

Shakespeare and the *Ali'i Nui*

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Abstract

A variety of nineteenth-century English and American texts evoke Shakespeare in descriptions of the *ali'i nui*, the high chiefs of Hawaii; these appropriations reveal the perspectives of *haoles* (Caucasian foreigners) on Hawaiian royalty and provide a point of departure for analyzing some provocative Shakespeare appropriations in the discourse of the royal Hawaiians themselves. Shakespeare allusions in texts by and about nineteenth-century Hawaiian monarchs illustrate the relationship between Hawaiian history and the English literary canon, demonstrating the ways in which the *ali'i* adapted European cultural commodities to indigenous uses. They also cast light on Hawaiian rulers' attempts to negotiate the American presence in Hawaii, revealing Shakespeare's place at the intersection of Hawaiian, British, and American cultural history.

When the English came to the South Pacific, Shakespeare came with them. A copy of his complete works was almost certainly on board the *Endeavour* when Captain James Cook made landfall in New Zealand on his first voyage (Carr 1983, 196). In the following century, travelers from Europe and the United States — missionaries, journalists, businessmen, and actors — began to interact with the inhabitants of the Pacific, including the people of Hawai'i; and throughout the 1800s, many English and American writers used images drawn from Shakespeare in their efforts to describe the *ali'i nui*, the Hawaiian high chiefs.¹

A variety of nineteenth-century English and American texts turn to Shakespeare to describe Hawaiian royalty; these appropriations reveal some of the ways in which the *haoles* (Caucasian foreigners) viewed the *ali'i nui*, including *nm'* and *n m' whine* (the kings and queens).² Studying Shakespearean descriptions of the *ali'i nui* by British and American writers also provides a point of departure for analyzing some provocative Shakespeare appropriations in royal Hawaiian discourse: two nineteenth-century Hawaiian monarchs, Lunalilo and Lili'uokalani, used Shakespeare to fashion images of themselves, claiming England's Bard as their own and transposing his language for their own purposes.

Building upon Thomas Cartelli's richly nuanced account of Shakespeare appropriations in various post-colonial contexts, my study of these *haole* and *ali'i* texts focuses on Shakespeare quotations and allusions that characterize and either undermine or support the indigenous Hawaiian monarchy. Many blur the line between "proprietary" and the "transpositional" appropriations, to use Cartelli's terms. They are proprietary in that both *haole* and *ali'i* appropriators tend to imply their endorsement of Shakespeare as an artist; they engage in "an avowedly 'friendly' or reverential reading of the appropriated material" (Cartelli 1999, 18). For Shakespeare's language and characters were valuable commodities that functioned, within both *haole* and *ali'i* frames of reference, as marks of prestige; they were signs that could bridge or reinforce cultural and political borders, including the boundary between nineteenth-century American republicanism and the markedly English variety of constitutional monarchy that, for a time, prevailed in the Kingdom of Hawai'i. But as Cartelli points out, "Appropriations of Shakespeare are . . . the product of a host of . . . informing conditions that may be said to shape the form a given appropriation takes" (19). Seen in context, many nineteenth-century Shakespeare appropriations used in descriptions of the *ali'i nui* are, notwithstanding their proprietary endorsement of Shakespeare, also transpositional: that is, they relocate a Shakespearean character or theme within a new "interpretive field to underwrite or enrich a presumably related thesis or argument" (17). What makes these related theses and arguments so interesting in the case of texts by and about nineteenth-century Hawaiian monarchs is not only that they illustrate the relationship between Hawaiian history and the English literary canon, but also that they demonstrate the ways in which the *ali'i* adapted European cultural commodities to indigenous uses and cast light on Hawaiian rulers' attempts to negotiate the American presence in Hawaii.

Readers may respond to the encounter between Shakespeare and the *ali'i nui* by dismissing it as neither more nor less than an example of Shakespeare's colonizing power. The Hawaiian particularity of the kings and queens may at first seem swallowed up, either by the framing force of Shakespeare's language or by the degree to which their use of that language represents a departure from Hawaiian language and culture. This impression is not entirely false; the *ali'i nui* enthusiastically embraced vast quantities of non-Hawaiian culture, including European languages, fashions, manners, and ideas; their appropriations of Shakespeare are proprietary. But as Marshall Sahlins points out, "commonsense bourgeois realism, when taken as a historiographic conceit, is a kind of symbolic violence done to other times and other customs" (Sahlins 1995, 14). In order to appreciate the particularities of individual *haole* and *ali'i* allusions to Shakespeare, and the degree to which even wholeheartedly proprietary appropriations can transpose Shakespearean language to a Hawaiian "interpretive field," one must avoid such violence and carefully trace the ways in

which some *haole* and Hawaiian appropriators "travel from their local conditions to Shakespeare, becoming, in their encounters with the texts, voyagers within foreign terrain" (Orkin 2005, 2). My goal, then, is to tell the story of how a number of very different nineteenth-century people made that voyage in a number of different ways and, in so doing, to reveal Shakespeare's place at the intersection of Hawaiian, British, and American cultural history.

The story is a complex one, without a clearly defined trajectory; but it nevertheless unfolds in four discernibly distinct parts. In the first, the early nineteenth-century King Liholiho and his queen Kammalu are described by English and American writers in terms that link them to Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, framing them as exotic yet familiar examples of decadent royalty and positioning them as either comic or tragic examples of pagan majesty. In the second, the mid-nineteenth century Hawaiian king Alexander Liholiho becomes an Anglophile and Shakespeare aficionado, but his dignity and authority as ruler of Hawai'i are still variously undermined or reinforced by *haole* writers who use the language of Shakespeare to describe him or communicate with him. In the third part of the story, Americans' use of Shakespeare allusions in describing Hawaiian monarchs becomes distinctly political in character. American and American-Hawaiian journalists, writing about Kamehameha V and his successor Lunalilo, turn to Shakespeare to portray the first as a benevolent autocrat and the second as a democratic hero who will dismantle the Hawaiian monarchy, remaking Hawai'i in the image of the American republic. In each of these first three parts of the story, Shakespeare is a highly versatile commodity; appropriated Shakespearean texts provide *haole* writers with language and images capable of capturing their widely varying responses to Hawaiian royalty, while at the same time, a range of Shakespearean imports — from a sailing vessel with a Shakespearean name to a Shakespearean tragic identity — serve indigenous Hawaiian monarchs as desirable foreign merchandise invested with new and distinctively Hawaiian value.

But in the fourth and final part of the story, two of the *ali'i nui* make the transition from the consumption of Shakespearean goods to the active production of their own Shakespeare appropriations. Lunalilo (who reigned 1873-1874) and Lili'uokalani (who reigned 1891-1893) both put the language of Shakespeare to use. Both revere Shakespeare, both consider him an ally, and both use him to advance a cultural and political agenda. Most interestingly, however, the two monarchs' agendas are radically different and incompatible. Lunalilo's improvisational oral performance of *Richard III* advertises his blithely anti-authoritarian assimilation into an American cultural framework, while Lili'ouakalani's formal print allusion to *Measure for Measure* attempts

— unsuccessfully, but brilliantly — to turn English cultural capital into Hawaiian *mana* strong enough to resist American power and restore the lost sovereignty of her beloved islands.³

Antony and Cleopatra in the Sandwich Islands: Kamehameha II and Kammalu

The earliest recorded encounter between Shakespeare and a Hawaiian king came neither on the page nor upon the stage, but over the waves in the form of a yacht called *Cleopatra's Barge*. This vessel, purchased by King Kamehameha II (Liholiho) in 1821, was the first pleasure yacht built in America. Constructed in 1816 in Salem, Massachusetts for the wealthy George Crowninshield, Jr., the craft was originally to be called *Car of Concordia* (Johnston 2002, 1-2, 20, 24).⁴ By the time Crowninshield embarked on a much-publicized cruise to Europe aboard his new vessel in March 1817, however, he had renamed her *Cleopatra's Barge*. "The reason for this was never revealed," notes naval historian Paul Forsythe Johnston, "but may have been due to a reading of some lines from Act II, scene 2 of William Shakespeare's romantic tragedy *Antony and Cleopatra*" (2). Johnston goes on to quote several lines from Enobarbus's famous speech describing Antony's first encounter with the Queen of Egypt:

The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne,
Burned on the water. The poop was beaten gold;
Purple the sails, and so perfumèd that
The winds were love-sick with them. The oars were silver,
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
The water which they beat to follow faster,
As amorous of their strokes. (*Antony and Cleopatra*, 2.2.197-203)⁵

While it is true that no documentary evidence is extant regarding Crowninshield's intentions, the name *Cleopatra's Barge* most certainly would have functioned in the early 1800s as an evocation of Enobarbus's speech. The speech is not, of course, entirely original; Shakespeare borrowed many of the images and even transcribed some words directly from North's translation of Plutarch (1579, 981-82). And Dryden reworked parts of the speech in act 3 of *All For Love*, placing the lines in Antony's mouth (Dryden 1678, 35). But at the time Crowninshield was choosing a name for his yacht, the Enobarbus speech was frequently included in miscellanies as a prime example of Shakespeare's eloquence, and print references to the historical Cleopatra often included the speech as though it were an accompanying illustration.⁶ Clearly, when Crowninshield re-christened his newly-built yacht, he could be certain that the name *Cleopatra's Barge* would associate him (by virtue of his new acquisition) with Shakespeare's portrait of exotic wealth and self-indulgence.

And it did: *Cleopatra's Barge* drew crowds of gaping admirers everywhere she sailed on her maiden voyage, a six-month Mediterranean cruise. After Crowninshield's return to America and his unexpected death in November 1817, his brother bought the yacht at auction, then sold it to the owners of Bryant & Sturgis, a Boston firm. They, in turn, made plans to sell the vessel to King Liholiho of the Sandwich Islands.⁷

Liholiho, who reigned as Kamehameha II, was the son of Kamehameha I, a ruling chief of the island of Hawai'i who had subdued the other *ali'i* of his own island and — using weaponry and ships acquired from the British — conquered the chiefs of the other islands in the archipelago, uniting all of Hawai'i under his rule by the year 1810 (Kuykendall 1938-67, 1:29-51). During the reign of Liholiho, largely through the influence of his father's wife, the regent Ka'ahumanu, the *kapu* laws of ancient Hawaiian religion were abolished.⁸ After Liholiho's death, Ka'ahumanu would convert to Calvinist Christianity and promote the missionary agenda in Hawaii. But Liholiho, a hard-drinking polygamist, was less interested in religion than in luxury. His appetite for European and American goods was enormous, reflecting the traditional importance of conspicuous consumption as a key to prestige and power among the *ali'i*. As Marshall Sahlins puts it, "[T]he customary conflicts between the king and ranking chiefs . . . more and more appeared as demonstrations of indigenous *mana* in the most appropriate forms of foreign wealth . . . Trade goods were glorious extensions of sacred chiefly bodies already stretched to their organic limits" (Sahlins 1988; reprint 1994, 432, 433). Thus, when Bryant and Sturgis sent *Cleopatra's Barge* to the Sandwich Islands in June 1820, Liholiho agreed to buy the vessel for the enormous price of 1.07 million pounds of sandalwood; he took possession of the vessel on 4 January 1821. In November of the same year, Bryant and Sturgis agent Charles B. Bullard wrote to his employers, "If you want to know how Religion stands at the Islands, I can tell you — All sects are tolerated, but the King worships the Barge" (quoted in Johnston 2002, 12).

By 18 April 1822, however, "a routine overhaul" revealed that the yacht was "almost completely rotten abaft the mainmast" (Johnston 2002, 14). An English visitor, Gilbert Mathison, described the situation by casting Liholiho as an amalgam of the two title characters in *Antony and Cleopatra*: "She was called Cleopatra's Barge, and to catch his Sable Majesty was fitted up in a style of considerable elegance; but she had not been long in his possession, when the timbers on one side were found to be decayed" (Mathison 1825, 463). Here, Liholiho is both an Antony caught in the toils of a deceptive and inwardly corrupt beauty and a contemporary male incarnation of the queen who, in Shakespeare's tragedy, describes herself as "with Phoebus' amorous pinches black" (*Antony and Cleopatra*, 1.5.28). As Mathison saw it, the dusky monarch had been utterly seduced by the

barge's appearance. Liholiho, however, was not content to play the dupe; making clear to the sellers that he would not pay the full amount agreed upon (although he did still make some payments after the discovery of the yacht's condition), the king ordered a complete renovation. When the craft was again seaworthy in May of 1823, she was renamed *Ha'aheo o Hawai'i* — pride of Hawaii. In bestowing a Hawaiian name upon his prized vessel, Liholiho no doubt intended to claim her definitively as his own; at any rate, discarding its American name was a way of jettisoning some troublesome cultural cargo.⁹

The change in the name of the king's yacht did not entirely disassociate Kamehameha II from Cleopatra, however. Near the end of the month preceding that in which he renamed the yacht — on 24 April 1823 — Liholiho began a lavish two-week festival in commemoration of his father's death and his own accession. Among the guests was Hiram Bingham, leader of the first group of ABCFM missionaries to Hawaii, who had arrived in 1820.¹⁰ In his 1847 memoirs, Bingham describes the ceremonies of 8 May, the final day of the celebration, stressing that, while European carriages and dresses, as well as Christian prayers, had been included in the opening day's events, the rites observed on the final day were "chiefly Hawaiian, quite imposing . . . and as a display of aboriginal taste and customs . . . striking and interesting." Particularly impressive was the grand entrance of "the favorite queen, Kamamalu," who was "borne in state by about seventy subjects, upon a singularly constructed carriage — whale-boat upon an extensive wicker-work scaffold of transverse poles and light spars lashed together, and supported on the heads, hands, and shoulders of a column of men in their martial dress." The memory of this spectacle injects a shot of Shakespearean orientalism into Bingham's prose:

Seated as a Cleopatra in the middle of the boat, having a scarlet silk robe around her waist, a coronet of brilliant feathers on her head, and a large and superb umbrella of scarlet silk, fringed and tasselled, supported over her by a warrior chief, who was girded with a scarlet girdle, and had on a lofty feathered helmet, she rode, a queen, above the heads of the admiring multitude. (Bingham 1847, 184)

The author here takes for granted his readers' familiarity with images made famous by Shakespeare, including not only the feminine majesty of the boat's occupant, but the presence of a vast audience of people who "gaze on Cleopatra" (*Antony and Cleopatra*, 2.2.217). Bingham's reference to "the admiring multitude" is closer to North's Plutarch than to Shakespeare: the word "multitudes" — in the phrase "multitudes of people" — appears twice in North's prose account (Plutarch 1579, 981). But the relationship between storyteller and audience is the same in all three texts. Plutarch informing his second-century Greek readers (and, in North's translation, readers of early modern

England), Enobarbus enlightening the curious Romans Agrippa and Maecenas (and, with them, the seventeenth-century London audience watching Shakespeare's play), and Bingham painting a Polynesian scene for white Anglo-Saxon Protestant readers in mid-nineteenth century America all strive to evoke, for those who have never seen such a sight, the image of a majestic queen from a dark and distant land. Like Enobarbus, Bingham presents himself as an authoritative eyewitness who "will tell you" (2.2.190) of outlandish spectacle.

As Bingham goes on to portray her in the remaining paragraphs devoted to her, Kammalu arguably remains a type of Cleopatra, her opulent life crowned with tragic eloquence and pathos. When she and Liholiho left Hawai'i on a voyage to England, Bingham says, the queen "distinguished herself, as she was wont to do"; in "an elevated and poetic impromptu," delivered as she embarked, she "poured forth eloquently her parting salutation — her last farewell" (Bingham 1847, 203).¹¹ For Bingham, this performance epitomized what might have been, had "this noble woman . . . from her childhood been trained in the Christian religion, or had she been indulged with some years more of thorough instruction." But it was not to be; for while in London in spring 1824, the royal pair contracted measles. "By the morning of the 8th of July," Bingham reports, "the hope of the queen's recovery was abandoned. With tenderness, and many tears, the royal pair took leave of each other." Liholiho expired soon after, less than half way through the five years he had declared that it would take to "accomplish a thorough reformation in himself" and convert to Christianity. "What a lesson to the nation!" Bingham declares, "How impressively did divine wisdom show the vanity of the mirth and wine, the pomp and pride, the distinction and power, of which these departed ones, for a brief period, could once boast" (204, 259, 266-67).

In early nineteenth-century Hawaii, then, Shakespeare appropriation worked in two contrasting, yet complementary, ways. For Liholiho, the acquisition of an American yacht with a Shakespearean name and its conversion into *Ha'aheo o Hawai'i*, was an accumulation and display of Anglo-American goods that substantially increased his *mana*. For Hiram Bingham, the portrayal of Kammalu as a doomed yet noble Cleopatra was a means of establishing his own authority, both as an eyewitness to exotic alien culture and — more surprisingly — as a New England Calvinist interpreter of Shakespeare's most spectacularly decadent tragedy.

Hawaiian King as Spectator and Performer of Shakespeare: Kamehameha IV

While in London, Liholiho and Kammalu were taken to the New Theatre Royal in Drury Lane; the production they viewed from the Royal Box was an Orientalist fantasy, William Moncrieff's melodrama *Zoroaster*, presented on the same bill with the opera *Rob Roy Macgregor*.¹² It is unlikely that Kamehameha II ever saw or read a Shakespeare play. Twenty-five years after Liholiho's death,

however, on 26 December 1849, two members of the Hawaiian royal family were again present for a play in London's Drury Lane: a performance of *The Merchant of Venice*. The theater-goers were fifteen-year-old Prince Alexander Liholiho (the nephew, adopted son, and heir-designate of Kamehameha III) and his eighteen-year-old brother Lot (who would reign as Kamehameha V after Alexander's death). They had left Hawai'i in September 1849 with the American-born Dr. Gerrit P. Judd, Kamehameha III's most trusted adviser. Judd was on a diplomatic mission to the United States, Great Britain, and France, and was combining his official duties with a grand tour for the two princes, so that they might acquire "knowledge and experience of the world and of courts" (Adler 1967, ix-x).¹³ The young men had been educated at the Chiefs' Children's School, an institution set up by Kamehameha III to educate the next generation of *ali'i* (Kanahele 1999, 23-27).

Having voyaged first to San Francisco, they had crossed the isthmus of Panama by boat and ground transport, then sailed up the Atlantic coast to New York, where they stayed a few days before embarking for London via Halifax. In the English-language journal that he kept throughout his journey, Alex (as he was called) recorded his impressions of the Drury Lane performance. Though the prince does not mention that the play on the program was *Merchant of Venice*, he does note, "[I] was much pleased with the Pantomimes. But I liked the Drama better than anything else I saw" (Kamehameha IV 1967, 30). In his appreciation for the Shakespeare play, the royal Polynesian teenager was demonstrating sophistication not much in evidence at Drury Lane on the night he was present, for according to the *Times of London*, Shakespeare's comedy was ignored by the majority of the audience, "a set of jovial souls, determined not to hear a word of the play, but to reserve all their attention for the pantomime." According to the *Times* report, the only portion of *Merchant* that the audience "consented to hear" was the trial scene; the crowd was much more receptive toward *Harlequin and Good Queen Bess*, a "pompous caricature" featuring one "Mr. R. Romer" in the role of Elizabeth ("The Christmas Pantomimes" 1849).

Prince Alexander's remark that he was "pleased with the Pantomimes" indicates that he was not offended by the English tendency to make light of crowned heads. What did anger him was the taste of American racism he got during his extended stay in the United States after returning from France and England.¹⁴ Alexander Liholiho came home to Hawaii, then, having developed a strong preference for British Victorian mores and cultural tendencies. He ascended the throne as Kamehameha IV in 1855 and, in 1856, married Emma Rooke, who had both Hawaiian and British blood: her Hawaiian ancestors were very high-ranking *ali'i nui*, and her maternal grandfather was John Young, an Englishman who had been the adviser of Kamehameha I. Emma had, in keeping with *ali'i* custom, been raised as the *hnai* (adopted) daughter of a prominent couple other than her

birth parents: in Emma's case, an English physician named Thomas Rooke and his wife, Emma's maternal aunt Grace Kama'iku'i Young Rooke. Like her husband, Emma had been educated at the Chiefs' Children's School. The couple married in an Anglican ceremony, and in 1862, Alexander established a new branch of the Anglican Communion — the Hawaiian Reformed Catholic Church — as Hawai'i's national church. The king himself translated the *Book of Common Prayer* into Hawaiian (Kanahele 1999, 1-7, 23-40, 62, 145-55).¹⁵ Thomas Nettleship Staley, the first Anglican Bishop of Honolulu, would describe him as a man of "elegant tastes . . . who could enjoy Kingsley, Thackeray, Tennyson, and was ever quoting Shakespeare" (quoted in Hopkins 1866, 446).

A number of Shakespearean anecdotes and allusions cluster about the reign of this most Anglophilic Hawaiian monarch. Examining these against the backdrop of Honolulu theater history provides a sense of how deeply invested the *ali'i* had become, by the late 1850s and early 1860s, in specifically British constructions of royalty. Such an investigation also demonstrates how the scope and dignity of royal Hawaiian power were qualified in American discourse during the mid- to late nineteenth century and beyond. Most intriguing of all, Shakespeare allusions made in connection with the king of Hawai'i during this period reveal the degree to which Shakespeare continued to serve as a powerful source of what Marshall Sahlins (discussing the appetite for foreign commodities among the *ali'i* of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-centuries) has called "European *mana*" — *haole* goods, customs, and behaviors that conveyed a specifically Hawaiian kind of power upon their possessors within a Hawaiian context, while at the same time marking them as "civilized" in the eyes of British and American observers (Sahlins 1981, 26, 31).

Very shortly after Alexander Liholiho's accession in 1855, while the kingdom was still in mourning for the new king's predecessor, the soon-to-be famous actor Edwin Booth came to Honolulu on his way home back to San Francisco after a performance tour in Australia.¹⁶ According to an 1882 account by Edwin's sister Asia Booth Clarke, Alexander Liholiho went to some trouble to see Booth perform Shakespeare:

The king of the Sandwich Islands had lately died, and, the court being in mourning, his successor was unable to attend the theatre publicly; but expressing a desire to witness Booth's production of *Richard III.*, his Majesty was accommodated behind the scenes. The arm-chair used for the stage-throne was placed at the wing, with Edwin's theatrical robe thrown over it, and the king seated himself upon it; his escort, who were a Frenchman and a huge Kanaka, the latter wearing a military jacket, white trousers, and a long sword, stood by his side. Edwin was compelled to trouble the king for the throne in the coronation scene, and his Majesty good-naturedly stood until it was returned for his use. Kamehameha IV.

was an educated gentleman, speaking English fluently; he told Edwin that when he was a little boy he had seen the elder Booth perform *Richard III* at the Chatham Theatre in New York. (Clarke 1882, 141)

This narrative provides a view of the Hawaiian monarch as non-threatening in his westernized accomplishments and tastes; his behavior blends cultural *gravitas* (strong interest in Shakespeare and mastery of English) with down-to-earth good humor American audiences would be sure to appreciate: what could be better than a royal personage who gives up his throne when politely asked to do so, even while watching a play about ruthless ambition and the bloody history of the English monarchy? The image of the king flanked on one side by a European and on the other by a "huge" indigenous man armed with a European weapon might, in another context, have made him appear either dangerous or ridiculous. But positioned as it is within the account of Kamehameha IV as Shakespeare enthusiast, it casts the king as an urbane participant in an amusingly choreographed history play.

Interestingly, when Montrose J. Moses recounts the same events in a 1906 book, he adopts a relatively mocking and dismissive post-annexation perspective. As Moses tells it, the king was "loath to let his subjects find him at a place of amusement. So he sat behind the scenes on Richard's throne, watching the three-hours' traffic of the stage, and was ignominiously deposed whenever the throne was wanted as a stage property" (Moses 1906, 41). Gone is Clarke's hint of regret at impropriety ("Edwin was compelled to trouble the king"); gone is the Hawaiian monarch's polite cooperation; gone is the very specific explanation that the king had to stand only once, for the "coronation scene," as well as the information about the king's education and theatrical sophistication. Instead, the reader is treated to a joke at the expense of an "amusement"-seeking native chief who hides his frivolous activities from his own subjects, whose only throne is a "stage property," and who can be popped out of it repeatedly on cue.¹⁷

Booth's 1855 *Richard III* was by no means the first Shakespeare staged in Honolulu. In early March 1834, a group calling itself the Oahu Amateur Theatre had mounted its first production (James Kenney's farce *Raising the Wind*) at the palace of Kamehameha III; shortly afterward, performing at Major Warren's Hotel, they had presented several Shakespeare vignettes: the final scene of *Othello* on the evening of 3 April, with the final scene of *Hamlet* and act 2, scene 7 of *As You Like It* following on 1 May (Hoyt 1961, 14-15). The first fully-equipped theater building in Honolulu, The Thespian, opened for its inaugural performance on the evening of 11 September 1847, with Kamehameha III seated in the royal box (*The Polynesian* 1847, 70-71). And by 1853-54, an actor named William St. Maur was performing scenes from *Hamlet* at the Honolulu theaters

built after the Thespian had burned down: the Varieties and the Royal Hawaiian. Journalist John F. Thrum recalled hearing that St. Maur had "created quite a sensation in the dress circle of the Varieties one night while playing the Ghost of Hamlet's Father, and nearly scaring the life out of the first Mrs. A. P. Everett, who was so overcome that she was carried out of the theatre in a swoon" (Thrum [1882] 1905, 98).

Given Victorian-era theatrical practice, the Shakespeare productions audiences saw in mid-nineteenth century Hawai'i were often partial and modified versions. A broadside advertising an evening's entertainment at the Royal Hawaiian on 10 December 1853, for example, announces that "a selection of scenes will be performed from Shakespeare's | sublime Tragedy of | HAMLET | Including the celebrated | Ghost and Closet scenes." A February 1856 Royal Hawaiian production of "Shakespeare's beautiful Comedy in 3 Acts, of | KATHERINE & PETRUCHIO! | or, the | Taming of the Shrew" is clearly Garrick's adaptation (Forbes 2001, Items 1960 and 2190).¹⁸ And when Edwin Booth performed *Richard III* in Honolulu, the audience was seeing Colley Cibber's version of the play (1700), which includes bits and pieces from the *Henry VI* plays, as well as original material scripted by Cibber, such as the famous non-Shakespearean line, "Off with his head. So much for Buckingham" (Spencer, ed. 1965, 331).

Another well-known Cibber innovation is a line that Richard speaks as he emerges from the agony of self-doubt brought on by his ominous dreams on the eve of battle; in answer to a retainer's reproachful warning, "Be more yourself, my lord," Cibber's Richard declares, "Richard's himself again" (Spencer, ed. 1965, 339). This line, which Kamehameha IV had heard performed by Booth in 1855, would return to haunt the king during a tragic episode of his own reign a few years later. In early September, 1859, Alexander Liholiho "heard . . . idle and malicious" rumors involving a breach of propriety on the part of his private secretary, Henry Neilson, and Queen Emma. Brooding, the king drank himself into an alcoholic haze, acquired a pistol, sought Neilson out, and without a word, shot him at point blank range. The bullet passed through Neilson's body and, miraculously, he survived. Sober again, the king realized that "his suspicions of Neilson and the queen were without any merit" and "was so filled with guilt and remorse that he decided to abdicate." Rumors swirled; the papers were filled with reports and editorials, some supporting the king and others hostile toward him; the members of the privy counsel had all they could do to talk him out of his plan to relinquish the throne (Kanahele 1999, 112, 113, 114-24).

When Alexander at last decided that he would not abdicate, Robert C. Wyllie (a Scotsman who was Hawaii's Minister of Foreign Affairs and one of the king's closest friends) drew on both the spirit of Scottish Romanticism and Cibber's version of Shakespeare to advise the monarch on

how to proceed: "I wish to direct your mind from brooding over *one overpowering Idea*," he wrote, "Let that idea be gone for ever; let '*Richard be himself again*' . . . [let] the breaking up of the government never be again pronounced" (Private correspondence, 27 September 1859; quoted in Kanahele 1999, 115-16). Wyllie's choice of allusions here sends a richly mixed message. On the one hand, the distraught king is to identify with Richard on the eve of his fatal battle, a beleaguered tragic hero for whom the pangs of conscience are an unaffordable luxury. On the other, he is to see himself as suffering from a condition to which only a supremely sensitive feminine being would be subject. For the italicized phrase "one overpowering Idea," while appearing in many a work of fiction, here is probably an allusion to the heroine of the popular 1815 novel *Clan-Albin: A National Tale*, by Scottish novelist Christian Isobel Johnstone.¹⁹ The strong but deeply emotional Flora, informed that her husband has been killed, feels grief wash over her as "one overpowering Idea" almost insupportable in its intensity.²⁰ Wyllie's two allusions — to Cibber's Shakespeare and to Johnstone's novel — are seemingly incompatible. Yet they send the guilt-stricken king the message he needs to hear: though he has all the exquisite sensitivity of a Romantic heroine, he must not indulge it; like the Richard of Cibber's play and like the flamboyant Shakespearean hero-villain who inspired him, he must hold the course. The projection of a strong and unyielding image is essential to the maintenance of sovereignty.

Wyllie's allusion to *Richard III* was all the more powerful in that it provided the Hawaiian king with a royal English alternative to the Shakespearean role assigned him by one of his enemies, an American merchant named Gorham Gilman. Writing in the Honolulu newspaper *The Friend*, Gilman had held forth on his view:

It seems almost impossible to believe that the King could have any real distrust of the Queen . . . her whole life and character from childhood was against any cause for such a thought . . . Some evil demon, some devilish Iago must have distilled some damnable poison into the King's mind to have caused him to commit such an insane act! (quoted in Kanahele 1999, 122-23)²¹

Gilman's remarks cast Alexander Liholiho as Othello, pathetically susceptible to the insinuations of a malevolent whisperer. Like Othello, the king is all too willing to believe he has been cuckolded by a trusted white retainer. It is no wonder, then, that despite the ominous implications of Wyllie's letter, which encourages the king to press on like Richard III on the eve of his defeat and thus does not presume to suggest that all will be well, Kamehameha IV followed Wyllie's advice. In nineteenth-century Hawaii, it may well have seemed preferable to the Anglophilic Alexander

Liholiho to follow the example of a doomed English king rather than be cast as the gullible dark-skinned victim of "some devilish Iago."

Shakespeare and Hawaiian Politics: Kamehameha V and Lunalio

Kamehameha IV having established a version of Hawaiian kingship strongly reminiscent of the British monarchy, late nineteenth-century American appropriations of Shakespeare in descriptions of Hawaiian kings begin to reflect Americans' ambivalence toward monarchic government. No one put the Bard to work more effectively in allusions of this sort than Mark Twain, who was gaining notoriety in America as a deeply scathing, frequently hilarious, and always informative journalist. Writing letters from Hawai'i during his 1866 visit to the islands as a reporter for the *Sacramento Union*, Twain used Shakespeare at several points, often to satirical effect.²² Surprisingly, however, he also applied Shakespearean touches to a sympathetic portrait of Alexander Liholiho's brother and successor, Lot, who ruled as Kamehameha V from 1863 to 1872. Notwithstanding his low opinion of monarchy in general, Twain judged Lot to be attractively unpretentious and conscientious (Twain 1979, 54-55).²³ "Some people in California have an idea," Twain notes,

that the King of the Sandwich Islands is a man who spends his time idling about the town of Honolulu with individuals of questionable respectability, and drinking habitually and to excess. This impression is wrong. Before he ascended the throne, he was "faster" than was well for him or for his good name, but, like the hero of Agincourt, he renounced his bad habits and discarded his Falstaffs when he became King, and since that time has conducted himself as becomes his high position. He attends closely to his business, makes no display, does not go about much, and in manners and habits is a thorough gentleman. (Twain 1979, 121-22)

This passage from Twain's letter of 23 May 1866 invites American readers to revise their notions of dissipated native chiefs and to view Kamehameha V through a Shakespearean lens. Once a playboy Hal, Lot has become the Henry V of Shakespeare's *Henry V*: a king as famous for his dramatic self-reformation as for his military exploits; a king even a no-nonsense American can love; a king who not only rejects vice, but wins the undying loyalty of the common man in the "band of brothers" speech that makes the "hero of Agincourt" so memorable. Twain had no illusions, however, about Kamehameha V's authoritarian approach to rule; in the same letter, he tells of how the king rejected Hawaii's 1852 constitution, which savored strongly of American republicanism, and — in 1864, after a constitutional convention failed to produce a new document to his liking — simply put in place a constitution of his own making that greatly strengthened the power of

the monarchy. "But," Twain concludes, "he uses his vast authority wisely and well" (Twain 1979, 106-107).²⁴

Not everyone agreed. Kamehameha V's strong commitment to maintaining royal power did not endear him to the group of American *haole* residents who would eventually bring about the demise of monarchy in Hawaii. This faction, often referred to as the "missionary party" because its members were grandchildren of the American missionaries who had come to Hawai'i in the 1820s, was delighted when — Lot having died without issue and having failed to name his successor — he was succeeded by his dissipated but witty cousin, Prince William Charles Lunalilo.

Lunalilo's path to the throne was distinctly democratic. When Kamehameha V died childless in 1872, there were several people who might have succeeded him. The 1864 constitution provided, if the reigning monarch had not named a successor, for the Hawaiian legislature to elect the new king or queen, choosing from among the eligible *ali'i nui*. This group included a number of women descended from Kamehameha I, including the dowager Queen Emma (the widow of Kamehameha IV), Bernice Pauahi Bishop (Lot's *hnai* sister), and Ruth Ke'eliklani. But Lot did not think Ruth (a Hawaiian traditionalist who knew English well but would speak only Hawaiian) fit for the position, and the other two had no desire to rule. Of the remaining candidates, Lunalilo arguably had the strongest blood claim to the throne, his mother having been a niece and step-daughter of Kamehameha I; he was, moreover, the preferred choice of the "missionary party" because of his willingness to democratize the government, which contrasted strongly with the leanings of his principal rival, David Kalkaua, who favored a strong monarchy and a return to native Hawaiian cultural traditions. Lunalilo was the people's darling and thus won the popular vote, which preceded the official ballot in the legislature, by an overwhelming majority; the legislature, having no desire to antagonize the prince's many supporters, confirmed the popular vote and declared him king.

In a February 1873 editorial, Honolulu's American missionary newspaper, *The Friend* (which had published Gorham Gilman's disparaging remarks about Kamehameha IV as an "insane" Othello) exulted over the triumph of Lunalilo:

The events occurring during the month of January, 1873, will form a most important chapter in Hawaiian history. The month opened with a noteworthy and unheard of thing in Hawaiian annals. At the call of a Prince aspiring to the throne, the legal voters throughout the Kingdom . . . cast over twelve thousand votes for him who has since been enthusiastically proclaimed the King of the Hawaiian Islands. Such a triumphant expression of the popular will would be worthy of record even in a Republican form of government. The minds of the King and his subjects are harmonious. His Majesty is reported to have said that he wanted

his Government as Republican as would be consistent with the existence of Monarchical and Constitutional forms. If the sovereigns of some older and more populous nations than Hawai'i had manifested equal confidence in the people and the justice of their claims to the throne, there would not have been the ground for the oft-quoted saying of Shakespeare:

"Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."

A sovereign ruler supported by the will of the people may dismiss his soldiers to till the ground and his courtiers to seek their livelihood in some useful employment more dignified than that of obsequious and sycophantic attendance at Court. Hereafter we hope the will of the people may find free expression under this King, or whoever may be his successor in office . . . When a sovereign asks the people to place the crown upon his head, it is an acknowledgement that political power emanates from the people. (*The Friend* 1873, 12)

In a self-consciously "Republican" appropriation of Shakespeare, the editorial advocates a form of kingship that bears no resemblance to the ideas of rule with which the late-Elizabethan audience of Shakespeare's history plays would have been familiar, and it implicitly rejects a similar Hawaiian definition of kingly duty according to which the *ali'i nui* are higher beings born to function as caretakers of their people. This definition had prevailed during the reign of Kamehameha V and would, after Lunalilo, be central to Kalkaua's and Lili'uokalani's ideas of rule.²⁵ But *The Friend* — no friend to monarchy — puts Shakespeare's line to use in a way that undermines such paternalistic beliefs.

Indeed, the appropriation of Shakespeare here is, while strongly proprietary, at the same time audaciously transpositional; for the editorial drastically distorts the philosophy of kingship that King Henry's remark conveys in its original context in order to advance the American-Hawaiian agenda. As *The Friend* sees it, a crowned head lies uneasily because it embodies an unsound institution, a despotic system in which able-bodied men serve as the king's armed guards rather than as productive farmers and in which the sovereign is surrounded by "obsequious and sycophantic" courtiers who lack any notion of gainful employment. The monarch's slumbers are disturbed because his power relies upon the support of these parasites, and he lives in constant fear lest the people, realizing the corruptions of the ruling class, rise up to overthrow him. But in *Henry IV, Part Two*, the famous concluding line of Henry IV's act 3, scene 1 soliloquy has nothing to do with fear of the common man; Shakespeare's ailing ruler feels that he bears a weight of which the people can have no notion. He is threatened by the nobles who, having helped him acquire the crown he

plucked from the brow of Richard II, now resent his exercise of sovereignty over them. The aging usurper who ponders the challenges posed by these rebellious lords is in no way at odds with the commons; indeed, as Henry tells his son, Prince Hal, in *Henry IV, Part One*, his meteoric rise was in part a function of his popular appeal.

It is such popularity that *The Friend* assumes will allow King Lunalilo to rest easy, confident in his own security. Having come to the throne through means the editors deem sufficiently "Republican," he need not fear. But the advantage gained by a sovereign like Lunalilo, the editorial goes on to say, is not so much that he can govern without anxiety, as that he can divest himself of military power and courtly dignity: that is, that he can be a king in name only, abandoning all vestiges of royal prerogative. In short, *The Friend* hints, Lunalilo is just the man to preside over the demise of the Hawaiian monarchy. The editorial proved prophetic: though the anti-monarchists would have to wait twenty more years before the last *m' wahine*, Lili'uokalani, would be overthrown, the reign of "the People's King" was the beginning of the end for *ali'i* rule.²⁶

Contrasting *Ali'i* Appropriations: Lunalilo and Lili'uokalani

Two very different appropriations of Shakespeare texts in the discourse of King Lunalilo and Queen Lili'uokalani complete the unfolding story of Shakespeare and the *ali'i nui*, demonstrating the very different routes these two indigenous rulers took in "travel[ing] from their local conditions to Shakespeare" (Orkin 2005, 2). For each, Shakespeare remained a foreign commodity with particular value in a Hawaiian context. But for Lunalilo, the value involved the establishment of a democratic persona that would appeal to American-Hawaiian observers by reinforcing their notions of themselves as champions of freedom, while in Lili'uokalani's hands, Shakespeare became a means of challenging that familiar American self-image.

As king, Lunalilo was "seriously hampered in the exercise of his duties by two handicaps — chronic alcoholism and pulmonary tuberculosis" (Korn 1958, 305). It was the latter that eventually killed him, but the former seems not to have prevented him from attaining a reputation as a superb performer: a composer, singer, and raconteur of consummate wit and panache. Stories of his personal magnetism abound. In his 1885 memoirs, the German-born actor Daniel Edward Bandmann says that Lunalilo was "a man of excessive fun and merriment of soul" who "hated intensely conventionality in manners." Once, when Kamehameha V was late for a banquet, Bandmann notes, the prince "rose and said: 'Gentlemen, we will wait no longer for the king; we will let the band play, "God Save the King"; and, if his majesty does not appear during that time, we will let the band play, "God d— the king"' (Bandmann 1886, 279, 281).

To Bandmann's jolly portrait may be added the specifically Shakespearean anecdotes provided by others. Lunalilo's Attorney-General, A. Francis Judd, recalled in an 1891 biographical sketch of the king that he had been so notoriously irresponsible as a young man that his father had petitioned the courts to keep him under guardianship even after he came of age and had confined his income to a small allowance. "When his allowance was paid him," Judd says, "he invested it in drink and when intoxicated, rioted in low company. Nothing pleased him more when in such a state, than to have about him a crowd, to whom he could quote Shakespeare . . . He was revered and loved by the Hawaiians, for he was the most democratic, loveable prince that could be imagined — a very 'Prince Hal'" (Judd 1936, 38).

The young monarch-to-be is also described in the journal of Lady Jane Franklin, who visited Hawai'i in the spring of 1861:

Prince William Lunalilo . . . is a young man of about 24 yrs of age of remarkable talent, good-looking, well-read & of very gentleman-like manners, understanding & speaking English better even than his own language, but with all this hopelessly given to drink, & lost to all the promise of his earlier years . . . This young prince was a great admirer of Shakespeare, & used when in a state of undue excitement to go about the city on horseback, gathering the people about him at the corners of the streets & reciting passages from his plays. (quoted in Korn 1958, 305-306)

This account of Lunalilo as equestrian street-performer is filled out with more specific detail by Helena G. Allen, whose 1983 book *The Betrayal of Liliuokalani* is not systematically annotated, but is based largely on Allen's extensive conversations with Queen Lili'uokalani's *hna'i* daughter, Lydia K. Aholo. The book includes many stories about Lili'uokalani's contemporaries, including her school-mate and erstwhile love interest, Lunalilo. In his youth, Allen explains, Lunalilo was known as "Prince Bill,"

having taken his "democratic" name of "Prince Bill" from his Christian name of William. "Prince Bill" suited him. He was vibrant, eager, enthusiastic toward life, in a word, joyous; his greatest love was music and Shakespeare. Astride his horse, he rode through the streets of Honolulu, greeting everyone, *haole* and Hawaiian alike, *alii* or commoner.

"My kingdom for a horse!" was his favorite Shakespearean cry. And quite appropriately, for he had no kingdom, and he loved his horse! (Allen 1982, 76)

Allen's account is at least third hand: Lydia Aholo, who is her source for many of the stories she tells, was not born until 1878, four years after the death of Lunalilo, and was in her nineties

when Allen recorded her stories of Lili'uokalani's youth. But the portrait of Lunalilo in this passage rings true, and his performance of a light-hearted Richard III is particularly fascinating. No tragic warrior-villain, the horse-seeking Richard of Lunalilo is a raucous young roisterer, happy to exchange a kingdom not yet his for the pleasure of mounting a fine, prancing steed. He has not a care in the world, and he cares not a fig for power or the burdens of rule. Just as he is "Prince Bill," so his version of the Bard is Bill Shakespeare, stage magician, inventor of memorable lines, patron saint of toastmasters, supremely middlebrow entertainer.²⁷ Lunalilo's populist Shakespeare anticipates later, more radical Hawaiian "local" appropriations of the "Bard," such as James Grant Benton's 1974 pidgin adaptation of *Twelfth Night*, *Twelf Nite o Wateva!* (1983) and Troy Apostol's 2010 production of *Julius Caesar* at the Hawai'i Shakespeare Festival, which was set in ancient Hawaii, incorporated *mele* (chant) and hula, and featured actors wielding ancient Hawaiian weapons.²⁸

Lunalilo died of tuberculosis after just over a year as monarch. He was succeeded by the man he had defeated in the 1873 election: David Kalkaua, a strongly committed Hawaiian traditionalist who ruled from February 1874 to January 1891. But Kalkaua's reign was disrupted by the interference of the *haole* missionary party, which in 1887 forced him to sign the "Bayonet Constitution," severely reducing the power of the monarchy and restricting the voting rights of the native Hawaiian population (see Kuykendall 1938-67, 3:366-72). With the 1893 overthrow of Kalkaua's sister and successor, Lili'uokalani, and the annexation of the Hawaiian islands by the United States in 1898, both the monarchy and Hawaii's independence came to an end.

Lili'uokalani's memoir *Hawaii's Story, by Hawaii's Queen* was published in 1898 as the annexation of Hawai'i by the United States was about to be signed into law by President McKinley. Midway through the book, Lili'uokalani describes her predecessor's vision of Hawaiian monarchy; in doing so, she reveals her understanding of her own role as queen and prepares her intended audience of American readers to understand what she believes should be the relationship between their powerful democracy and the sovereign Kingdom of Hawai'i:

If he [Kalkaua] believed in the divine right of kings, and the distinctions of hereditary nobility, it was not alone from the prejudices of birth and native custom, but because he was able to perceive that even the most enlightened nations of the earth have not as yet been able to replace them with a ruling class equally able, patriotic, or disinterested. I say this with all reverence for the form of government and the social order existing in the United States, whose workings have, for more than a century, excited the interest of the world . . . Kalkaua's highest and most earnest desire was to be a true sovereign, the chief servant of a happy, prosperous, and progressive people . . . He was rightly jealous of his prerogatives, because

they were responsibilities which no civic body in his kingdom could safely undertake to administer. (Liliuokalani 1898, 370-71)²⁹

Lili'uokalani here describes not only her late brother, but herself; the self-portrait that emerges from her pointedly-titled memoir makes clear that she shares Kalkaua's beliefs and refuses to relinquish her identity as *Hawaii's Queen*.

Though that identity is in many ways compatible with the idea of anointed monarchy that haunts the usurpers and tyrants of Shakespeare's history plays, the Shakespeare allusion Lili'uokalani employs in her book does not at first seem designed to bolster her monarchic authority. Instead, she quotes a passage from *Measure for Measure* in which a subaltern character protests against tyrannical rule, and she casts the American press in the role of abusive overlord:

. . . [T]he native people of Hawaii are entirely faithful to their own chiefs, and are deeply attached to their own customs and mode of government; . . . they either do not understand, or bitterly oppose, the scheme of annexation. As a native Hawaiian, reared and educated in close intimacy with the present rulers of the Islands and their families, with exceptional opportunities for studying both native and foreign character, it is easy for me to detect the purpose of each line and word in the annexation treaty, and even to distinguish the man originating each portion of it.

I had prepared biographical sketches and observations upon the mental structure and character of the most interested advocates of this measure. They have not refrained from circulating most vile and baseless slanders against me; and, as public men, they seemed to me open to public discussion. But my publishers have flatly declined to print this matter, as possibly it might be construed as libellous.

And just here let me say that I have felt much perplexity over the attitude of the American press, that great vehicle of information for the people, in respect of Hawaiian affairs. Shakespeare has said it is excellent to have a giant's strength, but it is tyrannous to use it like a giant. It is not merely that, with few exceptions, the press has seemed to favor the extinction of Hawaiian sovereignty, but that it has often treated me with coarse allusions and flippancy, and almost uniformly has commented upon me adversely, or has declined to publish letters from myself and friends conveying correct information upon matters which other correspondents had . . . misrepresented . . . Possibly the press was not conscious

of how cruelly it was exerting its strength, and will try, I now trust, to repair the injury.
(Liliuokalani 1898, 369-71)

Lili'uokalani's critique of the American press is intensely topical, taking its emotional energy from the onslaught of current events, but the point is conveyed in Shakespearean terms, as she ventriloquizes the supremely chaste and sternly rigid virgin Isabella from *Measure for Measure*.

Isabella speaks the line Lili'uokalani quotes during her first interview with the puritanical Angelo, who — acting as deputy to the absent Duke, and carrying out the Duke's orders that he should revitalize Vienna's long un-enforced sex laws — has condemned Isabella's brother to death for impregnating his fiancée before marriage. Isabella, a novice nun who abhors sexual sin, is reluctant to plead for her brother's life, but ends up doing so with such grace that the straight-laced Angelo falls in lust with her and attempts to extort sex from her in return for her brother's life. Before there is any hint of Angelo's desire for Isabella, however, her argument to him addresses the lack of precedent for such draconian law and the idea that power can easily be abused:

So you must be the first that gives this sentence,
And he that suffers. O, it is excellent
To have a giant's strength, but it is tyrannous
To use it like a giant. (*Measure for Measure*, 2.2.108-111)

Recontextualizing the line that Lili'uokalani quotes from this speech makes clear that the queen's choice of Isabella as her Shakespearean mouthpiece is heavily fraught with meaning.³⁰ As a woman and a private individual confronting the man who has been placed in a position of supreme civic authority and who has the power of life and death over her brother, Isabella does not hesitate to use her rhetorical skills to comment on the public sphere. Lili'uokalani has been removed from that sphere by force; she does not, like Isabella, desire to withdraw from the world into the realm of cloistered virtue. But having been forced into the position of a private individual, she is no less willing than Shakespeare's icy heroine to define tyranny and speak truth to power. That Isabella addresses a deputy who has been vested with the absolute authority of the absent duke, while Lili'uokalani addresses the American press as the voice of a supposedly democratic society, only reinforces the queen's irony. Only in their gigantic strength are editors and publishers like monarchs; but if they use that strength to abuse the disempowered, to crush the weak, and to trample on the small, they resemble the worst of monarchs.

They also resemble a sexual predator intent on possessing a pure and sexually unavailable woman. For in *Measure for Measure*, it is not so much Isabella's eloquence as her inaccessible

virgin beauty that pierces Angelo's resolve and turns his self-righteousness into shameless self-indulgence. In casting the American press in the role of a powerful man who attempts to coerce a vulnerable virgin into surrendering her body, Lili'uokalani hints that there is an element of sexual assault in her enemies' use of "vile and baseless slanders" and "coarse allusions" in attacking her; what is more, she suggests that the imminent seizure of Hawai'i by the United States is a form of rape.

The queen's Shakespearean critique of the press appears near the conclusion of her book's final chapter; only nine brief paragraphs follow the one in which it appears. Prevented by her publishers' double standard from naming names, she uses these paragraphs to describe the members of the American-Hawaiian "annexationist party" in the aggregate, stressing their sense of privilege and warning that bringing them into the American polity through annexation may be dangerous for the United States, since "these men are anything but ideal citizens for a democracy" and will stop at nothing to retain their power (Liliuokalani 1898, 371). Even more boldly, she attempts to convince readers who see themselves as freedom-loving Americans that annexation will destroy the very essence of the United States: "Is the American Republic of States to degenerate, and become a colonizer and a land-grabber? . . . There is little question but that the United States could become a successful rival of the European nations in the race for conquest, and could create a vast military and naval power, if such is its ambition. But is such an ambition laudable? Is such a departure from its established principles patriotic or politic?" (372).³¹

With these questions, the queen begins a transition from political discourse into the language of prophecy. In doing so, she deepens and complicates her allusion to *Measure for Measure*; for in that play, Isabella follows up her image of the tyrannous giant with a fiery, prayerful sermon:

Could great men thunder
As Jove himself does, Jove would never be quiet,
For every pelting petty officer
Would use his heaven for thunder, nothing but thunder.
Merciful heaven,
Thou rather with thy sharp and sulphurous bolt
Split'st the unwedgeable and gnarled oak
Than the soft myrtle. But man, proud man,
Dressed in a little brief authority,
Most ignorant of what he's most assured,
His glassy essence, like an angry ape

Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
As makes the angels weep . . . (2.2.113-25)

Isabella speaks in this passage with the power of a prophet authorized by God to castigate the presumption of "proud man." Similarly, Lili'uokalani sees herself as the holder of a sacred trust who can and must prophesy. She thus concludes her appeal to the American public by making an explicit appeal to their shared Christian beliefs and warning that they will answer to God if they turn a deaf ear to her plea:

Oh, honest Americans, as Christians hear me for my down-trodden people! Their form of government is as dear to them as yours is precious to you. Quite as warmly as you love your country, so they love theirs. With all your goodly possessions, covering a territory so immense that there yet remain parts unexplored, possessing islands that, although near at hand, had to be neutral ground in time of war, do not covet the little vineyard of Naboth's, so far from your shores, lest the punishment of Ahab fall upon you, if not in your day, in that of your children, for "be not deceived, God is not mocked." The people to whom your fathers told of the living God, and taught to call "Father," and whom the sons now seek to despoil and destroy, are crying aloud to Him in their time of trouble; and He will keep His promise, and will listen to the voices of His Hawaiian children lamenting for their homes.

It is for them that I would give the last drop of my blood; it is for them that I would spend, nay, am spending, everything belonging to me. Will it be in vain? It is for the American people and their representatives in Congress to answer these questions. As they deal with me and my people, kindly, generously, and justly, so may the Great Ruler of all nations deal with the grand and glorious nation of the United States of America. (Liliuokalani 1898, 373-74)

The first explicit biblical reference in this passage is to 1 Kings 21, in which King Ahab covets the vineyard of his subject Naboth, who will not sell it to him because it is "the inheritance of [his] fathers"; when Ahab's evil wife Jezebel has Naboth executed on false charges of blasphemy, the king is able to seize the dead man's property, but God sends the prophet Elijah to tell Ahab that he will be punished for this outrage: "Thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine." The message of the vineyard story is summed up in Lili'uokalani's direct quotation of Galatians 6:7, where St. Paul cautions that "God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." But both of the queen's explicit allusions are closely related to Jesus' dictum from the Sermon on the Mount: "[W]ith what measure

ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Matthew 7:2). This is the biblical text evoked by the title of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* and by the Duke's lines at 5.1.404-405 of that play.³²

As the deliverer of this biblical and Shakespearean message, Queen Lili'uokalani completes her complex allusion to *Measure for Measure*, a distinctively royal and specifically Hawaiian appropriation that depends upon and illustrates not only her knowledge of Shakespeare, but also her sacred authority as Hawai'i's queen. Though it fails to save Hawai'i from annexation, the impassioned prose of the deposed *m' wahine* effectively taps into the power of a Shakespeare play, redirecting the flow of English literary *mana* to cast a dark shadow over the United States' presence in the South Pacific.

The story of Shakespeare and the *ali'i nui*, which begins with the importation of an opulent American yacht called *Cleopatra's Barge* and ends with Lili'uokalani's attempt to keep the forces of American expansionism at bay, is a tale with several familiar character types and plot developments. In many places and times, members of the elite among a colonized people have appropriated Shakespeare, along with other European cultural commodities, both in proprietary texts that establish them as civilized in the eyes of westerners and in texts that transpose Shakespeare's language, placing it into the service of indigenous resistance.³³ The encounter between Shakespeare and Hawaiian royalty is unusual, however, in the degree to which the *ali'i nui* make use of Shakespeare largely to negotiate with American rather than English imperialism. In pursuit of that negotiation, they fashion versions of themselves vis-à-vis two very different Shakespeares: one American, populist, and democratic; the other monarchist, critical of American values, and magisterially prophetic. Neither of these Shakespeares is presented as an icon of English cultural hegemony. Rather, Lunalilo's *Richard III* and Lili'uokalani's *Measure for Measure* present, for American audiences, in Hawai'i and North America respectively, two antithetically opposed versions of the relationship between Hawai'i and America. Lunalilo's quintessentially low-brow performance of Shakespeare persuades the business-oriented missionary party of American-Hawaiians that he will rule democratically and make the Kingdom of Hawai'i safe for American commerce. Lili'uokalani, addressing an audience of genteel readers in the United States, taps the language and posture of Shakespeare's Isabella to critique the values of the American missionary party in Hawai'i and to prophesy, in the dim pre-dawn of the American Century, that tyranny may cloak itself under the mantle of democracy.

Notes

1. An *ali'i* is a "Chief, chiefess, officer, ruler, monarch, peer, headman, noble, aristocrat, king, queen, commander"; an *ali'i nui* is a "high chief" (Pukui and Elbert 1986; this dictionary is

my source for Hawaiian- English translations throughout the essay). Note that the plural forms of Hawaiian nouns usually do not differ in spelling from the singular form; plurality may be indicated through the use of the plural definite article *n*. (A rare exception is the noun *wahine* [woman], the plural of which is *n wahine* — the long "a" sound being indicated with a macron called the *kahako*). On the word "Hawaiian," which is an English word spelled without the 'okina (the symbol indicating a glottal stop), see Brightman and Subedi 2007 and Orsorio 2001, 376-77, n.1). In this study, while a number of the primary sources I quote use the word "Hawaiian" as a noun meaning "Hawaiian native" I use the word only as an English adjective meaning "of Hawai'i" — that is, of the archipelago itself or of the Kingdom of Hawai'i — and as a noun meaning "the Hawaiian language." The adjective "American-Hawaiian," which I use at several points, refers to nineteenth-century Caucasian residents of Hawai'i who were descendants of missionaries and other settlers who came to the islands from the United States in the early nineteenth-century. Due to typesetting limitations, Hawaiian diacritical marks are missing from the captions identifying my illustrations.

2. Used as a noun, *haole* means "White person, American, Englishman, Caucasian; . . . formerly, any foreigner"; as an adjective, it means "American, English; . . . foreign, introduced, of foreign origin." On the provenance of the term *m'i*, see Stoakes (1932).
3. *Mana* is "Supernatural or divine power, mana, miraculous power; . . . authority" (Pukui and Elbert, 1986); the English word "mana" — which appears in Pukui and Elbert's definition — is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as meaning "Power, authority, or prestige; *spec.* (in Polynesian and Melanesian religions) an impersonal supernatural power which can be associated with people or with objects and which can be transmitted or inherited" ("mana, n." *OED Online*, June 2013 [Oxford University Press, 13 June 2013]).
4. Johnston is my source for all facts and figures in the story of the *Barge*; see also Alexander (1906).
5. Here and throughout, Shakespeare quotations are taken from *The Norton Shakespeare*, second edition (Shakespeare 2008), and cited parenthetically by title, act, scene, and line numbers.
6. Early nineteenth-century publications that present Enobarbus's speech as an example of Shakespeare's verse or quote it in connection with historical and geographical information include *The Poetical Preceptor* 1806, 239-40; Knox, ed. 1816, 635-36; Griffiths 1805, 302; the entry for "barge" in *Encyclopedia Perthensis* 1816; and Bourn 1815, 805. See also John Carr (1809), who finds the scenery along the Rhine so lovely that he "envie[s] not the aquatic pomp of Cleopatra" (116). He illustrates his point with four lines from Enobarbus's speech; in the French translation of Carr's book by Louise Félicité Robert (1809), Shakespeare's English is retained.

7. This place name, assigned to the Hawaiian archipelago by Captain Cook, honors John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich. It appears in European and American publications throughout the nineteenth century.
8. Scholars offer a variety of anthropological, historical, and political explanations for this remarkable event; see Harfst (1972); Seaton (1974); Sahlins (1981, 55-66); and Kashay (2008).
9. I have found no record of Liholiho reading Shakespeare or seeing a performance of his plays, but he may have investigated the significance of the name given to the vessel by its original owner. The English clergyman William Ellis, who came to Hawaii in the early 1820s as a representative of the London Missionary Society, wrote that the king's "mind was naturally inquisitive. The questions he usually presented to foreigners were by no means trifling; and his memory was retentive . . . I have heard him entertain a party of chiefs for hours together, with accounts of different parts of the earth, describing the extensive lakes, the mountains, and mines of North and South America; the elephants and inhabitants of India; the houses, manufactures, &c. of England, with no small accuracy, considering he had never seen them. He had great thirst for knowledge and was diligent in his studies." Ellis also remembers hearing the king remark "one day, when he opened his writing desk, that he expected more advantage from that desk than from a fine brig belonging to him, lying at anchor opposite the house in which we were sitting . . . I have sat beside him at his desk sometimes from nine or ten o'clock in the morning, till nearly sunset, during which period his pen or his book has not been out of his hand more than three quarters of an hour" (Ellis 1827, 456-57).
10. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, often referred to by the acronym ABCFM, was founded by a group of New England Congregationalists in 1810 and celebrated its 200th anniversary in 2010. For a history of the organization, see the Congregational Library's digital exhibit "Of Faith and Courage: The History of the ABCFM" (2010-2011).
11. Bingham translates Kammalu's chant into metrically irregular English verse; for the Hawaiian text with a translation by a nineteenth-century native speaker, see Kamakau 1992, 256-57.
12. The playbill, which announces that the Hawaiian king and queen will be guests in the royal box, is reproduced in Scott 1968, 33.
13. Adler's edition is my source for all facts and dates relating to Alexander Liholiho's journal.
14. In his diary entry for 5 June 1850, Alexander describes how, after he had seated himself on the train in Washington, DC, he was accosted by the conductor, who told him "to get out of the carriage rather uncerimoniously [*sic*], saying that I was in the wrong carriage"; after being informed of Alexander's identity, the conductor told him to keep his seat and — when the prince pressed for an explanation — refused to elaborate on his reasons for assuming that Alexander

had seated himself in the wrong carriage. He had, the prince writes, "probably taken me for somebody's servant, just because I had darker skin than he had. Confounded fool." The prince goes on to observe that it was "The first time that I ever received such treatment, not in England or France, or anywhere else. But in this country I must be treated like a dog to go & come at an Americans bidding." His irritation is clearly fueled in part by his class consciousness, which leads him to find Americans "saucy": "Even the waiters in their hotels in answering a bell, instead of coming and knocking at the door, they stalk into the room as if they were paying one a visit . . . In England an African can pay his fare for the Cars, and he can sit alongside of Queen Victoria. The Americans talk and they think a great deal of their liberty, and strangers often find that too many liberties are taken of their comfort, just because his hosts are a free people" (Kamehameha IV 1967, 108).

15. Portions of the translation, including a Preface written by the king, are available online at <http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/Hawaii/index.htm>.
16. Edwin Booth was the son of the renowned Shakespearean actor Junius Brutus Booth and the elder brother of another actor, John Wilkes Booth, who would assassinate President Lincoln in 1865.
17. Moses also omits the king's remark about having seen Junius Brutus Booth perform. This part of Clarke's story may have been inaccurate, as Alexander was a teenager, not a little boy, when he visited New York, and the itinerary of his visit to America does not place him in New York on a date when he could have seen a Booth production of *Richard III*. Compare the Chronology in Adler's edition of Alexander Liholiho's journal (Kamehameha IV 1967, xv-xix) with the list of "Recorded Engagements" for 1849 and 1850 in Archer 1992, 274-76.
18. See also items 2057, 2059, and 2060.
19. *Clan-Albin* was anthologized in *The Novelist's Magazine* in 1833 and reissued in one-volume editions in 1853 and 1854.
20. Johnstone's narrator describes a "horrid and unnamed state, when hideous sensation combines with mental agony . . . when one overpowering idea . . . throbs in the brain," affecting "a nature too gentle to combat with such horrors" (Johnstone 1815, 138-39).
21. Gilman would later reprint his remarks on the Neilson affair, recontextualizing them so as to present himself as a friend and admirer of the king (Gilman 1905, 89-90).
22. On the prevalence of parody and burlesque in nineteenth-century American allusions to Shakespeare, see Levine 1988, 13-16.
23. On Twain's impressions of Hawai'i as a source for his satire on feudalism in *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, see Day's Introduction to Twain 1979, xiii.

24. The 1864 constitution would remain in force until the "Bayonet Constitution" of 1887 was forced on King Kalkaua by the "missionary party" (Daws 1968, 184-86).
25. Kamehameha V advocated limited suffrage, believing it would be rash to "jump by one bound from feudalism" — which "involves unquestioning obedience to the will of a superior, who ruled and thought for those under Him" — to pure democracy (Cabinet Council Minutes, 3 March 1864; quoted in Daws 1968, 184). See also Twain 1979, 106-107. On *ali'i* responsibility for commoners' well-being, see Lili'uokalani 1898, 2-3. However, see also Sahlins 1981, 10-11 on the Hawaiian concept of ruling chiefs as predatory, shark-like gods who came from afar and overthrew benevolent indigenous *ali'i*.
26. The epithet was used in the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* extra of 8 January 1873 (quoted in United States Department of State 1873, 502).
27. See Levine 1988, 45-81 on how this populist version of Shakespeare gradually disappeared from mainstream American culture in the later 1800s.
28. On the term "local" and its relevance to contemporary theater in Hawai'i, see Carroll 2000.
29. Lili'uokalani's name as it appears on the title page of this 1898 volume, along with other Hawaiian words included in the text, are printed without the *'okina* and the *kahako* (the macron which indicates a long vowel).
30. Bott correctly notes that the allusion showcases Lili'uokalani's "superior command of English" (Bott 1997, 150); but the queen is not, as Bott argues, seeking to demonstrate "that she is familiar with even the lesser known works of literary icons." *Measure for Measure* was frequently performed in the nineteenth century and "reached its height of popularity between 1888 and 1898, when Madam Modjeska revived it four different years in New York City alone, and played it frequently in other cities in the United States" (Morris 1912, xii). Lili'uokalani relies on the play's popularity, not its obscurity.
31. Here, as at several points in her account of her travels in the United States, Lili'uokalani is blind to U.S. appropriation of native North Americans' lands.
32. "Haste still pays haste, and leisure answers leisure; / Like doth quit like, and measure still for measure." Biblical passages are quoted from the King James translation.
33. See Loomba and Orkin 1998, Cartelli 1999, 85-180, and a range of essays analyzing specific examples in Dionne and Kapadia, eds., 2008.

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Figure 1. George Ropes, *Cleopatra's Barge* (1818). Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Cleopatra%27s_Barge_1818.jpg

Figure 2. John Hayter, King Liholiho (Kamehameha II). John Hayter [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons.

Figure 3. Queen Kammalu Carried in Procession. Ephraim Eveleth, *History of the Sandwich Islands: With an Account of the American Mission Established There in 1820*. Philadelphia: American Sunday-School Union, 1829. 66-67. Google Books.

Figure 4. John Hayter, Queen Kammalu (1824). Lithograph by John Hayter of London [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons.

Figure 5. King Liholiho and Queen Kammalu at Drury Lane Theatre (1824). Wikimedia Commons.

Figure 6. Prince Alexander Liholiho (the future Kamehameha IV) with Dr. Jerritt P. Judd and Prince Lot (the future Kamehameha V. Hawaii State Archives. Call Number: PP-97-8-009. Wikimedia Commons.

Figure 7. King Kamehameha IV. *Honolulu Advertiser*. http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/dailypix/2006/Jul/02/sesq1kamehamehaiv_b.jpg.

Figure 8. King Lunalilo. *Honolulu Advertiser*. http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/dailypix/2006/Jul/02/sesq1lunalilo_b.jpg.

Figure 9. Queen Lili'uokalani. *Honolulu Advertiser*. http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/dailypix/2006/Jul/02/sesq1liliuokalani_b.jpg

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