

MAPPING MĀ'OHĪ COMMUNITIES IN DIASPORA:
HISTORY, IDENTITY, AND HEIVA IN HAWAI'I

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ABSTRACT

This thesis contributes to archival and contemporary research for Mā'ohi migration and culture in diaspora, and introduces Mā'ohi diasporic communities in Hawai'i. Long standing relationships between Kanaka Mā'ohi and Maoli have helped to create these diasporic communities. By using historical traces of significant Mā'ohi mobilities, the thesis argues that Mā'ohi have been actively engaging with and expanding the boundaries of Te Ao Mā'ohi. Intertwined in this argument is the claim that Mā'ohi identity which is now rooted in Hawai'i, is playing out differently in diasporic contexts than in homelands. As a result of historical flows, mobilities, and convergences, Mā'ohi communities have replicated cultural festivals such as the Heiva in diaspora with striking results. This thesis concludes that using the Heiva as a contemporary site of the phenomena in action brings the historical diaspora of Mā'ohi into focus.

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PREFACE

On Being Mā'ohi In Diaspora

When my Pa'umotu mother speaks of her early childhood on the island of Takaroa in the Tuamotu Archipelago of Te Ao Mā'ohi or French Polynesia, her talk is full of anecdotes reminiscent of small island communal living, made colorful by the storied presence of lustrous poe (black pearls) from the black lipped oyster (*Pinctada margaritifera*).¹ She reminisces about how their family's furniture legs were made of buckets used to store these family heirlooms. She speaks of pearls so plentiful that as a child she was allowed to play marbles with them all day in the shade of coconut palms. She remembers occasionally that she would accompany her parents and grandparents on trade expeditions to neighboring atolls because of this family business, although this was primarily her brother's privilege.² In her youth, her maternal grandparents owned the only fishing schooner in their few surrounding atolls, and her stories boast of the traditional skills honed by her father and her grandparents the craft and expertise required to dive to great depths seeking these treasures. She notes how Takaroa in the 50s and 60s, when she was growing up, was the site of a departure from traditional diving pearl farms to large scale pearl farming operations, and this brought a season of change to the Tuamotu Islands.

In a wave of migration in the 50s and 60s, ta'ata Pa'umotu, people of the Tuamotu Islands, migrated from the Tuamotu Archipelago (in my family this was primarily the atoll of Takaroa) to Tahiti after large government agencies took control of the black pearl farming industry (Rapaport 1993, 1996). Under the force of the powerful waves of change of the black

¹ As an indigenous scholar, it is a priority to highlight the potency and vitality of our homelands languages. Therefore, non-English words will be translated in its first use for meaning, and not italicized to allow for a greater fluidity in the text.

² My mother was fluent in Pa'umotu and Tahitian, her parents had a stronger emphasis on Pa'umotu dialects, and her grandfather in several Pa'umotu dialects, as well as Tahitian. However, all would eventually learn French and English in their migrations throughout the region and beyond. This breadth of language diversity was considered a standard in order to conduct trade/business in this region of Te Ao Mā'ohi.

pearl rush in which a great deal of the lagoon space was reconceived as no longer owned or to be directly controlled or operated by gati or “lineages” who were from that island, only the land on the atoll itself could be passed down (Rapaport 1993, 1996). Through the selling of lands, government interest in developing lagoon space, and the alluring prospect of farming large parts of the lagoons for black pearls this period led to immense change. New immigrants were introduced and old families left the lagoons.

For many ta’ata Pa’umotu, the story of black pearls is a complicated and critical historical motivation for the migration to Tahiti and beyond. My mother’s story, the story of her parents, her siblings, her grandparents and their parents before, represents a type of internal migration that kept rippling beyond local shores in French Polynesia. Outer islander ta’ata Pa’umotu are still today largely in control of land ownership on those islands. However, the prosperity of atolls rests in their lagoons spaces which have become increasingly dominated by foreign investments, an arrangement negotiated far from the shores of those atolls.

By the end of the 1960s, my great grandparents had either sold or redistributed much of their land rights and local property and migrated to Tahiti. While on Tahiti, through a series of events related to their church membership, they were eventually called to serve cultural missions to the newly formed Polynesian Cultural Center, located in Lā’ie, Hawai’i. My great grandfather became one of the first village chiefs of the “Tahitian” village at the Center, a position of significant influence and pride since in those early days Islanders more directly influenced the music and dances portrayed in the villages. The construction of “identity” for Mā’ohi in that space was less about homeland boundaries and more about cohesive elements of shared identities belonging to Te Ao Mā’ohi.

Fast forwarding through the decades of reciprocal exchange between these two regions evident in my and many other family's stories, reveals a rich story of engagement and encounter and exchanged genealogies increasingly rooted in many island homelands with transnational identities that defy colonial boundaries. You happen upon the story of us; Mā'ohi, along with the many flavors by which indigenous peoples of French Polynesia have sought out new relationships within and across the region of Oceania. My family's story stretches across many island nations; from the Tuamotu Islands to the Society Islands, to Hawai'i nei, and then on to the mainland US. The courage of these navigations continues to astonish me as the Francophone Pacific is an uncomfortable and sometimes invisible neighbor with the Anglophone Pacific.

This thesis is in direct conversation with the transnational migration of Mā'ohi to Hawai'i, past, present, and future. But as an underrepresented demographic and subjectivity within Pacific Studies, diasporic Mā'ohi may require new pathways of understanding Oceania. The sheer size (number of islands), diversity of languages and dialects, cultures and peoples within the Overseas Territory of French Polynesia complicate this region's relationship to the rest of Oceania. Similarly, New Caledonia and Wallis & Futuna, the other French territories in the Pacific, face the same challenges of distance and difference. It is difficult to encapsulate the magnitude of experiences available just within these archipelagos while competing against the backdrop of the dominant Pacific literature on the Anglophone speaking Pacific.

This thesis highlights some of the struggles and constructs of Mā'ohi identity and diaspora in the region. Mā'ohi have been marginalized in the discussions of diaspora because of the linguistic divide, even though there is clear evidence to support the conversation. My family and the other thousands of Mā'ohi mediating this divide, are creating new possibilities for understanding Oceania. Hau'ofa's foundational call that the great Moana is a space which

connects (1993; 2008), has never been made more tangible than between the Francophone and Anglophone speaking Pacific. Those of us who substantially contribute to the creation and maintenance of communities far distant from our homeland have much to offer, but much to risk as well because of the slippery nature of defining identity across linguistic, cultural, post-colonial, political and social boundaries.

The following thesis contributes to archival and contemporary research for Tahitian migration and culture in diaspora. It acknowledges the underlying void of Mā'ohi academic representation in the Anglophone speaking Pacific, and presents new possibilities for understanding diasporic communities of Mā'ohi, the indigenous peoples of French Polynesia. In Hawai'i, long standing historical relationships between Mā'ohi and Maoli have helped to create these communities. As a result of historical flows, mobilities, and convergences, Mā'ohi communities have replicated cultural festivals such as the Heiva in diaspora. Through the study of Heiva (specifically Heiva i Honolulu) in Hawai'i, this thesis explores the building of community and reinforces Mā'ohi culture in diaspora. This thesis argues that the contemporary and historied relationship between Hawai'i and French Polynesia transforms divergent local understandings of Mā'ohi identity in homelands into a unique diasporic Mā'ohi identity.

INTRODUCTION

Expanding The Borders of Te Ao Mā'ohi

Located approximately 2,700 miles south of Hawai'i, French Polynesia is a non-homogenous polity of five diverse archipelagos, each with their own languages, customs, and peoples. They are the Society Islands (with Pape'ete, Tahiti as the capital of French Polynesia and located within this archipelago), the Tuamotu Islands, Marquesas Islands, Gambier Islands, and the Austral Islands. France's centrally focused colonial influence in Tahiti, has resulted in complex exchanges over time in relationship to each of these other polities (Moulin 1994; Tetahiotupa 2004). This has contributed to the way each archipelago has been developed as part of the whole and consequentially has contributed to a linguistically disconnected relationship to the rest of the region.

Here in this contemporary moment, understanding the exchanges and mobilities of the peoples that constitute this region is the key to understanding the complexities of Oceania, as well as create a pathway to forge a new way of thinking about the interconnectivity of this space. This perspective of French Polynesia as intertwined with Oceania and particularly Mā'ohi peoples as participants in large patterned migrations, has largely been out of view. Therefore, this thesis explores the mobilities of Mā'ohi peoples as they move internally within the five diverse archipelagos, and also the patterns of external diaspora as they move outward in various parts of the region. In pursuing this goal, this thesis identifies the historical and contemporary migration patterns of Mā'ohi to Hawai'i, the spread of Mā'ohi identity and culture, and the formations of community in diaspora.

Moving Seas of Islands

When Pacific writer Epeli Hau'ofa theorized a unified “sea of islands,” bound together by the great Pacific Ocean, he inspired a perspective that recentered Oceania as ‘vast and expanding’ (1993). This was a “new and optimistic” (1993, 27) modern ideology of enlarging a perspective on what was once deemed isolated, separated, and small “islands in a far sea” (1993, 51). All that this region has to offer; an array of Pacific diversity in peoples, cultures, languages, environments, landscapes and seascapes, politics, economies, and so forth, are connected through the shared space of the Pacific. And yet, the Francophone Pacific is rarely considered unbounded, unified, and coherent with its surrounding neighbors. In fact, many scholars point to the inherent language divide that exists between the Anglophone and Francophone as binaries in separate spaces of Moana Nui (Mateata-Allain 2008; Stewart, Mateata-Allain, Mawyer 2006; Anderson 2014). Hau'ofa's imagined Oceania is not so easily visible, especially when tangible boundaries exist in the way peoples are interacting with and understanding one another (2008; Anderson 2014; Sultan 2010).

The boundaried relationships between the Francophone and Anglophone Pacific's embody Hau'ofa's narrative of differences between ‘islands in a far sea’ and a ‘sea of islands’ where information and exchange can be at times inaccessible, translations unreliable, and indigenous representations subverted, challenging the openness of Oceania as a space with room for all. The notion of identity does not escape this criticism either, as understanding cultural differences such as “Mā'ohi” and “indigeneity”, continue to be heavily nuanced and debated depending on where you stand in the region.³

³ A discussion of the issues surrounding contemporary Mā'ohi identity can be found in the Conclusion of Chapter Three.

But there is hope for navigating this divide. The possibility of dissolving national and economic boundaries and borders, in theory as Hau'ofa puts it, is through the world enlargement of ordinary Pacific Islanders, people like my mother and her family. Hau'ofa states,

The former discourse was centered on a “view of a very narrow kind that overlooks culture, history, and the contemporary process of what may be called world enlargement that is carried out by tens of thousands of ordinary Pacific Islanders...making nonsense of all national and economic boundaries, borders that have been defined only recently, crisscrossing an ocean that had been boundless for ages before Captain Cook’s apotheosis (2008, 30).

It is the history of the seemingly ordinary, the people who traverse great lengths in the pursuit of world enlargement⁴ who are instrumental in the connectivity Pacific Islanders have always relied on and continue to rely on today.

I consider Hau'ofa's optimism when I think of the world enlargement that my mother embarked on early and often in her lifetime. My family and I experienced it with her every time we met up to tāma'ara'a (feast or large gathering with food) with family, or attended cultural events and festivals (including Heiva, a Tahitian dance competition). The visibility of cultural events like the Heiva in diaspora stands out as it helps to tell a different enduring story of Oceania, the story of Mā'ohi as they move, migrate, and reciprocate culture outside of their homeland. Hau'ofa's 'world enlargement' is in the new possibilities of an increasingly globalized relationship between homeland culture, and diasporic Mā'ohi culture, a conversation just emerging in the historiography of Mā'ohi. The homeland is the backdrop to where layers of migrations mediated cultural reciprocation both historically (evidenced in archival data) and contemporarily (through networks of community and cultural events) as it continues to move to new places. In this way, I conclude that Hau'ofa's vision is a constant hopeful reminder that

⁴ The mediation of contemporary migration calls attention to lived realities that are intertwined with globalization, the pressure of economic growth, and cultural adaptations to new environments.

Oceania's beauty is in her resilient capacity to create and nourish connections in spite of the boundaries we create for it.

Defining the Mā'ohi Diaspora

Applying Hau'ofa's hopeful envisioning of a connected Pacific through the mobilities of Islanders in the region, produces a tangible discussion on the lives and experiences of everyday people. But what to call that? How do we define the culminating experiences of long-standing, layered, and complex migrations throughout the region? The diaspora of Pacific peoples "is not an entirely new phenomenon. Islanders have been moving around the Pacific for as long as memory recalls, for many hundreds of years" (Spickard, Rondilla, Wright 2002, 2). However, the study of contemporary Pasifika diaspora is. As the literature on Pacific diaspora increase, so do the many ways scholars around the region are grappling with defining diaspora and incorporating those movements as influential contributions to a cultural landscape. Here I consider the historical mobilities of Mā'ohi to Hawai'i as an important and rich diaspora story, which has been connecting these archipelagos together for centuries.

In a conceptual framing, the term "diaspora" has been "proliferated, its meaning has been stretched to accommodate the various intellectual, cultural and political agendas...resulting in what one might call a "diaspora" diaspora — a dispersion of the meanings of the term in semantic, conceptual and disciplinary space" (Brubaker 2005, 1). The argument continues that the use of the term "diaspora" has become increasingly overused, and it questions whether or not its use is appropriate, let's say in terms of the long and historic migration of Mā'ohi out of French Polynesia? Brubaker posits, "if everyone is diasporic, then no one is distinctly so. The term loses its discriminating power—its ability to pick out phenomena, to make distinctions. The

universalization of diaspora, paradoxically, means the disappearance of diaspora.” (Brubaker 2005, 3). The criteria considered for appropriate usage of diaspora: dispersion, homeland orientation, and boundary-maintenance, could be argued for or against the outward migration of Mā’ohi in French Polynesia.

Outer-islander Mā’ohi have long been participants of mandated migrations due to limited and insignificant infrastructure for education (past the 8th grade), commerce, and health care in many of the outlying archipelagos. This requires the leaving of home islands to migrate to the main island of Tahiti, negotiating boundaries of culture and language as well as home island identity and orientation. The outward migration of Mā’ohi beyond French Polynesia to other parts of the region holds the same conceptual framing. Is it considered a “voluntary” migration if without these resources and infrastructure, many Mā’ohi would not have the same opportunities to participate in society on a more equal scale, thereby participating in what I argue is a form of forced migration?⁵

Currently, there is no standard text that teases out “diaspora” and forms of migrations within the context of French Polynesia. The definition of diaspora would have to depend on other definitions of citizenship; to distinguish “who” belongs, “who” stays, and “who” migrates. That definition is at the heart of contesting citizenship in French Polynesia and requires much further study (see Flosse 2001).

Even to a newcomer to the discursive field of diaspora studies, other Pacific diaspora come to mind in the conceptual framing of “diaspora” in the wider region. Some of these conversations include Tongans to New Zealand, Australia and/or the United States (Lavaka

⁵ To add to the complexity of meeting everyone’s needs, to what extent does the heavy hand of colonialism influence migrations? (Perez 2003, Gershon 2007). Could it be argued that colonialism contributes to the diasporas of Pacific peoples, is also part of the burgeoning of the study. More specifically, if and how colonialism contributes to the “traumatic dispersion” (Brubaker 2005) of Pacific Islanders?

2014; Besnier 2011; Otsuka 2007; Ka’ili 2005; Morton 1998), Samoans in the same general flow (Polamalu 2009; Lilomaiava-Doktor 2009), Tokelauans to New Zealand and Hawai‘i (Iaukea 2014; Steiner 2012) and Micronesians of different flavors to Hawai‘i and the mainland U.S. (Bennett 2013; Diaz 2011; Asang 2000). This of course is a broad grouping, and not meant to be exclusive, but offers solid points on the push and pull factors of Pacific Islanders to urban centers as contemporary forms of nation specific diaspora.

The literature on Pacific diaspora is generally in its infancy, as we have yet to describe with certainty how diasporas differ from transnational migration which differs from forced and voluntary migrations in the region. Mā’ohi and their flow in and around the region are a sizable demographic, cover a vast ocean space in the Pacific, and yet remain virtually invisible in the corpus of Pacific literature on diaspora happening every day in the region. This suggests that some factor must be playing a role in producing and maintaining this scholarly and public silence, and unfamiliarity with Mā’ohi mobilities and experiences. Perhaps collectively it is difficult to resolve the struggles of mediating linguistic distances because we continue to look for familiar Anglophone patterns, with a one size fits all attitude towards mobilities in the region.

In French Polynesia, this is truly navigating new oceans; in the literal distancing of Mā’ohi and the conceptualization of distance from homeland, as well as terming it a “diaspora”. This sentiment is particularly applicable in French Polynesia, in the way the term “Mā’ohi” resonates the same weighty responsibility in attempting to satisfy every interested party’s definition of indigeneity (Gagné 2015; Saura 2011). It seems fitting that Mā’ohi as a nuanced and symbolic word in the homeland and abroad would find its lexicon equal. Diaspora, with its layers of connectivity, historical meaning, and cultural relevance may be exactly the word to use in this corner of the world. After all, “as idiom, stance, and claim, diaspora is a way of

formulating the identities and loyalties of a population” (Brubaker 2005, 28). The Mā’ohi diaspora is the spread of Mā’ohi people, culture, values, and language throughout the world. I offer it as an echo to the formulating of identities and loyalties of this ethnic population as they spread to places outside of French Polynesia.

As Gershon observes, authors of diaspora “emphasize ruptures and reconstructions, often describing diasporas as obstacles to be overcome. This focus renders diasporas as dislocations that wound, and families as units of recovery that heal to varying degrees” (2007, 474). These understandings run a close parallel between “Mā’ohi” and “diaspora”. They are intertwined as both rely on the “culturally specific ways through which families circulate knowledge and resources...In the Pacific, it is families and their transnational connections that sustain diasporas, making them both durable and visible” (Gershon 2007, 474). Defining diaspora in a Pacific context will always include the challenge of incorporating as many examples as possible to contextualize its meaning and give it relevance. The Mā’ohi diaspora has long standing connections that defy the arbitrary and colonial boundaries of mapped territories. I remap these connections in this thesis by way of Hawai’i nei, as a way of understanding the historical and contemporary Mā’ohi diaspora.

Internal Mobilities and External Diaspora

The differing experiences of internal mobilities and external diaspora are a unique factor of the Francophone experience, especially when taken into consideration that their regional surrounding neighbors are in the Anglophone speaking Pacific. Identifying these layered qualities of internal mobilities and external movements out of the country reinforces the dynamic nature of the interconnected complexities of French Polynesia. For example, I argue that the first

layer of contemporary Mā'ohi diaspora is experienced through the internal mobilities of peoples back and forth within the five archipelagos. As French Polynesia is spread over a watery distance of approximately 2,000 miles, internal mobilities are complex negotiations of space, as exchanges in these archipelagos have converged and overlapped onto one another over time. Strong contemporary correlations of internal migrations are linked to the economic and educational infrastructure on Tahiti island, through its colonial out posting as the capital of the territory. This is generally the most understood aspect of the Mā'ohi experience; encounters between different islands and archipelagos is both easy and considered frequent.

An example of internal migrations is highlighted in the contemporary reciprocations of culture, expressed especially through dance/performance. Moulin demonstrates the complications of how internal migrations affect the reappropriation and exchange of culture, and indigenous identities between the Society Islands and the Marquesas Islands. “The fête was announced . . . Marquesans were sure that this celebration would be a grand event of such importance that the rest of French Polynesia would be forced to acknowledge the presence and abilities of these far-distant neighbors and to stand in awe of the innate beauty of their culture. Marquesans could no longer be ignored” (2012, 1). Tahiti and the Society Islands act as the governing epicenter of French Polynesia, which in this article is referred to as, “a net of control in French Polynesia” (1994, 2).⁶

Moulin does an impressive comparative look at the Marquesas islands and the Society islands through its exchange of cultural appropriation. Her piece is one of the few that critically examines the interrelatedness of the five archipelagos as they contest differing notions of cultural identity, political autonomy, and the dynamics of power in French Polynesia (see also

⁶ This idea will be further applied to the use of diasporic Heiva events in the middle of Chapter Three.

Tetahiotupa 2004; Mawyer 2008). I add here that a closer study of these kinds of economic and cultural exchanges that we know have happened continuously since time irrelevant, can deepen our understanding of the archipelagos as unique and dynamic interrelated systems converging upon one another over and over again. There is much potential to understanding how French Polynesia is both one country, while simultaneously existing as individual parts of the whole.

The second type of Mā'ohi diaspora⁷ is external, and is used in this thesis as a reference to indigenous people's lived experiences while migrating abroad. This is most visibly seen in France and in other Pacific French territories such as New Caledonia, and Wallis & Futuna. Some of the biggest motivations for this migration is linked again to educational (secular & religious) and economic opportunities, and also to fulfill military obligations overseas. These connections are easily understood because of French citizenship and the allowance to travel freely back and forth between overseas territories.

What does not fit the paradigm is Mā'ohi who live abroad in the Anglophone Pacific, because in a contemporary timeframe they are usually challenged with having to gain a strong background in the English language as well as gaining a visa to stay for an extended period of time. This void presents an opportunity to analyze external diaspora experienced unorthodoxly; such as the historical migrations of Mā'ohi to the island nation of Hawai'i, which fostered long-standing relationships irrespective of the colonial frameworks which have successfully bounded and divided the Pacific. Contemporary mediations of diasporic identity speak to the ways of knowing Mā'ohi *beyond the postcard*, to play with an important image of Tahiti reconceived and reimagined introduced by Miriam Kahn (2011), which unpacks the nuances of Mā'ohi society in

⁷ The term migration is used with intention throughout this piece when referring to the Mā'ohi people who traveled extensively within French Polynesia. The term diaspora however, is also used with intention in regards to the people and cultural remittances such as dance 'ori Tahiti, and its globalized circulation outside of French Polynesia as the most visible cultural marker originating from the South Pacific.

contemporary Tahiti and the paradoxes that enrich the unorthodox. Thus, in order to understand French Polynesia's positionality in relationship to the rest of Oceania, this thesis weaves together the histories of Mā'ohi who navigate those divides, who provide that lens, who share those experiences, and in turn demonstrates the breadth and gravity of the lived realities of the peoples of Oceania.

Overview

The Mā'ohi diaspora is a story of layers, integrated and connected over time and space. Identifying the Mā'ohi migration out of French Polynesia presents a unique perspective on the shifting dynamics of identity which diasporic culture creates in relationship to their homeland. This thesis is motivated by those of us who question where the boundaries of Te Ao Mā'ohi lie, and look to cultural practices (such as the creation of Heiva overseas) to mediate that distance. The fact that there exists 'ori Tahiti (Tahitian dance), Heiva (Tahitian dance festival and competition), Fête (cultural celebration), and other small scale celebrations and entertainment ventures in the Pacific diaspora, are revealing of the spread and consumption of Mā'ohi culture in the West. The first chapter begins the historical and chronological mobilities of Mā'ohi to Hawai'i which incorporates the complexities in the layered histories that define this movement.

The aim of Chapter One is to exhibit historical exchanges of Mā'ohi to Hawai'i beginning in the nineteenth century. The ancient migrations between Tahiti and Hawai'i have long been recognized as historically significant and culturally foundational. This chapter pinpoints tangible historical exchanges that reinforce Mā'ohi migrations as they converge and blend into a contemporary period. This chapter also makes visible the patterns, motivations, and possible reasons for these continued exchanges over time. The contemporary mobilities of

Mā'ohi rest upon these older exchanges, where in the following chapter I show that twentieth century mobilities to Hawai'i were driven by new goals and contexts.

As a process to envision the moving parts of understanding Mā'ohi mobilities, in Chapter Two I introduce a contemporary view of Mā'ohi communities in diaspora. By using my family's story, I start to make sense of contemporary community formations, which draws on the Introduction discussion of internal mobilities and external diasporas to Hawai'i. I incorporate several different kinds of anecdotes to display connections to homeland, motivations for diaspora, and community makings in Hawai'i throughout this chapter. Contemporary Mā'ohi migrations are driven by separate but intertwined institutions and structures. Understanding the historical motivations of diaspora in Chapter One and the new motivations in Chapter Two reveals that these patterns change over time. As these patterns changed, new community formations emerge in the contemporary diaspora centered on the representations of culture.

In Chapter Three, these diasporic communities exhibit that they are actively engaged in producing a sense of self as Mā'ohi in diaspora. They do this by participating in the same kinds of cultural festivals that take place at home, such as the annual Heiva event. The Heiva is highlighted as Tahiti's most well-known cultural event. It represents, highlights, and makes visible each year the most creative and beautiful aspects of Mā'ohi history, culture, and society. In continuing to explore the diaspora of Mā'ohi overseas, Chapter Three tracks Mā'ohi communities' distant yet potent enactments of Heiva. No matter where it takes place, the Heiva continues to provide that stage for the flows of Mā'ohi culture in diaspora. Since the Heiva is now being produced in large quantities far from its socio-political contexts of its homeland in places like Hawai'i, Japan, Mexico, France, and throughout the mainland U.S., I draw out the

nuances of producing Mā'ohi homeland identity vs. diasporic identity, and analyze how communities contribute to the formation of these events.

CHAPTER 1

Mā'ohi Crossroads of Mobility and Diaspora

In regard to the name Owhyhee, which Capt. Cook applied to Hawaii, the same correspondent suggests that he might have brought it with him from Tahiti. A Tahitian, Tupaea, whom he took with him on his second voyage, drew for him a chart, exhibiting the geographical knowledge of the Tahitians at the time, besides dictating to him a list of names of islands. Among these names is *Owahei*. In an ancient Maori chant the names of *Rehia* and *Owaihi* occur, and are evidently applied to places beyond the islands from which the ancestors of the Maoris came... As we stated in a former report, *Aihi* or *Vaihi* is the ancient Tahitian poetical name of these islands. Hence it is suggested that Capt. Cook, on hearing the name Hawaii, concluded that it was the *Owahei* of Tupaea's list, and altering it slightly, adopted Tupaea's name. *Teuira Henry*⁸

There is a shadowed history of Mā'ohi mobilities in the nineteenth century. Mā'ohi have been exchanging with Hawai'i for over the past 150 years, saying nothing of the deep time histories which our genealogies solidify through the telling of our mo'olelo. And yet, the relevance of these exchanges are obscured from the texts that teach us about the history of these places. In this chapter, I explore the nineteenth century roots of the Mā'ohi diaspora to Hawai'i. This exploration aims to expand, enhance, contextualize, and complicate the deeply rich historical relationship between these archipelagos. In Hawai'i, Mā'ohi culture has been weaving itself into the historiography of Kanaka Maoli (native Hawaiians) in some of the most influential points in its timeline. Evidence of these exchanges are highlighted through various glimpses into the past, such as the one above brought into view by Teuira Henry in the late nineteenth century. As Henry indicates, here in Hawai'i there are rich historical connections to ancient Kahiki, which along the way develops into many circulating notions about the roles these connections play in the identity of Kanaka Maoli. The contemporary outward diaspora of Mā'ohi is a centering story

⁸ "On the Name Owhyhee." Hawaiian Historical Society 4th Annual Report, 1895.

of this thesis, and this chapter explores the nineteenth century roots as some of the earliest recorded traces of the journey from Te Ao Mā'ohi to Hawai'i.

These historical snapshots into the past provide rich context in order to analyze contemporary makings of community and culture in diaspora. Motivating this chapter are the larger frames and historical processes that have affected the view of Mā'ohi culture as integrated into Hawaiian culture. This chapter also identifies the potential patterns, motivations, and reasons for these migrations which will become important in the second chapter where I explore new motivations of diaspora in the twentieth century. Thus, this chapter aims to recount Mā'ohi intersectionalities as exchanges that have contributed to the spread of Mā'ohi peoples and culture to Hawai'i.

In the opening epigraph, *Tupaia* is a name many point to as one of the earliest recorded figures demonstrating Mā'ohi mobilities in the Pacific. Tupaia (also spelt Tupaea interchangeably) is described as a chiefly or priestly navigator and explorer from Ra'iatea, who meets Captain Cook when Cook voyages to Tahiti in 1769. Tupaia then accompanies him on his second voyage around the Society and Austral Islands of French Polynesia and through the South Pacific to places like New Zealand and Australia (Salmond 2009). Cook was impressed with Tupaia's ability to name, map, and navigate to many of the different islands in the region even if he had never been to those islands, some of which were thousands of miles away (Salmond 2009; see also Sharp 1964; Smith 2009; Druett 2011). Tupaia was literally mapping new understandings of the ways Mā'ohi were engaging with transnational migration, and is recognized as producing for Cook the first map of the South Pacific, which Cook then uses to "discover" other new places (Salmond 2009; Somerville 2012; Druett 2011). As demonstrated in Henry's recounting of the naming of *Owhyee* or Hawai'i, it is Tupaia who carries the distinct

knowledge of a sea of islands, and yet history has credited Cook for naming Hawai‘i, an island in a far sea.

Until recently, Tupaia was a figure relatively lost in time. He died from scurvy at sea and “once he was gone, his many accomplishments were easily forgotten” (Druett 2011). It is the depiction of an exchange between a Maori man trading crayfish for tapa with a European merchant in New Zealand, captured in a simple painting by Tupaia that his story inks back into the history books (Fig. 1; Somerville 2012; Druett 2011). Tupaia’s historical impact transcends the borders between what we now call the Anglophone Pacific and the Francophone Pacific. His contributions are now widely credited as a fundamental reason for Cook’s success in encountering the Pacific (Druett 2011).



Fig. 1: From the cover of *Tupaia: Captain Cook’s Polynesian Navigator* by Joan Druett, a replica of Tupaia’s famous drawing of a Maori man exchanges crayfish for tapa with Joseph Banks.

Tupaia’s expeditions reveal impactful and continuous exchanges integrated in the framework of other Pacific cultures. However, Tupaia reminds us of the invisibility of Mā’ohi in

the study of migration and diaspora in contemporary Pacific Studies.⁹ This is due in large part to the colonial boundaries of the Anglophone and Francophone countries which linguistically divide the region, and the cracks of colonization through which indigenous representations fall into (Stewart, Mateata-Allain, Mawyer 2006). These colonial ruptures, are the on-going effects of the French administration, whose calculated erasures have resulted in the missing pasts of Mā'ohi in the Pacific, subverting the experience of exchange and interconnectivity with other Pacific nations.

In a wave of efforts to bridge these disconnects both intentional and unintentional, there are growing interests (on both ends) to demystify the language barrier that exists between the Francophone and Anglophone Pacific. “Until very recently, it has been difficult to find in literature the emotions, intelligence, and daily lives of the Islands’ indigenous peoples. Many false notions have been conjured up, and many true things have been omitted” (Stewart, Mateata-Allain, Mawyer 2006). These are some of the most poignant challenges that have hindered a more consistent dialogue between the two language regions. Translating across the region is painstaking but necessary work which continues to unfold new perspectives in understanding Te Ao Mā'ohi.

In this chapter, I focus specifically on Hawai'i nei as a destination where Mā'ohi communities have been able to establish and maintain long standing connections while distanced from a homeland. I begin with a discussion of Pacific Islander mobilities in the region, complicating once again the void of Mā'ohi representation in academic scholarship in the historic period. I introduce Mā'ohi as a valued and integral component in Hawaiian history beginning with the coming of missionaries to Hawai'i and their impact on one of Hawai'i's most

⁹ Tupaia's obscurity in history is reminiscent of other discussions on indigenous ambivalence in the region, see Diaz 2011.

significant turning points, the Great Mahele. This section represents the prominent relationship between Mā'ohi and Kanaka Maoli as long-standing and familiar, contributing to the intertwined connection between Hawai'i and various parts of Te Ao Mā'ohi.

In analyzing these connections, it is important to note that there were sustained exchanges before the finalities of the annexation of Hawai'i to the US and Tahiti to France. Some of these exchanges can be seen through the Naturalization Index, Indexes to Hawaiian Passports and the Passenger Manifest Logs, recording passenger's travel between Hawai'i, Tahiti, and Marquesas. I also introduce other historical figures such as Teuira Henry, as another prominent example of the Mā'ohi diaspora, through her contributions to the Hawaiian Historical Society.

As this brings our collective attention to the twentieth century, voyaging and travel become more mainstream, and the speed of exchange and interaction is highlighted in the shift from long passenger freight voyages to airplane travel and the welcoming of airports. This accessibility affects the exchange of culture and the renaissance of Hawaiian culture takes off with the sailing of the Hōkūle'a. These events and key figures build up a timeline of Mā'ohi interactions that represent an inherent relationship between these two spaces. This historical relationship manifests itself in communities of diasporic Mā'ohi who continue to mediate culture in meaningful ways in Hawai'i. This will be further examined in Chapter Three. Thus, understanding Mā'ohi mobilities, connections through diaspora, and historical processes motivate this chapter as a timeline of Mā'ohi intersectionalities between Hawai'i and Te Ao Mā'ohi.

Pacific Mobilities

The outward mobility of Pacific Islanders to other places in the region create a new awareness of culture and identity. Increasingly, scholars interested in transnational migrations among Pacific Islanders are contributing to understanding the diverse realities and consequences of these exchanges. Drawing in other examples from the region, in the case of Tonga for example, “in the last half century, the society has transformed itself from a relatively stable organic entity into a diasporic, pluralistic, and deeply modern society” (Besnier 2011, 5). Tonga at a glance, is often set up as an iconic portrayal of the vision of Polynesia we seek as rooted in culture and tradition. This is based on a robust contribution of literature positioning Tonga as a culturally rich and connected society; which provides one possible lens for exploring migrations of Pacific Islanders within the region (Morton 1998; Lavaka 2014; Besnier 2011; Otsuka 2007).

Discussed in Besnier’s work, is how the Tongan diaspora is a critical contributor to its homeland economy through the form of remittances. “For diasporic Tongans, remittances to island-based relatives ensure their on-going access to valuables and therefore their ability to demonstrate their competence in ‘doing culture’ and allegiance to tradition” (Besnier 2011, 109). To this, Hau’ofa demonstrates that “economists do not take account of the social centrality of the ancient practice of reciprocity, the core of all oceanic cultures” (Hau’ofa 2008, 36). Reciprocity and remittances are a significant contributor to the maintenance of culture, both at home and abroad, but especially in mediating the in-between. “Although geographically separated, Tongans in the diaspora still hold strong ties with the population in the islands. Thus initiatives taken by members of the diasporic population could still be regarded as coming from within the Tongan community, and as such should be more meaningful and effective” (Otsuka 2007, 465). Otsuka also adds that diasporic communities are in a unique and fragile relationship based on

reciprocity (via language) with their homeland counterparts (2007). Identity on the other hand, seems much more fluid and negotiable.

Notions of identity are further complicated by the movement of other Pacific peoples in diaspora. As a diasporic Chamorita scholar, Bennett questions, “when waves of Pacific Islanders leave, how does this affect their home islands? The hardships on Pacific Islanders living abroad and the questions their islands are left with are often ignored when scholars discuss the Oceanic diaspora” (2014, 10). The awareness of understanding new possibilities of culture, identity, and exchange in other transnational migrations among Pacific Islanders represent the work scholars across the region who understand that “for Pacific Islanders, movement and voyaging has always been a part of their identity and lifestyle” (Bennett 2014, 6). And yet, we are still emerging as collective scholars in understanding the vast potential that migrations are contributing to “approaching Oceania as an ever-expanding space” (Bennett 2014, 17; see also Diaz 2011; Perez 2003). Bennett also states how her work in “examining Chamorro navigation and its diaspora adds to the idea of Pacific Islanders as a mobile people that are flexible in times of pressure and change” (2014, 14). The referencing of Tongan and Chamorro diasporas, represent some of the growing conversations of Pacific Islander mobilities throughout the region, raising concerns over the dispersion of its peoples and the effects of globalization on culture. As a vahine Mā’ohi born in the diaspora and encountering the homeland from a distance, through and across generational movements, I find it crucial to connect Mā’ohi to their homeland through lenses that redefine the possibility of our own histories as it blends and connects to distant places.

For some Mā’ohi, the modern anxieties of expressing a familiar yet exotic culture is shaped by rooted connections of reciprocity. “Although this flow of goods is generally not included in official statistics, much of the welfare of ordinary people of Oceania depends on an

informal movement along ancient routes drawn in bloodlines invisible to the enforcers of the laws of confinement and regulated mobility” (Hau’ofa 2008, 35). Here in Hawai‘i, the makings of community are made possible through the people that have left French Polynesia and made perpetuating culture a priority where they went; their form of remittances was seen, felt, and heard through the culture they exhibited. “Islanders have broken out of their confinement, are moving around and away from their homelands, not so much because their countries are poor, but because they were unnaturally confined and severed from many of their traditional sources of wealth, and because it is in their blood to be mobile” (Hau’ofa 2008, 35). This justification of mobilities applies directly to the Mā’ohi experience in Hawai‘i which after years of exchange has resulted in the strong current of cultural remittances through festivals. This is a point which I continue to tease out in the third chapter.

The communities where diasporic Mā’ohi gathered were the sites where connecting to identity, however fluid that was after a century and a half of colonial influence, was made possible. The expression of culture through performance became the most valuable form of remittances in diaspora, exchanged through networks within French Polynesia, and especially abroad. It is fluid, it is based on the context surrounding the places that these communities inhabit, but it is an integral part of maintaining a connected identity to a homeland.¹⁰ History proves that the late twentieth and twenty-first century Mā’ohi context of maintaining a connected identity is not new in Hawai‘i. Though contemporary scholars are only now fleshing out the challenges and triumphs of Pacific Islander diasporas within the region, I aim to construct a general timeline of Mā’ohi mobilities to Hawai‘i. This done so that analyzing the constructs of

¹⁰ See Chapter Three for further discussions on connections to homeland via performance remittances.

contemporary culture will be rooted in historical context that attempts to bridge the Mā'ohi experience to the homeland and vice versa.

Tahitians and the Great Mahele

The contemporary motivations to understand the complex relationship between Tahiti (as well as the other parts of French Polynesia) and Hawai'i are firmly rooted in ancestral knowledge of voyaging and exchange. However, there exists a limitless possibility of uncovering new ways the peoples, the languages, and the cultures were linked cohesively over time. These links may not be readily available as a part of Tahiti's archival records, but they are written within Hawai'i's. A prime example of this were the Tahitian scholars Tehuiarii Tute, Tauā, and Ta'amotu who came to Hawai'i with early missionaries (with William Ellis) in 1823 from the Society Islands in French Polynesia, in order to perform missionary work in behalf of the American Board Commission of Foreign Missions or ABCFM (see Report of the Missionary Stations in Tahiti and Eimeo 1821; Ellis 1838).

The first important conversion among the Ali'i Nui was that of Keōpūolani in 1823. The event coincided with the arrival of the English missionary Rev. William Ellis in February 1823. Ellis brought with him three Tahitian teachers, Tute (or Kuke), Tauā, and Ta'amotu, from the Society Islands. As we Hawaiians have for centuries celebrated an ancestral link with Tahiti in our poetry and literature, Keōpūolani was naturally intrigued by these Tahitians and took them into her household in Lāhainā, her favorite residence. The Tahitians succeeded where the American Calvinists had failed, and Keōpūolani became a follower of Iesu Kristo (Kame'eleihiwa 1992, Kindle Locations 2862-2867).

Kame'eleihiwa's *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, also demonstrates these recorded histories of exchanges as a centrifugal aspect of understanding Hawaiian historiography. The introduction of converted Tahitian missionaries into the elite Hawaiian noble society in the early nineteenth century intersects between Kanaka Maoli royalty and European missionaries. Subsequently

Ellis's early wave of missionaries find success and stability in Hawai'i. Because of their presence and the belief of shared customs, status, previous polytheistic religious beliefs and the like, these Tahitians are also awarded lands during the largest transfer of private lands to public ownership through the Great Mahele. To sum it up briefly, the Great Mahele is described in the following passage.

Several legislative acts during the period 1845-1855 codified a sweeping transformation from the centuries-old Hawaiian traditions of royal land tenure to the western practice of private land ownership. In the first stage of this process, the Hawaiian monarch Kamehameha III (1813-1854), also known as Kamehameha III, divided up his lands among the highest ranking ali'i (chiefs), konohiki (land managers), and favored haole (foreigners). Thus the political and social relationships that had been the foundation of Hawaiian culture were permanently altered. Later the maka'āinana, or common people, were permitted to acquire legal title to land they had tilled and lived on and to purchase other lands from the government. Finally, near the end of the *Mahele*, one of the most significant changes occurred: granting naturalized foreigners the right to purchase land in Hawai'i (Moffat and Fitzpatrick 1995, 15).

Records of Ta'amotu drop off, but Tauā and Tute are awarded some exceptional agriculture lands in Hawai'i during this time. For example, Tute was given lands in fertile upper Mānoa valley and even on other islands which he eventually barter other parcels of land for (*see* Bureau of Conveyances Title Search, Testimony of Tute, and Tute Memoirs for further information). The Great Mahele is already recognized as a key feature of Hawaiian historiography. However, it is the mixture of these underlying stories of relationships to place, that cast new light in just how dynamic this event, or series of events, were for not only Hawai'i, but for the wider region at large.

The Bureau of Conveyances tables included on the next page (Tables 1 and 2), showcase the elevated positionality that Tute exhibits during his time in Hawai'i, through his awards of prime fertile plots of land during the Great Mahele. Such an award during that time was relegated to persons who play an active part of Hawaiian elite society. This demonstrates how

this early diaspora integrated Mā’ohi influences into the framework of Kanaka Maoli awareness during a critical time in Hawai‘i’s history.

Table 1: Bureau of Conveyances Search for Tute” from Grantor Index #3, 1843-1869, L-Z, Island of Oahu

Kind of Instrument	Grantor	Grantee	Date of Instrument	Book	Page	Date of Record	No. of Award, R.P. or G.	Name of Land	District	Island
D.	Tute, T. & wf. et al.	McGuire, Alexander	10/23/1850	4	272	10/25/2850	LCA 3322	Mānoa	Honolulu	Oahu
D.	“	Bishop, Delia S.	7/14/1855	6	796	8/8/1855	pc. land	Kalawahine	Honolulu	Oahu
D.	"	Kalama, Hakaleleponi	6/26/1857	9	378	6/26/1857	por. R.P. 1899 Kul. 3322	Kalawahine	Honolulu	Oahu
L.	Tute, T. heir of	Dowsett & Sumners	7/1/1859	15	381	9/15/1862	pc. land	Kailua	Koolaupoko	Oahu

Table 2: Bureau of Conveyances Search for Tute” from Grantor Index #8, 1870-1884, P-Z, Island of Oahu

Kind of Instrument	Grantor	Grantee	Date of Instrument	Book	Page	Date of Record	No. of Award, R.P. or G.	Name of Land	District	Island
M.	Tute, T. devisee of	Cartwright, Alexander J.	2/1/1872	34	215	2/17/1872	R.P. 5642 Kul. 7122 Aps. 1,2,3,4,5, & 6 & int. in 600 hd. cattle	Kailua & c	Koolaupoko	Oahu

During this time the Naturalization Index (will be addressed further following this section) was used to keep track of the legal status of individuals because these implications could allow them access to valuable lands in that were being turned over during this era. This is the motivation to becoming a naturalized and recognized citizen in the Hawaiian kingdom turned annexed territory. Mā'ohi had been counted among the society and these historical figures signpost the establishment of Mā'ohi in Hawai'i. Archival inquiry thus creates new boundaries of awareness in the scope of relationships between these two places as connected, cohesive, and paralleled in many ways.

Archival Searches For Mā'ohi Mobilities

The example of Tahitian scholars turned Christian priests impacted Hawaiian elite society in the early nineteenth century. This being so, then how have other Mā'ohi exchanges shaped the collective understanding of Mā'ohi culture in diaspora? The following research offers a starting point to some of the earliest known written records of Mā'ohi coming to Hawai'i in the mid-nineteenth century. As a proof of concept, these migration records demonstrate the continual general flow of everyday Mā'ohi (not only scholarly priests and missionaries of status) to Hawai'i¹¹ and enhance the visibility of the Mā'ohi diaspora over the *longue duree*. There were several texts that were instrumental in the Hawai'i State Archives to the search of Mā'ohi mobilities. I include them here for further investigations on the spread of the Mā'ohi diaspora. They were:

1. The Naturalization Index (for individuals naturalized by the Minister of the Interior of the Hawaiian Islands) from 1844-1894
2. Indexes to Hawaiian Passports 1845-1900
3. Passenger Manifests Index 1843-1900, in the Misc. Ethnic Groups compartment

¹¹ This also reinforces how connected reo Tahiti and 'ōlelo Hawai'i were in this time frame.

4. Name Index
5. Hawaiian Historical Society's Annual Report

Naturalization Index 1844-1894

The upcoming data represented in Table 3, first lists the surname of the individual, followed by the column of the city, island, island grouping or the country of the individual as their home residency. This is followed by the date of naturalization and the information where one can see the original recording in the Hawai'i State Archives. To see the original certificate of naturalization, one would then use the last column which gives the volume and page number on Microfilm #79 (information provided on the inside of the Naturalization Index) for the complete transaction. Particularly interesting is the description as being "Native of" a place. Part of my approach to extracting data from this text was to search the column "Native of" and mark down the various islands or island groupings that individuals were using to describe their homeland.

Not surprisingly, Tahiti island is listed most frequently and was considered the largest port of entry for the Society Islands. However, it remains unclear whether outer islanders traveled to Tahiti for their departure and listed Tahiti as the most recent island they've come from, or if they were in fact from Tahiti.¹² This implies the on-going need to understand internal migrations that have been a constant (yet unknown) feature of Mā'ohi mobilities.

The listing of being native of "Society Islands" is also ambiguous. Marquesas is the other prominent locale represented in this data. One striking example of the similarities of 'ōlelo Hawaii and reo Tahiti are seen in this graph through the names of these individuals. The use of

¹² Further biographical research is needed for these individuals, but for the purpose of genealogy work this can be a powerful addition to understanding the long standing roots that connected Hawai'i to different parts of French Polynesia.

K's in names are particularly prominent of individuals coming from Tahiti and Marquesas.¹³ It is believed that anciently, Hawai'i was settled in part via Marquesas (Pollack and Crocombe 1988). The records pointing out a strong contemporary connection in the mid to late nineteenth century is striking. In these examples, strong correlations of connectivity create a new awareness to the kinds of migrations experienced in this time frame.

Table 3: Index to Naturalization Record Books 1844-1894, Series 234. "For individuals naturalized by the Minister of the Interior of the Hawaiian Islands"

Name	Native Of	Naturalized Year/Month/ Day	Volume and Page # (for record of transcription)
Anania	Tahiti	1847 Feb. 12	F 54
Atamu	Tahiti	1850 Oct. 30	J 6
Ato, Jack	Marquesas	1854 June 18	L 128
Atoaitai	Tahiti	1847 March 2	F 60
Beni	Tahiti	1852 May 29	K 117
Bira	Tahiti	1848 March 25	G 15
Brown, Henry	Tahiti	1852 Nov. 22	K 167
Daniel	Society Islands	1856 Nov. 22	N 265
Dyer, George	Tahiti	1848 Sept. 23	G 66
Friday	Tahiti	1848 July 8	G 47
George	Huahine	1848 Sept. 12	G 62
Hanale	Marquesas	1845 Nov. 14	C 197
Hiki	Tahiti	1861 April 22	O 195
Hoona	Tahiti	1844 Nov. 28	C 59
Ieo	Tahiti	1846 April 17	F 11
Itaita	Tahiti	1844 Sept. 26	A 12
Kaina	Tahiti	1845 Jan. 29	C 91

¹³ It was between the years of 1823-1826 that LMS missionaries strategically differentiated the languages for ease of separating and marking different groups of people as distinct.

Name	Native Of	Naturalized Year/Month/ Day	Volume and Page # (for record of transcription)
Kainoa, Bill	Society Islands	1858 Dec. 21	N 449
Kakalike	Tahiti	1853 Nov. 19	L 76
Kalii	Society Islands	1868 Nov. 7	P 118
Kamaluli	Tahiti	1847 Nov. 27	F 102
Kamele	Society Islands	1843 March 29	A 5
Keahu	Society Islands	1844 Oct. 2	A 14
Keaka	Tahiti	1846 Nov. 23	F 42
Keaka	Marquesas	1847 Nov. 1	F 96
Kealu	Tahiti	1849 Oct. 28	J 3
Keoni* (no record on file)	Tahiti	1860 Sept. 12	O 140
Lulu, Jim	Society Islands	1854 March 15	L 95
MacFarlane, H.	Tahiti	1868 Nov. 30	P 121
Mailahi	Society Islands	1855 May 15	N 46
Maiuri	Tahiti	1850 June 18	I 68
Malaea, Ruahine	Tahiti	1868 Oct. 30	P 113
Manger, Thomas	Tahiti	1856 Nov. 12	N 258
Matai	Tahiti	1867 Nov. 23	P 46
McIntyre, H. Jr.	Tahiti	1867 Jan. 25	P 7
Mehemia (alias Tom Smith)	Tahiti	1869 Nov. 24	P 182
Mini	Marquesas	1859 June 8	O 64
Moinoa	Tahiti	1846 April 27	F 13
Niulii	Tahiti	1846 April 27	F 12
Oihate	Marquesas	1860 Oct. 1	O 143
Panakor	Society Islands	1857 Nov. 18	N 352
Paranwahaiti	Tahiti	1845 Jan. 30	C 93
Parauvahaiti	Tahiti	1847 Oct. 14	F 93
Pawahi, Keaka	Marquesas	1845 Jan. 3	C 80
Pawelo	Society Islands	1863 Nov. 24	O 319

Name	Native Of	Naturalized Year/Month/ Day	Volume and Page # (for record of transcription)
Pekelo (alias Phillip)	Tahiti	1869 Nov. 26	P 184
Pohikaawili	Tahiti	1848 Sept. 22	G 65
Pokai	Manihiki	1869 Nov. 19	P 181
Smith, Tom (alias Mehemia)			
Smith, W. James	Tahiti	1868 Jan. 17	P 60
Tamu Sela	Tahiti	1846 Nov. 4	F 38
Tanamona	Tahiti	1850 Jan. 15	I 6
Taovu	Tahiti	1850 Aug. 7	I 80
Taulua* (no record on file)	Society Islands	1853 Dec. 14	
Tele	Tahiti	1847 March 8	F 61
Tele	Tahiti	1874 Nov. 27	L 6
Teleolua, Keaka	Tahiti	1850 April 12	I 46
Teriimana	Tahiti	1847 March 8	F 62
West, Bob	Tahiti	1848 June 8	G 34
Wilson, Charles B.	Tahiti	1869 July 19	P 161
Wodehouse, J. H. Jr. (not signed)	Society Islands	1892 Jan. -	4 16

Besides the islands directly represented in the graph above correlating with my research interests of immigrants from Tahiti, Society Islands, Huahine, and Marquesas, these records also point to a distinguishing feature of migration into Hawaii at this time from a worldwide scope.

Immigrants during this era were naturalized from the following places: US, China, France, Great Britain, Nova Scotia, Tonga, New Zealand, Rutumah (Rotuma), Malta, Cape de Verd Isles., Western Islands, Ireland, Isle of St. Miguel, Australia, Canada, Manila, Guam, Jamaica, Sweden, West Indies, St. Helena, Samoa, Spain, Germany, India, Portugal, Chili (Chilé), Ecuador, Talchuana, Holland, Goa, Singapore, Denmark, Italy, Mauritius, Belgium, Niue, Ocean Island, Rurotouga (Rarotonga), Mangaia, Manihiki (all 3 are islands in the Cook Islands), Sumatra, New

South Wales, Hervey Islands, Santa Cruz, Guyaquil (Ecuador), Batavia (East Indies), Silesia (Prussia), Maderia (Portugal), and Tasmania. These Naturalization Records were a record of immigrants kept between the years of 1844-1894 and represent the global connectedness of Hawai‘i as an important economic destination in the nineteenth century.

As highlighted in Table 4, the Recapitulation graph of the Naturalization Records demonstrates the population shifts in this increasingly globalized economy, whose timeframe encompasses the eventual annexation of the Hawaiian nation to the United States. Statistics were being taken of the amount and frequency of international immigrants, which helps to determine the demographic trajectory of Hawai‘i over time.

Table 4: Recapitulation of Naturalization Record Books 1844-1894

US	1105
China	763
Great Britain	427
Portugese	242
Germany	230
<i>Pac. Islands</i>	<i>136</i>
Other British Possessions	80
Misc. Europeans	68
Ireland	49
France	47
Canada	40
South America	27
<u>All Others</u>	<u>25</u>
TOTAL	3239

Significantly influencing Hawai‘i during this time are strong interactions with the US, China, Great Britain, Portugal, and Germany, the world powers of the day. But interest in Hawai‘i by its neighbors in the Pacific region are also well represented, demonstrating a surprising fact of the Mā‘ohi diaspora as a prominent feature with recorded history in Hawai‘i. These records help to make the changing cultural landscape of Hawai‘i visible, and opens up a wider perspective of the influence that these exchanges have in this time period.

Hawaiian Passports and Passenger Manifest Indexes

The Indexes to Hawaiian Passports 1845-1900 and Passenger Manifest Index 1843-1900 are not linked sources, but reflect similar data of voyage and travel at the intersection of Hawai‘i which is also available in the Hawai‘i State Archives.¹⁴ Early in the search, I came across the name of Tahia, who was traveling to Marquesas with her husband Tavefitu on March 28, 1867 via Hilo. At this time, it was listed that she was about 35 years old. On that same voyage to Marquesas (via Hilo) was also an individual named Tahuhu (listed to be about 40 years old). It is possible that minors could have accompanied these passengers, but it is not made clear on these specific records. The ship’s name was “Morning Star,” and this led my research interests to the Passenger Indexes based on the ship’s name.

Already it would seem that travel during this era to what are now considered remote and isolated places, was happening more frequently than we can easily point to. The Hawaiian Passports records listed passenger’s names, their passport numbers, date of departure, and the ship they were traveling on. Searching for “Morning Star,” since we’ve established that it is a known passenger freight that went to at the very least Marquesas, below are listed several more examples of passengers using freights to get to and from Hawai‘i.

Table 5: Passenger Manifest Index 1843-1900

<i>Name</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Ship</i>
Emerson, Rev. J. S.	July 15, 1865	Morning Star
Haalau	April 3, 1849	Papeite
Hough, James	April 2, 1849	Papeite

¹⁴ The Name Index is an alphabetical open search based on archival records of prominent figures of Hawai‘i without regards to date, place, or content. It also connects the odds and ends of files to a specific person, so that if you knew the specific name of a person, one might be able to find other facts, misc. correspondence, or court proceedings having to do with that individual. The more prominent the figure, the better the chance of uncovering information about their life. I hypothesized that starting the search on who I considered as a prominent Mā’ohi figure, could lead a meaningful search to new ways of understanding transnational migration. Teuira Henry was one such an individual.

Kalio, O.	March 29, 1849	Papeite
Kaimana	April 3, 1849	Papeite
Kamaha	April 3, 1849	Papeite
Kamahiai	March 29, 1849	Papeite
Robertson, George M.	July 3, 1865	Polynesian

Correlating with these ideas of internal mobilities and external diaspora, is the way people migrated across the Pacific up to the contemporary timeframe. It appears to be divided into a binary. The first is the ancient epistemologies of Pacific ancestors that either traversed the great Pacific through celestial navigation, or with knowledge systems of waves, clouds, and nature or any combination of these (Finney 1977; Wilson 2007; see also *The Navigators* 2012). Then the second half of the timeframe industrializes the modern twentieth century age of ships, commercial steam liners, and airplanes. What happened in between the era of ancient indigenous “traditions” and contemporary life as we know it today, full of bustling airports and trans-Pacific flights operating almost daily? In what ways can we start to bridge gaps of non-evidence between these two migratory eras?¹⁵

In teasing further out the story of post-traditional navigations that began with Tupaia, there is another figure that starts to fill that gap. Teuira Henry, the prolific Tahitian scholar who wrote about Tupaia in the epigraph at the beginning of the chapter, happens to be one of the first female contributors to the Hawaiian Historical Society. Being recognized for her high level of education and status in society, she was admitted membership to the Society along with Emma Nakuina, daughter of cheifess Ka‘ilikapuolono, in 1895 (for more of Emma Nakuina’s contributions, see Nupepa 2016). Henry wrote and translated *Ancient Tahiti* (1928), a text still

¹⁵ Some of these non-gaps can be found in little known records in the Archives, one of which is the Annual Reports of the Hawaiian Historical Society. The Hawaiian Historical Society was established in 1892 “by a group of prominent citizens dedicated to preserving historical materials, presenting public lectures, and publishing scholarly research on the history of Hawai‘i. Queen Lili‘uokalani was an early patron of the Society.”

relied on heavily today as a foundation to the most widely used chants, legends, and histories of French Polynesia pre-dating European contact.

This “long looked for history of Tahiti...will fill an important gap in our knowledge of Polynesia. Her researches in conjunction with those of S. Percy Smith, Esq. and Elsdon Best in New Zealand have thrown new light on the ancient connection between the Maoris of New Zealand and the people of the Society Islands, as well as the aborigines of Hawaii nei.”¹⁶

After she comes to Hawai‘i, she teaches at the Royal School in Honolulu, educating Hawai‘i’s young elite high society. After 16 years, and all the while writing, publishing, and educating, she returns home to live out her life in Tahiti where she passes away on June 28, 1915 at the age of 68 years old.¹⁷ Her writings and translations of Tahitian culture and history for Hawaiians at the turn of the twentieth century are still valuable contributions as an exemplary source for bridging linguistic divides in Oceania. Her fascinating life is deserving of more attention, and I incorporate her story as a framework for the display of contributions in understanding Mā‘ohi and Kanaka Maoli intersectionalities in the early twentieth century.

Flying Through History

Teuira Henry voyages to Hawai‘i on a commonly traveled passenger freight, but the coming decades would usher in another vision of movement. It is possible that in the twenty-first century, we have forgotten how a seemingly inconsequential infrastructure, building an airport for example, could drastically and forever change the way Mā‘ohi moved around the Pacific. In French Polynesia, the building of the Fa‘a‘a International Airport paved the way for a new

¹⁶ “In all Polynesia: Annual meeting of local historical society.” *The Hawaiian gazette*. (Honolulu [Oahu, Hawaii]), 30 Nov. 1897. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025121/1897-11-30/ed-1/seq-1/>>

¹⁷ *Honolulu star-bulletin*. (Honolulu [Oahu, Hawaii]), 08 March 1915. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn82014682/1915-03-08/ed-1/seq-4/>>

military industry, with increased access to a country that changed the purpose of France's assets in the Pacific. "Once in operation from October 1960, the airport provided swifter and easier access to Tahiti and its islands, permitting mass tourism. The new airport also assisted the French government to transfer equipment and personnel into the territory to prepare for and implement the nuclear testing programme" (Henningham 1992, 127). In short, the Fa'a'a International Airport being built on the island of Tahiti, opened the floodgates for modern travel both with military and personal/recreational use to get to these otherwise remote islands with ease and speed. With the introduction of flying boats, airports and eventually airplanes had huge consequences in terms of allowing access to a previously closed off and remote island nation.

Essentially, the Faaa airport opened Tahiti to the modern world. Instead of an eight-day ship voyage, travelers faced an eight-hour plane ride. People, goods, mail, and news arrived on the island with increasing frequency, intensifying the imposition of Western ideologies and consumerism. The number of tourists rose from four thousand to fifty thousand a year between 1960 and 1970."¹⁸

In a personal interview with Jack H. Ward, who during and after his US Navy service in the late 1950s sailed through many of the most remote parts of French Polynesia, he also suggests that this time period was a significant marker in Tahiti's historiography. Jack Ward has been living in Hawai'i for the past 50 years following his military service, and his various long standing research interests in French Polynesia have kept him abreast of the Mā'ohi people and culture thriving in Hawai'i. He was also instrumental in "'Iaorana Tahiti," a network of Tahitians and those interested in learning about the region to meet together and have a support system here in Hawai'i. 'Iaorana Tahiti and other community formations will be discussed in the following chapter. Jack Ward's input is valuable in understanding the parameters of how and why Mā'ohi

¹⁸ As cited in *Encyclopedie de Polynesie* 8:126-127; (see Stevenson 1990, 263).

were coming to Hawai‘i in the twenty-first century, and how they were connecting with others while living here.

Ward notes, “the building of the airport in 1960 widely opened up the access of Tahiti to the rest of the world. Prior to that, private vessels or occasional import steamers were the only vessels to enter or leave Tahiti. Commercial travel to French Polynesia was non-existent.” At the time Ward was there to do his own research in the late 1950s, in order for Customs to allow him entry into the country, he had to show proof that he had a return ticket “out”. At that time the only way “out” was from a steam ship liner heading east from Tahiti to the Panama Canal. The only other available airport transport was riding T.E.A.L. (short for Tasman Empire Airways Limited, the forerunner to Air New Zealand), a flying boat that would land in the lagoon from which one would have to row a boat back to shore. It seated about 10 passengers and took over a week (depending upon the weather) to get back to the U.S. through multiple stopovers via the Cook Islands, Samoa, Fiji etc. This was the most expensive source of transport, but still an available option if steamships were not coming through for an extended period of time.

The purpose of the Fa’a’a airport allowed France to have a greater presence and influence in French Polynesia (Henningham 1992). This directly correlates with the speed and intensity that brought nuclear testing to these islands.¹⁹ French Polynesia’s nuclear history also requires reexamination as a primary motivation for internal migration among French Polynesians in the mid twentieth century. However, for the purpose of how these two events changed French Polynesia in terms of culture and dance, Stevenson’s piece offers the following which may help uncover the cause and effect relationship that shifted ideals and politics during this era.

¹⁹ French Polynesia’s nuclear past has lasting effects, still being felt today, see also “L’elu du Peuple” Pouvanaa a Oopa.

In 1963, when the French brought the bomb, military forces were expanded and money flowed in. Tens of thousands of French military personnel arrived in the islands. As in the past, the Tahitians countered this onslaught with an intensification of Tahitian activities during the *Fete* (precursor to “Heiva”). Events that stressed the cultural and artistic values of the Tahitians helped to reinforce Tahitian ideals at a time of exaggerated foreign intervention. The *Fete* was, after all, a festival celebrating Tahitian culture, not French imperialism” (Stevenson 1990, 263).

This relationship becomes intensified when the Fête becomes known as the Heiva²⁰, and the cultural and artistic values of Tahitians seemingly true and enduring, begin to feel unstable by the pressure of representing what is distinctly “Tahitian”.

Sailing Into The Contemporary: The Hōkūle‘a

While this stability is being negotiated in Tahiti, in Hawai‘i at virtually the same time, understanding indigenous Kanaka Maoli identity invigorated Pacific Islander intersectionalities manifested in the form of the Hōkūle‘a. The Hōkūle‘a is one of the most visible collaborations of contemporary indigenous identities. While this vision could not have come to pass without the knowledge sharing of celestial navigation by Mau Piailug, the vision and purpose of this collaboration by visionaries of the Polynesian Voyaging Society was to fulfill the dream to, “raise Hawaiki from the sea.”²¹ Raising “Hawaiki from the sea” as a centrifugal motivation to recreate ancient routes of travel represents a common desire to understand the historical mobilities that connect peoples over time. The Hōkūle‘a’s first long voyage took place in 1976 to Tahiti. “When Hōkūle‘a arrived at the beach in Pape’ete Harbor, over half the island’s people were there, more than 17,000 strong, and there was a spontaneous affirmation of what a great

²⁰ Switching to a Tahitian name for a Tahitian festival may seem minor in some respects, but it allows Tahitians to own it as their own.

²¹ “The Story of Hōkūle‘a.” Polynesian Voyaging Society. <http://www.hokulea.com> (accessed October 25, 2015). see also The Navigators 2012.

heritage we shared and also a renewal of the spirit of who we are today.”²² That renewal was based on historical knowledge that these islands were inherently linked. Due to colonial boundaries had been separated, and now share common linkages through its communities of Mā’ohi who mediate that divide.

The continued success of the Hōkūle‘a and its sister canoe Hikianalia, even now as it pushes the boundaries to what could’ve ever been thought was possible in its “Malama Honua” voyage to circumnavigate the globe, will continue to inspire the possibilities of connectedness through mobilities, exchange, and reciprocity.

Conclusion

This chapter on the historical intersectionalities between Mā’ohi peoples and Hawai‘i nei seeks to motivate a new way of understanding Mā’ohi mobilities as rooted in time and a familiar exchange between these regions. This chapter argues that the Mā’ohi contemporary migration is deeply rooted in the nineteenth century despite the general lack of knowledge, public and academic, about nineteenth century migrations to Hawai‘i. Understanding historical Mā’ohi mobilities develops a new perspective in the interrelationships of French Polynesia with the wider Pacific region as a whole. And lastly, this chapter argues that nineteenth century Tahitian migration is a context for later mobilities to Hawai‘i which become motivated by new patterns of exchange.

As Teuira Henry and others have noticed, deep historical connections to ancient Hawaiki contribute to many circulating ideas about what Tahiti means to Kanaka Maoli. Because of this shadowed history, it becomes easier to recognize that the Mā’ohi diaspora is not a late twentieth

²² “The Story of Hōkūle‘a.” Polynesian Voyaging Society. <http://www.hokulea.com> (accessed October 25, 2015). see also *The Navigators* 2012.

century phenomenon. Mā'ohi mobilities to Hawai'i stand on top of the shoulders of these deeper historical movements even though these mobilities have largely been out of view. Though they have different kinds of participants over time, these patterns of exchange set up a foundation for a Mā'ohi historiography that is interconnected in places far distant from the homeland.

This foundation will become important in the second chapter where I show that twentieth century mobilities are influenced by new motivations, new contexts, and new goals altering the Mā'ohi exchange. In Chapter Two, the focus largely shifts to bring active contemporary diasporic communities of Mā'ohi into view. This focus includes the making of a predominantly religious Mā'ohi community in Hawai'i over time, a centering piece by the only scholar to ever do this work in Hawai'i, Moshe Rapaport. Through these diasporic contexts, a new awareness of creating connection to the homeland contribute to the spread of Mā'ohi culture and identity abroad.

CHAPTER 2

Remapping Communities in Diaspora

Coiled in upon myself
I'm seated at an opening in Time.
And I murmur to myself:
For too long
I've distanced myself from my homeland,
and the need for deeply rooted identity
has disappeared from among the recent generations.
It's been far too long since I sat
at my homeland's side.
The previous generation carelessly tossed
their ways of thinking into the deserts of elsewhere.
*Henri Hiro*²³

On Sunday, November 22, 2015, about 150 Mā'ohi living on the North Shore of O'ahu gathered in Lā'ie to celebrate their shared community experiences and connection to this place of Hawai'i, and more specifically, Lā'ie. The gathering was planned by a few families from the community who were interested in sharing their stories with their posterity, and for others who might be interested in the genealogy and history of Mā'ohi in Hawai'i. The gathering was formatted like a public informal conference panel, where four speakers from the community were asked to speak on several different timeframes, representative of waves of emigration to Hawai'i experienced over the decades. They were each from different parts of Te Ao Mā'ohi, and had come to Lā'ie through a very specific connection to the Church College of Hawai'i (now known as Brigham Young University-Hawai'i), the Polynesian Cultural Center (which for three out of four of them, was still in its infancy at the time they came), and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

²³ Translated in English as "Devour Ravaged Time" by Jean Toyama and Frank Stewart in *Varua Tupu*.

On that Sunday, those sharing their stories were marked by genealogical links to each of their respective islands: Hikueru (Tuamotu), Tupua'i (Australs), Ana'a (Tuamotu), and Taha'a (Societies). The recounting of genealogies is a significant Pacific practice, but one made more visibly through the shared experience of coming to a new place. Each speaker proceeded to tell stories of interrelationships; who came with them (all of them came in small groups), when, why, who was here already, what life was like then, and what life is like now. The recounting of genealogical and social networks both in the homeland and now abroad, was an important foundational grounding for each of these speakers as they related their histories to Lā'ie. In an interview after this gathering, E.T., a native of Ana'a in the Tuamotu Islands and one of the presenters who shared stories that night, stated that "knowing your genealogy is important. We all came together in those early days and made our families here. That's how we're all connected, and we had to take care of each other. It didn't matter which of the islands where you were from, we all took care and helped each other."

This chapter is dedicated to exploring the patterns of twenty-first century Mā'ohi migration. Starting with this community's engagements, histories, and influences is no accident. This community has been identified as the most concentrated grouping of Mā'ohi in Hawai'i, and the focus of Tahitian migration from French Polynesia to Hawai'i as primarily a Tahitian migration by Moshe Rapaport, the only scholar to ever do this work. Rapaport's ground breaking work attempts to analyze the migration from French Polynesia to Hawai'i through the formation of Tahitian communities, and defines this specific religious community on the North Shore of O'ahu as a case study in the subject. In this context he maps out demographic information determining the characteristics of the community. Through this grouping, he demonstrates the well represented demographics of outer islander Mā'ohi in Hawai'i, where his own earlier

research in the Tuamotu Islands reveals the complicated nuances of belonging to parts other than Tahiti in French Polynesia.

In this chapter, I demonstrate that the story is even more complex than that, and that Tahitian migration to Hawai‘i is a part of a chain migration that begins as internal migrations in French Polynesia because of the development of the nuclear history and the Tuamotuan pearl industry. Through these layered twentieth century migrations, Mā‘ohi mobilities to Hawai‘i is in some sense not primarily Tahiti centered, but incorporates outer islanders for whom the label of Tahitian sits uncomfortably. Furthermore, this chapter explores how these mobilities are not the same patterns of exchange as seen in the previous chapter. These new patterns and crossroads blends into rich community exchanges which complicates the story of Mā‘ohi mobilities in the region and sets the stage for the exploration of contemporary community engagements in the third chapter. This effort serves as a charted course to remap Mā‘ohi communities in diaspora.

Without realizing the commonalities of their experiences, each speaker in that community gathering also shared about their personal layers of migration they experienced in their lifetime. For the community surrounding this North Shore area, these experiences paint the history of a layered internal migration in French Polynesia and an external diaspora beyond as these families left those islands to come to Hawai‘i. Another one of the speakers, from the black pearl farming atoll of Hikueru, highlighted some personal events that exemplify this movement. She migrated from Hikueru to Tahiti with her family in 1950 for more consistent educational opportunities; her parents believed that formal education led to a better life. During these schooling years, some of her siblings had been sent with the help of missionaries from the Church as far as Tonga for education. Because having regular access to education was difficult for large outer islander families, external migrations were not uncommon, especially those undertaken to pursue

education. In 1959, she was informally adopted, and taken in by English missionaries to California for an American education. Her story eventually took her to Hawai‘i and the Church College of Hawai‘i (now known as Brigham Young University-Hawai‘i), where she met her husband and where she remains today with her children and grandchildren. My mother’s own story also closely resembles this journey as this was one pattern of the outward migration described by other members of this community.

This present day community gathering on the North Shore reflects upon the linkages to the homeland that are still being mediated, and generally shared as common experiences of relating to home. The migration of Mā’ohi within and without the region are still very much contested as types of diaspora; large flow movements sustained over time through (in this case, religious) pull factors explains the contemporary formation of this community.

In this sensitivity to distance, maintenance of culture, and understanding identity, Mā’ohi poet and theologian Henri Hiro, provides a type of foreshadowing of diasporic concerns in understanding Mā’ohi past, present, and future through his poem *Aitau*, translated as “Devour the Ravaged Time”. What he advocates in the poem is recognition of the urgency of “find[ing] the roots of my people...so that the deep past can unite with the future.” His questioning of deeply rooted identity for new generations, “lost in its own homeland,” is reverberating out, and is especially heard in communities far distant from their homeland who are always mindful of this positionality. While I do not seek to speak about the populations of Mā’ohi who are rooted and living in French Polynesia, this chapter seeks to understand how Mā’ohi are mapping new roots in the communities they inhabit in diaspora.

The desire to self-represent personal narratives was felt deeply by many of those in attendance of this informal community talk-story, including myself. Those who were there were

aware of historical writings that did not necessarily take into account Mā'ohi who were making new lives elsewhere. Indeed, many present may have understood Hiro's call intensely, since many of their forthcoming generations would be growing up in the diaspora, distanced from their ancestral homeland. For this community gathering, the motivation to reconnect personal narratives with living experiences was a way to self-represent a diasporic identity belonging to these Mā'ohi.

Making Community Over Time

This community exemplifies some of the connections made visible through a layered diaspora. Through the sharing of these stories they are remapping Mā'ohi history and reciprocating culture in powerful ways, “and they have contributed much, much more than has been acknowledged.” (Hau'ofa 2008, 36). In this section, I provide a close reading of an unpublished study of the diaspora of Mā'ohi in Hawai'i. In this study, Moshe Rapaport provides “a picture of the size and characteristics of a hitherto undescribed immigrant community” (Rapaport 1988, 17) on the North Shore of O'ahu, that live primarily in the Hau'ula, Lā'ie, and Kahuku area.

Rapaport's study identifies a contemporary Mā'ohi diaspora to Hawai'i, not dependent on ancient mythology, but with tangible data explaining the workings behind it. The study notes that a bulk of this diaspora is due to the Mormon church, and its adjacent affiliations with the Polynesian Cultural Center and Brigham Young University-Hawai'i. It also observes that that largest grouping of Mā'ohi in Hawai'i belong to this specific diaspora.²⁴ As his primary justification, Rapaport's study focuses on the “close-knit group centered around the Mormon

²⁴ Rapaport also adds that “the Tahitians in Hawai'i are mainly located on O'ahu, there are also families reported on the neighboring islands of Hawai'i” (Rapaport 1988, 2).

Temple, the Brigham Young University, and the Polynesian Cultural Center in Lā‘ie, ... because of their relatively small size and residential dispersion, there has, as yet, not been a single study of the Tahitian immigrant population. Most people are scarcely aware that there are any Tahitians living in Hawai‘i” (Rapaport 1988, 2).

Here of all places is the reminder most significant; that “the world of Oceania is not small; it is huge and growing bigger every day.” This immigrant population exemplifies the expanding borders of Te Ao Mā’ohi through meaningful connections that validate the homeland and vice versa. I expand Rapaport’s work by furthering the context of this community, since it is the one to which I belong, by identifying the ways Mā’ohi perpetuate and maintain cultural identity in Hawai‘i. This chapter re-introduces this diasporic community, contextualized by others, with their own recent histories. This will further Rapaport’s study in providing more context to the motivations and makings of diasporic Mā’ohi communities in Hawai‘i.

Rapaport’s study brings some driving questions in to view and suggest the need for a closer look of this diverse immigrant population. First, it exists as a proof of concept in identifying populations of Mā’ohi in the Anglophone Pacific. This point is striking since Mā’ohi culture is widely consumed through dance, music, body art, apparel etc. in the Anglophone Pacific. It seems like such an obvious point to make that Mā’ohi, just as any other ethnic group in the Pacific, would migrate in and throughout the region that articulating it would almost feel unnecessary. However, understanding Mā’ohi mobilities through its diasporic communities provide new contexts and possibilities to the breadth of understanding how diverse Oceania actually is. Mā’ohi peoples are moving, have always moved, and the consideration of their cultural contributions in places outside of their homeland, diversify the region and contribute to the overall understanding of the layered mobilities of Pacific Islanders. Mā’ohi have long been

underrepresented in the field of writing and academia (Stewart, Mateata-Allain, Mawyer 2006; Mateata-Allain 2008). While writings of French Polynesia and its inhabitants have existed since the first Europeans ventured to the South Pacific, it is timely for contemporary Mā'ohi writers to contribute to the writing of their own historiography, be it through whatever lens, language, or citizenship they do it in (Mateata-Allain 2008).

Second, his efforts while contributory in understanding Tahitian immigrants in Hawai'i, is limited in the full scope of diversity represented. Many of those included in the study were from other parts of Te Ao Mā'ohi. How does the difference of being from other various archipelagos affect the kinds of cultural contributions these Mā'ohi are making in diaspora? His study is a peek into the lives that embody the fluid movement of Mā'ohi to Hawai'i, but other than a few ethnographies with some pointed anecdotes about family life, we are left wondering how these interviewees practiced a variety of cultural customs²⁵ while making another Pacific place their home. There exists a huge potential for understanding how this diverse group redefines cultural norms that have become known as "Tahitian" dance and culture.

And the third point draws closely to the second observation in that all of the interviewees included in the case study were referred to as Tahitian. This is reflective of the day and age it was written, the mass "clumping" of Mā'ohi as "Tahitians" was and sometimes is a common referential practice. Since countless outer islanders of French Polynesia migrate regularly to Tahiti for education, employment, and business over the last century, it is a complicated misnomer to say that one is from Tahiti (Stewart, Mateata-Allain, Mawyer 2006), even though it remains the epicenter of the region. One may have come most recently from that place, but "fromness" connotes roots and branches of a family tree that is grounded in a literal place and a

²⁵ "Many of the immigrants categorized as professionals are employed in Tahitian music and dance, which are highly in demand by the tourists in Hawai'i" (Rapaport 1988, 8).

figurative belonging.²⁶ The general referencing of “Tahitians” is not particularly harmful up front, but the inclusion of ethnographies in Rapaport’s study included immigrants from places other than Tahiti. This obscures the identity of Mā’ohi in the Anglophone speaking Pacific.

The study also includes interviews of Mā’ohi from the Tuamotu Islands, particularly Hikueru and Takaroa; both particularly known for their links with the Mormon church. This gives relevance to their connection to the church when they later came to settle in the Lā’ie area. Knowing this affects our understanding of the fluidity of Tahitian identity in the region. Each archipelago consists of different languages and customs, each within their own culture. By acknowledging the breadth of Mā’ohi experiences in the homeland, it also sheds light on the diversity of Mā’ohi experiences in diaspora.

While this community offers a distinct perspective based on a specific religious affiliation, it is noteworthy to add that there were and continue to be many other thriving communities of Mā’ohi in the state of Hawai‘i. Rapaport’s focus is in part justified because of the close proximity of Mā’ohi in this tight knit community providing accessibility to the Francophone Pacific here in Hawai‘i. In his methodology, a few select individuals were interviewed to help represent the greater whole through this accessibility. Since this case study was the only entry point to the study of immigrant Tahitians in Hawai‘i to date, it is also relevant to note that during the 70s and 80s when this piece was written, there did not exist a clear distinction between the different indigenous island peoples of French Polynesia. The blurriness of Mā’ohi identity is a contemporary issue, contested only recently as increasing indigenous movements have come to the forefront of socio-political commentary (see Stewart, Mateata-

²⁶ So the question of “fromness” leads to some interesting discussions in the contemporary relationship between place and belonging in and throughout French Polynesia. Henri Hiro and Turo a Raapoto were the contemporary theologians who challenged the laissez-faire subtleties of identity.

Allain, Mawyer 2006; Gagné 2015; Porcher-Wiart 2015; Saura 2011; Spitz 2007) and accessibility to these islands was created at the time of building airports in the region (see *Flying Through History* in Chapter One).

The history of French colonialism positioned Tahiti as the epicenter of politics, business, trade, and education in the region. This brought French influence and eventually labor immigrants to build up Tahiti's infrastructure. Some of the larger ethnic distinctions that can be made in Tahiti are made up of white Pōpa'a, the contemporary influx of Chinese immigrants or Tinito, and the native populations dependent on the island/group of islands they are from such as Tahitians or ta'ata Tahiti (person of Tahiti), or ta'ata Pa'umotu (person of the Tuamotus). Theoretically, the indigenous Mā'ohi naming of native populations in this distinction will be explored further in the Conclusion of Chapter Three. As for "Demi," equivalent to afakasi or half-cast, there exist other double-standards as well. Being "Polynesian," being of Polynesia, and living in Polynesia are still highly contested contemporary notions of belonging to place within the region. This notion is further complicated by ideas that "people are able to gain Polynesian citizenship" (Flosse 2001, 13) an ethnic citizenship, in French Polynesia. So is indigeneity something one is born with, or is it accessible by doing indigenous things and living in indigenous places? In the following passage, the former President of French Polynesia, Gaston Flosse, theorizes the nature of indigeneity, citizenship, and the rights of the inhabitants of French Polynesia.

Who would be a Polynesian citizen? Two very different approaches can be taken towards this issue. One involves the concept of an 'indigenous people'. From this point of view, the beneficiaries of rights would be only those who are descended from the people who were living in the country at the time of the arrival of the new immigrants. This is an ethnic approach, one which comes very close to racism. It can create problems in the case of intermarriage as, for example, in Fiji, where it becomes necessary at times to determine who is a 'Fijian Fijian' - a real Fijian - for the purposes of receiving particular benefits reserved for ethnic

Fijians. In our case, in French Polynesia, it would be even more difficult, as so much intermarriage has taken place over the years... A second approach uses a quite different concept, one to which I am attached and propose to defend. In this case, the criteria for eligibility for citizenship is determined by place of birth or by length of residence. This second conception is preferable, for Polynesian citizenship is not an idea designed to promote exclusion. On the contrary, rather than encouraging ethnic antagonisms or tensions, this citizenship aspires to be both generous and open” (2011, 15).

Of course, this is the same President who was head of government multiple times during the deeply controversial nuclear testing era of French Polynesia, and who more recently has been entangled several times with court cases involving civil and government corruption. It’s no wonder that racism, ethnicity, indigeneity, and citizenship are debated, contested, and at times marginalized throughout French Polynesia. It is a definition that contests and questions the “juridical value of the rights attached to Polynesian citizenship” (Flosse 2011, 13).

This issue of definition is only complicated in diaspora, where the future rights of Mā’ohi overseas to citizenship rights back in the homeland is at stake. Does this category of identity have pragmatic, legal, economic and political repercussions? Flosse’s vision is “generous and open,” but I question, who are the beneficiaries of this generosity? Members of this community who came from their islands via Tahiti would have no question about their citizenship and identity relationship to their homeland. The conversation grows with interest however, when one considers how subsequent generations are redefining their identity as overseas or diasporic Mā’ohi.

Mā’ohi Demographics

Understanding the “size and scope” of the population of Mā’ohi and the outward flow in diaspora provide a baseline starting point into the diaspora of Mā’ohi people, culture, and ideas.

L'Institut de la Statistique de le Polynésie Française (The Statistics Institute of French Polynesia, or ISPF) cites the following trends of populations incoming and outgoing.

As of August 22, 2012, French Polynesia counted 268,207 inhabitants... Net migration is a significant deficit: the difference between the number of people leaving French Polynesia and the number of those arriving is 7,700 people over a period of five years. Each year, over 1,500 net departures are counted. In a context of economic crisis, the unemployment rate measured by the census has almost doubled in five years: 11.7% in 2007, it reached 21.8% in 2012... As of December 31, 2014, shows that 271,800 people live in French Polynesia... The increase in population is still driven by the birth rate, helped by a favorable structure by ages, but slowed from a historically high migration deficit. The birth rate and fertility marking time in continuous decline for two decades. The population growth is much lower than in the 90s, when growth reached 1.9% per year on average.

This net migration deficit demonstrates that migrations within the region are not only historical traditions of Mā'ohi, but a telling sign of the contemporary experience. Where are French Polynesians going, and why? The place with the biggest “pull factors” (BBC 2014) for French Polynesians is France. In the 2007 census disseminated by ISPF, the majority of the population is born in French Polynesia, 8% is born in France, and 3% in a place outside of France and French Polynesia. Thus a total of 11% of the population is born outside of French Polynesia, and this is what contributes to the diaspora of Mā'ohi abroad. Considering migration as a significant and common feature for many Mā'ohi families today (to have or know about family members or friends that live abroad), I question how we can better understand these experiences? It is a part of the Mā'ohi fabric even in the homeland to have connections abroad, and yet relatively little is known about ways Mā'ohi are navigating that distance. This clearly presents a void in the corpus of literature about Mā'ohi. “Pull” factors to France include access to higher education, the possibilities of increased employment opportunities, military service, and family connections. In the English website *World Population Review*, this same census information was reinforced and

added upon with a section of the breakdown of ethnicity. Although not as recently conducted, I found it pertinent to the discussion to include here,

The last census that asked about ethnicity occurred in 1988, at which point 66.5% of the population was ethnically Polynesian, 7% was ethnically mixed Polynesian, 11.9% were European (primarily French),...4.7% were East Asians (primarily Chinese)²⁷. The Chinese, Demis and white population are concentrated on Tahiti, particularly in the capital of Pape'ete.²⁸

The indigenous peoples of French Polynesia, or ethnically Polynesian, are still the dominant ethnic group in their home islands. If one considers the correlation of the majority population being Mā'ohi (or any combination thereof), and the high unemployment rate in combination with the net deficit of migration in French Polynesia, it's easy to conclude that Mā'ohi across the board are seeking economic opportunities elsewhere, and their diaspora reflects these interests.

The 3% of French Polynesians born outside of France and French Polynesia would include the diaspora of Mā'ohi to the Anglophone Pacific. This links to the demographic of the community highlighted in Rapaport's study. According to the United States Census Bureau, as of 2010, the total population of "Tahitian alone or in any combination of mixed ethnicity" was 2,513 persons in the state of Hawai'i.²⁹ Of that demographic, 1,741 live in the City and County of Honolulu. The numbers for the community of Hau'ula, Lā'ie, and Kahuku would be included in the City and County of Honolulu count. In comparison to Rapaport's findings, where his primary focus is the migration numbers of Tahitians between the years of 1972-1984, current demographic data does not specify citizenship, when these populations came, or the generational linkages to this demographic (born in diaspora, or in the homeland).

²⁷ The remaining 10% was unaccounted for. It also states that "93% were of mixed Polynesian and French descent referred to as "Demis", but no context of how this fits into the scope of the population was added.

²⁸ "French Polynesia Demographics." World Population Review. <http://www.worldpopulationreview.com> (accessed February 15, 2016).

²⁹ "Tahitian Alone or in any combination." US Census Bureau. <http://www.factfinder.census.gov> (accessed February 15, 2016).

In comparison to the demographics of the homeland, according again to World Population Review, it is noted that in 2015 the population of French Polynesia is estimated at “almost 283,000, with 68.5% of the population living in Tahiti. It is estimated that the population growth in 2016 will increase the population to over 285,000.” An updated structuring of the demographic of Mā’ohi in the homeland and abroad, help to contextualize the continued conversation of the spread of Mā’ohi; where they’re going, why, and what they are doing in the context of new homelands.

New Community Definitions

Over the course of many years contemporary migrations to Hawai‘i were a direct partnership with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Polynesian Cultural Center, and Brigham Young University-Hawai‘i in the Lā‘ie area. The makings of this “tight-knit” community are a direct result of this faith enmeshed religious grouping. Many Pacific Islanders who were members of the Church in their home island nations were sought out to come to the Polynesian Cultural Center as different kinds of labor missionaries in the early years of building up the Center, and over time had settled in the area. Such is the case of my great-grandfather who served as one of the first Tahitian Village Directors, after having spent previous years on a mission for the Church in New Zealand, there learning how to speak English.

This was one significant way that Mā’ohi were allowed long term visas despite their French citizenship on a consistent basis, and is one significant factor for Mā’ohi who traveled outside of the Francophone Pacific to the Anglophone Pacific. For local access to a community identified as having a diverse population of French Polynesians in one locale, this we know was a primary interest of Rapaport’s study. While this thesis could expand Rapaport’s analysis of the

family makeup and the religious relationship that these immigrants had built up, the aim of this chapter is to broaden the discussion of motivating factors for immigrants coming to the Anglophone speaking Pacific, as well as their cultural contributions to the places they inhabit.

Because Rapaport's study presents content about a unique contemporary relationship between Tahiti and Hawai'i and is considered the first of its kind, (especially in the Anglophone Pacific), it is tempting to think it starts here. While Rapaport's study frames the potential of understanding between people and place, the creation of this document attempts to speak to the vast ranges of possibilities ripe for expansion. It is this offering that provides critical insight into the breadth of possibilities that communities, and particularly diasporic Mā'ohi communities, make towards mediating identity. Unpacking the layered diaspora within this specific community will continue to unfold diverse experiences.

The following sections widen that understanding to note that Mā'ohi immigrants are not new, nor are they a small indistinguishable population. Significantly enough, they were a regular and consistent part of Hawai'i's contemporary immigrant demographic. The community where I did my field work is experiencing diaspora in a relationship with religious institutions, but this is certainly not the full extent of historical processes affecting the migration of Tahitians to places like Hawai'i.³⁰ From personal experience, the following section embraces the notion of diasporic communities intertwined with culture through layered migrations.

³⁰ Outside of this specific community with strong ties to the Polynesian Cultural Center as an outlet for expression of culture, other community gatherings are centered around the innate feeling of hospitality towards the familiar. The establishment of communal ties, whether religiously based or not, still remain a significant marker of diasporic identity.

Language Archives

As a current graduate student at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, fulfilling a Pacific language requirement is a primary expectation of the Pacific Islands Studies degree. In my first semester of reo Tahiti, I learned about the Jack H. Ward Tahitian Language Scholarship and soon after, applied for this modest yet welcome funding opportunity. As part of the application, I was asked to share about my motivation for learning the language. In my application I responded that my heritage links are to the Tuamotu Islands and that my mother was from Takaroa. Because my family and I were raised in Hawai‘i and on the continental US, mildly our other language exposure was to French, but even this was still limited. This is often the case for Mā‘ohi in Anglophone speaking countries; multiple removals away from language represent the multiple layers of migration for Mā‘ohi.³¹ Some time passed, I was awarded the scholarship for the following academic school year and then was emailed a congratulatory note from Mr. Ward. He shared some of his experiences in the Tuamotu Islands and asked what my family name was. I told him about my parents, my mother, and he almost immediately responded what my connection was to the name Taumata Mapuhi. My great-grandfather Taumata Mapuhi, and my great grandmother Vahineri‘i Mapuhi pictured in Fig. 2, came to Hawai‘i in the early 70s via Tahiti island, through their connection to the Church.



Fig. 2: Taumata & Vahineri‘i Mapuhi

³¹ Clumping them together as “Tahitian” glosses over the unique quality of language and culture diversity in the region.

They had sold portions of their pearl farming lagoon space, or rather, had felt the increased economic pressure by forceful administrative policy to sell lagoon space to foreign investments. This was a prevalent pressure among Pa'umotu families living on pearl farming atolls in the Tuamotu Islands at the time.

Because of their natural stocks of black pearl oysters, Tuamotuan lagoons have attracted the covetous interests of external society since the early 19th century. Under the French colonial administration, land was individualized and lagoons were declared public domain. Island populations responded to these intrusions through hidden and open forms of resistance. Nevertheless, pearl oyster stocks were overexploited and became nearly extinct on many atolls. By 1970, the mother-of-pearl industry ended. It was replaced by a pearl farming industry, now pitting Tuamotuan populations against the Tahitian administration. The struggle over land and sea resources parallels a deeper struggle over ideology and meaning (Rapaport 1993, v).

This era also ushered in the increased migration of foreign investors who were developing the global trade of Tahitian black pearls in French Polynesia.

The hegemonic role of the Tahitian territorial administration also became evident... Competition on Takaroa did not simply occur as the natural consequence of a pearl rush. The alien entrepreneurs were being deliberately encouraged and supported as part of the official administrative development policy, regardless of the objections of local populations... Aided by recently released government historical records at the Territorial Archives in Papeete, I began an inquiry into the history of colonial modifications of land and lagoon tenure policy. I found that 19th century administrative decisions had indeed set the foundation for current problems in the Tuamotus (Rapaport 1993, 43).

Some of the largest pearl farms in those atolls today, remain the exclusive enterprises of the descendants of these acquisitions. What we know as the globally circulated "Tahitian black pearl" has roots in cultures distant from Tahiti, in places like the Tuamotu and the Gambier Islands, and yet, remains one of Tahiti's largest economic industries. Nevertheless, my great-grandparents were asked to be cultural missionaries for the Polynesian Cultural Center through their Church networks, and had moved to Lā'ie for that purpose.

For many of the stories evident in Rapaport's study, my family's personal history provides some context for the motivation of how specifically "Tahitian" immigrants were coming to the Hawaiian Islands, and to the community of Lā'ie. My great grandfather's legacy was also documented in two other books, *Seasons of Faith and Courage: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in French Polynesia, A Sesquicentennial History 1843-1993* (Ellsworth et. al, 1994) and *Unto the Islands of the Sea* (Britsch 1986). Both religious books are widely circulated as missionary accounts in French Polynesia; my great grandfather having attributed much of his own personal resources, time, and wealth in supporting that cause.

After my great grandparents come to Hawai'i, my story picks up to the diverse ways that these communities were affecting the spread of Tahitian culture, beyond the confines of Lā'ie's interconnected institutions. I learned from Mr. Ward that it was my great grandfather, while living here in Hawai'i, who had aided him in the creation of the Tahitian language program at the very same university where I am doing my graduate research on the contemporary migrations of Mā'ohi.

I could never have guessed that 45 years after these recordings made for the introductory level of Tahitian 103, I would be sitting in an audio lab at the Center for Language and Technology (CLT) directly across the walkway from the Center for Pacific Islands Studies to learn reo Tahiti or the Tahitian language, from my great grandfather.³² In terms of our family's past, this was literally a genealogical link that had been lost in time. Finding his voice amongst a sea of records made this work feel relevant, timely, and deeply personal. The fact that these recordings are still available today at the Audio Archives of the University of Hawai'i-Mānoa for

³² Among other things, the audio lab functions as UH-Mānoa's entry point to the storehouse of curriculum for the College of Languages, Linguistics, and Literature. There you can find research and language material for any of the languages studied at least in part by any number of relevant departments and independent researchers at UH-Mānoa.

the only Tahitian language program in the Anglosphere, make visible this very phenomenon that we see and know is happening.

Mā'ohi experience many kinds of migrations throughout their lifetime. Most of them are internal within the region, any many more are external. This underlying current of diaspora affecting the identity, language, and culture of Mā'ohi today seems so repetitively obvious. Yet this remains an invisibility in the academic literature of indigenous Mā'ohi historiography. The migrations and mobilities of Mā'ohi are expanding new ways of understanding culture, language, and history. The narrative that Mā'ohi history is lost in time, is now made irrelevant. It is not lost in time, it is cohesive, vibrant and thriving, albeit in unexpected ways.

It is important to note that while my great grandparents were the earliest assistance to the language program, many others came through early on and throughout the decades to support the teaching, pronunciation, and perpetuation of reo Tahiti at the University of Hawai'i-Mānoa. This program also provides a conversation for the culture, lifestyle, politics (both past and present), and other current affairs about French Polynesia in Hawai'i. This is an extension of the inherent connection between two places which are both rooted in history, and which creates new narratives in the discussion of Mā'ohi culture. One dynamic way I was experiencing this program was through the scholarship previously mentioned, and its clause to return to French Polynesia.³³ It literally created a platform whereby new narratives could exist alongside pre-existing ones about migrations in the region, and even about this shared region of Oceania. Long standing traditions and these pre-existing platforms didn't happen by accident or overnight. They were the product of many layers of exchange.

³³ The return migration of Mā'ohi are adding on yet another possible avenue to explore this subjectivity in its entirety.

In considering the making of this community, the personal anecdote of my great grandparents reaching beyond linguistic boundaries highlight just one kind of engagement that was made possible through a “small tight-knit community” with religious and secular ties to Lā‘ie. In comparison Ward states that, “Tahitians beyond the Lā‘ie-focused community are less integrated around a central principle. Thematically they are more disparate as a group and seem to share the characteristic of "blending into the larger society" while their Tahitianness is a less defining feature of who they are. Paradoxically, at the same time they are strongly Tahitian as well”.³⁴ Shining a light upon these paradoxes introduces other facets of Mā‘ohi communities rooted in Hawai‘i.

Hoa Nō Tahiti and 'Iaorana Tahiti

Like many other Pacific Islander diasporas, it becomes essential to gather with, connect to, and reciprocate among those who are experiencing their new homeland together. In a military driven migration among San Diego based Chamorros, “the Sons and Daughters of Guam Club became an important part of the Chamorro transpacific home in 1953.” (Bennett 2013, 30). This provides more concrete evidence of the examples which transnational Pacific Islanders are creating new spaces to “socialize and reaffirm their cultural roots” (Bennett 2013, 30). Bennett continues in her work to talk about the connections this and the Guam Club made for diasporic Chamorros living in California as a “space that provides roots in the new environment” (30). Similarly, understanding the social clubs, gatherings, and events that make up the Mā‘ohi experience in Hawai‘i nei, make visible the connections diasporic islanders make to their homeland as new patterns of migration emerge.

³⁴ Jack H. Ward, email message to author, November 6, 2015.

In the early 1970s, Jeanne Mou'a Larsen (the niece of Madame Madeline Mou'a), and her then husband created a group called Hoa Nō Tahiti, or Friends of Tahiti, in California where they were living at the time. Larsen had been brought to the US through her employment with the Tahiti Tourism Bureau, her husband at the time was working for the company receiving the delegation in Los Angeles. After spending some time in California, the couple transferred to Hawai'i, where Larsen's husband continued to work in the advertising industry.³⁵ They brought the idea of celebrating Tahitian culture as an organized association to O'ahu, where it quickly became rooted in the communities of Mā'ohi already established here. Hoa Nō Tahiti over time transformed into a non-profit organization called 'Iaorana Tahiti, to formally extend the vision of gathering and celebrating Tahitian culture in Hawai'i. This group was created to bring together Mā'ohi who were living here in Hawai'i and to help build up support networks with those who were interested in learning about Tahiti. Their primary function was to tāma'ara'a (feast), and have events that brought together Mā'ohi living here and Mā'ohi visiting, along with other interested supporters.

Some celebrations were quite elaborate, with full luau regalia right on Waikiki Beach to welcome various delegations of visiting authorities. Hoa Nō Tahiti served as an organization with members to put together welcoming events or celebrations also in conjunction with the tourism industry. Says Larsen, "I remember when we started, we had lots of big parties with lots of members... There was one time when we had a huge feast right in the front of Waikiki Beach. We had it roped off for ourselves with torches, lots of ma'a Tahiti (Tahitian food) and everyone had leis."³⁶ As she reminisced of these events in that same interview, Larsen also continued to

³⁵ Jeanne Mou'a Larsen, personal communication, September 4, 2015.

³⁶ Jeanne Mou'a Larsen, personal communication, September 4, 2015.

share how over the years it became more and more difficult to maintain a social club that even though brought people together, was increasingly competing for time and resources by its members. This demonstrates the tensions of mediating connection to the homeland in diaspora. “I miss those days, I miss the old Hawai‘i. Those days weren’t as hard as it is now. Everyone has to work two, three, or more jobs now and people needed to take care of their families. People are trying so hard to live and work that when it comes to certain things like this it’s hard. It became too hard to collect dues. Now it seems like the only time a lot of Tahitians are together are for the Moloka‘i races. Then the Tahitians will come together!”

In 2008, 'Iaorana Tahiti was reinvigorated into 'Iaorana Tahiti Club of Hawai‘i. In a recent interview with Chantal Moeari'i Weaver, the first Board President of 'Iaorana Tahiti Club of Hawai‘i, she shares that the club was always meant to “create networks and facilitate exchange between Tahiti and the islands of French Polynesia, and Hawai‘i.”³⁷ That exchange never stopped, and informal gatherings were still happening as a result of the canoe races that were happening annually. She was active in 'Iaorana Tahiti, as was her parents; Spencer (from New York) and Turere (from Tahiti) Weaver, and was an agent in trying to resuscitate the meaningful gatherings that used to happen in its hay day.

Spencer Weaver and his brother Cliff built SpenceCliff Corporation, responsible for some of Hawai‘i and Tahiti’s largest tourism infrastructures in the 1960s and 70s, as they were simultaneously restaurateurs and hoteliers. And highly successful ones at that. In a 1967 news article for the Honolulu Star Bulletin, Cobie Black writes of the Spencecliff’s international reach. “Two of the largest hotel enterprises in Tahiti have American backing. Of the 400 hotel rooms available, 150 are operated by SpenceCliff Resort Hotels. Spence Weaver’s two hotels, the Tahiti

³⁷ Chantal Moeari'i Weaver, personal communication, November 6, 2015.

Village and Hotel Tahiti, are considered the best in town. Prices range from \$12 single to \$30 double. Hotel Tahiti hires 145 employees.”³⁸ In its hay day “through the 1970s they operated more than 50 different restaurants, including the Ranch House, Tahitian Lanai, Coco's, Trader Vic's, Queen's Surf, Kelly's and South Seas.”³⁹ Jack Ward remembers Spencer Weaver as “instrumental in the startup of 'Iaorana Tahiti. In fact, he offered the use of his SpenceCliff board room as well as clerical and financial support that was crucial at the time. I was on the board of directors from the very beginning and know how important that was and how he loved and helped Tahitian people.”⁴⁰

This “SpenceCliff hay day” is a critical era for Hawai'i's mid-twentieth century booming tourism economy, and has wide implications for understanding pan-Pacific connections in a new way. Spence, his Tahitian wife Turere, and his brother Cliff, were very much actively mediating the divide, and held interests in connecting these two places. Hawai'i's tourism industry depended on these early networks, organizations, and gatherings of Mā'ohi in order stabilize jobs and create infrastructure. These histories gave birth to what we understand as “Tahitian” culture here in Hawai'i, along with the major industries of the day making these exchanges possible.

Moloka'i Hoe, A New Kind of Migration Story

As Larsen mentions earlier, one way the Mā'ohi diasporic community is seen as visible is through outrigger canoe races like the Moloka'i Hoe (informal gathering), and I add here also through the Heiva (formal gathering). The Heiva will be examined in further detail in Chapter

³⁸ Black, Cobey. “Who's News with Cobey Black.” *Star Bulletin* (Honolulu, HI), 1967.

³⁹ Sigall, Bob. “SpenceCliff spent decades atop local restaurant scene.” *Honolulu Star Advertiser* (Honolulu, HI), June 3, 2011.

⁴⁰ Jack H. Ward, email message to author, November 6, 2015.

Three, but in this section I seek to add more context to both the visibility and structure of these informal gatherings which include canoe clubs and races in Hawai‘i.

The Hōkūle‘a, a full scale replica of a wa‘a kaulua (Polynesian double hulled canoe) sails its first voyage to Tahiti from O‘ahu in 1976, which is considered its landmark voyage and the epitome of reconnecting ancestral knowledge (which was deemed on the verge of extinction), to native Hawaiians as a form of cultural renaissance. What we don’t often hear about is in the year right before this, Tahitian canoe clubs had come for the first time ever to participate in the Moloka‘i Hoe. In October of the year that Hōkūle‘a sails to Tahiti without any modern navigational system (1976), Tahitian crews sweep the Moloka‘i Hoe and it is front and center news. The combination of these two narratives elevate the relationship that Hawai‘i has with Tahiti and coincides with the booming industries highlighted in the section above. Even though many other kinds of prior relationships between these two places are considered long standing at this point, the narrative of voyaging seems to reemerge as an idolization of Tahitian culture in this era.

According to molokaihoe.com, the O‘ahu Hawaiian Canoe Racing Associations’ official home page, the race started in 1952. The course connects Moloka‘i to O‘ahu via the Ka‘iwi channel, about 55 miles in length and,

has become one of the longest running annual team sporting events in Hawai‘i, second only to football. The Moloka‘i Hoe perpetuates one of Hawai‘i’s and Polynesia’s most important and historic cultural traditions, while honoring outrigger canoe paddlers around the world. The Moloka‘i Hoe tests the limits of physical and mental strength and endurance, courage, determination and teamwork, and paddlers must also battle nature’s most extreme elements.⁴¹

⁴¹ “Race History.” Molokai Hoe. <http://www.molokaihoe.com> (accessed November 21, 2015).

In 1975, the first year they come and because it's entirely a new course, the Tahiti teams barely cross the finish line. However, that next year the teams are much more prepared for the course; which starts at Kaunakakai Pier. It accommodates the record number of canoes to date, 35. In several news articles documenting these events, it says "last year (1975), the first time Tahitians entered the race, a paddler explained that they came in second because they didn't know which direction the finish line was. This year (1976) they took first place overall-first in the prestigious koa class and first in the nonkoa class. If there had been any other first to take, they probably would have walked off with that too."⁴² The winning Te Oropaa (nonkoa class) crew finished the 55.6 mile course in 7 hours and 55 mins, and the winning Maire Nui koa class crew, in just over 8 hours. The top spots in this year go to Tahitian clubs.

Their imprint on this sport changes the dynamic of the narrative about Tahitians in this era. It was shared in multiple newspaper accounts that none of the sport analyzers could understand how they made their canoes go so fast; in fact it was stated that "a sports writer here complained that the Tahitians do everything wrong except win."⁴³ In breaking down this critique Tahitians are cast as impossibly stronger and more knowledgeable about a sport deeply imbedded into Hawaiian culture. Several articles offer noteworthy critiques.

Their strokes are shorter, seem to lack body leverage and should therefore, have less power. Also, the Tahitians pay no attention at all to the standard Hawaiian stroke of 14 on the left and 14 on the right. Tahitian paddlers might take seven on the right, eight on the left, then six on the right and nine on the left. Or they might change across with each stroke three times in a row.⁴⁴

In comparison another account of the same events states:

⁴² Krauss, Bob. "Tahiti No. 1...and 2, 3, 4." *Honolulu Advertiser* (Honolulu, HI), October 18, 1976.

⁴³ Krauss, Bob. "Tahiti No. 1...and 2, 3, 4." *Honolulu Advertiser* (Honolulu, HI), October 18, 1976.

⁴⁴ Krauss, Bob. "Tahiti No. 1...and 2, 3, 4." *Honolulu Advertiser* (Honolulu, HI), October 18, 1976.

What amazes those who have learned to paddle in Hawaii is that the Tahitians do everything “wrong,” yet win by incredible margins. They don’t bend down while taking a stroke; their strokes are short; and when they substitute paddlers, their boat comes to a dead halt. They even defy logic. At the start, both Te Oropaa and the Outrigger Canoe Club paddled at 52 strokes-per-minute. Since Outrigger used a much longer stroke, it should have been moving faster. Yet the Tahitians pulled away.⁴⁵

Defying logic aside, the interesting positioning of these narratives of Tahitians in this era suggest several things. First, they show up in the first year as exotic benign foreigners, that in the following year (and out of nowhere) redefine a sport with methods that shouldn’t work but in the end lead to dramatic and other-worldly success by its participants. Second, they comparatively become held up on a pedestal as more knowledgeable, better trained, better prepared for the treacherous course, even though it was literally the second time they’ve ever raced it. And third since then, Tahiti teams come regularly to Hawai‘i and usually do very well for themselves in this sport.

Romantic stereotypes of the South Seas have real implications in other facets of understanding Mā’ohi in diaspora. In 1970s Hawai‘i, during the age of cultural revitalization and the search for cultural continuity among Kanaka Maoli, Tahitians emerge as the favored source of a culturally strong foundation. This sentiment is reinforced through the success of their teams in not just winning a canoe race, but defying the standing logic which is viewed as impossible, and almost supernatural.

It is no wonder that gatherings, formal or informal, happen around this event. Each year, members of ’Iaorana Tahiti Club of Hawai‘i including Larsen and Weaver, gather with food and provisions for these crews so that they have a sense of community to welcome them. Larsen offers that critical point of connectivity that Tahitians here in Hawai‘i are literally making (at

⁴⁵ Osmun, Mark. “Tahitians, Tahitians, Tahitians, Tahitians.” *Honolulu Star Bulletin* (Honolulu, HI), October 18, 1976.

least around this one event annually) to their homeland. It's not about otherness, or whether or not they see themselves as "Tahitian enough" in their identity to engage. It's bridging the diasporic divide, connecting through a loose definition of a "community" to show hospitality towards groups and crews that come to participate in the event. The Moloka'i Hoe has grown substantially since these newspaper articles have been written in 1976. At the same time that Tahitian culture is held on a familiar pedestal here in Hawai'i, it is perpetuated through a lens of exoticness, of otherness. These gatherings mediate that lens while simultaneously offering a new space of "homeland" familiarity for Mā'ohi experiencing diaspora on many different levels.

A Return Migration

During the week-long Spring Break in March 2015, instead of participating in one of the biggest Tahitian dance competitions in Hawai'i (Heiva i Honolulu), I accompanied my reo Tahiti professor to give a 4-day lecture series at the Université de la Polynésie Française. Although not my first time to Tahiti, this was my first time to the lecture halls of the University space, and it was an experience that solidified my desire to research the contemporary connections of Hawai'i and Tahiti. The lectures I prepared were directed towards the equivalent of college freshmen, with a similar lecture series replicated for college seniors getting ready to graduate. The general topic was about Hawaiian culture and history, with a unique intersectionality through its people.

Our discussions were not at all what I had planned them to be. I was prepared to give a sterile look at some basic historical facts about pre-annexation Hawai'i up to the illegal annexation of Hawai'i. But instead they asked questions about how our ultra-modern capitalist system worked, even in the face of reinvigorating customary native Hawaiian practices? Why native Hawaiians were considered minorities in their own homeland? How does the "melting

pot” demographic of Hawai‘i influence local culture? Where do Tahitians fall into place in this makeup and how do they contribute to the cultural landscape? The discussions provided a platform for new ways of encountering narratives about Mā’ohi communities in diaspora, a context not previously explored for this group of Mā’ohi from across French Polynesia. That exchange also provided insight into how Mā’ohi in the homeland were interpreting contemporary identity as it connects to many different places.

This return migration exemplifies the connections forged through mobilities back and forth between the homeland and abroad. This exchange challenged ideas of Mā’ohi culture only existing in its homeland. It helped to usher in an emerging conversation about diaspora, the push and pull factors of contemporary lifestyles in the homeland and abroad, and the formation of community’s being a vehicle for the spread of Mā’ohi culture globally. These dialogues motivated this chapter on remapping communities in diaspora, a conversation that is emerging as a new frontier in the discussion of Pacific Islander mobilities, movements, and diaspora.

Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to trace back the various threads of historical connections that have contributed to the making of Mā’ohi communities in Hawai‘i. Mā’ohi communities mediate the distance from the homeland by gathering together, rerouting lines of genealogy across the ocean, which fulfills as Hiro calls, the “need of a deeply rooted identity” in diaspora. Contributing factors such as Tuamotuan pearl industry displacements, chain migrations, and religious institutions have shaped a contemporary diaspora of outer-islander Mā’ohi to Hawai‘i. The data of net deficit migrations, cultural events, and the building of economic infrastructure proves how these factors have all influenced this new diaspora pattern to Hawai‘i. Mā’ohi who

leave French Polynesia mediate their homeland from abroad in diverse ways, and yet we've never fully considered the consequences of these movements.

While the North Shore community offered an entry point into the discussion of Mā'ohi diaspora in the twenty-first century, they were not the first to show up to present what we know as "culture" in diaspora. The multiplicity of the experiences highlighted in this chapter contributes directly to the search for Mā'ohi migration and culture in the diaspora. The historical accounts of mobilities as described in Chapter One, along with the contemporary patterns of mobilities to Hawai'i in this chapter, actively shape the layers of culture and identity of Hawai'i. Through these markers of Mā'ohi intersectionalities, we see how cultural influences have been exchanged over a long period of time. These exchanges have affected the receiving of Mā'ohi culture in diaspora, shaping the diverse ways contemporary communities of Mā'ohi mediate identity.

Due to this long running historical entanglement between Te Ao Mā'ohi and Hawai'i nei, contemporary Mā'ohi here in Hawai'i are working actively to strategically mediate their identities as Mā'ohi persons in diaspora. In the following chapter, I use the Heiva i Honolulu as a prominent study of culture in diaspora, incorporating the consequences of Mā'ohi moving across the Pacific to create new understandings of Mā'ohi identity in Hawai'i.

CHAPTER 3

Remapping Heiva in Diaspora

HEIVA I HONOLULU, produced by Tahiti Nui International, takes to the Waikiki Shell stage hundreds of soloists, as well as premier Tahitian performance groups representing Hawaii, North America and Asia March 21, 22, and 23. A full three-day of events for visitors and locals, this Heiva is a gathering of the best in Tahitian culture. From the fast hip shaking Otea movements to the seductive rhythms of song and legends, this competition is sure to entertain. An array of Polynesian arts and crafts unique solely to this event, complete the festivities. Tickets go on sale March 1, 2014 at the Blaisdell Ticket Box Office, or each day two hours prior to the event start time at the Waikiki Shell Box Office. General Admission: Adult (11yrs+) \$15 Child \$10 (4-10yrs). Ticket prices noted are per day. For more information contact: Tahiti Nui International.

The Heiva is a large cultural celebration held annually in all five archipelagos of French Polynesia. It is celebrated throughout the month of July, which corresponds with the French independence national holiday of La Bastille, or Bastille Day on July 14th. Throughout the month, there are on-going craft fairs, canoe races, group and solo 'ori Tahiti competitions, drumming competitions, choral performances, 'ōrero competitions, fashion shows, beauty pageants, and general merriment during the winter holidays. While each island group (some islands cluster together) has a Heiva festival, the Heiva themselves trace out distinct signatures of the places they inhabit and vary from island to island. For participants, the Heiva is an opportunity to represent, contest, and participate in Mā'ohi cultural practices.

Today however, Tahitian dance competitions and cultural events that are inspired by the Heiva celebrations are now showing up in places far from Tahiti and the other island groups in places like Japan, Mexico, Paris, throughout the US and Hawai'i. Overseas Heiva are thus one of the most visible ways to illustrate the diaspora of Mā'ohi abroad, historically and contemporarily to Hawai'i. This chapter contextualizes the historied and contemporary diaspora of Mā'ohi

through the construction of these events, and particularly how they produce a sense of self in the distance away from the homeland.

In this chapter I consider the Heiva as it moves away from its homeland context, to become a “gathering of the best in Tahitian culture” in diaspora. As a result of both historical and contemporary migrations to Hawai‘i as referenced in earlier chapters, Mā‘ohi have made substantial contributions to the local culture of Hawai‘i. The most visible of these contributions are seen through the display of culture, performance, and dance. The fact that there are Heiva overseas is a signpost in and of itself that culture and identity are being realized through practice, but how does diaspora affect these practices? How does diaspora change the relationship of identity to the homeland?

I aim to analyze how the Heiva plays a role in mediating a sense of identity for Mā‘ohi here in Hawai‘i, and how this event offers a shared experience of representing a unified “Tahitian culture” to audiences who may or may not have any context of its origin. I consider the effects of these representations, as well as who is the Heiva for in diaspora? Mā‘ohi are a minority in Hawai‘i, yet have created pay-for-entry cultural festivals that offer a glimpse of Mā‘ohi culture through its “hundreds of soloists, as well as premier Tahitian performance groups...seductive rhythms of songs and legends...an array of Polynesian arts and crafts unique solely to this event.” This chapter examines the use of diasporic Heiva as it mediates culture for communities of Mā‘ohi in Hawai‘i, through the primary example of the Heiva i Honolulu. It draws on the nature of the Mā‘ohi diaspora shared in the previous chapters as influential movements that have laid a solid cultural foundation to Hawai‘i. This chapter shows that descendants of these migrations (including many other new and active participants in these mobilities) are producing a sense of self as Mā‘ohi in diaspora, yet affirm cultural and familial

ties to the homeland. From there, questions of authenticity, representation, identity, and community are further examined.

The epigraph opening this chapter is a newspaper feature advertising the Heiva i Honolulu, one of these overseas Heiva events that are cultural displays of Tahitian dance. Used to perpetuate culture in the homeland, Heiva is a powerful tool distilled after decades of reinventing the ideals of Mā'ohiness in French Polynesia. It is rooted in a specific socio-political history, and influences the overall representation of Mā'ohi culture. To deepen this complexity, the distancing of diasporic Mā'ohi present new contexts for these cultural celebrations. Overseas Heiva are clearly not the Heiva i Tahiti, although it may share some commonalities and refer to it as its source of inspiration. Rather in diaspora, ideals of Mā'ohi meaning, identity, and representations are transformed through the communities which inhabit this space.

In March 2014, I served as the co-M.C. (Master of Ceremonies) for the same Heiva i Honolulu at the Waikiki Shell advertised in the epigraph above. I also served in this same capacity for the March 2016 Heiva i Honolulu, which took place at the Blaisdell Center in Honolulu. The Heiva i Honolulu is one of three Heiva (Tahitian dance cultural festival) put on by Tahiti Nui International (TNI), “a cultural organization founded for the purposes of preserving, promoting, and sharing the cultures, arts and crafts of the five groups of islands of French Polynesia, commonly known to the world as ‘Tahiti’.”⁴⁶ TNI is based in Honolulu, and is run by Rose Mapuhi Perreira, a longtime resident of Hawai‘i who originally came to the Lā‘ie community from the Tuamotu Islands via Tahiti. She now runs some of the largest and most profitable cultural events outside of French Polynesia. Other than the Heiva i Honolulu, TNI sponsors and organizes the Heiva i Tokyo in Japan as well as the Heiva i Las Vegas in Nevada.

⁴⁶ “Heiva i Honolulu.” Tahiti Nui International. <http://www.tahitinuiinternational.blogspot.com> (accessed September 13, 2015).

My co-M.C. partner for the event, Cathy Teriipaia, regularly contributes as a cultural expert to this and other Tahitian cultural events throughout Hawai'i and the mainland U.S. Her father shared about his journey to Hawai'i in the community gathering discussed in Chapter Two, and supported the making of the Heiva i Honolulu as one of the original board members of TNI in 2002.

The 2014 Heiva i Honolulu drew in thousands of ticket sales over the course of its three day events. My role as one of the M.C.'s meant that I had an all-access pass to all participants: dancers, drummers, group leaders, vendors, general audience, judges, support staff, as well as the TNI staff putting on the event. Mā'ohi are an integral part of each of these groups coming together in a way that teaches cultural practices in diaspora. Through diasporic communities of Mā'ohi new and old, culture and identity are realized in practice, which contribute to the vibrant effort of teaching and perpetuating Mā'ohi culture globally. The following sections will further discuss the Heiva in the homeland, these subgroups within the Heiva which diasporic Mā'ohi mediate, the making of the Heiva overseas, as well as the Heiva's purpose in diaspora. The Heiva events in diaspora continue to be a visible reminder that contemporary Mā'ohi communities are forging new pathways to understanding place-based identities and connecting the Francophone Pacific in diverse ways.

Heiva Histories

In order to understand how diasporic Mā'ohi were contributing to perpetuating Tahitian culture through the Heiva on a global scale, the following section provides some context of where the original Heiva itself was born out of. This section also discusses the Heiva's uses, history, and relevance in Tahiti as the pattern for which Heiva in diaspora attempt to copy. After

providing some context for the Heiva in French Polynesia, I will discuss the ways these cultural events reappropriated a distinctly Mā'ohi identity into a diasporic context.

Heiva inhabits a complex space of identity for Mā'ohi in Tahiti. As the site by which 'ori Tahiti validates Mā'ohi culture both past and present (and vice versa), the Heiva is a festival which promotes cultural sharing and competition between districts, islands, and island clusters. For Mā'ohi of French Polynesia, with the largest demographic of peoples living on the island of Tahiti, by and large this is an event for the indigenous peoples of the islands. "The Heiva is a Tahitian celebration with a 108-year history. Because the celebration is often linked with French independence (La Fête Nationale or La Bastille), many believe that it is not a Tahitian holiday. However, many of the events associated with the Heiva have historical antecedents in "traditional" Tahitian culture" (Stevenson 1990, 256). Is this a French celebration or a Tahitian one? Is it possible for the same event to hold up two (somewhat opposing) current national ideals: colonial belonging vs. cultural and political independence?

"Heiva, tiurai, Fête, and Bastille are all names for a Tahitian celebration that (usually) takes place in July, and always includes traditional French and Tahitian activities such as parades, games, dance competitions, and outrigger canoe races" (Stevenson 1990, 257). The two purposes of Heiva are to express an indigenous Mā'ohi identity through cultural games and competitions and to celebrate Bastille Day, the French National Independence Day on July 14th.⁴⁷ "In 1977, the festival organizers officially changed the name from La Fête or La Bastille to tiurai (the Tahitian word for July). In the minds of some Tahitians this alleviated the tiurai's overt association with the French. The name change gave the celebration a more explicit Tahitian

⁴⁷ Heiva is the reo Tahiti word for this type of large celebration. Fête is the French word for the same purpose; large celebration. Tiurai is Tahitian for July, the month in which these large communal gatherings were initially celebrated.

identity” (Stevenson 1990, 264). Understanding how reclaiming this event as a space by and for Tahitians gave way to the importance of performing indigenous Mā’ohi identity.

Another important aspect of the Heiva is that it was and continues to be underwritten by the French and Tahitian governments. This could suggest many things, but signifies most importantly the satisfaction of separate, seemingly contradictory agendas. The French encouragement of Tahitian cultural activities attracts tourism and income, as well as legitimizes the French role as protectors and preservers of cultural traditions. For their part, the Tahitians use the Fête to educate their people about a past not found in French history books, to sustain subsistence activities and marketable skills, and to encourage tourism, which produces income not subject to French control. Within the past twenty years the Heiva has become increasingly Tahitian, as shown by the events that constitute it, by the audience, and by the fact that the language of the Heiva is primarily Tahitian. There is an emphatic relationship between the Heiva and the "traditional" culture and ideology that it nourishes. From a Tahitian identity—aware of its past as well as its importance in the future—has been created; it demonstrates the vitality of this culture in a changing Pacific” (Stevenson 1990, 272-273).

The tension of performing identity in Tahiti is not necessarily over proving indigeneity to “outsiders” when the majority of the population are islanders. The precarious balance is mediating between who’s islands are being represented, and who’s “Mā’ohiness” is being reinforced? Moulin complicates this perspective with a study of the appropriation of Marquesan culture in Tahiti (1994). Tahitian is the dominant culture in French Polynesia, sometimes assimilating outer islander cultural contributions to strengthen Tahitian narratives of authenticity, legitimacy, cultural purity, and potency on the stage. Therefore, Tahitian culture becomes the most visibly dominant portrayal of “Mā’ohi” even if the legend, costume, song, and/or motion originates from elsewhere. Moulin adds that there is a “net of control in French Polynesia stretched outward from Tahiti over the five archipelagos that make up the Overseas Territory of France” (1994, 2). Even though this cultural hegemony exists with an “unmistakable Tahitian overlay on many aspects of their lives, Marquesans still view themselves as markedly different from other French Polynesians—in language, various cultural practices, and specifically, in

music and dance traditions” (1994, 2). Moulin discerns the subtle nuances and tensions associated with performing identity in French Polynesia. Although her study directly focuses on the Marquesas in comparison to Tahiti, similar arguments could be made for each of the archipelagos since French Polynesia is “far from being a cohesive cultural unit” (1994). Mā’ohi in practice is complicated because of the differences of outer islanders’ epistemologies, especially when it comes to performing identity.

The purpose of the Heiva in the outer islands of French Polynesia promotes many kinds of sub-cultural events (i.e.: cultural games/sports, races) that draw in large communal gatherings which provide other dimensions to the understanding of indigenous culture in the region. The performances that take place are much more about contributing to these gatherings than it is about competing for titles. Says M.A., a native of Tubua’i (also Tupua’i interchangeably),

Growing up on my island, everyone looks forward to Heiva. We always hope the weather will be nice because everything takes place outside under the stars. Everyone participates, the baby’s, the mama’s, everyone! Everyone spends a lot of time together making our costumes by hand. We’d go down to the water to pick different shells, and little by little we’d work on our costumes. We’d take turns climbing the coconut tree so we could get the ni’au (spine of the coconut frond). And the mamas would show us how to make the *more* (natural plant fibers) skirt by hand. It takes a lot of time. And then if we really wanted to decorate it, we’d bleach the *more* to turn it really white. Everyone comes together to dance for each other. The costumes are my favorite part, seeing where everyone is from is really beautiful. People from other islands will come to my island because Tubua’i is the biggest one in our area. I didn’t see Heiva in Tahiti until I was older and going to school in Tahiti. It’s bigger, there’s a lot more people that go to that one.

Cultural reappropriation within this context has to do with inner (referring to Tahiti and the Society Islands) and outer islander displays of cultural customs. Therefore, in Tahiti the purpose of Heiva is not to prove their indigeneity to “others” since Mā’ohi are the majority. It is a cultural festival that may be complicated in its representation of specific island groups and the tension of a hegemonic “Tahitian” cultural portrayal, but no one is challenging indigeneity as

whole. Competitions are held between districts, islands, and clusters of islands to celebrate their own stories and music. This reflects the earlier dialogue in Chapter One of Mā'ohi identity being challenged in the homeland, since cultural representations are contested throughout the region.

In diaspora however, the majority of audience members and participants are not Mā'ohi, therefore this is not a competition between districts or island clusters. Even though the imagery of stage performance is strong, the context of the experience is stripped away. Therefore, the dance competition component is the main attraction of diasporic events. As one of the most visible remittances of Tahitian culture, 'ori Tahiti can be disseminated through people, whereas the experience of walking down to the shoreline to gather costume adornments is not.

Etua Tahauri and Iona Teriipaia (two members of the community highlighted earlier in this thesis), along with a small planning committee began the first (in recent memory), Heiva i Honolulu at the Waikiki Shell as a means to represent Tahitian culture by and for Mā'ohi who were living here in Hawai'i.⁴⁸ It began as a modest 'ori Tahiti solo and group dance competition held in (the true spirit of tiurai) July 2002. It also had the customary fruit carrying races, and coconut husking games which more closely resembled the annual Heiva done in other parts of French Polynesia.⁴⁹ The diversity of Mā'ohi represented in diaspora presents a unique collaborative effort. Their Heiva experiences are largely founded on roots that stem past the capital of Tahiti island. Recreating Heiva in diaspora is both about being organized like the Heiva in Tahiti, but here in this example is an ode to the remembered experiences of outer islander Mā'ohi who are a part of this contemporary migration. All of these experiences

⁴⁸ According to a small advertisement printed on July 7, 1962, this was the first year of the “Hawaii-Tahiti Fête” in Honolulu, however it didn't run annually.

⁴⁹ Jeanne Mou'a Larsen, personal communication, September 4, 2015.

culminate in festivals that happen overseas, because the blending of perspectives and belonging is a unique unifier when distanced from a homeland.

In the Heiva i Honolulu, because of obvious permit issues, other games customarily held during Tahiti's annual month long Heiva Nui celebration could not be done in the space and time provided by the Waikiki Shell, but it was still an important avenue that Mā'ohi would promote a culturally responsible celebration of Tahitian culture. After that year, the shift towards promoting a marketable business venture resulted in an organized structure that could plan to perpetuate this dance event for the long haul.

In 2003, following the foundation of Tahiti Nui International with the cooperation of the government of Tahiti, it's Minister of Culture and the Mayor of Honolulu, "Heiva I Honolulu" took shape. Honolulu Mayor Jeremy Harris was bestowed the Tahitian name Heipuni Mataarii by Tahiti's renown language professor Mako Tevane. Tahiti's Minister of Culture sent a representative to Hawaii to attend the "Heiva I Honolulu" event. Heremoana Maamaatuaiahutapu, Director of the House of Culture of French Polynesia, has since acted as Head Judge over "Heiva I Honolulu" ... Sensationalizing this inaugural event, Tahiti Nui International, with the assistance of the Tahitian government, hosted Les Grands Ballet's "Varua", filling the Waikiki Shell's capacity. This performance echoed the great beginnings of Tahitian dance in Hawaii and across the world.⁵⁰

This is just one prominent example of the kinds of support that has been offered in the past by the cultural governmental entities that support diasporic events, but there are many other events which also see this level of support. The cultural significance of this shift towards independently owned organizations, backed by the House of Culture of French Polynesia, meant that Tahitian dance competitions began to be conceived as financially significant ventures in the diaspora, which could also benefit Tahiti's international "brand". "In 2004, the growth of the Heiva i Honolulu took on exponential numbers, featuring renowned groups representing Hawaii, North

⁵⁰ "Heiva i Honolulu—A Look Back (Part 1)." Tahiti Nui International. <http://www.tahitinuiinternational.blogspot.com> (accessed September 13, 2015).

America, and now Japan.”⁵¹ Growth, expansion, promotion; were all key factors motivating the spread of Tahitian culture via Heiva events to the rest of the world.

As a product of the diaspora of Mā’ohi to Hawai‘i, overseas Heiva is about the identity of shared indigeneity and a pan Mā’ohi (and in some cases pan Polynesian) ideology. This creates a different set of nuances and tensions (as a marketable business venture), but are seen as aspects of the diaspora, consequences of the movement away from the homeland. Where homeland tensions of inner and outer islanders exist, in diaspora it becomes much more about celebrating the “homeland” and about remembering and honoring cultural practices that are longed for. Homeland could mean Tahiti, but it also could mean any island in the Territory. These diasporic ideologies of relating to homeland impact the way Heiva in diaspora are organized, participated in, and propagated.

In an event geared towards celebrating “Tahitian culture” in diaspora, Mā’ohi are the minority. Those participating are relying heavily on those who are Mā’ohi to be leaders, speakers, representatives and placed in the front row in order to capture validity as participants. The embodiment of the proper “Mā’ohi aesthetic” is a significant aspect of replicating this event; to look and to play the part of “Mā’ohiness” is just as important as performing the actual dances and drumbeats. Local Mā’ohi communities actively shape these engagements and are the distinguishing factor of Heiva events that are marked in places with such communities.

Heiva Overseas

As part of the global movement of Heiva overseas, there are Heiva and Heiva inspired ’ori Tahiti festivals and competitions in Hawai‘i (O‘ahu, Big Island, Maui, Kaua‘i), Nevada (Las

⁵¹ “Heiva i Honolulu—A Look Back (Part 1).” Tahiti Nui International. <http://www.tahitinuiinternational.blogspot.com> (accessed September 13, 2015).

Vegas & Reno), California (Anaheim, San Diego, Santa Clarita, Merced, Santa Ana, Fullerton, Elk Grove, San Bruno, West Sacramento, San Jose), and as far away as France (Paris, Toulon, Bordeaux), Japan (Osaka, Fukuoka, Tokyo), and Mexico (Guadalajara). This is according to Black Pearl Designs, an online Polynesian craft retail site and cultural information website (see Fig. 8).⁵² It is one of the few sites that track overseas Heiva, like the Heiva i Honolulu, as well as the Heiva events that take place on Tahiti. Fig. 8 at the end of the chapter also demonstrates the sheer volume of Tahitian dance competition and cultural events where you can find 'ori Tahiti performed in diaspora.

Black Pearl Designs also references the contact information of event organizers, as well as the dates and places of the event; serving as an organized contact list for anyone interested in participating in these events. Some of the larger Heiva with their own websites feature links to other corresponding Heiva events as well, but this webpage seems to be the most comprehensive in terms of information offered and frequency of updating their lists of events. Their audience base is clearly the Anglophone Pacific, as this site was created in English and is focused on informing those primarily in the vicinity of North America of local events. There may be more Heiva and Heiva inspired events taking place across the U.S. and overseas. This list serves as a starting point in analyzing the diversity of events offered as well as the breadth of places where 'ori Tahiti and Tahitian culture is represented outside of Tahiti.

The naming of Tahitian cultural events are important markers of either who is sponsoring the event, or where the location of the event will take place. For example, *Manutahi Heiva* in Waimea Valley, O'ahu is sponsored by the group Manutahi; and the *Heiva i Honolulu*, takes place in Honolulu. Other Heiva associated events have the framework of a solo/group

⁵² "Heiva & Tahiti Fête." Black Pearl Designs. <https://www.blackpearldesigns.com/pages/tahitian-dance-heiva-fete-and-festivals> (accessed September 10, 2015).

competition component like the *Kiki Raina Tahiti Fête* in Merced, CA. It's not called a Heiva, but is inspired by the purposes of gathering to promote Tahitian dance and culture.

The differences between “Heiva” and “Fête” are not very clear in these overseas events. Both are cultural festivals which implies a large group gathering. The “Heiva” as a name implies the Tahitian culture and by association Tahitian dance, because of its context as the event made famous by Madeline Mou’a. Reprinted from Teheiuira, Stevenson cites, “Heiva is also the expression of our gratitude to the great lady of Tahitian dancing, Madeleine Mou’a, whose troupe named Heiva, was essential in the rebirth of traditional dancing” (1990, 265). Heiva reiterates the cultural meaning of Mā’ohi, while also pays homage to Madeleine Mou’a, the instructor credited for largely reinvigorating ’ori Tahiti in the 1960’s (Stevenson 1990; see also Moulin 2001, Laurens 2013). The debate of naming such an event in the homeland carries over when trying to decide what purpose these events have, and how they affect the display of Mā’ohi identity abroad.

Other events such as the *Hura Tahiti* of Fullerton, CA uses the older term for ’ori Tahiti, which is hura, much like the term with the same context in Hawaiian for dance, hula.⁵³ This would imply that this event is offering a showing and competition of hura Tahiti, the hula of Tahiti or Tahitian dance. In attempting to understand how these events negotiate identity and rootedness to a homeland context, the placement of event names offers an insight into the connections made by Mā’ohi abroad.⁵⁴

There doesn’t exist a singular entity organizing or sponsoring all these Heiva and Heiva-esque events, since these are independently owned and operated festivals each with different

⁵³ This term originates from outer islander groups who have a preference to describe it this way.

⁵⁴ Some events have the sponsorship and support of government entities in Tahiti. One example of this partnership is how the 2015 *Heiva San Diego* was sponsored by the Conservatoire de Tahiti.

motivations and styles of organizing. There exist some entities which sponsor multiple events, such as Tahiti Nui International and the three Heiva it organizes: Heiva i Honolulu, Heiva i Japan, and the Heiva i Las Vegas. To date, TNI is the largest organizing entity which sponsors multiple Heiva events throughout the year. Whatever the motivation for naming the event, diasporic Heiva promote the culture specifically through dance competition, other cultural components such as games and crafts contribute to this aim.

Study of Heiva i Honolulu

The Heiva i Honolulu is an appropriate site for this continued discussion. At the Heiva i Honolulu, there are several markers of the portrayal of Mā'ohi culture that contribute to the dance competition. They include an ornate opening protocol with an introduction to the panelist of judges,⁵⁵ different age/gender categories of solo, couples, and/or group entries to compete throughout the day. This is usually simultaneously accompanied with a costume competition (scoring for dancing and costuming will usually go together), Tahitian drumming competitions, Polynesian craft and food vendors, exhibition performances,⁵⁶ fashion shows, oration,⁵⁷ craft workshops, drumming workshops, singing (accompaniment based on group performances), audience participation cultural games, and award ceremonies; all done in a weekend's time.

The duration of diasporic Heiva events last anywhere from a one-day competition, or two-three days of multiple events, whose dates are kept tightly together. They are not usually

⁵⁵ The amount of cultural experts/judges differs from each event. It is common for the judge's panel to consist of an odd number to break a tie should that happen. There will usually be a "Head Judge" who sits in the middle of the panel, and his or her vote will determine tie breakers, as well as keeping the event progressing. Head judges, as well as the other panelists will have been selected at the discretion of event organizers. In diaspora, many of the judges have been a part of a variety of events and so will have experience in the different ways of scoring performances and analyzing cultural content.

⁵⁶ Exhibition performances are done by professional cultural groups not allowed to enter in the competition, but that still want to participate. See example above of the dance troupe Les Grandes Ballets de Tahiti and the 2003 Heiva i Honolulu.

⁵⁷ Oration is usually performed in the style of 'ōrero at the beginning of group performances, or the general commencement of the event. It's not placed as its own competition, but can be a component to a group's performance.

longer than this because of the cost to rent spaces for venues, and the fact that organizing these events takes time, effort, and monies up front. Many groups are putting these events on as for-profit fundraisers, so it is a business venture that is aimed for a high return on profits. Whereas the Heiva events that happen throughout French Polynesia have administrative infrastructure specifically dedicated to the various annual Heiva events. Not all of these happenings take place at every Heiva, Fête, or festival, but any combination of any of these can show up at the discretion of the planning committee and the time frame they have to work with, venue space limitations, and goals of the events.

For ease of organizing data, I have highlighted four aspects of the Heiva i Honolulu in the discussion of Mā'ohi communities mediating diaspora; Tahitian dance group leaders (with their performers), Judge's Panel, Drumming Ensemble, and Vendors. Even though Mā'ohi are generally the minority in the audience, they influence these categories more visibly and is pertinent to the discussion of remapping the significance of Heiva in diaspora.

Ra'atira

This is the most heavily saturated category of Mā'ohi participating in Heiva; they are the leaders of dance groups, typically with strong ties to the homeland in order to perpetuate Mā'ohi culture from a distance. While not all ra'atira are Mā'ohi, majority of those participating at the Heiva i Honolulu in both 2014 and 2016 were. The high level of competition and creativity involved in pruning and maintaining a dance group, means that there is a high level of expectation in the transmission of indigenous knowledge.

In Hawai'i, because there are communities of Mā'ohi drawing on direct sources of knowledge from the homeland, it is a critical marker of the validity and representation of Mā'ohi culture abroad. Judges across the board, and ra'atira from the various groups represented, agreed

that this was a defining critical point as well. It can happen in diaspora that the transmission can be less clear. With the growing influence of social media tools, DVDs, CDs and other forms of technology, ra'atira can now be someone who may or may not have direct access to the homeland, but does have access to technology that disseminates videos, audio files, and costume imagery to the general public. Hence the point that for many, Mā'ohi communities serve as entry points to accessing cultural knowledge through homeland connections.

Judge's Panel

At the Heiva i Honolulu, the ones who have the biggest say in critiquing every performance that happens in the duration of the event, are the judges. There are at least three judges on the panel (in case there needs to be a tie breaker), but in the 2014 competition there were seven. All were Mā'ohi living in Hawai'i permanently, who are or were ra'atira at some point, and that participate in many cultural events even worldwide. Some of the credentials needed to be a judge at the Heiva i Honolulu included strong links to the homeland, experience performing and/or teaching 'ori Tahiti, and knowledge of the dance techniques, steps, and names used in dance.

When asked about the task of judging the performances and having to assign scores narrowing the candidates for winners of age categories, one of the judges (JML) admits, "it's very hard. I've learned that if you give a very low score, it's very discouraging. Judges have come from Tahiti in the past to give marks and they have to adjust because it's very different here."

Other judges have admitted that there exist tensions in judging customary cultural practices far removed from its home context, and trying to breakdown aspects of the performances create opportunities of critique. "The Heiva i Tahiti represents the source of the

culture, beyond that it's a dynamic relationship. Heiva i Tahiti isn't perfect, but for the good and the bad it proliferates ideas about the culture. So out here at things like the Heiva i Honolulu where you see some groups and dancers become very 'creative,' I wonder what parts of the culture are being adopted?"⁵⁸

Former judge at other international Heiva and the current professor of reo Tahiti at the University of Hawai'i-Mānoa, Steve Te'urahau Chailloux goes on to provide a specific example of this in the costuming.

Everything about the performance has to speak to me. It should send a clear message; the language and translation of the story, the costumes, the motions, the music, and the land...there's always a story to be told. When I see costumes on the stage that don't send a clear message that connects the dancer to these elements, and especially to the land, that's a big disconnect for me. The tension between being 'culturally correct' vs. 'freedom in expressing creativity' is a very thin line that many do not understand they are balancing.⁵⁹

That tension exists both in the homeland and diaspora, but in the diaspora there is an exerted effort in relying on the minority of Mā'ohi to help mediate the distance between homeland and abroad, in order to tease out the nuances of identity in diaspora.

Drumming Ensemble

House drummers play a critical role in diasporic Heiva. They are a drumming ensemble provided by the event organizers to play live drumming of Tahitian drumbeats during the solo competitions. Group presentations will provide their own ensembles for their performance. At the Heiva i Honolulu for the past 5 years, *Maeva i Patitifa*, a drumming group based in the Tahitian community in Lā'ie, performs the drumming offered during the rounds of competition where solo competitors are tasked to compete to a beat assigned randomly. They can drum any

⁵⁸ Steve Chailloux, personal communication, March 18, 2016.

⁵⁹ Steve Chailloux, personal communication, March 18, 2016.

pattern of beats during each round averaging about one-two minutes, with the finalist round averaging as long as 2.5 minutes. It is a challenging task on both ends since the drummers have to exhibit stamina and skill in executing round after round of drumming, which in turn tests competitors' knowledge of drum beats and dance steps to put on a smooth performance. This is a different approach than Heiva in the homeland, where competitors' come with their own choreography, and drummers and drumbeats are not assigned randomly.

This yields different results. The Heiva in diaspora calls for dancers to exhibit knowledge and skills that require time, practice, and a close study of the culture, even from afar. This presents a need for strong community ties to have access to people who can help in this preparation. The Heiva in the homeland seeks to elevate the dance and the culture through an expert presentation of choreography. These differing motivations influence the way culture is being proliferated on a global scale.

Vendors

Mā'ohi who live in Hawai'i permanently, rely on cultural events like the Heiva i Honolulu to provide opportunities to buy and sell crafts and goods from the homeland. Majority of the goods sold are black pearl jewelry, instruments, and clothing attire. Many local Mā'ohi bring in jewelry, pareu, and other curios back and forth from Tahiti as a circular exchange of remittances. These goods are consumed by other Mā'ohi, but the majority of goods are also being sold to non-Mā'ohi who are looking to establish a strong connection to the culture. There are other vendors who sell goods and products that appeal to a pan-Polynesian aesthetic, not necessarily from the homeland. However, Mā'ohi who bring in goods to sell are often doing so to support their family and bring in unique cultural products that appeal to many who have never been to Tahiti.

These subcategories provide a glimpse into the visual cues of diasporic Heiva. These are some of the ways that locally based Mā'ohi actively shape Heiva events as extensions of homeland culture. Within these subcategories are Mā'ohi who represent various practices with wide-ranging levels of connections to the homeland. These sub-groupings help to formalize the relationships between diasporic Mā'ohi and the purpose of gathering at the Heiva. Some of the local critique revolve mostly around these community engagements, when issues of authority and expertise determine who can and who should be in the role of Heiva Judge for example, or Heiva House Drummer. Other critiques of the event by locally based Mā'ohi point to the economic benefit that some gain by hosting and charging entry tickets for. Direct profit means there's much at stake. Those tensions sit right alongside the ideal that it is still worth the effort to create these events because Heiva are the realized constructions of identity in diaspora.

Heiva in a Regional Context

Looking at the purpose of cultural events in other areas of Polynesia attempting to mediate diasporic identity, provide this dialogue with some grounding context. In the case of Tonga and the cultural festivals of the homeland, many shifts are being appropriated to accommodate diasporic audiences. “The generalization one can make about the festival foregrounds what it means to be Tongan in a modern context and affords both local and diasporic Tongans the opportunity to negotiate this meaning” (Besnier 2011, 126). In understanding how Tongans play a prominent role in mediating both homeland and diasporic sides positions of these festivals Besnier adds,

The rise of the Heilala Festival to the status of national event in the last couple of decades of the twentieth century coincided with the decline and eventual disappearance of the yearly agricultural show...It is particularly significant that it was replaced with a festival designed, in the official version at least, for the ears

and eyes of an extraneous audience...More subtly, the festival that replaced it is a sign of the growing importance of bifocality, the consciousness of the copresence of multiple audiences, both local and extralocal” (2011, 126).

Unlike the Tongan use of festivals in its homeland, Mā’ohi festivals in diaspora are not necessarily the prominent demographic as participants and spectators. These critical differences result in events that may conflict with the underlying definitions of Mā’ohiness as defined in the Introduction chapter. But conflict here can be relatively important as it shifts the meaning of definitions, and calls attention to the lived realities of those in diaspora.

The establishment of the Heiva overseas in communities that celebrate Tahitian culture, music, language and dance are important for the same reasons Heiva is in Tahiti. Because the Heiva exists as an event with meaningful purpose in its homeland context, the production of Heiva overseas presents an interesting dichotomy. On the one hand, event planners and groups here in Hawai’i for example, are looking to Tahiti to find the structure and cultural relevance rooted in tradition. There is often an ideal pattern they want the event to resemble, and indeed that’s where understanding the nuances of identity and culture in a homeland connect to places located far away.

On the other hand, living in a new homeland presents new opportunities to flexibly incorporate other influences and adaptations for the purpose of innovation. A quality also highly prized in the homeland of Tahiti. When considering how these values define the nature of identity in and outside of French Polynesia, there seems to be a constant struggle over which takes precedence and when. It can be argued either way for each and every event that takes place in the diaspora spread. These events are either rooted in a definition of Mā’ohi values but can at the same time, invite adaptation and reinterpret things old and new to challenge status quo.

Heiva des Écoles, Returning to the Heiva

This freedom to reinterpret and challenge status quo was experienced in June 2013, where I had the opportunity to assist a small non-profit organization located in the North Shore community of Mā'ohi discussed in Chapter Two, to travel to and participate in Tahiti's Heiva des Écoles or Heiva for dancing schools in Tahiti. The other group leaders and I were taking a small group of children ages 5-13 (including my own) who we were teaching 'ori Tahiti to. We planned to join one of the groups who were performing at this annual event; École de Danse Vaheana, under the direction of Vaheana Le Bihan, located in Puna'auia, Tahiti. Heiva des Écoles is the friendlier amateur precursor Heiva competition for groups who aim to teach children and beginning adults about the fundamentals of 'ori Tahiti. Just as much preparation and work goes into this competition, but it doesn't have the edginess of the highly competitive and "professional" Heiva Nui, or big Heiva a.k.a. Heiva i Tahiti which takes place usually about two-three weeks later in the month of July.

Entering groups have to be from French Polynesia, but it is not uncommon for groups to host dancers from other places so that they too can participate in the event. These rules are often blurry even for the Heiva i Tahiti. There is a "homeland" rule in place where groups have to be located within French Polynesia, but it's been known to allow outside dancers from places like Japan, Mexico, and the States (and in our case, Hawai'i) to perform within a group's showcase. We wanted our emerging dancers to have the opportunity to participate in a homeland event. We believed this would provide a valuable experience that would improve our dancers; many of whom were Mā'ohi with family ties to various parts of French Polynesia. Participating in this event, was in effect, a return migration to reconnect Mā'ohi youth born in diaspora to a significant cultural event in the hopes of grounding them in cultural context.

When we arrived to participate however, even with strong familial ties and knowledge about the culture and dance practices, we were identified as not local, as outsiders. This presented an opportunity to unpack the various nuances of Mā'ohi identity locally, as in there in Tahiti. And locally as in here, in Hawai'i. Mā'ohi identity transforms in diaspora. It is influenced by place based ties to the surrounding environment, and based on my experiences in mediating this distance, obvious questions of how these shifts happen were an important part of investigating the Mā'ohi diaspora. Within the realm of Heiva, Mā'ohi identity is especially sensitive because the craft of performing identity is so highly valued: culturally, linguistically, and economically.

The different events we encounter in diaspora are often based ideologically on the main Heiva i Tahiti. This is because it is the event most widely viewed and circulated of all the Heiva events. However, we do not often collectively consider how each of these different events are creating meaning both in the homeland and elsewhere. As these ideologies of Heiva (“fromness”, local politics, performing identity, etc.) play off of each other, it creates a dynamic dialogue back and forth between the homeland and diaspora. This ‘dynamic relationship’ was one of the points referenced earlier by one of the judges interviewed on their participation with the Heiva i Honolulu in the *Judge's Panel* section.

In actuality, the Heiva that takes place overseas, has a tendency to pattern these Heiva des Écoles, where participants and groups are encountering competition for the first time as amateurs and may be pre-dominantly non-Mā'ohi. Diasporic Mā'ohi understand that there is a wide-ranging interest for beginner participants and audiences who may or may not have any context of its homeland culture. Because of this, many of the Heiva in diaspora are instead individualized to suit a group or organizer's needs in whatever location they are in. Therefore, the end product is

never going to look, feel, and be the Heiva i Tahiti. Even knowing this, diasporic Heiva events that more closely resemble Heiva des Écoles, are still named after the Heiva Nui or Heiva i Tahiti. This is a problematic expectation that draws out the tension of legitimacy and authenticity of Heiva in diaspora as not a lesser or amateur event, but one with the same impact and resonance as the Heiva i Tahiti.

Those specific subtleties of identity aside, overall, Heiva in diaspora are still a gathering place for Mā'ohi. Interest in these events continue to grow because as a cultural gathering it is flexible in including other audiences and participants that may have limited knowledge about the full context and meaning of this gathering. This flexibility comes from sharing the culture as a unified Mā'ohi practice. Where that being unified as Mā'ohi is fraught and nuanced in the homeland, it transforms as a flexible way of mediating the distance in diaspora. Identities and cultural performances therefore shift. Communities of diasporic Mā'ohi create the flexibility to relate to homeland events, because it gathers other Mā'ohi together to celebrate cultures that remind them of home.

Fa'atau Arofa

At the end of the 2016 Heiva i Honolulu, a Fa'atau Arofa or tribute procession in honor of Raymond Mariteragi, one of the founding members of TNI and a member of the Lā'ie community that passed away in 2015, was performed by some of the other founding members of TNI, group leaders, former dancers, musicians, kin, and supporters. A similar tribute also happened at the other Heiva i Honolulu I was involved with in 2014 for Roiti Sylva, a board member of TNI, an early supporter of the reo Tahiti language program with my great

grandparents at UH-Mānoa, and an active participant in the gatherings of Mā'ohi on O'ahu, who passed away that previous year as well.

The procession consisted of its own opening 'ōrero performed by the Head Judge of the Heiva i Honolulu, Hatota Tehiva (Tuamotuan who currently resides in Maui), to honor the place we were gathering in and the memory of Uncle Raymond. It was followed by a procession of these individuals holding a pakerere, woven coconut fronds, held like a hand standard as they



Fig. 3: Woven pakerere at the 2016 Heiva i Honolulu Tahitian today, and to symbolize the maintenance of

good feelings as a collective community. The giving of the pakerere was the symbolic gesture of mending, of acknowledging the energy needed to constantly weave and re-weave active networks together in the maintenance of community.

These individuals contributed directly to the formation of community here in Hawai'i, and more importantly helped to create gatherings whereby the culture of their homelands could proliferate. This visibly embodies the strong cultural ties that Mā'ohi build while in diaspora, drawing on historical connections that have led to the cultivation of community, family, and culture ties that bridge the Francophone and Anglophone together. It was at this moment that the vision of community was reinforced through diaspora. Consequentially, all in attendance acknowledged that the movement and diaspora of Mā'ohi peoples have led to a global

distribution of culture, which justifies the formation of Heiva events in the places they inhabit.

As a primary motivation of study, these events reinforce different connections to the homeland. Understanding the construction of these events through the peoples who have created and in part maintained it, unpack the contemporary culture of Mā’ohi and community as a foundational aspect to the Heiva in Hawai’i. The following chart of Heiva type events that are offered in diaspora, illustrate the growing interest of participating in these types of cultural connections which mediate the homeland culture while away.

Table 6: Table of “Heiva, Tahiti Fête, and Festivals featuring Tahitian Dance - ‘Ori Tahiti”

Latest / Upcoming Date	Event	Location	Contact
March 11-12, 2016*	Heiva i Honolulu	Honolulu, HI	Rose Perreira
March 18-20, 2016*	Kiki Raina Tahiti Fete	Merced, CA	Becky Manandic
April 10, 2016*	Heiva i Osaka	Osaka, Japan	Kensuke Tamatoa Onishi
April 16, 2016*	Te Ori Here	Santa Ana, CA	Guy Montgomery
April 2016	Heiva i O ahu	Kaneohe, HI	Cathy Temanaha
May 28-29, 2016*	Ori Fest	Las Vegas, NV	Henry George
June 5, 2016*	Heiva i Fukuoka	Fukuoka, Japan	Kensuke Tamatoa Onishi
July 2016	Heiva i Tahiti	Papeete, Tahiti	Heremoana Maamaatuaiahutapu
July 1-2, 2016*	Hura Tahiti	Cerritos, CA	Alex Tekurio
July 2-4, 2016*	Tahiti Fete of Hilo	Hilo, HI	Pua Tokumoto
July 6-10, 2016*	Kauai Tahiti Fete	Kapaem, HI	Carol Casil
July 29-30, 2016*	Heiva i Reno	Reno, NV	Ruth Nalua Manaos
July 30-31, 2016*	Manahere i Ori Tahiti	San Jose, CA	Lorie Roldan-Almogela and Chris Almogela
August 6-7, 2016*	Heiva i Kauai	Kapaem, HI	Tepairu Manea
August 20, 2016*	Heiva M ophi O Patitifa	Elk Grove, CA	Rhea Nunez
August 20-21, 2016*	Heiva San Diego	San Diego, CA	Lindsay Reva McNichol
August 2016	Tata'ura'a Ori Tahiti	Tokyo, Japan	
September 3-4, 2016*	Tahiti Heiva - Japan (Heiva i Tokyo)	Tokyo, Japan	Kensuke Tamatoa Onishi

September 4, 2016*	Heiva i Waikiki	Honolulu, HI	Manarii Gauthier
September 10, 2016*	Heiva i Paris	Paris, France	Ken and Serena Carter
September 24-25, 2016*	Pacific Islander Festival	San Diego, CA	Rudy Tai
September 2016	International Tahitian Ori	Anaheim, CA	Maile Letuli
October 8, 2016*	Heiva i Japan	Tokyo, Japan	Rose Perreira Kenzo Tanaka
October 2016	Heiva i Taiwan		
November 2016	Mehetia Fête	Kaneohe, HI	Charelle Silva
November 2016	Hura Tapairu	Papeete, Tahiti	Heremoana Maamaatuaiahutapu
November 26-28, 2016*	Ori Tahiti Nui Solo Competition	Papeete, Tahiti	Tumata Robinson
January 2017	Te Mana Ori - Tahitian Solo Competition	Santa Clarita, CA	Gladys Farrell
February 2017	Heiva i Hawai'i	Kailua-Kona, HI	Maile Lee
February 2017	Ori Tahiti Las Vegas	Las Vegas, NV	Runi Tafeaga
February 2017	Ori Tahiti San Diego	San Diego, CA	Angel Case
June 2017	Heiva i Keaukaha	Hilo, HI	Tiffany Dela Cruz
TBA	Kori Kori Tahiti Fete	Las Vegas, NV	Ravahere Amo-Allred
TBA	Kona Tahiti Fete	Kailua-Kona, HI	Carol Casil
TBA	Tarena Tahiti / Te Aranui O Tahiti	San Bruno, CA	Elizabeth Nemenzo Bertumen
TBA	Heiva Tahiti En Mexico	Guadalajara, Mexico	Emilia Garcia
TBA	Te Mahana Hiroq̄ o Tahiti	Lie, HI	
TBA	Pacific Island Competition Sacramento	West Sacramento, CA	Janet Auwae-McCoy Tanisha Reshke
TBA	Tahiti Taurua Nui i Las Vegas	Las Vegas, NV	Tetua Ioane
TBA	Manutahi Heiva	Waimea, HI	Pola Teriipaia
TBA	Tahiti Fete of San Jose	San Jose, CA	Pua Tokumoto
TBA	Farereira'a i Tahiti	Papeete, Tahiti	Coco Hotahota
TBA	Heiva i Maui	Wailuku, HI	Lolita Eugenio
TBA	Heiva i Las Vegas	Las Vegas, NV	Rose Perreira

As demonstrated in the graph above, cultural festivals that perpetuate Tahitian culture are widely accessible in the Anglophone Pacific and makes the phenomenon of the spread of Mā'ohi

culture in diaspora clearly visible. From venues across Hawai‘i, the mainland U.S.A., to Japan and beyond, the breadth and quantity of these events speak to the cultural influence that diasporic Mā‘ohi have even while located far from the homeland amongst other cultural landscapes. Those shifting identities are taking root in places that bring homeland experiences into a new context.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter explores the Heiva i Tahiti as the source of inspiration for the production of Heiva in diaspora, and how constructions of Mā‘ohi identity are being negotiated through communities of diasporic Mā‘ohi. The diasporic environment collectively inspires and supports the on-going tradition of Heiva, Fête, and festivals overseas, but with intentions which like the locations of these events themselves, are repositioned.

In the diaspora it shifts to a space where a pan-Mā‘ohi identity is appropriated to venerate Mā‘ohi and specifically, “Tahitian” culture. This is a subtle tension since many Mā‘ohi in diaspora are outer islander, with roots that stem far past the capital of Tahiti. As evidenced in Fig. 8, the quantity, diversity, and locations where these overseas Heiva events are staggering, and growing each year. Overseas Heiva, such as the Heiva i Honolulu often seek to replicate the Heiva i Tahiti, even though the participants resemble smaller competitions like perhaps, the Heiva des Écoles.

In the distance away from the homeland, regional and ethnic groups of peoples tend to embrace shared identities and reminders of home and familiarity. Mā‘ohi who are experiencing mobilities, movements throughout the region and beyond, understand from firsthand experience how this unique balance of diaspora and homeland are embodied in the same space. As Andersen (2006) and others (Butler 2001) have noticed, when people who are from the same region

experience transnational migration or “diaspora”, positionality changes. People often flow through networks of similar relationships so that even though peoples from the same region might literally be at war with one another in the homeland, in diaspora new opportunities to relate to one another and exist more cohesively present itself without the same defined boundaries. Therefore, what was once viewed as complex identities back home, crystalizes into shared identity in diaspora.

In French Polynesia, Mā’ohi identity is nuanced and complicated. It is complicated in Tahiti where not all Mā’ohi believe there is such a thing as Mā’ohi identity, and yet is the birthplace of the contemporary socio-political definition applied to an indigenous ideology (Gagné 2015). As scholars invested in this dialogue will argue (Moulin 1994; Tetahiotupa 2004; Stewart, Mateata-Allain, and Mawyer 2006), the stakes for identity in the region are rather high; the politics of territorial boundaries and political authority among other things are very much in play. However, in diaspora the term serves its purpose with room for potential to grow. Perhaps this significance is most felt in the way that it gives “indigeneity,” “identity,” and “culture” a chance to abandon pretenses of racial and linguistic divides that are so inherent in French Polynesia, and allows them to exist collectively in the shared space of a new homeland.

As a construct of contemporary indigenous identity in Te Ao Mā’ohi, the use of the term Mā’ohi plays a critical role in rethinking the relationship between indigenous Polynesian persons and communities and their representation within the twentieth century politics of French Polynesia. Turo a Raapoto, a critical theologian, linguist, and anthropologist, justifies the appropriation of Mā’ohi as it begins to take on a new symbolic meaning in the 1970s,

Ohi refers to a sprout which has already taken root, securing itself with a certain autonomy of life, all the while being linked to the mother stem. From a sprout, an *ohi*, tracing back its roots, one always gets to a trunk. *Mā’ohi* is the community of

all those who claim to be of the same past, culture and language, which constitute the common trunk and which still have the same destiny (Saura 2011, 13).

The premise of these definitions were based on the contemporary external migrations of “the first Tahitian students who returned home in the 1970s with their French university qualifications amplified the advocacy of the term Mā’ohi and the values it articulated. Eminent among these were two former student pastors: Henri Hiro, a poet, actor, filmmaker and director of the youth and culture centre in Pape’ete in the late 1970s and his friend, also a poet and theologian, Duro (Turo) Raapoto” (Saura 2011). Both Hiro and Raapoto realized the value of a distinctly Polynesian identity (in their indigenous language) grown out of its own soil as a means for push-back against political corruption and misrepresentation. “Since the 1970s the indigenous identity movement in Tahiti has been articulated through the use of the term Mā’ohi” (Saura 2011, 2). Mā’ohi, prior to this as Saura and others have pointed out (Gagné 2015; Moulin 1994), was used as a term that literally meant “native and indigenous” and often in a derogatory context (2011).

Even though Raapoto and Hiro were issuing a call to return to indigenous Polynesian ways of being and knowing, it took many years for some of the ideas to lead to the political and social movements that they were hoping for. They were certainly not the first to advocate for the use of the term. As Saura points out, “the term Mā’ohi was occasionally used from the earliest manifestation of organized political life in Tahiti...by the supporters of Pouvanaa Oopa (the main nationalist leader of the 1945-1958 period) in a context of defense of indigenous interests” (Saura 2011, 3). However, Raapoto and Hiro were charismatic in their promotion of Mā’ohiness and their understanding eventually permeated the Protestant Church (Saura 2011).

A more contemporary take on the issue of Mā’ohi identity comes at a relevant time in understanding the nuanced challenges that inhabiting a Mā’ohi space brings into an increasingly global context. In *Bridging Our Sea of Islands*, “Mā’ohi” acts as a multifaceted term that again

regionalizes identity in French Polynesia with heavy roots planted firmly in its soil.⁶⁰ “The term Mā’ohi in reference to the literature discussed herewith refers to those writers born or raised in French Polynesia who have ancestral and indigenous ties to the fenua (land), and who share a collective local identity rooted in local Mā’ohi values” (Mateata-Allain 2008, 14). Note that all persons considered Mā’ohi have some genealogical ties to at least one if not more islands with the boundaries of French Polynesia as a distinguishing feature of belonging to Te Ao Mā’ohi.

And yet, dissecting any map of the region trying to define Te Ao Mā’ohi based on regional relationships, is increasingly slippery as throughout the region inner and outer islands are actively contesting their relationships to one another in a colonial/post-colonial time period where identity remains a profound question of the day (Mawyer 2008). I question, along with many thoughtful scholars of the subject, where those boundaries lie? Who does Te Ao Mā’ohi belong to? Can the term be more inclusive than that? What about other spaces that Mā’ohi, the indigenous peoples of French Polynesia, make as their new homelands? Is that still Te Ao Mā’ohi? Some of that gray area is the motivation for this thesis; rethinking the theoretical boundaries of Te Ao Mā’ohi and considering Mā’ohi as a mobile definition in movement as well. Mā’ohi identity are seen as values rooted in culture, with issues that need to be addressed as outlined below.

Mā’ohi values’ include, but are not limited to; speaking the Franco-Tahitian vernacular, being familiar with insular practices; possessing strong links to family, roots, genealogies, oral traditions, and the land; and maintaining ties with the latter throughout the rapid changes brought on by globalization. For the reader unfamiliar with Mā’ohi literature, there are important issues to consider. First,

⁶⁰ Mateata-Allain offers, “for over 20 years, there has been an energetic resurgence, a focused resurrection, a strategic reconstruction of *Mā’ohi* culture” (2008). Mā’ohi persons who are experiencing mobilities and migrations can speak to the challenges presented earlier, by creating and promoting literature in English that can support this movement of awareness. But there will have to be a consciousness to also allow these fluid movements to happen. If the definition of a Mā’ohi person as the only qualified voice to write and share their histories as a static rooted individual with a location in and of French Polynesia, we ignore the enormous potential of support in the demographic of Mā’ohi who are experiencing other ways of living their cultural values in other places.

there needs to be more of an academic consciousness of the struggles of Mā'ohi writers to be valued and published. Second, for literature scholars interested in promoting indigenous causes, there is a necessity for a supply and demand of Mā'ohi works in English and French that will facilitate an exchange of ideas not only between Oceanic peoples, but within the United States and Europe; a move that will serve to subvert current myths and stereotypes about French Polynesians and Tahiti established through Western lenses (Mateata-Allain 2008, 14).

A response to these essential critiques could be to loosen the boundaries of Te Ao Mā'ohi, and realize the potential of Mā'ohi who maintain those familiar ties from a distance since they are conscious of this identity struggle, and can help fulfill this supply and demand. Raapoto, Hiro, Saura and Mateata-Allain's definitions have been born out of and discussed within the political parameters which sought to unify and identify a distinct and indigenous demographic within Te Ao Mā'ohi. Various other writers such as Karen Stevenson, Miriam Kahn, Jane Moulin, Geoffrey Colson, and most recently Natacha Gagné, expand upon the historical and political context of the identity negotiations and renegotiations in Tahiti, and critically analyze the context of the term, the baggage associated with each interpretation, and how local desires of identity help or hinder communities in their efforts to enact change in the homeland. All of this important context works into the threads of how Mā'ohi works as a subject, noun, and verb with its own unique place in the lexicon of reo Tahiti.

So, how does this thesis relate the construct of identity to diasporic Mā'ohi culture? This thesis explored the contemporary diaspora of Mā'ohi in Hawai'i through practices of community making and cultural festivals such as the Heiva. Hawai'i provides a distinguished and highly celebrated platform with which to examine these constructs over a long period of time; a factor which other Pacific diaspora do not necessarily benefit from. For example, in relatively the same time frame that Raapoto and Hiro were theorizing new relationships to indigeneity and social movements in French Polynesia, Kanaka Maoli in Hawai'i were revitalizing their own

indigenous ideologies on their colonial landscape. Some of these highlights were seen in the fruition of the Hōkūle‘a (Finney 1979; Denning 1997; Wilson 2011), cultural festivities (Stillman 1996), decolonial activism (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, Hussey, and Wright 2014; McGregor-Alegado 1980) and even canoe races (Cisco 1999; Krauss 1976; Osmun 1976). Where there already existed long standing exchanges and migrations of mythological proportions of culture, language, and religion between these two spaces⁶¹ (Ho‘omanawanui 2014; Henry 1995; Kamakau 1992); in the 70s and 80s, Tahitians emerge in Hawai‘i as the purveyors of ancient epistemology and widely affects the definition of identity for Hawaiians who are cultivating indigeneity in this time frame. Within Oceania, Mā‘ohi have many threads of internal and external migrations throughout the region, but Hawai‘i carries a time tested relationship to Te Ao Mā‘ohi.

Thus, the term Mā‘ohi represents the shared identity of the indigenous peoples of the various parts of French Polynesia as they bridge their historical, cultural, social, and linguistic divide. There are nuances and challenges that are still felt in the makeup of a distinct identity of ethnicity in French Polynesia, that is sure. How cohesive are the peoples of the Marquesas, Austral, Gambier, Tuamotu and Society Islands? Is it a term that can be used casually? My Pa‘umotu cousin living in Mahina, Tahiti will attest to the strong racial stereotypes that exist in the homeland. Still, what is possible in new contexts? In places other than what is inferred in its original meaning? In Tahiti and the surrounding region of French Polynesia, race relations still today play a critical role in the formation of a shared Mā‘ohi identity.

⁶¹ Characteristics of interconnected and complimentary mythology are poignantly demonstrated in Ho‘omanawanui’s *Voices of Fire: Reweaving the Literary Lei of Pele and Hi‘iaka*. Her work largely bridges together a collective dialogue that explores these places as linked in the telling of one another’s stories.

Outer islander relationships to Tahitians are not so easily resolved as an optimistic Hau'ofian/Oceanian endeavor, but complicated by the layers of histories that have positioned Tahiti as the epicenter of commerce, industry, politics, education, and military within the nation-state (Moulin 1994; Mawyer 2008; Tetahiotupa 2004). Since “Mā’ohi will never be a word on which everybody will agree” (Gagné 2015), but yet which exists no other replacement that has been so passionately debated over and so politically and culturally inspiring, Mā’ohi it is then. For it is the very definition of belonging in the diaspora that this term so appropriately endears. It has homeland roots, inspires, sprouts, and connects.

This could be viewed as a more inclusive “Mā’ohi” definition, and is perhaps a way of expanding Te Ao Mā’ohi, capable of crossing oceanic and colonial borders to include those that are not currently living in French Polynesia, yet cultivate the culture, language and practices that ground them wherever they are. Perhaps when we consider what distance does in defining whether a person is Mā’ohi, autochthonous, *hutu painu*⁶² or the opposite (Saura 2011, 5), in some sense the label is more easily measured when belonging to that space is no longer a luxury.

There are many appropriate analogies regarding the usage of a term which seeks to connect an offspring to its mother stem and is traced back to its physical and symbolic roots. For Mā’ohi persons living global lives, genealogies are perhaps the most relevant analogies in this example and cannot be overlooked when considering how important it is that roots intertwine, stretch, and connect in the exact same way that branches and roots on family trees provide the same sense of sustenance. But instead of thinking on the surface about roots, stems, and branches as it operates as a system of connectivity across time and space, how easy is it to expand our

⁶² Saura quotes Raapoto when applying the use of *hutu painu* meaning “seed adrift” to reinforce the new rooted definition of Mā’ohi as common, native, not foreign. Whereas the seed who is constantly adrift is used in a derogatory context to describe someone not from that land, outsider, not rooted in ancestral ties to that place (2011, 5).

definitions to include the lives of Mā'ohi persons as the living embodiment of roots (Saura, Capestro, and Bova 2002). The peoples of Te Ao Mā'ohi are sustained in the 'āina, in the roots and stems that provides life giving nourishment. Sustenance can be found symbolically in the way you are roots, and I am roots. Our lived experiences connect us and provide sustenance in the creation of our shared existence. Instead of stretching forth back to the homeland on a thin and distanced root, we become the 'ohi and recenter the rooted system to the places we inhabit.⁶³ Mā'ohi and their relationship to space need not be tied down to the confines of a singular entity such as French Polynesia. Rather in diaspora, roots stretching forth and connecting the Pacific is made evident in the people who are actively shaping and expanding the borders of Te Ao Mā'ohi.

⁶³ Noelani Arista, personal communication, November 13, 2014.

CONCLUSIONS

This work explores the construction of Mā'ohi identity in the diaspora, through the formation of communities and cultural events. In doing this, this thesis presents new possibilities for understanding diasporic communities of Mā'ohi and their relationship to the homeland of French Polynesia.

In the Preface, my family's history begins the primary motivation for understanding this larger pattern of migration in the region. Because of my family's migration to Hawai'i, Hawai'i becomes the centering focus of this thesis in relation to French Polynesia. Looking at these two island nations in conversation with one another, sparked the historical research for understanding larger historical processes that have been bringing Mā'ohi to Hawai'i throughout history. My family was not the first to experience this connection, but I use their story as a window to begin thinking about the movement of Mā'ohi peoples into new regional contexts.

In the Introduction, I began remapping Mā'ohi identity to diasporic communities as a way to expand the theoretical boundaries of Te Ao Mā'ohi. This was used to employ the conversation of defining Mā'ohi and the identity associated as the indigenous peoples of French Polynesia, in their diaspora outward to places like the Anglophone speaking Pacific. Mā'ohi who mediate the divide are perhaps the very ones seeking the lines of communication over the distance. The fruition of this contemporary awareness of identity, against the backdrop of the acknowledged linguistic boundaries created a conversation ripe for diaspora movements of Mā'ohi and the cultivation of culture away from the homeland.

What consequences does this movement create? For starters, it mandates the formation of community, of gatherings, and of shared memories in new homelands. To contextualize this process of movement, I make two distinctive differences in defining the Mā'ohi diaspora—the

concept of internal migrations between the five archipelagos of French Polynesia, and an external diaspora of Mā'ohi to places outside French Polynesia. This difference is key because each of the polities are non-homogenous and the interrelationships of each is a study in and of itself. I contextualize throughout my thesis the second type of migration, the notion of external diaspora as the key motivation of this thesis to relate to the movement of peoples and the formation of community. This setup was used to introduce the concepts of identity as being fluid in diaspora, and migrations of Mā'ohi as not a new phenomenon in the region.

This thesis uses the contemporary connections of this Mā'ohi diaspora, as a pathway to understanding a much older diaspora with historical capturings of connections made over long periods of time. The aim of Chapter One was to exhibit various kinds of historical exchanges of Mā'ohi to Hawai'i as it reinforces community ties. In considering the contemporary communities of Mā'ohi to Hawai'i, Chapter One looks at the historical processes which motivated these exchanges, including sign postings of how the Mā'ohi migration to Hawai'i may have happened over time. Chapter One also incorporates different layers of archival research as an effective medium for evidence of historical Mā'ohi exchanges. The ancient migrations between Tahiti and Hawai'i have long been recognized as historically significant and culturally foundational, but that is not quite the focus of this chapter. This chapter attempts to pinpoint tangible historical exchanges that reinforce Mā'ohi migrations as it converges and blends into a contemporary one.

The examples chosen to highlight these interactions were embodied in Tupaia's voyages with Captain Cook, Teuira Henry writing about that exchange (she herself being a Tahitian woman) in Hawai'i as one of the first female contributors to the Hawaiian Historical Society, the early Tahitian priests who arrive with William Ellis and the ABCFM (Tauā, Tute, and

Ta'amotu), and the voyages of everyday passengers who exhibited frequent exchange between Hawai'i, the Marquesas, and the Societies.

By bridging points of exchange throughout history, my aim for including these exchanges was to contextualize the Mā'ohi diaspora as a well-traveled course to and from Hawai'i. It didn't start with a contemporary group of religious Pacific Islanders, but it is made richer in the diversity of these kinds of exchanges happening over a period of time. Of course included in this are more contemporary examples of the building of the Fa'a'a International Airport on Tahiti, and the sailing of the Hōkūle'a as they embody more current evidences on how the Mā'ohi diaspora is made visible. These examples of exchanges were woven together to bring the story of the diaspora to the contemporary timeframe where I used that foundation to talk about a very contemporary Mā'ohi event, the Heiva.

In Chapter Two, I reinforced the contemporary view of the Mā'ohi diaspora by using an informal community gathering as a motivation to understanding types of regional migrations. I focused on incorporating personal and family anecdotes to make sense of contemporary community making. I accomplish this through what I described in the Introduction as the differences between the internal migrations and external diaspora to and from the homeland of Te Ao Mā'ohi to Hawai'i. This is initially expressed in a study published by Rapaport in the late 80s, of which I complicate by broadening the scope of its reach. Historically, there has been a tendency to clump Tahitians together, since the debate of "Mā'ohi identity" is just as new as that study. Essentially, there has been a silent glossing over of this indigenous group of people by assuming they are all the same. The overall work of this thesis, and particularly that chapter was to contextualize these experiences further as a means to understanding the nuances of Mā'ohi experiences in diaspora. Such was the motivation for including the text on the Language

Archives, which I added to demonstrate some of the specific motivations for diaspora as well as the impacts of Mā'ohi culture in Hawai'i. The largest contemporary diaspora to Hawai'i has specific religious affiliations but in order to broaden the scope of defining the Mā'ohi experience in Hawai'i, I incorporate other types of community formations such as the Moloka'i Hoe and the club gatherings as well. And finally, the return migration reinforces the emerging conversation of contemporary Mā'ohi identity in relation to diaspora movements, a point which I further tease out in the third chapter.

In Chapter Three, the Heiva is positioned as Tahiti's most well-known cultural event and over the years many have taken stock of its importance in its cultural contributions. However, this event is now being produced far from its socio-political contexts of its homeland to places like Hawai'i, Japan, Mexico, France, and throughout the mainland US. This is a different context for this cultural event, and the aim of this chapter was to draw out the nuances of producing Mā'ohi diasporic identity through this event by the communities who inhabit this space. I do this by first relating the history of the Heiva in its homeland context. The pros for providing this context was to ground it in its socio-political history in order to imagine it moving elsewhere. As a symbol of indigenous pride, the Heiva is about islander connections to their respective home islands. But in diaspora, the majority of participants (and certainly at the Heiva i Honolulu) are not Mā'ohi and would not inhabit those same connections. Instead, the diasporic Heiva is more for community bonding to share in reminders of home while teaching and cultivating culture abroad. It is not the same event as the Heiva Nui or Heiva i Tahiti, but it perpetuates culture and allows communities of diasporic Mā'ohi to celebrate their homeland. In turn, this creates a visibility for Mā'ohi communities who, in diaspora are all interconnected and who contribute to the cultivation of culture. In diaspora there is a shared sense of community because as

immigrants, they hold to the ideals of celebrating the culture they brought with them. As Heiva and Heiva-esque events continue to grow worldwide, this conversation provides potential to grow in the ways communities contribute to the event, identify locale specific nuances, and other visible ramifications of reproducing culture in diaspora.

This work has provided a conversation on the subjectivities of the contemporary lives of diasporic Mā'ohi peoples, culture and identity. In conclusion, this thesis argues that the Mā'ohi migration has a long and consistent historical relationship with Hawai'i, but over time those relationships shifted through new patterns of religious and socio-economic influences. These twenty-first century patterns were especially evident through the Tuamotuan pearl industry and the Mormon church which set the foundation to form the largest community of Mā'ohi in Hawai'i. In the twenty-first century, Mā'ohi are negotiating identity from abroad by creating cultural events such as the Heiva, in order to mirror the homeland culture they brought with them. In doing this, they are creating a new awareness to the complexities of an ever increasing globalized Pacific. Above all, this work connects, uplifts, and strengthens community roots that stretch across time and space in order to remap Mā'ohi identity to the many new places they inhabit. "Aia ke ola i Kahiki, life is in Kahiki" (Pukui 1983, Kindle Locations 657-660).

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