

## TRANSLATION IN THE CULTURE WAR FOR HAWAII

### *The Arabian Nights in Nineteenth-Century Hawaiian Newspapers*

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THIS ARTICLE DISCUSSES THE MOTIVATIONS BEHIND THE TRANSLATIONS OF *THE ARABIAN NIGHTS* IN TWO COMPETING NINETEENTH-CENTURY HAWAIIAN-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS: *KA HOKU PAKIPIKA* AND *KA NUPEPA KUOKOA*. TRANSLATIONS OF *THE ARABIAN NIGHTS* SERVE AS AN EPICENTER OF CULTURAL CONFLICT IN THE WAR FOR SOCIETAL AND POLITICAL DOMINANCE OF THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS ON THE EVE OF THEIR ANNEXATION TO THE UNITED STATES. FURTHERMORE, THE ROLE OF TRANSLATION ITSELF IN THE FORMATION OF CULTURAL IDENTITIES IS DISCUSSED, FOCUSING ON THE ROLE OF THE TRANSLATIONS OF *THE ARABIAN NIGHTS* IN THE WAR FOR CULTURAL HEGEMONY IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY HAWAII.

## INTRODUCTION: SHAHRAZAD'S TALE ARRIVES IN THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

On April 24, 1862, the Hawaiian-language newspaper *Ka Hoku Pakipika* published the story of Samesala Naeha, “Moolelo no Samesala Naeha! O ka Moolelo keia o ka Mea nana i haku i na Kaa Arabia” (“The Arabian Tale of Samesala Naeha”), a translation of the frame tale of *The Arabian Nights*. Though the story of Samesala Naeha does not itself function as a frame tale in this newspaper, it introduces Naeha as the author of a series of tales that would appear in *Ka Hoku Pakipika* from 1861 to 1862. These tales, as published in *Ka Hoku Pakipika*, were adapted to reflect classical Hawaiian traditions. For example, the Naeha of *Ka Hoku Pakipika* chants her tales with the use of an instrument in traditional Hawaiian fashion, as her sister, Haikanaau, dances hula to Naeha’s chants.<sup>i</sup>

Fourteen years later, on September 26, 1874, *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, the rival newspaper to the *Ka Hoku Pakipika*, published, “He Kaa Arabia Unuhia Mai Ka Buke Moolelo Arabia Mai” (“An Arabian Tale”), its own translation of the frame tale of *The Arabian Nights*’ frame tale. *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*’s translation is unique in its omission of the Shahrazad figure. Instead, the tale focuses on the public’s negative reception of King Shahriyar’s cruel practice of marrying and executing a new woman each night. “He Kaa Arabia Unuhia Mai Ka Buke Moolelo Arabia Mai” concludes with the condemnation of King Shahriyar by his people: “Because of this cruel activity, he [the King] became a person scorned by his people.”<sup>ii</sup> Both translations of the story emerged in a series of tales from *The Arabian Nights* featured in each of the Hawaiian-language newspapers.

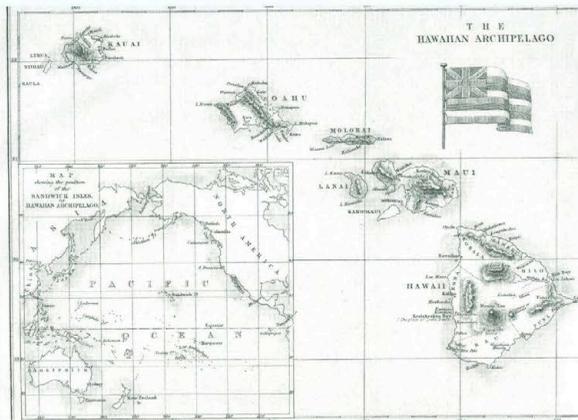
Are the translations of *The Arabian Nights* in Hawaiian-language newspapers simply another manifestation of the tales’ widespread popularity? From its pre-Arabic roots in ancient India, to the Middle East, Western Europe, and all the way to the location of our focus, the Hawaiian Islands, *The Arabian Nights* has a truly global audience. In each context, *The Arabian Nights* is adapted from oral and written traditions to music, art, dance, and film. However, the-

various translations of the Arabic tales in Hawaiian-language publications are more than simply another example of *The Arabian Nights*’ dual nature—the tales’ ability to exist in oral, printed and illustrated forms in societies so far-removed from that of their inception.<sup>iii</sup> In the case of *The Arabian Nights* in Hawaii, the tales act as a reflection of colonial Hawaii mediated through language.<sup>iv</sup>

This paper will explore the role of translation in the cultural and political power struggle between Native Hawaiians and *haole* (“European or American”) immigrants in nineteenth-century Hawaii. Though a number of Hawaiian-language newspapers from this period featured translations of tales from *The Arabian Nights*, this paper will focus on the role of these translations in two rival papers, the native-run *Ka Hoku Pakipika* and the *haole*-run *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*. As publications engaged in a direct struggle for domination in the Hawaiian-language newspaper arena, the rival translations of *The Arabian Nights* in *Ka Hoku Pakipika* and *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* manifested the conflict between Native Hawaiian and *haole* imperialists. The existence of *The Arabian Nights* in Hawaiian newspapers is reflective of the role of translation in the cultural war that pitted zealous members of the *haole* class against Native Hawaiian resisters to cultural imperialism on the eve of Hawaii’s annexation to the United States, a significant moment in Hawaiian history. The success of the annexation movement, however, does not indicate that the hegemonic process of the *haole* class was fully complete. Fissures within the colonial press emerge in the study of one tale of *The Arabian Nights* in the *haole* publication *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*. “No Ke Kanaka Lawaia! Ke Kumu o ka Pomaikai” (“The Story of the Fisherman”) appeared in *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* in 1875.<sup>v</sup> In the case of this particular tale, scandal surfaces in the translation strategies of the Native Hawaiian translator, S.K. Ulele, illustrating how translation functioned as a site of contestation in the war for cultural hegemony in nineteenth-century Hawaii.

## DISCREPENCIES IN TRANSLATION

Translator Lawrence Venuti claims that “translation wields



THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS WERE A CULTURAL BACKGROUND DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

enormous power in constructing representations of foreign cultures.”<sup>xvi</sup> Venuti’s assertion that translation is never impartial is manifested in the varying forms of *The Arabian Nights*. Translation, even in the form of entertainment, “inevitably domesticates foreign texts, inscribing them with linguistic and cultural values that are intelligible to specific domestic interests.” Translation maintains institutions by conveying and transmitting ethical values and simultaneously “embarrasses the institutions that house these categories and practices because it calls attention to their questionable conditions and effects.”<sup>viii</sup> Translations of *The Arabian Nights* are no exception to what Venuti calls “the scandals of translation.” Each circumstance of translation, from the Arab world to the West and all the way to the distant Pacific, brought about a significant moment of cultural contestation.

Interestingly, the Hawaiian translations of *The Arabian Nights* were generated from Western representations rather than from their Eastern origins. Therefore, it is relevant to briefly examine the contestation of *The Arabian Nights* translations in Europe, for it is from these translations that the Hawaiian versions emerged in their colonial context.<sup>ix</sup> This conflict is illustrated in Edward William Lane’s (d. 1876) English translation of *The Arabian Nights*, a likely source for the Hawaiian versions in the Native Hawaiian publication, the *Ka Hoku Pakikipika*, and the

*haole-run press*, the *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*.<sup>x</sup> In Lane’s version of *The Arabian Nights*, the text is “prudishly censored,” intended for family reading. Lane’s translation, which appeared in monthly segments from 1838 to 1841, introduced *The Arabian Nights* to England and simultaneously worked to promote the puritanical values of Victorian England held by the translator, himself, the son of a clergyman.<sup>xi</sup> Lane’s case is indicative of the power of translation in forming cultural identities, for “every stage of production, circulation, and the reception of the translation . . . continues most forcefully the development of a translation strategy that rewrites the foreign text in domestic discourses, always a choice of certain domestic values to the exclusion of others.”<sup>xii</sup> Lane practices exclusion in his translation of *The Arabian Nights*, effectively rewriting the tales as part of Victorian moralistic discourse.

In contrast, the ten-volume edition of *The Arabian Nights* published by Sir Richard Francis Burton (d. 1890) reflects opposition to the stringent moral climate of Great Britain in the Victorian era as championed by such puritanical discourse as Lane’s bowdlerized translation. Burton published his translation in 1885 under the imprint of the Karma Shastra Society, a subscription society founded by Burton to evade censorship of pornographic material.<sup>xiii</sup> Burton’s need to use his Karma Shastra Society in the publication of his translation is clarified by reading his “obtrusive, kinky, and highly personal” footnotes.<sup>xiv</sup> Burton’s notes also incorporated condescending slights directed at the works of his fellow translators of *The Arabian Nights*, particularly the work of Lane.<sup>xv</sup> It is not surprising that Burton’s provocative translation received heavy criticism from adherents to Lane’s translation.<sup>xvi</sup> In the publication of his scandalous translation, Sir Richard Francis Burton acted as an agent of opposition to restrictive Victorian morality. In the case of the English translations of *The Arabian Nights* by Lane and Burton, translation served as a site of cultural contestation in Victorian England.

The friction created by translation, as evident in Lane’s translation and Burton’s counter-translation, is further

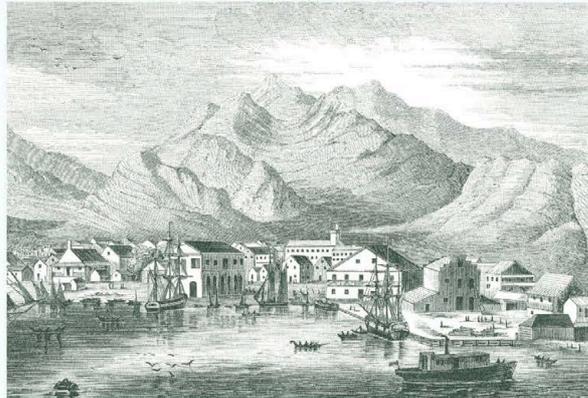
exemplified in the case of *The Arabian Nights* in nineteenth-century Hawaii. *The Arabian Nights* in the native *Ka Hoku Pakipika* publication and its rival *haole* newspaper, the *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, illustrated distinct cultural conflict and change in the context of the political power struggle between the *haole* establishment and the Native Hawaiians.

### A NATIVE VOICE EMERGES: THE ORIGIN OF KA HOKU PAKIPIKA

An editorial from *Ka Hoku Pakipika* on October 3, 1861 proclaims to its Hawaiian readership, “when it [*Ka Hoku Pakipika*] was born, it was the face of a Hawaiian, it was Hawaiian people, it was a Hawaiian body, with Hawaiian feet.” The native-run publication—founded by David Kalakaua, who would become king of Hawaii in 1874, emerged from the condition of colonialism and the accompanying cultural imperialism in Hawaii brought on by the arrival of missionaries from Boston in the early-nineteenth century.<sup>xvii</sup>

Upon examination, it is clear that the missionary message was greatly informed by its role in the plantation economy, emerging from the forced adoption of the *haole* economic system, which included the privatization of land in the mid-nineteenth century. Missionaries played a key role in the implementation of this new economic system known as the *mahele*. According to political scientist Noenoe K. Silva from the University of Hawai‘i, “missionaries were the primary information gatherers for this enterprise, and thus directly linked to the *mahele* and to the acquisition of land by foreign capitalists.”<sup>xviii</sup> As a result of the government privileges afforded to missionaries following the implementation of the *haole* economic system, they and their descendants emerged as a powerful class of plantation owners. In 1850, former missionary Edward Bailey (d. 1903) founded Hawaii’s first plantation for the production of sugar, the crop that would dominate the islands’ political economy throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>xix</sup> The linkage between missionary zeal and economic ambition is crucial in understanding the motives behind the assault of colonizing discourse on the Native Hawaiian people.

Missionary-driven citizenship discourse is further evidenced by the proliferation of instructive guidebooks attempted to civilize the Native Hawaiians into industrious, productive persons. The Mormon missionary Walter Gibbson’s (d. 1888) *Sanitary Instructions for Hawaiians*, published in 1880 in both English and Hawaiian, is typical of this authoritative discourse. In his instructional book, Gibbson urges the *Kanaka Maoli* (Native Hawaiians) to engage in “labor or exercise—this rule of course, does not apply to Hawaiians, who work hard on plantations . . . but to those who pass the time loitering about; or in lolling upon mats.”<sup>xx</sup> Members of the missionary class condemned what they viewed as frivolous components of Native Hawaiian culture in order to assimilate the *Kanaka Maoli* to *haole* values of productivity. The crusade for assimilation, as evidenced by the proliferation of missionary-produced guidebooks, was largely driven by the economic ambition of the missionary class.



AS EARLY AS THE 1860S THERE WAS ALREADY A BURGEONING COLONIAL PRESENCE ON THE ISLANDS.

As expected, newspapers played an influential role in this imperialist project. The tradition of missionary-sponsored news publications began with *Ka Lama Hawaii* on February 14, 1834.<sup>xxi</sup> *Ka Lama Hawaii* ran out of Lahaina, Maui until December 1834 and set the tone for the subsequent Hawaiian-language newspapers, with more than one hundred founded throughout the nineteenth century,

many established with Christian missionary objectives, as Catholic, Protestant and Mormon groups were each represented in the Hawaiian-language publishing arena.<sup>xxii</sup> A majority of the Hawaiian-language newspapers that emerged out of the *Ka Lama Hawaii* tradition proved to be influential tools in the propagation of *haole* values over *Kanaka Maoli* (Native Hawaiian) culture. The adaptation of the written Hawaiian alphabet in July 1826 and the integration of weekly newspapers as a popular method of exchanging news and ideas are two basic examples of *haole* cultural hegemony in a society where oral communication dominated as the traditional tool of exchanging information.<sup>xxiii</sup> This case of successful cultural hegemony, mediated through missionary-backed Hawaiian-language newspapers, is further illustrated by the fact that Hawaiians themselves contributed letters to the *Ka Lama Hawaii*, apologizing for the lifestyles of their ancestors.<sup>xxiv</sup>

Alongside the imperial ambitions and cultural hegemony came an assault of a different nature: disease. Diseases introduced by Europeans following Captain Cook's 1778 arrival in the islands brought mass death to the Native Hawaiian population. Tuberculosis, typhoid fever, measles, smallpox, influenza, and leprosy ravaged the *Kanaka Maoli* population while members of the planter elite increased in numbers and continued to encourage the immigration of Asian workers to Hawaii as a source of cheap labor. From 1877 to 1890, 55,000 foreign immigrants arrived in Hawaii to work on sugar plantations. In that same thirteen-year period, the Native Hawaiian population decreased by one half.<sup>xxv</sup> Leaders in the Native Hawaiian community, aware of growing foreign influence amidst the decline of the native population, initiated a resistance movement aimed at the reassertion of *Kanaka Maoli* authority in their ancestral home.

The establishment of the native-run newspaper *Ka Hoku Pakipika* is evidence of this Native Hawaiian initiative to resist *haole* cultural imperialism. In founding the first anti-colonial nationalist newspaper, Native Hawaiians used the tool of their oppressors for their own purposes. This act by

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David Kalakaua and his compatriots provoked conflict with the missionary community who feared the potential power and influence of the first Native-run paper as a threat to their position of political and economic power in the islands. An editorial from October 3, 1861 illustrates missionary opposition to *Kanaka Maoli* mastery of the *haole* media. A Native Hawaiian writes,

*Forty years have passed since this people began to be taught to know reading and writing, and the civilized things of this life, under the instruction of the American missionaries. . . . [Now] the children have become adults . . . however, the parents are opposing us, as if saying, you have not reached the years of maturity.<sup>xxvi</sup>*

*Ka Hoku Pakipika* avowed Native Hawaiian identity in the midst of population decline and cultural imperialism. In the newspaper *Ka Hoku Pakipika*, Native Hawaiians criticized missionary efforts to subjugate the indigenous population and to force them to work under *haole* plantation owners. The native publication counteracted missionary opposition as demonstrated in the response to an editorial letter from J. Bicknell, a missionary descendant, in the summer of 1862. Bicknell wrote, “The pagan chants

published in *Ka Hoku Pakipika* are against civilization. If the people want songs, why aren't hymns composed by the poets of Christian countries translated?" *Ka Hoku Pakipika* printed the letter with a response stating, "This newspaper was established so that the opinions of the Native Hawaiians would be published, not to help a particular religious denomination."<sup>xxvii</sup> While attacking the motives of the *haole* class, *Ka Hoku Pakipika* simultaneously worked both to preserve traditional Hawaiian culture and to reestablish *Kanaka Maoli* identity, strength, and power. Kalakaua's publication printed foreign news but also included classical Hawaiian *mo'olelo* (historical narratives) and *mele* (songs), content misrepresented in other Hawaiian-language newspapers.<sup>xxviii</sup> Abraham Fornander's (d. 1889) editorial in the English-language newspaper, *The Polynesian*, is telling of the *Ka Hoku Pakipika*'s role in Native Hawaiian resistance of the 1860s. On November 23, 1861, he wrote, "The truth is, that there is a mental revolution going on among the native population, which the Missionaries are equally incompetent to comprehend, to master or to avert."<sup>xxix</sup>

#### TRANSLATION AS RESISTANCE: THE ARABIAN NIGHTS IN KA HOKU PAKIPIKA

As the political and cultural power struggle between the *haoles* and the Native Hawaiians took place in the publication arena, translation emerged as a point of conflict. *The Arabian Nights* translation in *Ka Hoku Pakipika* acted as an instrument of resistance to cultural imperialism. The appropriations made to this tale, as exemplified in the tale of Samesala Naeha, reflect traditional Hawaiian cultural practices. The incorporation of Haikanaau's hula dancing and the chanting of her sister, Samesala Naeha, are illustrative of resistance to cultural imperialism. The emphasis upon Haikanaau's dancing in Samesala Naeha's tale is in direct opposition to the colonizing discourse that promoted industrious labor. Missionaries found the Hawaiian tradition of dancing hula to be excessively frivolous—Haikanaau's dancing in *Ka Hoku Pakipika*'s version of *The Arabian Nights* came two years after the Hawaiian Evangelical Association's final attempt to legally ban hula dancing in

1859.<sup>xxx</sup> This act of cultural preservation, manifested in the translation of a foreign tale, upheld the traditional *Kanaka Maoli* identity at a time when Native Hawaiian control was threatened by *haole* cultural imperialism and simultaneous rapid depopulation of the Native Hawaiian people. The practices of hula and chanting that are incorporated in the tale of Samesala Naeha worked to preserve the Native Hawaiian identity. According to Amy Stillman, Director of Asian/Pacific Islander American Studies at the University of Michigan, hula and chanting are key sites of "cultural memory."<sup>xxxi</sup> She asserts, "For Hawaiians, the hula encodes and transmits key knowledge illustrative of the adoption of the historical past through which they define themselves."<sup>xxxii</sup> In the wake of mass death, Native Hawaiians promoted a cultural remembrance through such traditional practices as chanting and hula. The translations of *The Arabian Nights* in the native publication *Ka Hoku Pakipika* served as a defense of Native Hawaiian culture against *haole* cultural imperialism through the assertion of *Kanaka Maoli* identity.

#### THE CULTURE WARS: THE ARABIAN NIGHTS APPEARS IN A RIVAL NEWSPAPER

In light of the threat to *haole* political dominance posed by the *Ka Hoku Pakipika*, Henry M. Whitney (d. 1904), son of Samuel Whitney, one of the first missionaries to arrive in Hawaii from Boston, endeavored to wrest control of the nationalist paper from Native Hawaiian hands.<sup>xxxiii</sup> After a failed attempt to control *Ka Hoku Pakipika*, Whitney established *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* as a rival newspaper, hoping to undermine the influence of the native-run press.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Henry M. Whitney's position of influence in the publication arena enabled him to produce the "longest-running, most successful of mission-supported newspapers."<sup>xxxv</sup> *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*'s success can be attributed to a number of factors linked to Whitney's position of privilege. In the year of its origin, 1861, *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* held a circulation of five thousand and was distributed on seven islands—Hawai'i, Maui, Molokai, Lanai, Oahu, Kauai, and Niiahu. The *Ka Hoku Pakipika*, in contrast, was only distributed on four islands: Hawaii, Maui, Oahu, and Kauai.<sup>xxxvi</sup>



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Furthermore, Whitney employed illustrations and elaborate style to add to the professionalism of *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*. The first issue, from October 1, 1861, featured an elaborate border and a large illustration of a camel, titled “*Ke Kamelo o Arabia*.”<sup>xxxvii</sup> The inaugural issue preceded a tradition of professionalism further exemplified in *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*’s introduction of color illustrations in January 1862 with an issue featuring a red and blue Hawaiian flag.<sup>xxxviii</sup> These elements greatly contributed to the popularity and influence of *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* as a rival paper to Kalakaua’s *Ka Hoku Pakipika*.

*Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* claimed to be Hawai’i’s first secular newspaper, a departure from the Bible-centered writing and preaching that pervaded earlier missionary-run publications. Despite its commitment to secularism, *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*’s did not differ from these denominational publications and their central goals of assimilating the *Kanaka Maoli* and subverting native cultural identity and power. In fact, *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* enjoyed the sponsorship of the

Hawaiian Evangelical Association, the same organization that attempted to outlaw the hula from 1857 to 1859.<sup>xl</sup> Whitney’s adherence to missionary cultural imperialism is evidenced by his objectives of the paper, as detailed in both Hawaiian and English in *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*’s first edition. It is worth quoting the entire statement:

*First — To furnishing the people with a full and interesting record of events transpiring in foreign countries, embracing whatever in this line may tend to instruct and interest them.*

*Second — To a dissemination of foreign ideas, both as regards mode of life, habits, business and industry; with a view to improve, expand and elevate the native mind; that the natives may rise to an equality with foreigners.*

*Third — To disseminate correct information regarding the best method of farming, tilling, use of labor-saving implements and machines; in short to instruct, and encourage them in habits of industry.*

*Fourth — The paper will be illustrated with pictures of passing events or of men and scenes, as soon as such pictures can be obtained from New York or London.*

*Fifth — While the paper will stand firmly on the side of truth and religion, it will carefully avoid religious disputations.*

*Sixth — It will be firm and loyal to the King and Queen, the young prince and chiefs, inculcating obedience to the laws, and loyalty to the sovereign, as the first duty of every subject.*

*Seventh — The paper will also be devoted to local news, giving all that may be of interest transpiring in the group. In short, it will endeavor to furnish from week to week such reading matter as may tend to develop and enlarge the Hawaiian mind, and enable Hawaiians to think, feel, act and live more like foreigners.<sup>xli</sup>*

Upon examination of Whitney’s agenda for *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, it is clear that his mission to “civilize” the native

population through the promotion of productivity and fidelity to the ruling elite was driven by a desire to maintain political and economic control of the islands in the face of Native Hawaiian resistance to waxing foreign power. The first issue of the publication featured an article titled “The Advantages of the Plow Over the Digging Stick,” an advertisement for *Hale Kuai Buke*, a foreign bookstore announcing the availability of primary “ABC” and arithmetic books, in addition to guidebooks for Hawaiians and a story about a wealthy man from Rhode Island sweeping the floor of an army barracks who, as the article claims, “loves his country.”<sup>xlii</sup> In this issue, it is easy to see cultural hegemony as part of the *haole* imperial project at work. The advertisement for the foreign bookstore parallels the colonizing discourse as exemplified in the previously discussed guidebooks for Native Hawaiians. The promotion of the plow and the admiration laid upon the rich man who takes up industrious work to promote the Puritan values of industrious labor and exhibit the essentials of colonial discourse. As previously discussed, motives behind the propagation of these values were related to the economic and political ambitions of the *haole* class. The content of the *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*’s first issue is illustrative of *haole* efforts to subvert Native Hawaiian power and recast Native Hawaiians as productive laborers on *haole* owned sugar plantations. The articles and advertisements from the inaugural issue of *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* are demonstrative of *haole* efforts to “civilize” Native Hawaiians and subvert traditional culture. The content of *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* further illustrates Whitney’s agenda and contribution to aggressive colonizing discourse following *Ka Hoku Pakipika*’s provocation of Native Hawaiian nationalism.

The inclusion of *The Arabian Nights* in *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* is reflective of the role of translation in the contestation of *haole* cultural imperialists and Native Hawaiian resisters in nineteenth-century Hawaii. In this context, translation is scandalized “by the very choice of a foreign text . . . which answers to particular domestic interests.”<sup>xliii</sup> *The Arabian Nights* translations were printed in *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*’s *mo’olelo* (“historical narratives”) section in 1874 and

1875.<sup>xliv</sup> Here the act of exclusion by owners of the *haole*-run press functions to subvert Native Hawaiian culture and to promote the assimilation of Native Hawaiians to Western practices. Though Native Hawaiians had “an extensive literature accumulated in memory . . . chants, stories and traditional lore in which were imbedded fragments of history and bibliography” traditional Hawaiian *mo’olelo* were often ignored in the missionary sponsored *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* in favor of translations of foreign works.<sup>xlv</sup> The tendency of the *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*’s editors to include translated foreign tales over Native Hawaiian stories sent a message of Western cultural superiority to the Native Hawaiians, who made up a majority of *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*’s readership.<sup>xlvi</sup> This inclination suggested to Native Hawaiian readers that native traditions and education should be abolished in favor of Western practices.

This practice is exemplified by the presence of *The Arabian Nights* translations, despite the fact that the tales have Arabic rather than European origin. By the nineteenth cen-

QUEEN LILIUOKALANI REPRESENTED AN OBSTACLE TO THOSE ATTEMPTING TO WESTERNIZE THE AREA.



tury, *The Arabian Nights* had been adopted or transformed as a Western product, utilized to educate and initiate children to European values. Thus, translations of *The Arabian Nights* appeared in conjunction with European fairy tales, including “Snow White,” “Cinderella and the Glass Slipper,” and “The Frog Prince” among others.<sup>xlvii</sup> The presence of *The Arabian Nights* in the *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* demonstrated efforts to subvert indigenous culture and assimilate the Native Hawaiian population to *haole* cultural values.

The translation strategies employed by translators of *The Arabian Nights* in the *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* further censored Lane’s already tame text. Christina Bacchilega, a historian at the University of Hawaii who has researched *The Arabian Nights* in *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, concludes that the further expurgation of Lane’s translation allows for “making Shahriyar’s tale assume a localized, possibly political, function in 1874 Hawaii.” Moreover, she attributes the translation of the aforementioned “He Kaa Arabia Unuhia Mai Ka Buke Moolelo Arabia Mai, no Ke Kuokoa” to a “Christianizing process.”<sup>xlviii</sup> *Ka Nupepa*’s emphasis on the condemnation of King Shahriyar’s cruel practice by his subjects further subverts Native Hawaiian nationalism. Whitney and *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* outrightly opposed the reign of Hawaiian sovereigns, referring to Kamehameha IV (d. 1863) as a tyrant and later condemning supporters of the fiercely nationalistic Queen Liliuokalani (d. 1917) as *anee-alii*, or hangers-on for royal favor.<sup>xlix</sup> Translation strategies employed in “He Kaa Arabia Unuhia Mai Ka Buke Moolelo Arabia Mai, no Ke Kuokoa” emphasizing the cruel practices of a despotic king worked to undermine the authority of Native Hawaiian sovereigns while simultaneously promoting *haole*, Christian morality. In the case of *The Arabian Nights* in the *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, translation strategies acted in concert with political “factors of reception” in the subversion Native Hawaiian culture by the *haole* establishment.<sup>l</sup>

## FISSURES AND FAULTLINES IN THE COLONIAL PRESS

This paper has already examined the role of translation as a site of contestation manifested through rival newspapers. Yet the curious case of a single tale published in 1875, “No Ke Kanaka Lawaia! Ke Kumu o ka Pomaikai” (“The Story of the Fisherman”) in the missionary-sponsored publication *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* warrants further discussion of conflict within the colonial press itself. The presence of this tale in *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* is further evidence of the scandals of translation. The translation of “No Ke Kanaka Lawaia! Ke Kumu o ka Pomaikai” is indicative of a fissure between the agenda of Whitney and that of S.K. Ulele, the Native Hawaiian translator of this tale. It is reasonable to assume that the agenda of Ulele, as a Native Hawaiian, conflicted with the hegemonic objectives stated in the *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* by his editor, Whitney. In this case, translation was provocative of contestation within the missionary-sponsored publication itself.

Examination of the translation strategies employed by S.K. Ulele in “No Ke Kanaka Lawaia! Ke Kumu o ka Pomaikai” indicates an act of resistance on the part of the Hawaiian translator.<sup>li</sup> Though Ulele’s work is derived from Edward William Lane’s family version of *The Arabian Nights* and was included in the *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* as a form of colonizing discourse, his translation strategies simultaneously promote reverence for the traditional-Hawaiian civilization and thus conflict with the agenda of his *haole* editors. Noelani Arista, the Hawaiian translator who worked with Cristina Bacchilega on *The Arabian Nights* translations, provides an example of Ulele’s determined strategy in the translation of this poem from “No Ke Kanaka Lawaia! Ke Kumu o ka Pomaikai”:

*Lawaia moewaa  
Ka upena ume iki  
Anu hewa i ke Ao  
Ke kuuna ia ole*

*Unlucky fisherman*

*The net that attracts little  
Bitterly cold in the day  
The cast that snares no fish*  
—S.K. Ulele (*Kuokoa* May 1, 1875)<sup>lii</sup>

Arista determines from Ulele's translation that he utilized specific strategies to evoke remembrance of the classical-Hawaiian tradition, "Ulele had many choices for the word I have translated as 'unlucky.' He could have used something very conventional. . . . Instead Ulele decided to illustrate his knowledge of the cherished past when he chose the word *moewa'a*, literally "a dream of a canoe," which in former times was considered bad luck, a portent of disappointment, or even death."<sup>liii</sup> The word selection of S.K. Ulele, as exemplified in the poem, works to preserve the traditional Native-Hawaiian identity as a form of resistance to the cultural hegemony propagated by the newspaper, itself.

Arista's reasoning concerning the motives of S.K. Ulele is further supported by the speculation that S.K. Ulele is a pseudonym for S.K. Kaai, the named translator of the Samesala Naeha story and three others in *Ka Hoku Pakipika*.<sup>liv</sup> If S.K. Ulele is indeed the same translator that implemented the previously discussed appropriations to *The Arabian Nights* as a means of preservation of Native-Hawaiian traditions and identity, then it is likely that he adhered to native nationalism championed in *Ka Hoku Pakipika*. This speculation provides further evidence as to the objectives of the Native-Hawaiian translator, S.K. Ulele,

and indicates that Ulele's agenda was in direct conflict with the imperialistic objectives of his *haole* editor, Henry M. Whitney. Ulele's translation strategy to promote the preservation of the Native-Hawaiian identity in a publication founded for the very reason of subverting that same identity is another example of translation as an instigator of cultural conflict. In the case of "No Ke Kanaka Lawaia! Ke Kumu o ka Pomaikai," translation of *The Arabian Nights* provoked a fissure within the colonial press itself as the agenda of the *haole* editors conflicted with that of the Native-Hawaiian translator.

### CONCLUSION

In the nineteenth-century Hawaiian newspapers *Ka Hoku Pakipika* and *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, translations of *The Arabian Nights* served as a site of contestation between Native-Hawaiian nationalists and *haole* cultural imperialists. The translations worked to promote the conflicting interests of *haole* cultural imperialists and *Kanaka Maoli* nationalists in the two rival papers. In the native-operated *Ka Hoku Pakipika*, translations of *The Arabian Nights* served to evoke a remembrance of the traditional Hawaiian past in the face of mass death and oppressive colonizing discourse. In *Ka Hoku Pakipika*'s rival paper, the missionary-sponsored *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, editors included translations to further promote European values and aid in the assimilation and subjugation of the *Kanaka Maoli* to *haole* dominance. In the case of *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, the translations provoked fissure within the publication itself, as the agenda

*"If S.K. Ulele is indeed the same translator that implemented [these] appropriations to The Arabian Nights as a means of preservation of Native-Hawaiian traditions and identity, then it is likely that he adhered to native nationalism championed in Ka Hoku Pakipika."*

of the native translator S.K. Ulele conflicted with that of the paper's editor.

Different translation strategies and factors of reception worked in concert to promote the agendas of both the Native Hawaiians and the *haole* immigrants, two groups warring for cultural, political, and economic domination of the Hawaiian Islands. *The Arabian Nights* in Hawaiian-language newspapers served as the root of disagreement in the bitter war for cultural hegemony, just as the translation of the tales had precipitated conflict in other cases around the globe. The case of *The Arabian Nights* in nineteenth-century Hawaiian-language newspapers is reflective of the power of translation in the construction of cultural identity and change. The ability of translation to act as an instrument of both creativity and destruction of cultural identity is not to be underestimated for, as Venuti said, "Translation looms large among the cultural practices that at once join and separate us."<sup>iv</sup>

#### ENDNOTES

- i. Bacchilega and Artista 2007 (171)
- ii. Bacchilega and Artista 2004 (197)
- iii. Irwin (113)
- iv. Sajdi
- v. Bacchilega and Artista 2007 (192)
- vi. Venuti (67)
- vii. Ibid.
- viii. Venuti (2)
- ix. Bacchilega and Artista (192)
- x. Ibid.
- xi. Irwin (23-24)
- xii. Venuti (67)
- xiii. Irwin (29)
- xiv. Irwin (34)
- xv. Ibid.
- xvi. Irwin (35)
- xvii. Bacchilega and Arista 2007 (171)
- xviii. Silva 1999 (49)
- xix. Silva 1999 (50)
- xx. Gibson (41)
- xxi. Mookini (19)
- xxii. Mookini (19-34)
- xxiii. Mookini (3)
- xxiv. Quick (9)
- xxv. Trask (10)
- xxvi. Silva 1999 (35)
- xxvii. Johnson 1976 (217)
- xxviii. Silva (42)
- xxix. Silva (37)
- xxx. Silva 2004 (52)
- xxxi. Stillman (188)
- xxxii. Stillman (189)
- xxxiii. Mookini (1)
- xxxiv. Silva (80)
- xxxv. Chapin (53)
- xxxvi. Johnson (162, 185)
- xxxvii. "Ke Kamelo o Arabia"
- xxxviii. "Ka Hae Hawaii"
- xxxix. Chapin (53)
- xl. Johnson (58)
- xli. Whitney (2)
- xlii. Rubellite (1-5)
- xliiii. Venuti (67)
- xliv. Bacchilega and Artista 2007 (199)
- xlv. Kuykendall (10)
- xlvi. Chapin (47-86)
- xlvii. Bacchilega and Artista 2007 (179)
- xlviii. Bacchilega and Artista 2007 (197)
- xliv. Mookini (21)
- l. Venuti (68)
- li. Bacchilega and Artista 2007 (179)
- lii. Bacchilega and Artista 2007 (197)
- liii. Ibid.
- liv. Bacchilega and Artista 2007(180)
- lv. Venuti (7)

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