puahi12 (Richards 1944). Based on my research of the newspaper archive of that period, I believe that Richards’ kahuna Puahi was Elizabeth “Lizzie” Kainana Puahi Hiram, who lived from 1853 to 1926 (NK 8/5/1926). Puahi was a kumu hula (hula master/teacher) and cultural practitioner who lived at Makee Island in Waikīkī, near the present Honolulu Zoo. Richards asked Puahi to come to his home in Watertown and to help him with the

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12 Richards uses “Puahi or Kahinani” in one version of his story (Richards n.d.: 5), and “Kainani” in the published version (Richards 1944). I use the name Puahi. Based on my research of newspaper accounts of the period, I concluded that Puahi referred to Elizabeth Kainana Puahi, the kumu hula dubbed “Madame Puahi” in the haole press, who operated a hula “resort” in Waikīkī in the early 20th Century. She is the same person who had a rivalry with “Princess Theresa” over who had the best hula show in Honolulu during the port visit of the White Fleet in 1908.
blessing. After praying and consulting her Bible, Puahi agreed to help him. She accompanied Richards to the drydock, where she asked to speak with Richard’s boss, Francis “Dry Dock” Smith. Smith scolded Richards for bringing a female kahuna: “This is no woman job; this is a man job, Dave” (Richard n.d.: 6). According to Richards, Puahi replied in Hawaiian, “Hookieki no ka kanaka, e hoopai ia no oia” (sic.). The expression was possibly “Hoʻokiʻekiʻe no ke kanaka e hoʻopaʻi ia no ‘oia,” meaning that a haughty person would be punished. When Smith was injured in a car crash a short time afterward, many attributed it to his disrespect of Puahi.

Puahi advised Richards to make an offering of salt water and ashes, which she told him symbolized a human life, and instructed him on which prayers to recite. Richards followed her instructions, but as he approached the site in the early morning hours, he became afraid. He knelt down and prayed to his Christian God for guidance. Richards presented the hoʻokupu (offering) and recited the prayers as Puahi had instructed (Richards n.d.: 6).

Later, as workers cleared the drydock bottom of water and mud, they allegedly found the skeleton of a shark 14 feet, 4 inches long, which would have been a large tiger shark. An assistant boss who initially criticized Richards for performing the Hawaiian ceremony, later applauded him, “You certainly got the shark. Here it is. I take off my hat to you, Dave!” (Richards n.d.: 8). Richards’ success in his job required him killing an ancestral god.

Richards got the last word. He wrote, “This is the end of the true story of what W. F. D. [Walter F. Dillingham] started, and David Kanakeawe finished” (Richards n.d.: 8). Was he implying that Dillingham was responsible, or at least implicated in the outcome? Or that Dillingham was incapable of finishing this task?

The drydock was completed and dedicated August 21, 1919. At the dedication ceremony, Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels said, “The completion of this drydock and the coming of the great ships cements our national unity” (Thrum, 1919: 38). He added “the waters of the great deep were made to unite and not to keep men and nations
separate. By common ties of country and a common destiny the dweller in Honolulu and the dweller in Washington are as united as the residents of the cities of a single American state” (Ibid.) Pearl Harbor became a link for an imagined national community and the shrinking space of the Pacific.

Although the tone of news reports throughout the reconstruction of the Drydock swung wildly between defeat, anxiety, and triumph with every new development, the overall arc of the drydock disaster incident was citational to a set of powerful discourses. First, the story of Drydock 1 followed the script of a death-resurrection cycle. This is a mythic archetype within many religions and myths, because it transforms defeat into a validation and promise of triumph, and intensifies the drive toward an objective. Second, the drydock reiterated a masculinist discourse of heroic science and industry mastering and conquering the mysterious, unpredictable, chaotic, and destructive forces of feminized nature. Third, the drydock was a materialization of a process of Kanaka Ōiwi subjection to western knowledge, economics, and politics, and the abjection of traditional ways of knowing.

**Can Dave Richards Speak?**

A closer reading of different accounts of Richards’ story reveals interesting discrepancies and insights. The use of the Bible and a Christian expression is a curious detail that needs further discussion. While Kanaka Ōiwi traditional religious beliefs frequently syncretized with Christianity, it is unclear from the details in Richards’ account which particular religious tradition the kahuna Puahi practiced. The title ‘kahuna’ designated a priestly class in the pre-western Hawaiian society, but in the nineteenth century, ‘kahuna’ also applied to Christian pastors and priests of different denominations. In recent times the title ‘kahu’ is favored for Christian pastors and priests, with ‘kahuna’ reserved for leaders of the traditional religion. Richards himself attended the Catholic Saint Louis School. On his way to do the ritual, he became frightened, stopped his car, got on his knees, performed a Christian prayer. So it raises questions about the religious intention and derivation of the ritual he performed at the drydock. Was it based on a
particular non-Christian ʻŌiwi religious practice, a form of exorcism, or a syncretic blend of the two? And what was the intention? An offering of apology and appeal for forgiveness? An appeasement of a hungry demanding god? Or a casting out of a demonic spirit? The text offers no clues, but these questions go the cultural politics and psychological undercurrents that influenced narratives about Hawaiian culture in relation to the West.

The 1944 account of performing a ritual with salt water and ashes prior to the completion of the drydock differs from the narrative in a 1939 three-part newspaper series by Richards. In the newspaper piece he wrote, “On April 10, 1919, I dedicated the drydock with a white chicken and a red pig—sacrifice to the ancient Hawaiian gods” (Richards, December 15, 1939). He specifically identified Dillingham as the instigator of the Hawaiian blessing:

In 1917 Walter Dillingham asked me what the Hawaiians used as an offering to their gods when anything big was attempted. I told him I did not know and he said “white chicken and a red pig.” So you see this sacrifice idea was not really mine, but was W. F. Dillingham’s! (Richards, December 14, 1939)

In Walter Dillingham’s writings and speeches about Pearl Harbor, including one lengthy article on the history of Pearl Harbor that was submitted for publication in Proceedings journal, he never mentioned David Kanakeawe Richards, Kaʻahupāhau, or the “Hawaiian blessing” of the drydock (Dillingham 1928; 1951). When Dillingham described the “damned fool rig” that helped the company succeed in its dredging contract, he did not give credit to Richards for the invention.

Where did this so-called “Hawaiian tradition” of blessing large construction projects originate? Was it an invention of Walter Dillingham? Newspaper columnist Burl Burlingame claimed that the custom of doing a “Hawaiian” blessing at the start of any large construction project began with the drydock incident (HSB 11/15/1999). Over the years, performing “Hawaiian” blessings has become a sizeable cottage industry for many Native Hawaiian pastors, priests, and kahuna.
These seemingly contradictory accounts may suggest the multiple levels at which Richards’ moʻolelo was operating. Perhaps he performed two rituals, one in the dead of night with salt water and ashes according to the instructions of the kahuna, the other a public performance of a “Hawaiian blessing” at the christening of the drydock. Which one was the “real” blessing? The public performance that was recounted in a newspaper geared to a local readership? Or the exorcism-like ritual that was reported to a national navy audience years after the fact as an “official” account? Was one performance for the benefit of his employer? The other for his own peace of mind? The text does not suggest answers, but it does indicate that there is complex agency at work in Richards’ telling and retelling of the story and his positioning within the story. The drydock incident reveals how Richards performed multiple and contradictory identities within the paradoxical space of rapidly militarizing early Territorial Hawaiʻi.

Richards was a Kanaka ʻŌiwi man, once a subject of the Hawaiian Kingdom, becoming American. As Stuart Hall reminds us, “Cultural identity . . . is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture” (Hall 1990: 225). Richards drew on his partial knowledge of indigenous traditions and tried to apply them to the colonial circumstances in which he lived and worked.

A brief examination of Puahi’s history adds another interesting dimension to the account. Puahi, who was also known as “Madame Puahi” in the haole press, ran a “hula resort” out of her home in Waikīkī. (HSB 10/6/1913). Puahi was from a generation of hula practitioners who learned the sacred arts in a traditional setting with royal patronage, but lost that material support after the overthrow. In the post-annexation period dancers like Puahi would have been forced to adapt quickly to the capitalist economy, western touristic gaze, and commodification of Hawaiian women’s bodies and cultural practices (Imada 2012). Puahi led a hula hālau (school) that performed traditional styles of hula and claimed that she trained her dancers in a style of hula “as it was given in the royal old days of Kamehameha II, in short five-deep kapa cloth skins,” in contrast to the relatively newer “style of dance in the reign of King Kalakaua,” which, according to her was
“not . . . quite as artistic” (HSB 3/9/1914). In contrast her “hula resort” was portrayed as more of a night club or cabaret with lots of drinking and, as suggested by the haole press, possibly sexual services. But this messy blending of sacred art and crass commercial exploitation of culture, alcohol, and sex was symptomatic of the simultaneous processes of marginalization and exoticization of Hawaiian culture in the post-annexation period. In 1908, prior to the arrival of the White Fleet, Madame Puahi and Princess Theresa, the widow of Hawaiian nationalist leader Robert Wilcox, faced off in a highly publicized—and possibly staged—hula rivalry over who would entertain the visiting sailors (HG 6/5/1908). On another occasion in 1913, when a man was murdered in Puahi’s establishment, nearby residents calling themselves ”Ten Kapahulans,” rallied to shut down her business, depicting it as den of vice, crime, and lewdity (HSB 10/6/1913). When Puahi was denied a license to operate her establishment, she simply ignored the sheriff’s order to shut down (HSB 1/16/2014). In 1914, Puahi announced she was breaking into the “big time” by taking her hula troupe on a vaudeville tour of the United States (HSB 3/9/1914). That same year, she divorced her husband Moses "for failure to provide suitable maintenance" (HSB 7/15/1914).

In her study of the post-annexation hula circuits within the U.S., Adria Imada analyzed the complicated and contradictory roles performed by hula practitioners in these emerging cultural and economic circuits. Dancers like Puahi engaged in the commercial exploitation of hula, which helped to naturalize Hawai‘i as a part of the U.S. empire, and at the same time, they found pathways to greater social mobility and economic opportunity as marginalized women within the empire (Imada 2012). In the patriarchal society of territorial Honolulu, she was relatively independent precisely because she strategically parlayed her cultural knowledge into a form of capital. The accounts do not say whether she was compensated for helping Richards to bless the drydock. However, as Richards’ employers told him that “the cost means nothing” (Richards n.d.: 5) when securing a kahuna, I would venture to speculate that Puahi was compensated. After the drydock was rebuilt without incident, Puahi visited the site, “prayed and threw the crackers into the water and said, ‘No more pilikia to this dry dock. The next time when
big job is to be undertaken, do call me to clear the pilikia before you start to
build’” (Richards n.d.: 8). With so many military construction projects on the horizon, it
seems that Puahi was well positioned for this emerging market.

Upon the opening of the drydock, the Honolulu Star Bulletin reported “Kahuna
Aids Engineers to Complete Pearl Harbor Drydock: Angry Shark God of South Seas
Appeased” (Figure 7) (HSB 4/5/1919). The cover illustration depicted the lifeless body
of a large shark beneath photos of the new drydock and Navy officers and engineers.
Legendary Pearl Harbor was born. After that, the story of the drydock disaster and the
subsequent triumph of the Navy over a primordial Hawaiian god became a staple of naval
histories of Pearl Harbor. The story was retold in numerous publications, including the
previously mentioned article in Proceedings (May 1944), the 50th anniversary edition of
the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard newspaper (SL 7/31/1958), and a centennial anniversary
report produced by Hawai’i Pacific University students for NAVSEA (Vance 2008). The
headline of the centennial edition of the Shipyard Log newspaper read “The Curse of
Ka'ahupahau: David Kanakeawe Richard's story of the Dry Dock 1 Collapse” (SL
5/13/2008). The story has been cited by numerous newspaper articles, popular books, and
scholarly publications on the history of Pearl Harbor (Bolante 2008; HSB 2/5/1983;
Krauss 1975; Landauer and Landauer 1999; MN 12/7/1976; Seiden 2001). This legend
was even incorporated into the displays at the World War II Valor in the Pacific National
Monument visitors center.

Richards’ 1944 U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings article was submitted to the
journal by none other than Chester Nimitz, Fleet Admiral of the United States Navy
during World War II. His referral letter stated, “There are some old Hawaiians who
believe that the blitz attack at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, was merely a
continuation of the bad luck that was initiated when the ground was broken at Pearl
Harbor without appropriate appeasement of the native shark gods” (Richards 1944: 537).
If we were to read Nimitz’s remark through a binary lens of “truth” versus “falsehood”,
“reality” versus “fantasy,” we might be amused by the fanciful superstitions of “old
Hawaiians”, while maintaining a smug sense of superiority. But if we were to read the
Figure 7: “Kahuna Aids Engineers to Complete Pearl Harbor Dry Dock – Angry God of South Seas Appeased” Honolulu Star Bulletin. April 5, 1919.
drydock disaster through the lens of Hawaiian poetics, it is not too far a stretch of the imagination to draw connections between America’s imperial transgressions, of which the destruction of Ka‘ahupāhau’s sacred sites is emblematic, and a chain of geographically dispersed, unpredictable, and profoundly destructive effects across space and time to the outbreak of war. After all, it was the massing of U.S. naval forces at this very location that Japanese military leaders perceived to be an existential threat and that made Pearl Harbor the target of their December 7th attack.

In an introductory note to Richards’ article the editor of *Proceedings* asks, “how is one to separate fact from fiction? The fairy-like quality of his tale is absorbing and its charm filters in among the fact to such an extent that it is difficult to tell where fact ends and legend begins” (Ibid.):

the tides that travel from the Solomons, Singapore, and Bataan still roll into Pearl Harbor, but they aren’t the innocent tides of other years. No one knows what the waves may bring in or what may lie farther out in the dark blue water where the bottom falls away. We’ve learned our lesson...whether through the old woman Kahuna or the shark goddess, it’s difficult to tell . . . but we’ve learned it well this time, and there will never be another “Pearl Harbor.” (Ibid.)

So in the context of World War II, Richards’ story was reframed as a parable of danger from the sea and the certainty that America would rise from defeat to ultimate victory. Ka‘ahupāhau, originally the protector of Pu‘uloa in ‘Ōiwi accounts, had been inverted into the antagonist of the Navy’s narrative. Although she initially succeeded in destroying the drydock, she was later vanquished by the combined power of a domesticated Hawaiian spirituality and American science at the service of patriotism. This appropriation of the mo‘olelo of Ka‘ahupāhau constitutes what Bacchilega calls “legendary Hawai‘i” (Bacchilega, 2007: 5):

after annexation, Hawaiian *mo‘olelo*, or connected (hi)stories that were identified as "legends," served—like raw materials—to imagine and market within popular and scholarly venues a new product, *legendary Hawai‘i*: a space constructed for non-Hawaiians (and especially Americans) to experience, via Hawaiian legends, a Hawai‘i that is exotic and primitive while beautiful and welcoming....the production of post-annexation Hawaiian legends in English delegitimizes
Hawaiian narratives and traditions and at the same time constructs them as representative of Hawaiian "culture." (Bacchilega, 2007: 5-6)

The creation myth of Pearl Harbor exemplifies the kind of discursive and material displacement of the Hawaiian past that hinges on the knowledge, actions, and agency of a native person who facilitates the change. However, instead of condemning the actions of Richards and Puahi as betrayals, we should understand their stories as inhabiting paradoxical space within U.S. imperial formation.

Both Richards and Puahi were Kanaka ʻŌiwi who lived through the overthrow of their country, its occupation by the United States, and its rapid transformation as an imperial military outpost. With his intelligence and skill, Richards became successful in industrial trades, and from his various biographical sketches, we can see that he came to define himself by his work, by the structures he built, and by the care he showed to the workers under his supervision. With her mastery of Hawaiian cultural knowledge, Puahi also mobilized a degree of power and autonomy as a Hawaiian woman in a colonial and patriarchal society.

Although Richards was taught by his mother and aunt about his genealogy and certain cultural traditions like his family’s ‘aumakua (ancestral gods), he seems to have been deeply conflicted about the traditional Hawaiian beliefs and practices. In one sense, we can see how Richards’ complex and contradictory subjectivity was interpellated in power. When he was confronted by Kanakeawe, his elder, he did not stop work on the drydock. This is a contradiction that many Kanaka ʻŌiwi workers must face, whether they are construction workers ordered to desecrate a burial site, police assigned to break up a Hawaiian protest, or hula dancers performing sacred knowledge for the consumption of tourists. Richards was practically conscripted into performing Native Hawaianness by his employer. Yet, in his dealings with Puahi, he was conflicted about his own Catholic beliefs and the “pagan” god he was sent to confront. Subjected within colonial discourses, Richards saw and experienced himself as ‘Other’ (Hall 1990: 225). Hall’s comment on Franz Fanon is salient here:
It is one thing to position a subject or set of peoples as the Other of a dominant discourse. It is quite another thing to subject them to that 'knowledge', not only as a matter of imposed will and domination, by the power of inner compulsion and subjective con-formation to the norm. (226)

In the published account of his story, Richards became a native informant whose story’s appropriation and incorporation by the military is an example of what Pratt calls *anti-conquest* (Pratt, 1992), “strategies of representation whereby European [or Euro-American] bourgeois subjects seek to secure their innocence in the same moment as they assert European [or Euro-American] hegemony” (Ibid.: 7. Bracketed phrases are mine).

However, Richards also assumed the kuleana (responsibility) of a chief as the supervisor of workers whose welfare he looked out for, and whose loyalty and respect he earned. This trait was evident throughout his career. In 1925 Richards became a deputy warden of the prisons under Sheriff John Carey Lane. He made a point to treat the inmates with respect and provided them with more humane living and working conditions, and thereby increased their productivity in the construction of the Hilo Airport. Richards’ moʻolelo, the articulation of his multiple subject positions, or ‘subject effects’¹³ (Spivak, 1996), was always divided, partial and in the process of formation. He inhabited a paradoxical space along “the unstable points of identification or suture, which are made, within the discourses of history and culture” (Hall 1990: 226)

In the closing paragraphs of his “True Story” manuscript, Richards gave us a glimpse of his ambivalence towards the changes he was a part of and the workings of another epistemology, one that unsettles the massive structures he helped to build across Hawai‘i. He indicated that when faced with an engineering problem to solve, he would

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¹³“A subject effect can be briefly plotted as follows: that which seems to operate as a subject may be part of an immense discontinuous network ("text" in the general sense) of strands that may be termed politics, ideology, economics, history, sexuality, language, and so on. (Each of these strands, if they are isolated, can be seen as woven of many strands.) Different knottings and configurations of these strands, determined by heterogeneous determinations which are themselves dependent upon myriad circumstances, produce the effect of an operating subject. Yet the continuist and homogenist deliberative consciousness symptomatically requires a continuous and homogenous cause for this effect and thus posits a sovereign and determining subject. This latter is, then, the effect of an effect, and it positing is metalepsis, or the substitution of an effect for a cause.” (Spivak, 1996: 213)
pray to his deceased mother for spiritual guidance and that she would come to him in
dreams, usually with a riddle. The inspiration for many of the machines he invented came
to him in this way. “Of all the construction work I did mostly inventing new ideas to
overcome the destruction end of it” (Richards n.d.: 11). His statement could be read as a
desire to mitigate the destructiveness of his work, or antithetically, as a refinement of
destructive techniques. Richard’s spiritual sources of inspiration, guidance, and
knowledge reflects precisely the kind of epistemological intervention Oliveira makes with
the additional senses of Hawaiian ways of knowing: “naʻau (intuition), kulāwi (place),
au ʻapaʻapaʻa (ancestral time), and moʻo (connection to past, present, and
future)” (Oliveira: 22). But Richards did not reap the rewards of his inspiration and
creativity. On the contrary, it appears that although his skills were in high demand, he
never climbed in status in a stable career. Instead he moved around to different jobs and
eventually, in old age and battling illness, worked as a security guard for the Army Corps
of Engineers. He wistfully reflected, “Only I should have earned enough, including
royalties of which I have two valuable device or patents. I got sick worrying over it, and
it is just about four months now that I got back to normal again” (Richards n.d.: 11).

Richards shared that the last revelation he got from his deceased mother, at the
time of his article, was a two-word clue: “E hoʻokupu”, meaning to present an offering or
gift. He interpreted it to mean that offerings would be required because the “U.S. Navy
built many big constructions” (Ibid.). Yet, a kind of epistemic violence occurs when the
practice of hoʻokupu makes the leap from a Hawaiian context, where hoʻukupu usually
signifies a consecration of a particular place and a reaffirmation of the sacred reciprocal
relationship between humans, gods, and nature, to the colonial context, where the ritual is
intended to desacralize a site, that is, to cleanse, lift a kapu, or sever sacred relationships.
By expelling the sacred from a site, the new masters could be unencumbered by such
responsibilities.

Richards wrote “I believe Walter (Dillingham) and I should be punished because
we failed to continue ...with Hookupu” (Ibid.). “It is a fact that we cannot get something
for nothing, because it is nothing. And if you do something, it means something” (Ibid.).
In the last instance, Richards brought it back to the principle of reciprocity, the concept of relationality and mutuality, the subtle and complex economics of pono (balance, goodness, justice) which had been lost in grand visions of empire, the manic pursuit of profit, and the heroic conquest of nature. Dave Richards was speaking all along. Was anyone listening?
On a winter morning, the sun moving low across the southern sky and casting sharp shadows on the damp sand, I walk along the shoreline at ‘Aiea Bay, one of the few places within Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa where the general public can access the sea, and survey the lost geography of Pu‘uloa. The shallow water is littered with chunks of concrete, broken glass, rusting metal, and alien mangrove shoots. Blue-Pincer Crabs and Tilapia, both invasive species, dart about the brown water. A tired red, black, and white sign says, “WARNING CONTAMINATED FISH & SHELLFISH, FOR YOUR HEALTH DO NOT EAT,” but faded by the sun and defaced by graffiti, it is difficult to read. Beneath the surface of the water, there is an invisible plume of tetrachloroethylene seeping from the groundwater into the sea. It is one of the hundreds of contaminated sites within the Pearl Harbor naval complex, now a giant Superfund site (Navy Environmental Restoration Program 2013). As one magazine noted “we won the war, but lost Pearl Harbor” (“Remember Pearl Harbor: A Call to Arms for Environmentalists” 1991). The environmental threat is not just residual. In January 2014, 27,000 gallons of jet fuel leaked out of giant underground storage tanks deep inside Red Hill in Hālawa posing a potential threat to the main drinking water aquifer on O‘ahu (Cocke 2014). The Navy admitted that over the years, 19 of the 20 tanks have leaked approximately 1.2 million gallons of fuel (Ibid.).

The dark sand is flecked with shiny, pearlescent particles. They crunch under foot as I walk. Many fragments have a peculiar angular shape that I cannot identify. They seem to be pieces of a shell. I trace their source to a nearby mud embankment. There, in the eroding bank of red clay are dense layers of fossilized shells, a foot or more thick in places. Tugging on the pieces sticking out, I pry out several shells and rinse off the mud. They have an opalescent sheen, a rounded dish-like shape, and angular hinges of a
bivalve. These are the shells of the Hawaiian pearl oyster, the famous *iʻa hāmau leo* (fish-with-a-silenced-voice) or *pipi* of ‘Ewa! The last reports of these oysters being abundant in Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa date back to the mid-nineteenth century. These weathered shells must be at least one hundred and fifty years old, and possibly even older. I wonder if the *iʻa hāmau leo* might ever find their way back to Puʻuloa again.

The shells are a reminder that although places are produced through everyday interactions and relationships with other places, some of them distant in space and time, they also have a physicality that carries traces of the past inscribed on surfaces or sedimented beneath. In this way, place and subjectivity are like *palimpsests*\(^\text{14}\), where the past writings are effaced, but not completely erased, by more recent writings. Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa has been effaced by the processes of imperial formation in Hawaiʻi, and Kanaka `Ōiwi have been displaced and forced to reposition themselves within capitalism and empire, but their presences have not been completely erased.

In this thesis I have attempted to unsettle the seemingly stable and naturalized presence of the U.S. Navy in Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa. I wanted to understand how this presence came to be seen as natural and how those transformations effected geopolitical processes distant from Hawaiʻi. The discursive and material processes changed not only the physical structure of the space, but also the social relations, cultural meanings, and spatial practices that constitute that space. I have also sought to understand how the people involved in the events that transformed this geography were themselves changed in the process.

There were several discursive themes in operation. First, Ke Awalau o Puʻuloa was turned into an object of geopolitical desire, a “pearl” more precious to the U.S. than it could ever be to Kanaka `Ōiwi. Puʻuloa was the “key” to fulfilling a grand national destiny to expand across and command the vast Pacific ocean. This involved a simultaneous devaluation of Hawaiian forms of knowledge, practices, and interests and...

\(^{14}\) “A palimpsest is a parchment or other writing material written upon twice, the original writing having been erased or rubbed out to make place for the second or, more simply, a manuscript in which a later writing is written over an effaced earlier writing.” (Santos, 2006: 47)
their displacement from the desired spaces. Second and related to the first theme, a discourse of security/insecurity framed Pearl Harbor and Hawai‘i as the pivot of either security or disaster. Naming the “Yellow Peril” from Asia as an existential threat provided the constitutive Other that animated the discourse with a sense of urgency and necessity. A third discourse of improvement and opportunity materialized into an assemblage of economic, political, and cultural relations that continue to shape the political economy of Hawai‘i. This involved the epistemological shift that changed the ontology of place, converted living ‘āina into “dead” matter and rendered it legible, technical, and fungible in the process. A fourth civilizational discourse framed the demise of the Hawaiian past as part of the natural progression to the modern, American future. Once displaced and deposed, Hawaiian culture was re-annexed, preserved, catalogued, and exhibited in a sort of colonial nostalgia that strove to maintain an aura of exotic, yet domesticated difference. A fifth discursive production was the trope of resurrection, a faith in America’s divinely ordained destiny to rise from adversity to be the light of the world. From the sinking of the dredge in the Pu‘uloa channel, to the destruction of Drydock 1, to the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, the mythical trope of defeat followed by resurrection and eventual triumph has framed the teleological narrative of Pearl Harbor.

Today the state has invested the Pearl Harbor memorial site with spectral presences and sacred meanings that replace the Hawaiian sacred landscapes and their mo‘olelo with American ones, while simultaneously drawing legitimacy and political currency from them. As R. D. K. Herman points out, the U.S. military has usurped the power of ancient Hawaiian kings to proclaim kapu (prohibition) over land, people, and things. Pearl Harbor has become a modern military kapu site of human sacrifice and chiefly burial (Herman 1996: 112). On a recent guided tour of Pearl Harbor, a Park Ranger concluded her presentation with a reminder that “Pearl Harbor is still to this day, very sacred to the Hawaiian people, . . . and it’s also, . . . sacred. . . to us” (National Park Service Ranger 2013). It seems that the Navy has donned the feathered cloak of Ka‘ahupāhau, but it is an ill fit.
At a recent Pearl Harbor Day Commemoration, themed “Sound the Alarm” (Pacific Historic Parks 2013), a Hawaiian pastor Kauila Clark opens the ceremony with a Hawaiian “blessing”. Admiral Harry Harris, Commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet stakes America’s claim to the Pacific while reiterating a century-old Pacific Pivot:

Ours is a region of rapid growth, not only in population, not only in industry, but also in competition for scarce resources and in military growth. And I say “ours” deliberately... The United States is and will remain a Pacific power. (Harris 2013)

In the memorial site, Ka’ahupāhau herself has been appropriated as a cultural artifact of colonial nostalgia. The World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument visitors center includes a sign about the drydock collapse, and its website makes passing reference to the legend of the shark goddess:

Just as the luster of a pearl seems to change with the shifting light of day, so has Pearl Harbor changed in the shifting light of history... According to legend, a benevolent shark goddess watched over this precious natural resource and protected the area. Just as the Hawaiian people treasured Wai Momi in the old days, the United States honors and values Pearl Harbor today. (National Park Service 2012)

This text naturalizes the Navy’s presence in the harbor and elides the Hawaiian past and the American present as a smooth, unproblematic, and natural progression. In contrast to earlier representations of the Hawaiian geography as having no value, the U.S. government now seeks to recuperate its relationship with Kanaka ʻŌiwi in order to make the claim that:

Throughout its history, Pearl Harbor has been revered as a place of great value. In the beginning, it physically yielded sustenance for the Hawaiian people. Later, it empowered America to conquer her enemies. Today, Pearl Harbor embodies the lessons of our past and our vision of the future. Its legacy is the assurance we will never forget the sacrifice that drives our hope for the future. (Ibid.)

It is magical thinking to elide a place of sustenance with a site that enables imperial conquest. But in this gap, this parallax between two geographical ontologies, is a space where we might imagine and enact different realities, choose different futures.
Hints of such a possibility can be seen in the revitalization of Kanaka ʻŌiwi cultural knowledge and practices at Hanakēhau Learning Farm (“Hanakehau Learning Farm” 2014) and the revival of Makahiki and other Kanaka ʻŌiwi ceremonial practices within Puʻuloa (Kane 2013). This is also a space where the discourse of security and development can be critiqued and challenged by exposing just how destructive, unjust, and counter-productive the endless accumulation of capital and pursuit of militarized security have been for many people and environments around the world. Across the globe, activists confronting these contradictions and working translocally and at multiple scales have formed networks of affinity and solidarity to address the impacts of militarization and imperialism (Davis 2012; “International Women’s Network Against Militarism” 2014; Lutz 2009; Vine 2006). These “political-economic alliances that transcend both place and identity and foster a more effective cultural politics to counter the imperial, patriarchal, and racist integument of globalization” trace the contour lines of
what Cindi Katz calls “counter-topography” (Katz 2001: 1216). I hope that this thesis helps to illuminate Ke Awalau o Pu’uloa on the counter-topographic map of militarization and resistance.

The traumatic past of the U.S.-backed overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom and subsequent military occupation of these islands continues to haunt Pearl Harbor in the present. In the Pearl Harbor memorial exhibition, there is a sign with single line acknowledging the fact of the overthrow: “The Kingdom of Hawai’i was overthrown in 1893” (Figure 8). Although written in a passive, third person voice that disavows any responsibility for the act and located in a marginal space, literally and figuratively in-between the main exhibition narrative, the sentence nonetheless caused the most controversy in the planning of the exhibit (Figure 9) (Martinez 2010; Murray 2011; See also Gonzalez 2013: 126). As the prototype for the U.S. policy of “regime change” (Kinzer 2006), the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom is a present past that articulates its political meanings with every war, occupation, or military adventure the
United States has since undertaken. This history and its geographic coordinates constitute the unstable basis of U.S. sovereignty in Hawai‘i.

While mo‘olelo may have become a battleground of history, ideas, and power, the trope of resurrection is also contested terrain. For, just as Mikololou was resurrected through the tongue, so too, Ka‘ahupāhau might live again through mo‘olelo. What meanings might be produced in such a revival? Would it reify the discourse of threat and security and valorize the endless proliferation of militarization and “preventive” wars? Or would it embrace Ka‘ahupāhau’s kapu on killing and challenge us to transform Pu‘uloa from a site of militarized hegemony into a space for producing new kinds of non-hegemonic geopolitical relations and non-militarized conceptions of security based on solidarity (Davis 2012; Enloe 2007; Kirk 2008; Lutz 2006, 2009)? These questions are matters of ethics and politics which become possible when the veil is lifted from Ke Awalau o Pu‘uloa.

A friend and long-time ‘Ōiwi activist, Terrilee Nāpua Keko‘olani confided that she used to feel that she could not question such a “sacred and iconic” place as Pearl Harbor because it was indelibly marked kapu by the “horror of December 7th, 1941”; believing that she lacked knowledge about the Hawaiian geography of Pu‘uloa, she was afraid to “look at it differently” (Keko‘olani 2013).

But once I gave myself the liberty to see it differently, then I think one of those chains off my brain broke. And it felt really, really good. . . it taught me something about . . . what colonialism is . . . And that is to wipe away, . . . starve you, take away and erase your sense of place and attachment, and I’m going to use the word ‘genealogy’, that really belongs to you. And then the question becomes: How come I’ve been starved? How come this was taken away? Was it my fault? Was it my parents’ fault? Their parents’ fault? Whose fault is it, or is it a fault at all, that I really don’t know the history beyond December 7th or before it, what preceded before it? . . . So once I got away from the fear of thinking differently, that’s when I began to open up, to investigate, and to find out the history of that place. (Ibid.)

The turning point for her was speaking to an audience about the military’s impacts in Hawai‘i and describing the Hawaiian geography of Pu‘uloa prior to the construction of
the naval base: “People fished, you know, people had a life there before the military took it over. And it may sound very simplistic, but that was a very empowering and liberating moment for me, because I realized I could talk about a place that had so much history” (Ibid.). This recovery of the lost geography of Puʻuloa also made it possible for her to “think beyond [Puʻuloa] being a naval station” and a site of constant warfare, to imagining an alternate future as “a center of peace” (Ibid.).

As the Pearl Harbor remembrance ceremony concludes, visitors fan out across the grounds. Some stop at the museum. Others take photos with the Arizona Memorial and USS Missouri as backdrop. It is a sunny morning, but the ground is still damp from rains several days earlier. A soft green lawn invites visitors to venture off the paved path, but the grass conceals a history of destroyed wetlands and fishponds buried beneath, a sinking terrain that once undermined the foundation of the original visitors center. As a boy around ten years old tries to run across the lawn, the soft ground swallows his shoe. Hopping on one foot, he looks stunned. His mother makes a valiant attempt to rescue his shoe, but loses hers in the process. This ʻāina is a trickster. Perhaps it is a reminder that older geographical processes have invested the ʻāina with moʻolelo, memories whose traces constantly threaten to erupt from the unstable ground upon which Pearl Harbor, the lynchpin of U.S. imperial power in the Pacific, has been built.
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