

Book and Media Reviews

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more, perhaps much more, than meets the eye, and “to be in on the joke, [we] would need to have some shared history and experience” that we may be lacking (32).

One of the most widely published of Hawaiian poets, McDougall intersperses her poems as epigraphs throughout the book. These often magnificent works give readers an affective sense of what is emphasized throughout the book, the Hawaiian relationship with ‘āina and its attendant deities, such as this example from chapter 3: “Hāloa Naka / There is no need to sweeten / your body’s ripe offering / to suit my open mouth. // I take you in as you are— / the taste of earth and light, / salt-wind sieved through valley rains” (86).

One editorial in a Hawaiian language newspaper in the period after the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy was a story of a woman and her horse. A boorish man from overseas steals the horse and proceeds to use it as if it were his property. The writer of the editorial then asks: “Who is the woman? What is the horse? Who is the man?” The story is signed “Kealoha Aina”—The Patriot—or, as pointed out by McDougall as well as others such as Noenoe Silva (in her 2004 book *Aloha Betrayed: Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism*), literally “those who love the land.” *Finding Meaning* offers literature as a way of expressing this love and of “living decolonial.”

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Facing the Spears of Change:

The Life and Legacy of John Papa ‘Ī‘ī,
by Marie Alohani Brown. Honolulu:
University of Hawai‘i Press, 2016.

ISBN cloth, 978-0-8248-5848-3; paper,
978-0-8248-5849-0; 272 pages. Cloth,
US\$68.00; paper, US\$27.00.

More than a century after the 17 January 1893 coup that toppled Ke Aupuni Mō‘ī o Kō Hawai‘i Pae‘āina (the Constitutional Monarchy of the Hawaiian Islands), we, in academia and the general public, know relatively little about the ‘Ōiwi (Native) men and women who helped lead the Hawaiian nation prior to the Islands coming under non-Native control. In *Facing the Spears of Change: The Life and Legacy of John Papa ‘Ī‘ī*, Marie Alohani Brown takes up the task of bringing us all much closer to an ‘Ōiwi man whom US Consul to Hawai‘i Gorham D Gilman characterized as “the most important civilian in the nation” (109). In doing so, Brown, an assistant professor of religion at the University of Hawai‘i, seeks a broader mission—illuminating the intellectual history of her ancestors in order to help reshape the narrated identity of these men and women and the self-identity of ‘Ōiwi of her own era. In this formative publication, Brown achieves these goals and something even more impactful: the buttressing and expansion of an ‘Ōiwi-centered methodological bridge between scholars of today and figures of Hawai‘i’s past.

The life of Ioane Kaneiakama Papa ‘Ī‘ī—a man who served in a multitude of eminent government positions under five of the eight mō‘ī

(monarchs) in Hawaiian Kingdom history—seems a particularly invaluable lens with which to view the nineteenth-century Hawaiian nation as it navigated tremendous change in realms political, social, physical, and spiritual. During ʻĪʻi's lifetime, 1800 to 1870, the Hawaiian nation lost approximately two-thirds of its population to introduced diseases. Conversion to an introduced religion, Christianity, saw ancient practices challenged and oftentimes suppressed. A relatively swift transformation from divine, absolute rule to constitutional monarchy confronted the limits of the nation's adaptation and fluidity. Yet, in the midst of the tumult, leaders of the Hawaiian Kingdom adeptly navigated these changes to achieve remarkable international feats: in 1843 Hawai'i became the first country of non-European provenance to be internationally recognized as a sovereign state; in 1852, its second *kumukānāwai* (constitution) sanctioned universal manhood suffrage, nearly a decade prior to the United States going to war with itself over the issue of slavery; and by the 1870s, the Hawaiian Kingdom could claim one of the highest literacy rates in the world. John Papa ʻĪʻi—personal attendant to several *mōʻī*, *kahu* (caretaker) to ancient deity, superintendent of schools, Privy Council member, Speaker of the House of Nobles, and a justice of the Hawaiian Kingdom Supreme Court—had a view from the center of it all. Brown explains, “As a privileged spectator and key participant, his accounts of Hawaiian *aliʻi* [chiefs], and his insights into early nineteenth-century Hawaiian cultural-religious practices, are unsurpassed”

(3). In addition to his having been a key political figure in the kingdom, ʻĪʻi's historical legacy is enhanced by the fact that he was also a vital Kanaka ʻŌiwi intellectual and published historian. Between 1836 and 1870, seventy-three pieces authored by ʻĪʻi were published by multiple native-language newspapers; Brown lists them in an appendix.

Brown's chronological account of ʻĪʻi's life begins where Kanaka ʻŌiwi life narratives are customarily rooted: in *moʻokūʻauhau* (genealogy). A detailed accounting of ʻĪʻi's lineage, with accompanying charts, reveals how he came to his position in service of Hawai'i's divine rulers. The author explains, “The trajectory of ʻĪʻi's life was largely set long before his birth when two relatives, the *hoahānau* (siblings or cousins) Keaka and Luluka, accepted the responsibility of raising Kamehameha” (31). It was these familial ties that brought ʻĪʻi, at the age of ten years old, into close contact with the Royal Court. Brown makes clear the weight and potential consequences of this *kuleana* (responsibility/privilege) taken up by the young ʻĪʻi. At seven years of age, he was given the news that his elder brother Maoloha, a *kahu* to Kamehameha I, was to be strangled to death for a violation of the *kapu* (sacred laws). A devastated ʻĪʻi, and his sister Keʻimolāʻau, were sent by their mother to mark the site where the executioners buried their sibling. Three years later, at age ten, ʻĪʻi took his executed brother's place as *kahu* to the *mōʻī*. Instead of avoiding this grim yet extant aspect of Hawaiian society of the period, Brown provides cultural and historical context for the act.

This unflinching examination continues throughout the text. Brown, in an epilogue titled “He Kānaenae no Ioane Kaneiakama Papa ‘Ī‘ī” (Words in Praise of John Kaneiakama Papa ‘Ī‘ī), writes of being inspired by her subject and characterizes ‘Ī‘ī as a “courageous” man who “was strongly motivated by an innate sense of justice” and a “heightened awareness of the importance of kuleana” (157). But Brown’s account of ‘Ī‘ī’s life is no hagiography. When writing about his conversion to Christianity, the author notes: “By October 1827, ‘Ī‘ī had advanced from becoming an acolyte of Christianity to its enforcer” (68). She later adds, “This period also confirmed him in both his religious convictions and his prejudices. His fervent embrace of Christianity solidified into a degree of zeal that would cause problems in future dealings with Catholics. And while an innate sense of justice was a hallmark of his personality, at times it made him inflexible” (80). It is in her treatment of these topics that Brown’s work is especially valuable, moving past the binary of victimization versus agency that is commonly offered by earlier works. The author works to illuminate the complex navigation of Christianity and other introductions faced not only by many Kanaka ‘Ōiwi leaders but by multitudes within the nation at large.

Brown makes a clear statement concerning current issues surrounding a developing historiography in Hawai‘i, noting: “The Hawaiian-language newspapers and other Hawai‘i archives offer us access to the multiplicity of Hawaiian intellectual traditions preserved through the spoken word for countless cen-

turies before being written down, and often published” (11). Indeed, while demands for the incorporation of native-language sourcing in writing on Hawai‘i and Hawaiians have grown, the current narrative landscape is marked with libraries and home bookshelves desperately lacking native-language-sourced texts. Yet, it is in her further pursuit of ‘Ōiwi voice where Brown truly shines. One of the crucial aspects of the author’s research methodology is in reaching beyond the mere inclusion of native-language sources and working toward a cultural literacy that enriches her translations and interpretations. In her introduction, Brown expands on “Kanaka Maoli Values and Aesthetics as a Paradigm for Researching and Interpreting Kanaka Maoli Intellectual Production” (20). Importantly, the English-language sources included do not get short shrift. The author brings together varied voices on her subject in a conversation that is both complex and enriching.

Facing the Spears of Change: The Life and Legacy of John Papa ‘Ī‘ī marks a turning point in the production of life writing centered on Kānaka ‘Ōiwi of the nineteenth century. Its subject is a man who served his nation in significant yet seemingly incongruous roles. A renowned expert in ancient customary practices who acted as caretaker of the mo‘o (lizard) deity Kihawahine, he later became one of the staunchest of Christian advocates, never hesitating to rebuke those who wandered from the path of Iehova (Jehovah). ‘Ī‘ī epitomizes the complicated story of the Hawaiian nation. With her prodigious research in varied archives, use of Kanaka ‘Ōiwi

values and aesthetics as a paradigm for researching and interpreting 'Ōiwi action and writing, and focus on complexity and context, Brown has produced an important work of scholarship that offers much to Hawai'i's past, present, and future.

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Auē Rona, by Reihana Robinson. Wellington, NZ: Steele Roberts Publishers, 2012. ISBN 978-1-877577-85-7, 68 pages, artwork, notes, acknowledgments. Paper, NZ\$25.00.

Between the Kindling and the Blaze: Reflections on the Concept of Mana, by Ben Brown. Auckland, NZ: Anahera Press, 2013. ISBN 978-0-473-26385, 50 pages, glossary, CD track list, CD. Paper, NZ\$27.99.

Entangled Islands, by Serie Barford. Auckland, NZ: Anahera Press, 2015. ISBN 978-0-473-33082-8, 86 pages, glossary. Paper, NZ\$24.99.

Night Swimming, by Kiri Piahana-Wong. Auckland, NZ: Anahera Press, 2013. ISBN 978-0-473-24555-9, 50 pages, notes, acknowledgments. Paper, NZ\$25.00.

Pacific Islander poets have long imagined and reimagined stories of origin, land, ocean, and gods in ways that mirror the complex relationships we have with one another and our place as people of this ocean. Reihana Roberson's debut collection, *Auē Rona*, is a stunning example of the power of imagination and the importance of

recasting Pacific stories. Roberson's collection directly addresses the Māori story of Rona—the woman in the moon—in a voice that is powerful, unapologetic, and cutting. Through reimagining the voice and desires of Rona, Roberson sheds a nuanced and unwavering light on gendered constructions of will, desire, and power in the context of Māori storytelling.

Roberson centers her collection on the character Rona, whom she briefly introduces in the collection's glossary. In this explanation, the story of Rona "opens as she is collecting water for her children," and, as "a cloud covers the moon; [Rona] falls, spilling the water, and she curses." As punishment for cursing, Rona is "torn from earth and taken to the moon" (64). This first depiction illuminates the multiple positions Rona inhabits, from mother and provider to lover and abandoner. The overview of Rona's story in Roberson's glossary not only functions as an access point for readers unfamiliar with the Māori story but also poignantly presents some of the key commentary, images, and themes that the poet sustains throughout the collection. Rona's story is paired with the first poem of the collection, entitled "How it all began," and the relationship crafted between glossary and poem reveals Roberson's prowess in creating complex commentary on the gendered constructions of stories, archetypes, and power, all of which unfold in the spaces of Roberson's poetic recasting.

"How it all began" sets the tone and force of this retelling by rendering the voices of Rona and her lover, the moon. The moon watches Rona as "Husbandless, she / bends her will,