

Book and Media Reviews

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culture, and ho‘omanawanui uses this paradigm to masterfully explicate the importance of Pele and Hi‘iaka literature as an intellectual endeavor and a carrier of ancestral knowledge about gods, people, place, language, values, and practices. This alone is a notable contribution. However, she also explicates the ways that literary traditions have been utilized to rally Kānaka Maoli and remind them of the ways that our identity is rooted in and sustained by ancestral knowledge and connection to place. This work is a valuable contribution to Indigenous studies, and it is yet another important reminder that Indigenous ways of knowing and being have much to offer in the way of theory and methodology, and not just for literary studies but also for other fields such as Indigenous politics, religious studies, cultural studies, and more. My point is best reframed as a two-part question: What does it mean to carry out a literary analysis grounded in traditional Kanaka Maoli values and aesthetics, which are informed by Kanaka Maoli ways of knowing and being, and how can this approach serve as a model and be applied to other areas of study?

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A Chosen People, A Promised Land: Mormonism and Race in Hawai‘i, by Hokulani K Aikau. First Peoples: New Directions in Indigenous Studies Series. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012. ISBN cloth, 978-0-8166-7461-9; paper, 978-0-8166-7462-6; xiii + 232 pages, photographs, notes, glossary, bibliography, index. Cloth, US\$67.50; paper, US\$22.50.

Hokulani K Aikau’s *A Chosen People, A Promised Land: Mormonism and Race in Hawai‘i* critically reflects on the history and contemporary life of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the Mormon Church, with a focus on how the North Shore town of Lā‘ie, O‘ahu, developed into the Mormon community it is today. The book’s central concern is with the seeming paradox of how “colonial religious traditions such as Mormonism can be lived and inhabited as sites and sources of indigenous cultural vitality” (xii), which Aikau argues hinges on an “ideology of faithfulness” embedded within the discourse of Polynesian people being designated a “chosen people” by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS). The book provides both an essential history of the establishment of Mormonism in Hawai‘i and an ethnographic account of what Mormonism means to Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders who first migrated to Lā‘ie to serve the Church in the early to mid-twentieth century. In productive conversation with Pacific studies, Indigenous studies, and Hawaiian studies, Aikau is deeply critical of the roles the LDS Church

has played in the US colonization of Hawai‘i. At the same time, acknowledging her own Native Hawaiian family’s experience within the Church, Aikau is thoughtfully attentive to the multiple spiritual, material, and political reasons why Pacific Islander members find participation in the Church meaningful.

As the book explains, Mormon missionaries first arrived in Hawai‘i in 1850 seeking primarily to convert Hawai‘i’s haole (white, foreign) residents but unexpectedly found Native Hawaiians the more accepting audience. At the time, the Mormon Church explicitly discriminated against Black people (for example, a ban on Black men receiving the priesthood was lifted only in 1978). Despite their apparent racial otherness, Polynesians were deemed worthy of inclusion in the Church due to the Mormon missionary George Q Cannon’s vision in 1851 that Polynesians were one of the non-black Lost Tribes of Israel (a theory that dovetailed with others of the time about Polynesians being the descendants of Aryans, as detailed in chapter 1). Throughout the book, Aikau grapples frankly with the legacies of this history and the racial politics that Native Hawaiian and other Polynesian Church members continue to negotiate due to the history of being “chosen,” yet still experiencing, daily and generationally, racial discrimination in the Church.

A major contribution of the book is its demonstration of how Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders have often found the LDS Church to be an outlet for pressing community needs that are a result of colonization. For example, chapter 2 illustrates that

the Church’s purchase of six thousands acres of land in Lā‘ie in 1865, and the subsequent establishment of Lā‘ie as a Mormon gathering place, provided a compelling reason for Native Hawaiians to join the Church. In Lā‘ie, Native Hawaiian members of the Church could gain access to ‘āina (land) and kai (sea), where they could grow kalo (taro) and fish. This was significant because after the privatization of land through the 1848 Māhele land laws, Native Hawaiian access to ‘āina was greatly diminished. In addition to providing access to ‘āina, Aikau argues that the Church articulated Mormon ideas about the “promised land” in conjunction with the Hawaiian understanding that Lā‘ie traditionally served as a pu‘uhonua (refuge or sanctuary), effectively linking Mormonism and Hawaiian-ness (67). The access to ‘āina in Lā‘ie would not be forever, however, as the Church’s priorities shifted and Native Hawaiians’ lo‘i kalo (terraces for growing kalo) were bulldozed to build the Polynesian Cultural Center.

The book’s latter chapters demonstrate how such strong connections between Mormonism and Hawaiian-ness continue to be forged in more recent times, including the building and opening of the Polynesian Cultural Center in 1963 and the launching of a wa‘a kaulua (double-hulled canoe) by Brigham Young University–Hawai‘i’s Jonathan Nāpela Center for Hawaiian Language and Cultural Studies in 2001. Chapter 4, “In the Service of the Lord,” is especially striking and should be required reading for all scholars of tourism. This chapter highlights the experiences of many Pacific Islanders who professed

a love for working at the Polynesian Cultural Center (PCC) in its early days (roughly 1963–1983) by analyzing an archive of oral histories of former employees conducted in the 1980s as well as interviews that Aikau conducted in Hawai‘i and Utah. While far from dismissive of existing literature on tourism that critiques the industry’s reliance on tropes of the primitive, “happy Native” (which Aikau agrees is an enduring racial project evident at the center), the chapter insists on the importance of knowing what workers, not just tourists, seek from their performances at the center (see, in particular, 127–132). Rather than writing off PCC employees as dupes inhabiting a false consciousness in denial of the structural damage wrought by tourism, Aikau powerfully shows that the workers initially found it a productive site for advancing a “trans-Pacific politics of self-determination” (141). For many of the employees, in its first twenty years, the center provided a rare opportunity for many to learn and teach multiple Polynesian cultural practices. As with the lo‘i kalo bulldozed for the center’s construction, however, as the center developed into a profitable business, it became less open to the community and more directed toward serving the interests of tourists.

Despite not shying from critique of the Church, the book’s point is not to stridently dismiss the Church as a racist and colonial institution but to envision alternative futures for Mormonism, based on a genuine appreciation for many Polynesian Mormons’ “creative and inspiring relationships to the church that include opportunities for them to

express, embody, and perpetuate cultural practices” (185). Aikau argues that Polynesians have drawn on the designation of Polynesians as a chosen people to pursue these possibilities and positively resolve conflict with the Church, insisting on their ancestral connection to Mormonism. The last chapter engages community relationships with the Church in the contemporary context of the politics of Kanaka Maoli self-determination, frankly commenting on gendered divides in the movement while also expressing hope for continued cultural regeneration.

Overall, *A Chosen People, A Promised Land* is a bold, satisfying book, exemplary in its strong theoretical engagement with historical and structural issues of race, gender, indigeneity, cultural revitalization, and Indigenous self-determination. Many will value the book’s insistence on the significance of trans-Pacific links (among Hawaiians, Samoans, and Tongans in Lā‘ie as well as the diasporic connections between these communities in Hawai‘i and those in Utah). The text provides a much-needed critical history of the Mormon Church in Hawai‘i while also compellingly linking that history to the present. Most pointedly, Aikau insists that a nuanced knowledge of the history of Polynesians’ “venerated status” in the Church is important so that “we do not inadvertently reproduce these racial ideologies” (188). Centering Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Mormon voices while also developing productively critical analyses of the LDS Church and Native Hawaiian community politics, the book is a unique and important contribution

to Pacific studies, Hawaiian studies, Indigenous studies, ethnic studies, religious studies, and related fields.

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Repositioning Pacific Arts: Artists, Objects, Histories, edited by Anne E Allen, with Deborah B Waite. Canon Pyon, UK: Sean Kingston Publishing, 2014. ISBN 978-1-907774-23-2; 178 pages, table of contents, photographs, illustrations, maps, table, contributors. Cloth, US\$155.00.

Repositioning Pacific Arts: Artists, Objects, Histories draws together expanded versions of papers delivered at the Pacific Arts Association's 7th International Symposium held in Christchurch, Aotearoa/New Zealand, in June 2003. The volume consists of an introduction, keynote essay, and sixteen chapters organized into three thematic sections. Reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of Oceanic arts scholarship, contributors represent a variety of viewpoints (eg, art history, architectural practice and history, philosophy, anthropology, art practice, and museum professions) as well as Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives.

Volume editor Anne E Allen's introduction describes how the essays, despite the range of their cultural and historical subjects, address issues of identity and authenticity, striving "to position/reposition Oceanic art within a contemporary sensibility that takes into account the histories and current realities of Pacific peoples" (1). Adri-

enne Kaeppler's keynote essay argues that visual and performance arts provide a historical discourse centered on "intercultural dialogues" about social and cultural change in the Pacific. Examining Tahitian music, Tongan barkcloth design, traditional art forms "recycled" into contemporary art forms, and Hawaiian movement and dance, Kaeppler discusses (1) the ways "traditional" arts changed as Polynesian peoples came into contact with foreign materials and ideas, and (2) how Indigenous visual cultures have an impact on contemporary arts.

Part 1 of the volume is dedicated to the broad theme of "Artefacts and Traditions." Chapters by Ngārino Ellis (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Porou) and Hilary L Scothorn discuss the ways Indigenous cultural traditions were transformed through sustained contact with Euro-Americans in the nineteenth century. Ellis demonstrates how moko (permanent body marking)—taking the forms of signatures on land deeds, self-portraits drawn at the request of foreigners, wood carvings, and contemporary artworks—make political statements about the identities of those associated with them and provide a source of memory and reverence for descendants. Scothorn chronicles the evolving functions and design of Samoan barkcloth (siapo), which responded to the introduction of Christianity, foreign goods, and changing ideas about bodily presentation and emerged as a key marker of Samoan religious and social identities.

The four remaining chapters in this section analyze visual culture in the western Pacific. Pauline van der Zee identifies connections between Asmat and Kamoro (West Papua)