

Mana Wāhine Maoli

Female Empowerment - Hawai'i

Māhea Ahia

Hānau - birth

- Coral polyp is first life form
 - Hina - mahina - moon
- La'ila'i - is first human
 - (La'ila'i, then Ki'i, Kāne)
- Haumea - births from many body parts, in every generation
- Papahānaumoku - births islands
- Ho'ohōkūkalani - births first Kanaka Maoli (Hāloa)
- Pele & Hi'iaka
- Nāmakaokaha'i



Pūowaina: Flag Day

for Lākea and Mililani

Bring ginger, yellow
and white, broken stalks
with glossy leaves.

Bring *leibulu*,
palapalai, *pikake*. Bring
kapa, beaten fine

as skin. Bring
the children
to chant

for our dead,
then stand
with the *lāhui*

and burn
their American
flag.

Nāmakaokaha'i

I.

Born from the chest
of haumea, *mo'o*
woman of *kuapā*,
lizard-tongued goddess
of Hawai'i.

Nāmakaokaha'i,
sister of thunder
and shark,
Kānehekili,
Kūhaimoana,
elder of Pele,
Pelehonuamea.

II.

Kinolau on the wind,
in the yellowing *ti*,
sounds of Akua
awaking in the dawn.

Nā-maka-o-ka-ha'i,
eyes flecked with fire,
summoning her family

from across the seas.

III.

Sharks in the shallows,
upheaval in the heavens.

From the red rising mist
of Kahiki, the Woman of the Pit:

Pele, Pelehonuamea
travelling the uplands,

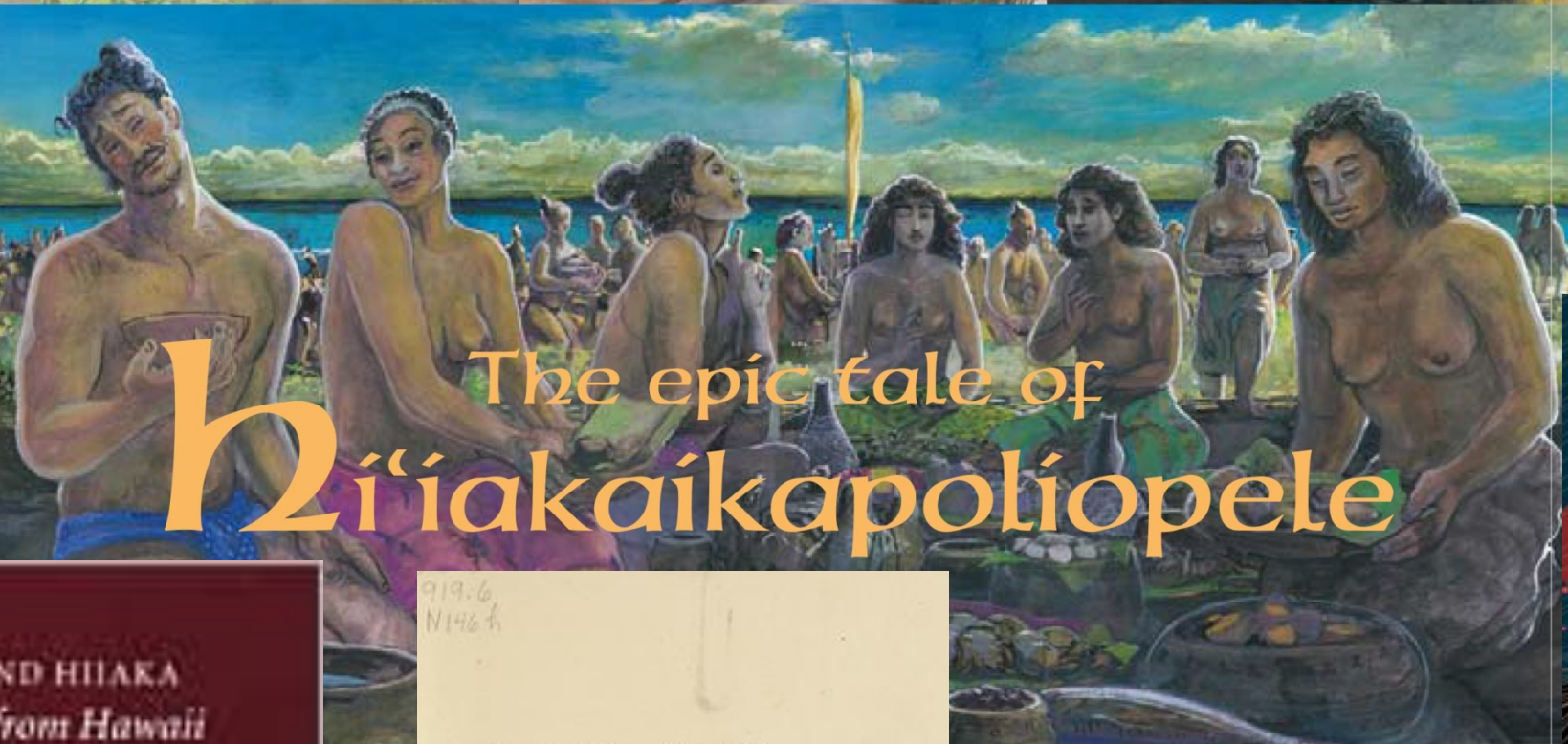
devouring the foreigner.

Glossary

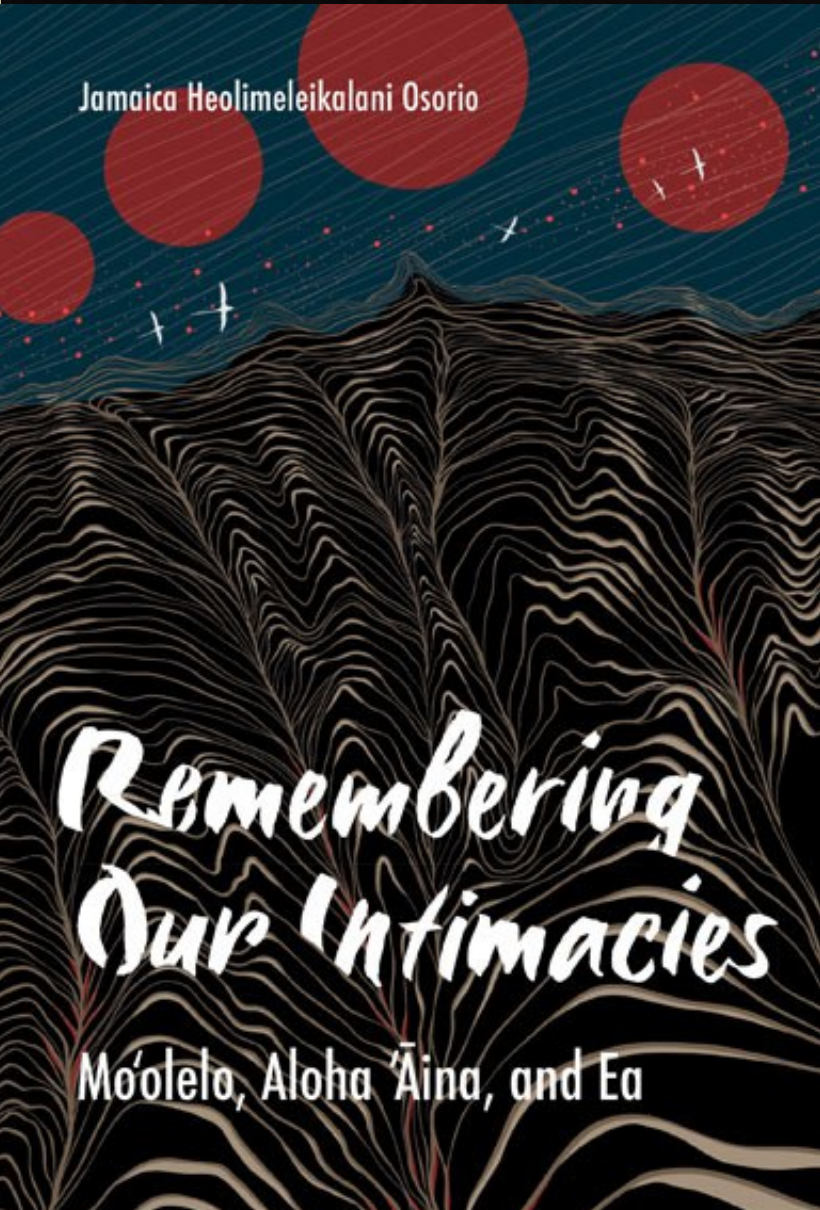
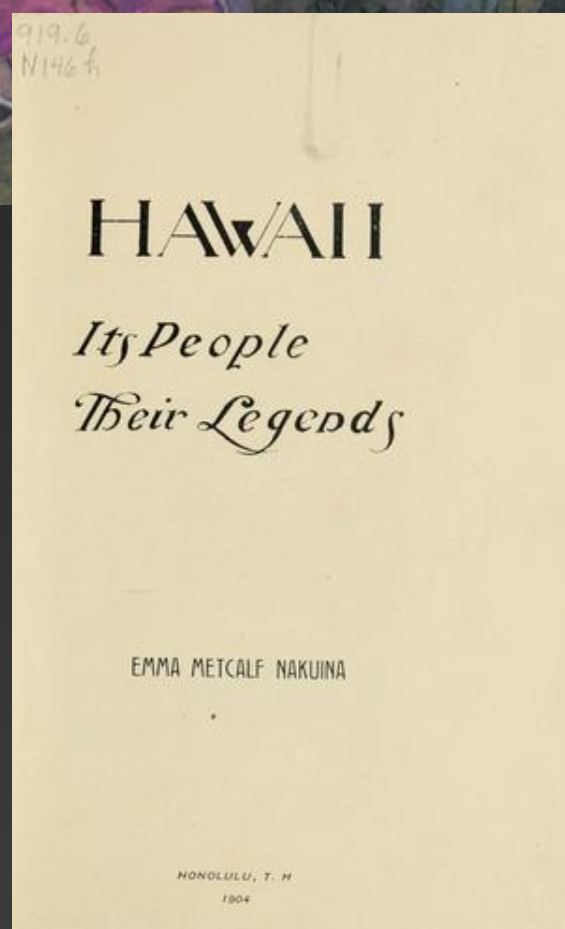
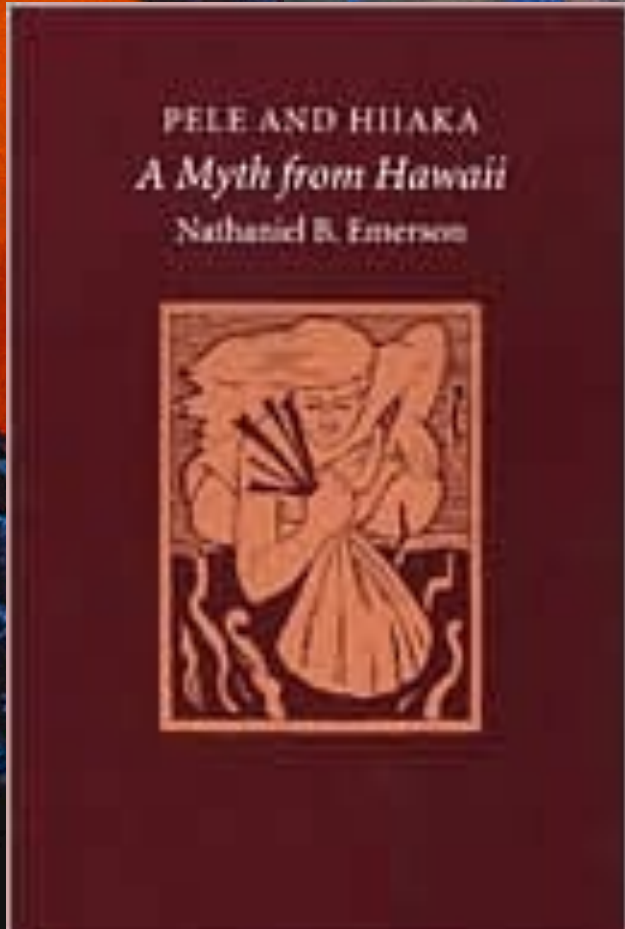
aku	Bonito, skipjack, tuna.
Akua	God, supernatural, divine.
Kahiki	Tahiti; one of the places where Hawaiians return upon death.
Kānehekili	God of lightning.
kapa	Cloth made from pounded bark; clothes.
kinolau	One of the many forms taken by a god, such as the <i>ti</i> leaf as a form of the <i>mo'o</i> god.
kuapā	Wall of a fishpond.
Kūhaimoana	Largest and most celebrated of Hawaiian shark gods.
lāhui	People, nation.
leihulu	Feather lei, formerly worn by royalty; a beloved child or person.

Our mother is our land, *Papa-hānau-moku* - she who births the islands. This means that Hawaiian women leaders are genealogically empowered to lead the nation"

Haunani-Kay Trask - *From a Native Daughter* pp. 121-122



The epic tale of
Hi'ikaikapoliopole



ku'ualoha ho'omanawanui

voices of fire reweaving the literary lei of pele and hi'iaka

**I am slyly
reproductive: ideas
books, history
politics, reproducing
the rope of resistance
for unborn generations.**

Haunani-Kay Trask, from her poem "Sons" in *Light in a Crevice Never Seen*

Mana Wahine: Feminism and Nationalism in Hawaiian Literature ku‘ualoha ho‘omanawanui

- female-based power, resilience, leadership
- “indigenous, culturally-based understanding of female em/power/ment that is rooted in traditional concepts such as mo‘okū‘auhau, aloha ‘āina and kuleana (responsibility). It is the physical, intellectual and spiritual (or intuitive) power of women. It is individually embodied, but often employs collaborative strategies with other women fo the benefit of the ‘ohana (family) or lāhui (nation) where women are the source of knowledge” (ho‘omanawanui 28)
- pre-dates Western feminisms: “western ideas of feminism react against, resist or seek equality with patriarchy. Mana wahine does neither”
 - we fight against colonialism and for self-determination as a people, not a gender
 - “asserts that women have our own power that is unique to us [and] can’t be shared with (or appropriated by) men” (Trask)

Literary Nationalism

- rhetorical moves - persistence, resistance, strength, cultural resilience
- first non-European, treaty-making, independent nation
- outsiders write ABOUT Kanaka Maoli (ships, missionary accounts)
- extensive oral culture, extremely high literacy rate
- Hawaiian language newspapers (Kanaka writers)
- translation into English - most published [publishing barriers throughout Pacific]
- post-1960s “Hawaiian Renaissance” Hawaiians write in English
 - identity, authenticity, connection to land
- reclaim writing in Hawaiian, HCE/Pidgin, English
 - decolonization, re/building nation, survivance (Gerald Vizenor), resurgence, emergent strategies



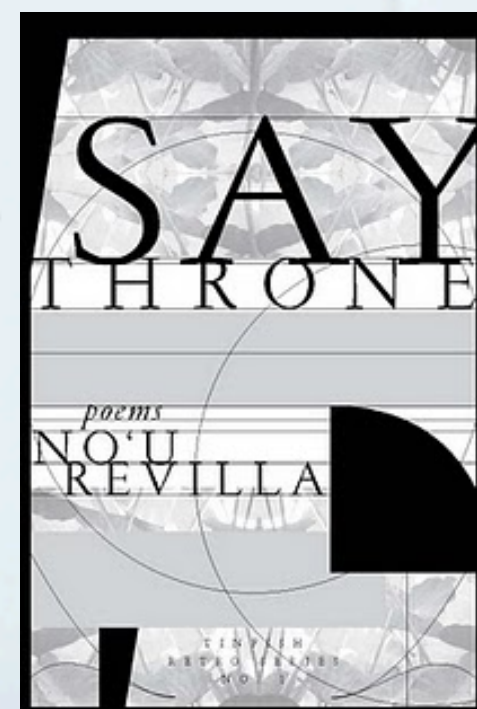
PULL WITHOUT PUSH

Grandma was a lizard at our age. She walked first, the story goes.
And learned to climb. Up the stiff metal pole. Up and over the
hanging head. Up until she was up and it was down.

The lamp post I thought
was a cervix to the sky, but no, not
female. It
belonged to the pier. And thus us. We
pissed everywhere.

on the bridge
on the concrete floor
on the steps running down to the tires
in the ocean where we waited for others to jump.

Young, territorial.
Everywhere pissing.



There was rope that hung
from one end of the pier to the other,
rope that hung like a tongue—the kind
of tongue we wished to have in our little girl mouths:
thick and twisted, tasting
salt in broad daylight:

Big Girl tongue.

In the water we mounted it, squeezed
it between our legs,

like she said "slyly reproductive."

We were warm without pissing,
enacting mothers and daughters where water met fiber met
piers.

Grandma jumped into the ocean with her legs spread. She landed
and the water turned to foam. The rope was dry for thirteen days.
One for every child that swam out of her.

We dreamed of sex in tents on cliffs in the morning out of wedlock,
of touchy that one itchy this one,
of making eyes biting lips saying "fuck" sexy.

Fucking formed like vowels between our legs—
not like other girls and their ABCs—we
knew rope like A E I O U.

One child from her forehead. One from the tongue. Another rolled
out from her clit. After another after another after another from her
mo'o toes. They climbed. Like her. Grandma. Lizard. At our age.



KA PO'E MO'O AKUA

Hawaiian Reptilian Water Deities



MARIE ALOHALANI BROWN

why poetry?

- compact form (less is more)
- precision of language, but also freedom of language (multi-lingual, second-language learners)
- stark imagery
- use of metaphor
- coded, kaona (layers of insider or hidden meanings)
- portable
- affordable
- emotional
- political
- latitude and creative freedom afforded artists (artistic statements, fool, court jester, political cartoonist)
- mana (deities/chiefs invoked, to whom, by whom, delivered in what social context)

Hāwane Rios

“Mana Wahine”

- connected to ‘āina, close to the earth
- womb symbolism, in the crevice/womb
- re/birth
- sisterhood
- leadership
- empowered women’s voices
- <https://youtu.be/btSBNyzM9zU>

Waimakaleahua

Makana Kāne-Kuahiwī

- ma‘i - historic mis/uses of the term
 - Christian associations of unclean, sick, weak, undesirable
- waimakalehua
- traditional practices - ritual separation
 - hale pe‘a (women house for menstruation)
 - hi‘uwai (sea bathing) after period
- contemporary practices
 - personal monthly observances
 - collective/community rituals and ceremony

Piko and 'Iewe

- customary practices that connect a child to its home and ensures a place to return to
- piko, naval cord connecting baby to mom through belly button
 - sometimes placed in pohaku rocks
- 'Iewe, placenta, afterbirth
- planting in the 'āina
 - sometimes under an 'ulu tree symbolizing growth
- Do you have a story of connecting you via your piko or 'Iewe?

Current restrictions

- What restrictions have you experienced or heard of while during menstruation?
 - When on their period, girls/women aren't supposed to...
- What restrictions have you experienced or heard of due to gender/sexuality?
 - Traditionally, wāhine and/or māhū aren't supposed to...
- What is at stake if we change these practices?
- Who benefits by keeping things the way they are?
- How might we re-evaluate, adjust, end some practices/rules?
- What rituals, ceremonies, observances would you like to initiate, or at least learn more about to support personally or collectively?