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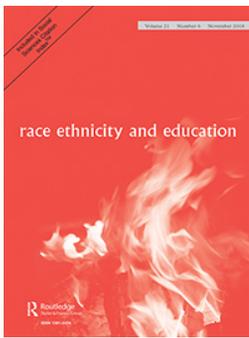
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A space for survivance: locating Kānaka Maoli through the resonance and dissonance of critical race theory

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ABSTRACT

In this article, I map a new theoretical space for Kānaka Maoli, the autochthonous people of Hawai‘i, within the landscape of critical race theory (CRT). To engage the ways that Kānaka Maoli have been identified as people of color, Asian Pacific Islanders, and Indigenous people, I review literature on CRT, Asian critical race theory, and Tribal critical race theory, revealing that these areas of CRT are at once resonant and dissonant with Kānaka Maoli sensibilities and experiences. Working through this resonance and dissonance, I weave together relevant concepts from extant strands of CRT with Kanaka Maoli knowledge and interests in the offering of new tenets toward a Kanaka Maoli critical decolonizing framework (KanakaCrit).

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Though Kānaka Maoli ¹ have flourished across the Hawaiian islands according to highly developed systems of governance, subsistence, and spirituality since our time of beginning (Kame ‘eleihiwa 1992; Stannard 1989), our society faced great change upon first contact with the western world in 1778. Within little more than a century, our thriving population diminished by an estimated 95% due to the introduction of foreign diseases (Kame ‘eleihiwa 1992). While such disease and depopulation was devastating in itself, so too was the cognitive and spiritual harm done to Kānaka Maoli by American missionaries and businessmen, who viewed us as sub-humans standing in the way of American empire (Kame ‘eleihiwa 1992; Silva 2004).

Despite several efforts made by the ali‘i ² (monarchy) of the Hawaiian Kingdom to protect our lāhui (nation/people) through the adaptation of western-style laws and acts of foreign diplomacy (Beamer 2014; Perkins 2006; Silva 2004), the sovereign Hawaiian Kingdom was illegally overthrown by American businessmen on 17 January 1893 and was later annexed by the U.S. government (Silva 2004; Trask 2000). The impacts of U.S. occupation and colonialism continue to reverberate among Kānaka Maoli today (Osorio 2006), but this story remains largely untold because it is inconvenient. It tarnishes a master narrative which imagines Hawai‘i as a pristine paradise, a land of shimmering beaches and smiling Natives. Describing this travel imaginary, Trask (1999) explains that ‘To most Americans, then, Hawai‘i is *theirs*: to use, to take, and above all, to fantasize about long after the experience

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... Mostly a state of mind, Hawai‘i is the image of escape from the rawness and violence of daily American life’ (136, original emphasis). Indeed, such a narrative integrally shapes the colonization of Kānaka Maoli (Trask 1999).

Despite this history and the lasting realities of colonialism, however, Kānaka Maoli continue to survive and to resist. Our (hi)stories are (hi)stories of strength. According to the Census, over a half-million individuals identified as Native Hawaiian across the U.S. in 2010 (Hixson, Hepler, and Kim 2012). Like our ancestors before us, we continue to come together, centered by values of lōkahi (unity), aloha (love), and mālama (care), to preserve and protect our cultural, political, and economic rights and interests (Trask 2000).

Some may suppose that, to be authentically Hawaiian, we must return to a way of life that existed among our people prior to western contact (Beamer 2014). However, such a notion in itself stems from a colonial belief that Indigenous peoples are defined according to our contact with those who would call us ‘other.’ It gives further power to a hegemonic discourse that would have Kānaka Maoli exist only in the static past (Beamer 2014), but Kānaka Maoli can delink from such discourses through our epistemic disobedience to them (Mignolo 2011). These ideas suggest that one front of Indigenous resistance may emerge from within the privileged spaces of the academy through Indigenous scholarship (Smith 1999). In developing our own scholarship, Kānaka Maoli can begin to (re)learn, to (re)conceptualize, and to (re)tell our (hi)stories. We can participate in our own decolonization by asserting ourselves as producers of new knowledge, while simultaneously connecting to the wisdom and traditions of our kūpuna (elders) (Grande 2008; Meyer 2003; Salis Reyes 2014a; Smith 1999).

Hall (2009) suggests that, as we develop our own scholarship, we must first map theoretical spaces in which our work can thrive. She calls attention to the liminality of Hawaiian women within feminist scholarship. We have been marginalized by White and Black feminist theories which operate through a Black-White paradigm, Asian American theories that are only nominally inclusive of the interests and experiences of Pacific Islander women, Indigenous theories which assume a North American land-base, and post-colonial theories that fail to note on-going states of colonialism (Hall 2009). Reflecting on this discursive marginality, Hall paradoxically states, ‘The experience of Kanaka Maoli women is not contained within any of the islands of feminist work I am discussing but nevertheless resonates with all’ (2009, 16). Thus, Hall finds the need to carve out a new place for wāhine ‘Ōiwi (Hawaiian women) within feminist studies, one which would more fully speak to our experiences and interests.

As an ‘Ōiwi woman, I have felt deeply the results of the occupation and colonization in my homeland. I live a liminal existence, at once knowing the injustice that has been done to our lāhui through overthrow and occupation and realizing that, in some ways, I have benefitted from the U.S. government as the daughter of a retired U.S. Air Force enlisted man and the recipient of federal financial aid. I am proud to be Hawaiian. Yet, though I have tried, I still have so much to learn regarding nā mea Hawai‘i (things Hawaiian), our ‘ōlelo makuahine (mother language), our cultural practices, our histories, and even our possibilities for the future. My ‘ohana (extended family) now lives dispersed within and outside of ka pae ‘āina ‘o Hawai‘i, in large part because, as many have flocked to our islands to own their own pieces of paradise, the costs of making a living in Hawai‘i have become exorbitant. For much of my family, educational and occupational opportunities have been limited. I am the first on my father’s side of the family ever to earn any college degree, let

alone a doctorate. This latter experience perhaps most of all has motivated me to enter the field of higher education so that I could play a role in empowering minoritized and especially, Indigenous peoples to access and harness higher education to meet their own needs and objectives. Because I consider it a privilege to be highly educated and to hold a faculty position in Hawai‘i’s flagship postsecondary institution, I also feel a deep responsibility to use these privileges in ways that serve my people. This is the lens that informs my work in this paper and in others.

Following Hall’s (2009) example in feminist studies, I aim to carve out a place for Kānaka Maoli within critical race scholarship, particularly as it pertains to the field of education, through this paper. To begin, I review literature on CRT, Asian critical race theory (AsianCrit), and Tribal critical race theory (TribalCrit) to engage the ways that Kānaka Maoli have been identified as people of color, Asian Pacific Islanders, and Indigenous people. Through this review, I explore how these areas of CRT are at once resonant and dissonant with Kānaka Maoli sensibilities and experiences. Lastly, as a new theoretical space for ‘Ōiwi survivance, I offer an initial sketch of a Kanaka Maoli critical decolonizing framework (KanakaCrit), which, though it borrows relevant concepts from extant strands of CRT, is centered by ‘Ōiwi knowledge and acknowledges ‘Ōiwi interests.

Critical race theory (CRT)

CRT originated from the critical legal studies (CLS) movement, which challenged traditional legal scholarship and its focus on doctrinal and policy analysis (Ladson-Billings 2009). Though CLS’s problematization of traditional legal scholarship and deconstruction of hegemonic power structures has been important, scholars of color have lamented its lack of racial power analysis (Ladson-Billings 2009). CRT was borne from this discontent.

Legal scholars of color developed CRT through their analyses of how the law has been wielded as a means of (re)producing race-based oppression (Taylor 2009). CRT scholars have redefined racism not as acts occurring between individuals but as systemic conventions that uphold and sustain oppressive group relationships (Taylor 2009, 4). Starting with this definition of racism, CRT scholars (e.g. Bell 2009; Ladson-Billings 2009; Leonardo 2009; Solórzano and Yosso 2009; Taylor 2009) have developed CRT to rely on some common concepts, including:

1. that racism exists normatively within society;
2. that Whiteness as property confers certain rights and privileges within mainstream society;
3. that the rights of people of color are only accommodated up to the point that they serve the interests of Whites (interest convergence);
4. that phenomena can only be understood within their historical contexts; and,
5. that narratives from people of color are essential to breaking down master narratives of meritocracy and colorblindness and, thus, the status quo.

Though CRT may have its roots in legal scholarship, it has since also found a place within other academic discourses, including educational scholarship. All five of the aforementioned CRT concepts, especially the first and the last, have been utilized by education scholars. Ladson-Billings (2009), for example, highlights how CRT might be used to understand the various ways through which racism has been normalized within education. According to

Ladson-Billings, CRT suggests that official school curricula have been designed to uphold a master narrative of White supremacy, conveniently muting challenges that have historically been made against White authority and power.

Adding to this discussion, Solórzano and Yosso (2009) argue the centrality of experiential knowledge in breaking down racial inequities in education. Because the dominant master narrative is constructed as normal and neutral, people often do not question its veracity. However, Solórzano and Yosso suggest that, as they call attention to experiences inconsistent with master narratives, counterstories, the narratives of marginalized peoples, may be used as tools to ‘shatter complacency, challenge the dominant discourse on race, and further, the struggle of racial reform’ (Solórzano and Yosso 2009, 138).

CRT has been vital in calling attention to the hegemonic pervasiveness of racism. Within education in particular, CRT analysis helps to identify how educational structures perpetuate racism and suggests counterstories as one tool for beginning to work against the strongholds of racism in education.

How is CRT resonant and dissonant with Ōiwi sensibilities and experiences?

Throughout our history of colonization, Kānaka Maoli have been racialized as deficient. By American missionaries and businessmen, we have been cast as sub-human, marked by our swarthy brown skins and near-naked bodies (Kame ‘eleihiwa 1992; Silva 2004). These colonial depictions of who we are continue to impact us today. We, as people of color, are not afforded the privileges of Whiteness. Currently, we have lower socioeconomic status and lower educational attainment rates than all other ethnic groups in Hawai‘i (Kana‘iaupuni, Malone, and Ishibashi 2005). Whereas a master narrative may suppose that Kānaka Maoli experience these social problems as a result of our own deficiencies, CRT might provide a useful tool for Kanaka Maoli scholars to deconstruct the ways in which White racial hegemony has contributed to the disenfranchisement of Kānaka Maoli.

The CRT literature, however, tends to assume a binary Black-White racial paradigm (Chang 1993; Gee 1999; Teranishi et al. 2009), which marginalizes Kānaka Maoli, who are neither Black nor White (Hall 2009). Perhaps trying to make sense of the invisibility of other people of color in CRT scholarship, Taylor (2009) suggests that:

The terms ‘White’ and ‘Black’ are not meant to signal individuals or even group identity. Rather, they indicate a particular political and legal structure rooted in the ideology of White European supremacy and the global impact of colonialism. ‘Non-White’ is an interchangeable word that can be substituted for ‘Black.’ (4)

This explanation, however, is unsatisfactory. According to Mignolo (2011), to impose the label of ‘other’ on whole groups, ‘it is necessary to be in a position to manage the discourse (verbal, visual, sound) by which you name and describe an entity (the anthropos or the other) and succeed in making believe that it exists’ (275). Thus, there is power in naming. So, in subsuming all non-White people under the label ‘Black,’ CRT scholars reference a hegemonic discourse which places Whiteness at its center, such that all are imagined only in their opposition to Whiteness. They negate the unique identities and experiences of non-White, non-Black peoples.

Furthermore, by not expressly acknowledging or including non-White, non-Black peoples in their analyses, CRT scholars fail to recognize the full complexity of racism. A. Smith (2010), for example, points to how, while Black people are identified by a ‘one-drop rule’

because they are envisioned through a logic of slavery as a source of menial labor vital to the operation of capitalism, Indigenous peoples are identified according to blood quantum quotas since they are envisioned through a logic of genocide as roadblocks to the expansion of capitalism. According to these logics, it is in the interest of White-dominated capitalism for there to be as many Black-identified and as few Indigenous-identified people as possible (A. Smith 2010). Thus, when CRT operates under a binary Black-White racial paradigm, it lacks the analytical complexity to make sense of Kānaka Maoli experiences.

Even further, CRT's focus on the intercentricity of racism does not fully capture the identities or forms of oppression faced by Kānaka Maoli. Though Kānaka Maoli have certainly been racialized through occupation and colonization, our identity is not only racial. Like other Indigenous peoples, 'Ōiwi identities are multiple and intersectional in nature (Brayboy 2005; Salis Reyes 2014b). Together we form ka lāhui Hawai'i, a nation comprised of 'Ōiwi genealogies, stories, land, cultural practices, and sovereignty (Basham 2010). These identities have all been impacted by our experiences with oppression and thus, must all be engaged as we resist oppression. This means that we must take different approaches to doing this work than perhaps other peoples that are grouped solely according to race do.

Asian American critical race theory (AsianCrit)

AsianCrit encompasses the body of work done by Asian American scholars who utilize CRT as a theoretical framework but critique CRT for its shortcomings. AsianCrit scholars suggest that CRT needs to be expanded in order to take better account of the various forms of racism and oppression experienced by diverse peoples of color, including Asian Americans (Chang 1993; Gee 1999; Museus 2013). Museus and Iftikar (2013) seek to fill this need with their offering of seven AsianCrit tenets:

1. Asianization, which acknowledges the normality of racism and calls attention to the distinct ways that Asians have been racialized;
2. transnational contexts, which highlights the importance of historical and contemporary national and international contexts in understanding Asian American identities and experiences;
3. (re)constructive history, which emphasizes that Asian Americans must (re)construct their histories as they develop pan-ethnic identities and work toward progressive futures;
4. strategic (anti)essentialism, which suggests that, though oppressive forces impact how Asian Americans are racialized, Asian Americans also have agency in (re)defining their group status;
5. intersectionality, which acknowledges that racism intersects with other systems of oppression to shape Asian American experiences;
6. story, theory, and praxis, which emphasizes the importance of counterstories, theoretical work, and practice in bettering conditions for Asian Americans in society; and,
7. commitment to social justice, which suggests that the goal of AsianCrit is to eliminate racism.

A foundational body of literature details 'Asianization' (Museus and Iftikar 2013), or how Asian Americans have been racialized in the U.S. according to American nativism and a

model minority stereotype (Chang 1993; Gee 1999). Borrowing from Bosniack, Gee (1999) defines nativism as ‘an “intense opposition to an internal minority” because of the minority’s foreign connections ... it focuses on the “foreign” and “un-American” characteristics of “internal minorities”’ (772). Through a nativist lens, Asian Americans have been imagined as perpetual foreigners and treated as scapegoats for the frustrations of other Americans, not uncommonly expressed through extreme acts of violence (Chang 1993). They are thought to embody a ‘yellow peril,’ dangerous to the continued well-being of American society if left unchecked.

According to the model minority myth, Asian Americans have by and large also been characterized as hard workers and high achievers (Chang 1993; Teranishi 2002; Teranishi et al. 2009). Though this stereotype may seem positive, its pervasiveness can be damaging. Chang (1993) explains that the model minority myth is ‘a tool of oppression which works dual harm by (1) denying the existence of present-day discrimination against Asian Americans and the present-day effects of past discrimination, and (2) legitimizing the oppression of other racial minorities and poor whites’ (1260). In other words, the model minority myth denies the existence of racial oppression among Asian Americans. In addition, the model minority myth supports the myth of meritocracy and positions Asian Americans as exemplars for and in opposition to other people of color (Buenavista, Jayakumar, and Misa-Escalante 2009; Chang 1993; Teranishi 2002; Teranishi et al. 2009). It places Asian Americans in a precarious position. In light of the model minority myth, ‘Asian Americans can reinforce white American supremacy by believing falsely that they can either be just like whites by attaining cultural assimilation ... or they can align themselves with African Americans and Latinos who are also seeking racial justice’ (Gee 1999, 796). As Asian Americans are positioned in opposition to other people of color, not only is racial difference presumed as an inevitable source of conflict but the role of dominant power structures in creating inequities is also obscured (Ikemoto 2000).

Within the area of higher education, Asian American scholars have primarily utilized CRT to problematize the pervasiveness of the model minority myth. Teranishi et al. (2009) note that the model minority myth supposes that Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) students are enrolling in overwhelming numbers at elite four-year institutions, but that they are unfairly losing their admission seats to Black and Latino applicants through affirmative action. However, these stereotypes ignore that students from some AAPI ethnic groups enroll in college at similar rates to other groups of color and that a significant proportion of AAPI students actually enroll at two-year institutions (Teranishi 2002; Teranishi et al. 2009).

Both Teranishi’s (2002) work and Buenavista, Jayakumar, and Misa-Escalante’s (2009) work helps to dismantle the notions that Asian Americans comprise a monolithic group or that they experience higher education in the same ways. According to Teranishi, Chinese Americans and Pilipino Americans face different postsecondary trajectories largely because of the different stereotypes and expectations they encounter during high school. Though Chinese American high school students, characterized as model minorities, receive significant support from school administrators during the college choice process, Pilipino American high school students, characterized as delinquents and failures, find their aspirations to be cooled out by school administrators through the college choice process (Teranishi 2002). Buenavista and associates describe Pilipino Americans as liminal people of color. Though they face many of the same barriers to postsecondary enrollment and achievement

as other people of color, Pilipino Americans are not recognized as needing support to overcome these barriers. In this way, the inequities they face in higher education are perpetuated.

AsianCrit has been key in explicating the forms of racial oppression faced by Asian Americans. It points to how stereotypes play a key role in exacerbating and perpetuating this oppression. It suggests that these stereotypes make invisible the intragroup oppression of Asian Americans and contribute to the more widespread oppression of people of color.

How is AsianCrit resonant and dissonant with 'Ōiwi sensibilities and experiences?

Kānaka Maoli are most commonly categorized alongside Asian Americans through the use of Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) labels (Hall 2009). On the U.S. Census, for example, Pacific Islanders were not disaggregated from Asian Americans until 2000 (Hixson, Hepler, and Kim 2012). That said, AsianCrit could potentially be presumed by some to speak to the realities of Kānaka Maoli. For Kānaka Maoli, then, it seems important that one concern of AsianCrit has been to counter the notion that AAPIs comprise a monolithic group. AsianCrit scholars suggest that AAPI data should be disaggregated for analysis in order to gain a better understanding of how various AAPI groups might experience various social phenomena differently from one another (Teranishi et al. 2009).

Other common themes within the AsianCrit literature, however, do not speak to the identities or realities of Kānaka Maoli. Much AsianCrit analysis focuses on how the immigrant origins of Asian Americans, despite current citizenship status or lived history within the U.S., continue to impact their experiences with oppression (Chang 1993; Cho 2000; Gee 1999; Han 2008; Ikemoto 2000). This analysis does not apply to Kānaka Maoli since we do not have immigrant origins but are Indigenous people. Thus, if AsianCrit analysis is applied to Kānaka Maoli, our Indigenous identities disappear. Because of our unique history of occupation and colonization, Kānaka Maoli have not been racialized in the same ways that most Asian Americans have been. Whereas Asian Americans have largely been racialized as foreign and as unassimilable through a logic of orientalism, Kānaka Maoli have been racialized as primitive and vanishing through a logic of genocide (Hall 2009; Smith 2010). This being the case, neither the perpetual foreigner stereotype nor the model minority myth speaks to the experiences of Kānaka Maoli.

Indeed, the perpetual foreigner stereotype and model minority myth also do not adequately speak to the experiences of many who have been labeled as Asian American Pacific Islander. Pilipinos, who also share a history of colonization by the U.S. and other nations, for instance, have been portrayed as maladjusted and uncivilized, with explosive temperament and proclivity to engage in criminal behavior (Espiritu 2003; Okamura 2010; Porteus and Babcock 1926). The echoes of these historical characterizations continue to be seen in the stereotypes and other barriers that Pilipino Americans face in education (e.g. Buenavista, Jayakumar, and Misa-Escalante 2009; Teranishi 2002). Given the limitations of these stereotypes, it stands to reason why scholars have been driven to dispel them. The model minority myth, in particular, has dominated the ways in which AAPIs have been racially framed in education (Poon et al. 2016). Yet, Poon and associates (2016) suggest that, in their focus on countering the model minority myth, scholars have, in many ways, solidified its centrality. They further argue that, moving forward, critical race scholarship on AAPIs must be conscious in the way that it uses pan-ethnic terms and must uncover the unique

racialized educational experiences of AAPIs in their humanized fullness. A Kānaka Maoli critical decolonizing framework would work toward answering both of these calls, first through its intentionality in calling attention to Kānaka Maoli and second in creating a space for more work to be done that seeks to understand the unique, complex experiences of Kānaka Maoli in education.

Tribal critical race theory (TribalCrit)

Noting the failure of CRT to address ‘American Indians’ liminality as both legal/political and racialized beings’ (429), Brayboy (2005) developed TribalCrit to be rooted ‘in the multiple, nuanced, and historically- and geographically-located epistemologies and ontologies’ (427) of Indigenous communities. TribalCrit relies on nine tenets:

1. Colonization is endemic to society;
2. U.S. policies pertaining to Indigenous peoples are shaped by White supremacy and imperialism;
3. Indigenous peoples occupy a liminal space due to their political and racial identities;
4. Indigenous peoples are interested in maintaining tribal sovereignty, tribal autonomy, self-determination, and self-identification;
5. Indigenous peoples have unique understandings of culture, knowledge, and power;
6. governmental and educational policies pertaining to Indigenous peoples revolve around a goal of assimilation;
7. the lived realities of Indigenous peoples must be contextualized by tribal philosophies, beliefs, and traditions;
8. stories make up theory and may be considered as legitimate sources of data; and,
9. scholarship done within Indigenous communities must be used to work toward the achievement of social justice (Brayboy 2005).

Literature using TribalCrit as a theoretical framework suggests that school curricula misrepresent and invisibilize the continued survival of Native Americans (Chandler 2010; Daniels 2011), that educational institutions value the presence of Native Americans only to the point that this benefits institutions’ own interests and prestige (Castagno and Lee 2007), that policies purportedly intended to improve the educational experiences of Native Americans lack some of the specificity and support needed to achieve this goal (Abercrombie-Donahue 2011), but that Native American students can rely on their cultural heritage and community connections as sources of strength to succeed in education despite barriers (Lindley 2009; Williams 2011).

TribalCrit does well to describe the unique history and experiences of American Indians. It suggests that, though American Indians experience racial oppression, this is one element of the oppression they face as a result of colonization within the U.S.

How is TribalCrit resonant and dissonant with ‘Ōiwi sensibilities and experiences?

Kānaka Maoli share much in common with American Indians. Despite cultural differences and geographic separation, Indigenous peoples across the globe have endured colonization and capitalist domination (Smith 1999). This being the case, many of the tenets

of TribalCrit speak to the experiences and interests of Kānaka Maoli. Unlike CRT and AsianCrit, TribalCrit acknowledges the intercentricity of colonization as impacting the racialization and disenfranchisement of Native peoples. If applied to a Kanaka Maoli context, TribalCrit may help to illuminate Kānaka Maoli's experiences with colonialism, to recognize the racial and political dimensions of our identity, and to emphasize our interests in self-determination and sovereignty. TribalCrit may also help to highlight the vitality of Kanaka Maoli voices and the value of Kanaka Maoli scholarship in its ability to create social change.

Despite these many possible applications of TribalCrit to understanding 'Ōiwi experiences, TribalCrit still does not speak directly to the needs of Kānaka Maoli. For one, the name '*tribal* critical race theory' in itself does not align with a Kanaka Maoli sense of identity. Kānaka Maoli are not tribal peoples. Additionally, though TribalCrit may address colonialism as a central experience, it does not address the experience of occupation, which is central to the past, present, and future state of the Hawaiian nation. Finally, though many of the tenets of TribalCrit generally align with the experiences of Kānaka Maoli, much of the accompanying analysis done by Brayboy (2005) and subsequently by other scholars is focused on the identities, experiences, culture-ways, and land bases of Native Americans of the contiguous United States. As Brayboy's seventh TribalCrit tenet suggests, knowledge of Kanaka Maoli philosophies, beliefs, customs, traditions, and visions for the future will be essential to understanding the lived realities of Kānaka Maoli. For that reason, TribalCrit, without having 'Ōiwi sensitivities incorporated within it, still cannot be used to attain a deep understanding of Kanaka Maoli oppression and resistance.

Toward a Kanaka Maoli critical decolonizing framework

Through my summary and analysis, I have found that CRT, AsianCrit, and TribalCrit simultaneously find resonance and discordance with 'Ōiwi experiences. Alone, none of these theories provide adequate analytical frameworks to make sense of Kanaka Maoli identities, needs, and experiences. Perhaps, however, some combination of these theories grounded by 'Ōiwi epistemological and ontological concepts, might be of use in the development of further 'Ōiwi scholarship. To this end, I offer six possible tenets toward a Kanaka Maoli critical decolonizing framework (KanakaCrit).

Occupation and colonialism are endemic in society

Though most branches of CRT begin with the assumption that racism is endemic in society (Ladson-Billings 2009; Museus and Iftikar 2013), a KanakaCrit framework, like TribalCrit (Brayboy 2005), should begin by highlighting the endemic nature of colonialism in society, but in the context of Hawai'i. According to L.T. Smith (1999), the purpose of colonization has been to allow for the global expansion of European economy through the subjugation of Indigenous peoples, along with the expansion of ways of knowing, being, and doing that support the reigning colonial order. This subjugation has been wrought out through the enactment of physical, cognitive, and spiritual violence (Grande 2008; Meyer 2008; Smith 2010). Speaking of colonialism, Thiong'o (2004) notes that 'its most important area of domination was the mental universe of the colonized, the control, through culture, of how people perceived themselves and their relationship to the world' (16). This suggests

that colonization deeply affects perception, shaping colonized peoples' understandings of themselves and their lifeworlds.

If we consider colonization as subjugation of the body, mind, and spirit, then it has been at the center of 'Ōiwi experiences with many forms of oppression, including racism. Arguably, the roots of colonialism began taking hold through some of the earliest interactions between Kānaka Maoli and haole (foreigners, especially Whites). Physical violence was meted out through the introduction of haole diseases beginning in 1778 and through the militaristic occupation of the Islands by the Provisional Government after the overthrow in 1893 (Beamer 2014; Kame 'eleihiwa 1992). Within this time frame, the population of Kānaka Maoli diminished from an estimated 800,000 to 40,000 (Kame 'eleihiwa 1992). These physical harms perhaps left Kānaka Maoli vulnerable to other forms of harm.

At the heart of the cognitive and spiritual violence inflicted on Kānaka Maoli were haole beliefs in 'Ōiwi inferiority. Such views are reflected by the utterances of Charles Stewart, a Calvinist missionary, upon his first encounter with Hawaiians in 1823:

Their naked figures, and wild expression of countenance, their black hair streaming in the wind as they hurried the canoe over the water with all the eager action and muscular power of savages, their rapid and unintelligible exclamations, and whole exhibition of uncivilized character, gave to them the appearance of being half-man and half-beast. (as cited in Kame 'eleihiwa 1992, 139)

Thus, Kānaka 'Ōiwi have been conceived of not just as uncivilized but as animalistic and inhuman. Such conceptions have been powerful; they have justified fervent attempts to colonize the islands. To American Calvinist missionaries, Hawaiians needed to be enlightened and taught how to live properly according to the laws of the Christian God (Kame 'eleihiwa 1992). And, where Hawaiians were deemed unfit to rule their own lives let alone their own nation, American businessmen and missionaries alike positioned themselves as just heirs to 'Ōiwi land and government (Silva 2004).

Because colonialism is endemic in society, its narratives have been normalized. This being the case, the popular conception is that the U.S. rightfully gained control over the islands. However, such a narrative conveniently glosses over the violence Kānaka Maoli have endured and denies efforts that our kūpuna made to protect the sovereignty of our lāhui. By combining 'Ōiwi governing traditions with western forms of law and engaging in foreign diplomacy, ali'i sought to protect the sovereignty of the Hawaiian nation and secured international recognition as an independent state (Aguon 2015; Beamer 2014). Knowing that their power would increase if the Hawaiian government was controlled by the U.S., however, American businessmen declared the abolishment of the Hawaiian Kingdom and claimed the establishment of a provisional government with support from the U.S. Marines (Aguon 2015). Despite widespread protest by Hawaiian nationals and the U.S. Senate's failure to ratify a treaty of annexation in 1897, the U.S. Congress annexed Hawai'i through a joint resolution, which is not legal according to international law (Aguon 2015; Beamer 2014; Silva 2004; Vogeler 2014). Yet, due to the normalization of occupation, Hawai'i is commonly thought to exist harmoniously as America's 50th state rather than as a nation state embroiled in over a century of war.

The endemic nature of colonialism and occupation leaves Kānaka Maoli to live precariously within our own homeland. Furthermore, the normalization of occupation and colonialism perpetuates the societal inequities that Kānaka Maoli face. Today, Kānaka Maoli experience disproportionately high rates of poverty, substance abuse, arrest, incarceration,

obesity, depression, and suicide (Kana‘iaupuni, Malone, and Ishibashi 2005). We are also more likely to attend under-resourced schools, more likely to be referred to special education, less likely to graduate from high school, and less likely to attend college (Kana‘iaupuni, Malone, and Ishibashi 2005). As colonialism and occupation are normalized, Kānaka Maoli are made to think of our own deficiencies as to blame for these dismal living conditions. Additionally, as Hawai‘i is imagined primarily as a tourist destination, we often find ourselves as relegated to fulfilling haole fantasies as hypersexualized hula maidens and surfer boys (Tengan 2008; Trask 1999). Indeed, even Hawai‘i public schools have done their parts in molding and shaping us to assume such positions in order to serve the economic interests of the state (Kaomea 2000, 2003). Rather than reflect complex accounts of Hawai‘i’s history, their Hawaiian Studies textbooks offer mirror images of tourist guidebooks and postcards (Kaomea 2000). In terms of Hawaiian Studies, they offer ‘a holiday curriculum,’ revolving around benign Hawaiian arts, crafts, and values all the while suppressing ugly realities regarding the dispossession and destruction of ‘Ōiwi lands, rights to self-determination, and ways of knowing (Kaomea 2003). Kaomea (2000) argues that lessons ‘in Hawaiian hospitality and the aloha spirit [are] being taught to our children through our Hawaiian studies curriculum in an effort to create a hospitable environment for visiting tourists and to prepare our youngsters for their future roles as Hawai‘i’s ambassadors of aloha’ (338). This first tenet calls us to name and to detangle the ways that occupation and colonialism have and continue to impact us.

‘Ōiwi identities are multiple, intersectional, and liminal

From a CRT perspective, race is central to the analysis of most any social inequity (Ladson-Billings 2009). However, a singular focus on race would not capture the complexity of ‘Ōiwi experiences. This is due to the multiple, intersectional nature of ‘Ōiwi identity. Though our brown bodies have been racialized as signifiers of our deficiencies through colonialism, we do not comprise only a racial group. Our ties to one another and to ka pae ‘āina o Hawai‘i are also genealogical, political, and cultural (Basham 2010).

Our mo‘olelo (histories/stories) remind us that all Kānaka ‘Ōiwi descended from the same ancestors, Papa and Wākea, Earth Mother and Sky Father (Malo 1951). Our genealogies as ‘Ōiwi link us then not only to our families but also to one another and to the cosmos. According to Kame ‘eleihiwa (1992):

Genealogies are perceived by Hawaiians as an unbroken chain that links those alive today to the primeval life forces – to the *mana* (spiritual power) that first emerged with the beginning of the world. Genealogies anchor Hawaiians to our place in the universe and give us the comforting illusion of continued existence. (19–20)

Our genealogies connect us to the mana of our one hānau (birth sands) and our kūpuna and allow us to pass forward this mana to those who succeed us. They provide us with our place in time and space (Kame ‘eleihiwa 1992) and with a foundation for a Hawaiian national identity (Beamer 2014). In this sense then, because our bloodlines continue to exist, so too does our lāhui. Our enduring Hawaiian national consciousness is apparent in our contemporary deliberations over the pursuit of sovereignty and in the proliferation of our cultural knowledge (Beamer 2014; Trask 2000).

The intention of this second tenet is to call attention to the multiplicity of ‘Ōiwi identities. From an intersectional perspective, multiple identities interact with one another and become

differentially salient according to contextual, interlocking systems of power and privilege (Crenshaw 1991). By keeping in mind the layered nature of 'Ōiwi identities, scholars can better understand 'Ōiwi experiences and see clearer paths toward achieving social justice. Without such an intersectional perspective, Kānaka Maoli are made to occupy a liminal space in between our racial, genealogical, political, and cultural realities (Brayboy 2005; DeLeon 2010).

Social justice is inherently tied to our ea and lāhui

Though the first tenet of KanakaCrit proposes that attention should be given to the endemic nature of occupation and colonialism in Hawai'i, the intent is not to suggest that Kānaka Maoli take the posture of perpetual victims. Rather, as is the orientation of other branches of CRT (e.g. Brayboy 2005; Museus and Iftikar 2013), a goal of KanakaCrit is that this awareness will empower and inform us as we move forward in achieving social justice. From a western perspective, social justice is often envisioned as occurring through the liberation of individual selves (Grande 2008). Due to the political nature of our identity, however, 'Ōiwi struggles to achieve social justice are inherently tied to our interests in maintaining self-determination and sovereignty as a lāhui.

The vital importance of Hawaiian sovereignty is most clear when we consider the multiple meanings of the word 'ea.' In ka 'ōlelo 'Ōiwi (the Hawaiian language), 'ea' can be translated not only as 'sovereignty' but also as 'life' and 'breath.' If sovereignty is the life breath of our lāhui, then we cannot survive without it. Reflecting on the words of Hawaiian musician and activist, George Jarrett Helm Jr., Goodyear-Ka'ōpua (2014) explains that ea 'reflects not a supreme authority over territory but a sacred connection to the land requiring dutiful, nurturing care' (7). Furthermore, ea allows us to steer ourselves toward a survival that both depends on and is meant to perpetuate the mutual interdependence of all forms and forces of life (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua 2014).

Some might suppose that Hawaiian sovereignty has been lost since there is no one political organization or person recognized as representing the Hawaiian Kingdom today (Goldberg-Hiller 2011; Pybas 2005/2006). However, according to McGregor and associates' (2003) Ho'olulu Lāhui Aloha (Raising a Beloved Nation) Ecological Model of Native Hawaiian Well-being, 'Native Hawaiian 'Ohana and communities all function within the framework of a sovereign nation. A nation is a historically constituted stable community with a shared unique language, culture including spirituality, ancestral national lands, economic life and governance structure' (109). Because we continue to exist, so too does our lāhui, our self-determination, and sovereignty. Today, Kānaka Maoli maintain agency to make choices and take actions regarding how we should exhibit our survivance within the contemporary world (Beamer 2014). Education can provide means and space for these processes to take place. This third tenet encourages us to think through and act out this agency for the betterment of our lāhui.

We work toward social justice as we work to restore pono

Osorio (2006) proposes that the occupation and colonization of Hawai'i have left our lāhui in a state of huikau (confusion) over what is right and over the choices that we have as a people. It follows from this that, to combat the impacts of occupation and colonization, Kānaka

‘Ōiwi must work toward restoring order across Hawai‘i Nei. Though other CRT branches focus on human liberation (Ladson-Billings 2009; Museus and Iftikar 2013; Solórzano and Yosso 2009; Taylor 2009), this focus may be limited. This fourth KanakaCrit tenet highlights that, for Kānaka Maoli, social justice may be achieved through the restoration of pono (balance, harmony, what is right) among not only ka po‘e Hawai‘i (Hawaiian people), but also among the ‘āina (land), kai (sea), wai (freshwaters), and lani (sky, heavens), as well as all matter and creatures that dwell within them.

This concept springs from ‘Ōiwi epistemology. Through a Western perspective, matter is thought to be unconscious and nature is considered to be a commodity (Dudley 1990). But, from an ‘Ōiwi point of view, ‘the world is alive, conscious, and able to be communicated with ... Man participates in a community with all of the species of nature, a community in which all beings have rights and responsibilities to one another’ (Dudley 1990, 3). This being the case, Kānaka Maoli respect the natural world because it is alive but, even further, we respect it because we share a familial relationship with it (Dudley 1990; Kame ‘eleihiwa 1992). Recalling traditional mo‘olelo, we know that earth is our mother, sky is our father, kalo (taro) is our elder brother, and all other forms in nature embody our ancestors too. Our familial relationship with nature signifies that it is our kuleana (responsibility, right, privilege, burden) to care for it and that nature will care for our well-being in return (Beamer 2014; Kame ‘eleihiwa 1992). Thus, when we work toward what is pono in nature, we work toward what is pono for ourselves. This tenet leads us to consider social justice and how we must work toward it in a holistic sense.

As we learn and tell our mo‘olelo, we contribute to our survivance

Other branches of CRT highlight the importance of stories and counterstories in breaking the strongholds of hegemonic narratives (e.g. Brayboy 2005; Museus and Iftikar 2013; Solórzano and Yosso 2009). Brayboy (2005) further adds that, as we hear stories, we give value to them and contends that Native peoples’ stories comprise legitimate forms of data. These concepts also hold value for Kānaka Maoli. Traditionally, knowledge has been passed down in oral form through stories, proverbs, riddles, and formal chants (Dudley 1990). On this, Ho‘omanawanui (2004) explains:

By learning, understanding, and perpetuating the mo‘olelo of our *kūpuna* (elders, ancestors), Kanaka Maoli are empowered with traditional *‘ike* (knowledge). This *‘ike* inspires us to continue to *kū‘ē*, to resist and to stand in opposition against colonization and against foreign domination, suppression, and appropriation of who we are and what our culture is and means to us. (89)

In other words, knowing our mo‘olelo helps us to know ourselves and gives us the power to protect our lāhui.

The goal of this fifth tenet is to emphasize the importance of ‘Ōiwi stories and to suggest that we allow them to live through our scholarship and our practice. The mo‘olelo of our kūpuna, especially in ‘ōlelo ‘Ōiwi, which in itself is revelatory of ‘Ōiwi ways of knowing (Oliveira 2014), are vital to our knowing of who we are as ‘Ōiwi today. However, we should also value and preserve our contemporary ‘Ōiwi mo‘olelo, for the process of sharing knowledge is ‘open-ended and collective; it is intergenerational and always expanding’ (Beamer 2014, 15). This suggests that Kānaka Maoli should honor the mo‘olelo of our past to improve our present and that we should preserve our present-day mo‘olelo to contribute to the betterment of our future.

Knowledge must be developed and used to benefit lāhui

Through the ninth TribalCrit tenet, Brayboy (2005) argues that research not intended to benefit Indigenous peoples should not be conducted among or with Indigenous peoples. This sixth tenet echoes this statement and grounds it in ‘Ōiwi epistemology. In her discussions of knowledge with respected kūpuna, Meyer (2001) learned that, from an ‘Ōiwi perspective, information must have a purpose to be considered knowledge. In addition, knowledge involves kuleana, meaning that it is at once a gift, a responsibility, and a burden (Meyer 2001). Drawing these ideas together, Meyer (2008) offers this imperative to her readers, ‘Make your work useful by your meaning and truth ... Knowledge that does not heal, bring together, challenge, surprise, encourage, or expand our awareness is not part of the consciousness this world needs now’ (221). For ‘Ōiwi scholars and our allies, this statement and this tenet are calls both to develop scholarly work that gives back to others and to implement the knowledge we have as we work toward what is pono. The value of ‘Ōiwi scholarship is in its usefulness among Kānaka Maoli.

KanakaCrit and our continued survivance

For far too long, others have tried to tell stories about who we are and where we belong. These narratives have been pervasive, and yet we have resisted. To this point, Kamakau states:

He makemake ko‘u e pololei ka moolelo o ko‘u one hanau, aole na ka malihini e ao ia‘u I ka mooolelo [*sic*] o ko‘u lahui, na‘u e ao aku i ka moolelo i ka malihini. [I want the history of my homeland to be correct. The foreigner shall not teach me the history of my people, I shall teach the foreigner]. (as cited and translated in Nogelmeier 2010, 3)

Since these words were first written in 1865, many ‘Ōiwi scholars have followed Kamakau’s example. They have written against empire with the interests of our lāhui at heart. But, our work is not done. Today, we continue to find ourselves in dissonant spaces. This essay is an attempt to contribute to a body of literature that resonates with ‘Ōiwi experiences and places our needs and interests at the center.

As a conceptual framework, KanakaCrit offers areas for analysis and suggests appropriate methodological approaches for future ‘Ōiwi scholarship. With regard to my own field of study, higher education, for example, there is currently extremely little literature inclusive of Kānaka Maoli. Statistics show that Kānaka Maoli enroll in and complete college at lower rates than other groups in Hawai‘i (Kana‘iaupuni, Malone, and Ishibashi 2005). Yet, research also indicates that Kānaka Maoli have high college aspirations (Kana‘iaupuni, Malone, and Ishibashi 2005) and that we may encounter a mixture of cooling out and empowering experiences in the academy that may impact our persistence, as well as our ability to envision the usefulness of college degrees (e.g. Hokoana 2010; Kealoha 2012; Kupo 2010; Wright 2003). KanakaCrit may potentially provide a vital conceptual and/or analytical framework for more research on Kānaka Maoli within higher education to be done. It suggests that we should seek to understand how colonization impacts ‘Ōiwi college success and that, through the conveyance of stories, we relate such success to ‘Ōiwi priorities of nationhood and social justice.

In ancient times, scholars came together to discuss new ideas in relation to traditional knowledge and decide what is worth being passed on to future generations (Dudley 1990; Meyer 2001). In a similar fashion, I present this preliminary KanakaCrit framework not as a definitive theory but as a collection of ideas that might be added to a growing body

of ‘Ōiwi theoretical and methodological thought (e.g. Oliveira and Wright 2016) and discussed, altered, and/or augmented among a community of scholars. My hope is that it will be sharpened and refashioned through use, and that what remains will contribute to the perpetuation of our survivance as a lāhui.

Notes

1. Throughout this manuscript, I use the terms Kanaka Maoli (Real People), Kanaka ‘Ōiwi (People of the Bone), Native Hawaiian, and Hawaiian interchangeably to refer to people with genealogical ties to Hawai‘i.
2. In this paper, I purposefully do not italicize ‘Ōlelo ‘Ōiwi (Hawaiian language) to resist distinguishing ‘Ōlelo ‘Ōiwi as foreign. While I operationalize meanings of these words on first usage, one-to-one translations are not possible due to the layered meanings of ‘Ōlelo ‘Ōiwi.

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