Kou Haole; The Image of Chief and Foreigner in the Lahainaluna Mo’olelo Hawai’i

Roland F. Perkins

“... a o Kukanaloa ka inoa o ka haole no ua moku la.” (Description of early 17th century landing in Hawaii.) “Eia no makou a pau ou kaikaina, a me ke ali'i au, a me kou haole ...” (Kaikioewa to Kamehameha I, 1819.)

The presence of foreigners (haole) in the Hawaiian Islands during the decades immediately preceding the arrival of the missionaries has three stages, traceable in Hawaiian sources: (1) the legendary stage, represented by Kukanaloa, who was presumed in legend to have arrived with a sister and is a reputed ancestor of some Hawaiian lines, (2) the semi-legendary, represented by Capt. James Cook, and (3) the historical, represented by a variety of captains and crews, and voyagers, the latter including an occasional permanent settler, the atypical Francisco de Paula Marin being the best known example of the latter. But it should be noted that, to a Hawaiian, this third, or historical, stage does not represent such a sharp break in the continuity of passing time, as it would to a westerner.

The compilation made at Lahainaluna in the 1830's, and usually, though without much validity, ascribed to the missionary teacher Sheldon Dibble (1809-1845), is a compendium of folklore, legend, and history from all three of these stages of association with foreigners, ending with a fourth stage, that in which the foreign community itself was broken in two by the arrival of the missionaries and the consequent hostility between them and the previous secular visitors and sojourners from Europe and America. Quick to recognize this rift, and firmly on the side of the missionaries who sponsored, and to some extent directed, their narratives and remarks, the Lahainaluna writers go far toward

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Roland F. Perkins is a graduate of Harvard in Classics, a translator, and a free lance writer.

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setting forth a discourse on power and the shifts taken by it in early nineteenth century Hawaii. Just as the two foreign communities that eventually clashed cannot be understood in isolation from one another, neither of them can be understood in isolation from the very structured power relationships that, of however recent origin, already existed in Hawaii at the time when Cook arrived.

Because of the intrinsic interest of many of the stories (mo'olelo), it has been common, and understandable, to treat them as isolated units. Because the supernatural sometimes, however disparaged by the Lahainaluna narrators, does enter in, and because, elsewhere, they deal with military exploits of a kind that never reappeared after Kamehameha I's conquests, they have much in common with such collections as the Grimm Brothers' Kindermärchen, or Livy's history of early Rome, works in which it has become customary to examine each "story" separately, and to disparage (under the influence of nineteenth century German historiography) any historical value in them. Dibble himself was later to pick and choose among these mo'olelo, arranging them in what looked to him like better order for an overall "history" of the "Sandwich Islands." But even by Western standards, the mo'olelo do not really require rearrangement; they follow a roughly chronological order, with allowance at the same time for going backward or forward occasionally in order to give the origins and outcomes of a particular subject. Thus, if sandalwood is being discussed, it is allowable to drop back and describe the situation which existed in Kamehameha's time, even though, in the chronological order, the "Kamehameha episode" has long ago ended, with the monarch's death; none of this appreciably roughens the generally chronological sequence. Here the Mo'olelo is considered as a unit for the purpose of deducing from it the Hawaiian writers' attitudes about the entire complex of ali'i-maka'ainana-secular haole and religious haole.

It is in writing of the post-Vancouver foreign arrivals that the writer announces his position of inflexible categorization of the haole arrivals. These end by being given the status of "sheep or goats," as one of the colder New Testament analogies has it. But they are not so categorized through ignorance of the wide variation in kinds of foreigners that might and did arrive; rather, the variation is declared to be a superficial one, representing differences merely of "aspect" and "face" not of anything essential.

On these ships, people of each and every aspect (ano), of each and every face (helehelena) voyaged here. But were they to be divided according to what the thinking inside them looked like (ke ano o ko lakou naau), there were only two groups of people: the one that heard and attended the commands of God, and the one that cared nothing about God. (Mo. Hw. R/P p. 60, 62)
Thus, though they come from several countries (the writer mentions six: America, Britain, France, Spain, Russia, and Prussia), the foreign arrivals are either secular or religious. There is no such thing, to the writer, as a somewhat religious non-missionary, or a somewhat secular missionary. The merchants and sea captains are never called Christians; the missionaries are, indeed, called haole, but are recognized as a different kind of foreigner. As well as being haole, they are also kahuna. The missionaries are introduced to a group said to include both chiefs and commoners, and in which Kaahumanu herself is included. In this introduction they are called “kahunas belonging to the exalted God.” There is a hint here that the missionaries potentially can replace one of the two oppressive classes (the other being the ali‘i) that have been cited earlier. A strict chronological order would have required going on to the landing of the missionaries immediately following the battle against Kekuaokalani, as the writer seems to be aware, in the final paragraph of that episode:

Kalaninoku returned from battle, and the chiefs met in council; Hoapili was sent to sail to Waimea for the purpose of fighting the warriors who were commoners there. He therefore voyaged with his men, and landed at Kawaihae. He went into the interior and fought at Waimea. All those commoners were slaughtered. This was a total victory for the removal of eating taboos in the kingdom. Hoapili returned to Kona, and it was during those days that the missionaries first voyaged from America. (Mo. Hw. R/P. p. 151)

The defeat of Kekuaokalani, who upholds the ancient taboos, is regarded with mixed feeling by these writers, not given blanket approval, as the conquests of Kamehameha were earlier. This feeling was derived from, or at least shared with, the feeling that the missionaries had about this conflict. Hiram Bingham’s report of the incident, the details of it largely based on the Lahainaluna account, but containing his own opinions on the values of the two sides, is as follows:

That evening, arms and ammunition were given out, and the next day, Kalaninoku mustered a regiment, and the succeeding morning, advancing to give battle, he gave the following laconic and spirited charge to his warriors, ‘Be calm, be voiceless—be valiant—drink the bitter waters, my sons, turn not back—onward unto death—no end for which to retreat.’ He knew something of the bitterness of the waters of battle, which even victors must drink, and of the use of martial valor, having often taken part, with Kamehameha, after the death of Kiwaloo; but he made here no allusion to any power but their own, and acknowledged no deity at all. Kekuaokalani sought the help of idols—offered sacrifices and prayers, and paraded his war-god; though as yet he had fewer soldiers and fewer arms than his antagonist, and little ammunition. Had it been his determination to make war, and had he drawn off to a distance, and given time for the friends of his cause to rally, his chance of success would probably have been more than equal. . . . Kalaninoku’s victory being complete, he immediately returned to Kailua, A pile of stones marks the spot where the rival chief and his affectionate wife, his heroic and prime counsellor, expired; and near it, a larger pile marks their grave, over which
Essay on obtaining an education, written in 1836 by Kaahai, a Lahainaluna student.

—Courtesy of Hawaiian Mission Children’s Society
the wild convolvulus creeps and blossoms, even on this dreary, lava waste. Around that grave, many piles of stones mark the spots where his friends and supporters were buried, who that day fell in the defence of idolatry, who, deluded and foolhardy as they were, may have been as correct in their principles and motives as their atheistic destroyers.

The Lahainaluna writer does not assess the relative military strength of the two sides, but he does see the same friends of the kapu-supporting cause which Bingham cites as making that cause, under different military circumstances, superior to Liholiho's and Kalanimoku's cause.

To Bingham, however, the Hawaiian culture minus its taboos and "idolatry" equalled atheism. The missionaries therefore worked out, and passed on to the Hawaiians, the concept of the Hawaiian warriors' on both sides having been passive instruments of the will of God. This produced the well-known concept of a "religious vacuum"—much like a "power vacuum" into which a completely new power might step in 20th Century international politics. As in the 20th Century, it might be asked why those who already occupied the space of the "vacuum" could not fill it. And the Lahainaluna writers, like Gavan Daws later, but unlike the conventional accounts—Kuykendall and others—do not accept the idea of a sudden, overnight religious revolution. Instead they see both a flouting of the kapus, over a period of time before 1819, and an observance of the kapus after 1819. But they are more clearly aware of the pre-1819 erosion, than of the post-1819 observance. Still, they do not fully accept the missionary concept of the overnight abolishment of the kapu system and of the religious vacuum.

If, however, as "kāhunas" the missionaries could replace the old priest/sorcerer/specialist class, perhaps, in the minds of the Hawaiian writers, the class closely paired with the kāhunas—the ali'i—could also be replaced. This, in fact, happened, but it was not perceived in the 1830's, as it might be later in the 1890's, as a case of the missionaries themselves usurping the chiefly role. Instead, the foreign traders and sea captains were seen as taking over the functions of the chiefs—by means of cooperation and alliance with the chiefs, but not with the maka'āinana or the missionaries.

A George Vancouver might be accepted as a useful ally, even though he tended to be somewhat condescending, as depicted here, toward Kamehameha. But the Vancouvers were out-numbered by the Metcalfs, and the Buckles. Of Vancouver, besides incidents of outright hostilities with his men, we are told:

Vancouver advised Kamehameha to stop the war and remain friendly with the Maui and the Oahu chiefs, but the question of Kamehameha's agreement remains uncertain . . . .

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Vancouver advised (Kahekili) . . . to stop the war that was going on against Kamehameha, and to live as a friendly equal with him. This advice that Vancouver was coming out with failed, and had no further result. . . . (Mo. Hw. R/P, p. 54)

And Vancouver realized that Kamehameha was a chief who led in prayer, and, again, he told him: “God exists, far up in the heavens. If you wish to be a leader in prayer, then hear me: I am returning to Britain, and I am taking it upon myself to ask the chief there to give me a kahuna; upon this kahuna’s arrival here, do you see, you should release the people from the eating taboos. They inclose people in a net of lies: there is no god down here on earth. In the skies, that is where God is.” . . .

Kamehameha, in turn said to Vancouver: “Go back, tell the chief of Britain to watch over this land of ours.” What Kamehameha had in mind, in this giving away of Hawaii, was not actually to give it, but rather, a situation in which there would be cooperation forthcoming, and only that. (Mo. Hw. R/P, p. 58)

In politics, as the writers see it, Vancouver, had he been able to return, would have been much like Kalanimoku, and, in religion, much like the missionaries. As with them, a new kind of “kahuna” would arrive and take over the religious life. But most significant among the pieces of advice given by Vancouver was that against any permanent settlement of foreigners in the islands:

Another thing that Vancouver said to Kamehameha was “Do not let foreigners settle here in Hawaii, except for two foreigners who may go on living here; the two that I mean are Olohana (John Young) and Aikake (Isaac Davis). But, as for most of the foreigners, they are a most evil-bellied sort, people in a constant rage of anger, people covetous of land. Settlement by foreigners in your island-group would not be right, far from it; it would be an entanglement for you”. (Ibid.)

As this passage immediately precedes the one in which Vancouver says that he will send a kahuna from Britain, it is evident that he did not regard missionaries as colonising foreigners. Or so, at least, the writer and his informants remember Vancouver. And it is clear, too, that the increasing power of the merchant class allowed the Hawaiians to see this class as the foreigners and the only foreigners, while the missionaries were perceived as allies who had brought intellectual aid to the maka‘aina and to the better chiefs, just as Vancouver had earlier brought material and military aid to Kamehameha. Vancouver would, in all probability, have brought, or sent, a missionary of the Church of England and therefore one belonging to an orthodoxy that was much more broad-based than that of the New England missionaries. Among the major factors in the arrival of those missionaries was the schism that was taking place in the Congregational Church in New England, with the Unitarian “side” in the process of becoming the orthodox, while the old-line orthodox, to whom the missionaries belonged, were being relegated to a sectarian position. The interest that was evinced by Boki (or Poki, to give him his more correct name), in the 1820’s, in “the great church (in London), named Saint Paul,” is only mentioned in passing,
in these texts. But it can be seen from James MacRae's observations that Poki was leader of a faction which would have preferred an Anglican religious regimen to that of the New Englanders:

At 1 p.m., a meeting was held at Pitt's (Kalanimoku's) house, of Lord Byron and all the chiefs, to consider fit laws to be established throughout the islands. Boki stood up for half an hour and made a surprising speech. His own countrymen were so astonished, they said it must be someone else in Boki's skin. He compared what he had seen in England with his own country, and strongly recommended them to establish laws and religion on the English principles. He wished fires to be allowed in their houses to cook on Sunday, and also to be allowed to bathe on Sundays as in England. After discussion, however, it was resolved that the former laws of Tamahamaah (Kamehameha) should be again put in force.6

McRae, it must be admitted, was not an expert on the missionaries; he mistook them for Methodists, and underrated their education, but his general picture of a potential schism, between a "Methodist" (i.e. evangelical) church and a more liberal national church, is valid. A few pages earlier, he says:

Lord Byron had a magic lantern show at the king's hut, but owing to the religious fanaticism of the American Methodists, the king was prevented from being present. These missionaries, many of them being but illiterate mechanics, possess what power they please over the credulity of the natives, and have already carried their system of religion too far to be upheld.6

"Too far to be upheld" by other foreigners is his evident meaning, for he seems to have already given up on the "credulous" natives as candidates for a humane religion. The Lahainaluna writers, however, did not see this period (the 1820's) as one of mass conversion or monolithic adherence to Christianity. They, in fact, make a point of emphasizing that many were converted "in body only," not in their minds. But MacRae believed that the foreign community was the natural source of proper religious decision.

Even Kalanimoku, though elsewhere seen as a pillar of pro-missionary orthodoxy, does not at this time fully participate in the joint Anglican and missionary funeral services for Liholiho, though the procession does stop for prayer at his house:

The procession halted at the missionaries' chapel, where our chaplain read a prayer in English and then one of the missionaries did the same in the native language. Resuming our way, the procession reached Mr. Pitt's (Kalanimoku's) hut, between two and three o'clock... Pitt, Boki and other chiefs of consequence were admitted, together with the principal officers of the Blonde and a few Americans. No inferior class of natives were admitted nor had been allowed to join in the procession... Pitt, who had never joined the procession, remained at home in his arm chair, as usual dressed in black.7
Kalanimoku’s being baptized as a Catholic, aboard a French ship at Kawaihæ, is briefly mentioned in the Lahainaluna writings, and this episode of the funeral is before what the writer regards as his real conversion—to the missionary form of Protestantism. He is never perceived, in those texts, as adhering to a third Christian sect, apart from the missionaries and the Anglicans.

It is not at all sure that the Lahainaluna writers, or, for that matter, the majority of Hawaiians felt, with Bingham, that the kingdom would have proceeded into a blind atheism but for the missionaries’ arrival. The kahunas, these writers felt, had to be gotten rid of, not as a religious group, but rather had to be gotten rid of insofar as they represented a social class which upheld the oppressive social and economic power of the chiefs. When, as a class, the kahunas disappeared, they were replaced, as allies of the oppressive chiefs, by the haole traders. This is brought out most clearly in describing the coalition that opposed and prosecuted William Richards, the missionary, on Maui:

... “Kanikele” (the British consul), an Englishman, arrived from Polapola and joined a group of foreign traders at Honolulu. Because they could see nothing but fault to find in the missionary group, this group brought the missionaries to trial, at Honolulu. This group itself, as well as the missionaries, came to trial, and it was the captain of a man-of-war from America who, with ceremony of reconciliation (ho'oponopono), interceded between the two groups. Keoniki (Jones) was the name of that man-of-war captain. His work derived, however, from God... Poki and Manuia joined this foreign group.

The chiefs may have realized that by now Poki and Kanikele were thinking alike, and they joined together in an overall plan of abandoning Rikadi (Richards) to his death, rather than interceding for him. For, those who were chiefs on Oahu wrote to the Maui chiefs; the writing was as follows:

“O chiefs of Maui, if Captain Bakala (Buckle), and Kanikele, and Kalaka (Clark) should come seeking the teacher that you received, you must look out only for yourselves, hear us, and you must not hold back the teacher that you received, but give him up. This is definitely a case of foreigners: being foreigners, all actions about it should be taken by them alone. Intervene unprovoked among them, and that will be your wrongdoing.” (Mo. Hw. R/P, pp. 215, 218)

Richards’ trial, as the writer describes it, was going well for him, though the death penalty was projected in case of conviction, until John Young and Poki testified that Richards had libeled Captain Buckle by reporting the controversy in the United States press—by “writing to America.”

Even Kaahumanu, generally favorable to the missionaries, seemed ready to accept this testimony, until Kanaina and David Malo intervened on the side of Richards. Malo, though of the ali‘i class, came into the court chambers secretly and uninvited. He persuaded Kaahumanu by a folkloric type of analogy with the case on trial first, and then, surpris-
ingly, by what seems a very personal incident from her own life with Kamehameha:

David, this time, continued, "Certainly you were Kamehameha's wife: Kanihonui once sought to sleep with you. And Luheluhe told Kamehameha about the two of you sleeping together. My question to you now is: which one of those two persons was killed by Kamehameha? Was it Luheluhe, or not?" She replied, "It was Kanihonui." (Mo. Hzv. R/P, p. 222)

Malo convinces her that, by analogy, Richards is Luheluhe, and Captain Buckle is Kanihonui. More than the incident chosen for illustration, the surprising element is in the familiarity with which Malo is depicted as speaking to someone who was of higher ali'i status than himself.

No detailed description is given of Buckle's grievance against Richards, and, surprisingly, there is even less detail on Richards' grievance against Buckle, even though the writer is obviously favourable to Richards. Richards emerges as the winner in the case, not so much because of pono or any abstract principle of justice, but because he has Malo who can argue his case not only by applying recognizable Hawaiian situations to it but also by the use of malama—the element that the writers regard as the missionaries' chief contribution.

Just as Vancouver had suggested Western religion, and the abandonment of the kapus, without any Western colonization of Hawaii, so the writer can envisage an all-Hawaiian life without foreign-introduced commerce, and, in religion, a life either under a new group of "kahunas" or under the old haipule—the general religious lifestyle of pagan times—without either the socio-economic and religious coercion of the kāhunas or the atheism that Bingham imagined. Thus, instead of a thorough-going condemnation of the religious life of the wa kahiko (former times), the writers present a formal condemnation of it in set speeches, and a surprisingly neutral description of it in the passages that are narrative and not didactic. They, so to speak, tell the reader one thing and show him another. In contrast to most parts of the narrative, the passages in which the old religion happens to come up are told in a rushed, almost embarrassed, style. I stress those in which it happens to come up, because this is not true if the author is setting out to describe in detail what the old religion was like, from his newly Christian, unfavorable, viewpoint; in these he is, whatever may be thought of his argument, logical, consistent and fairly expansive. When the religion is mentioned in passing, he is, by contrast, obscure, tending to non-sequiturs, and ambiguous. Three examples of the latter type of passage follow:

First, in describing an episode from the last days of Kahekameha’s life:
As Kamehameha’s illness increased, those who were *kahunas* were unable to save his life; thereupon a *kahuna* said, “For the sake of your life, it is better to construct a house for your god.” The chiefs aided the *kahuna* by assenting to his advice, and an outdoor temple (*heiau*) was, in fact, built for Kukailimoku, and, in the evening, a taboo was imposed. As the *kahuna* and the chiefs put their heads together, close to Kamehameha’s, their words were perhaps overheard, when the *kahuna* said, “For the sake of your life—a human being for your god!” The people may have overheard these words; there was soon seen to be a flight on the people’s part, in fear of death, and after the flight, only a person here and there remained. The people stalled, in the place they had fled to, until there was freedom from the temple-ritual taboo (*noa ke kaulia*): Then the people came back: the time during which a person would have to die was over. Kamehameha may not have assented to this advice of the chiefs and the *kahuna*; he was heard to say, “Human beings belong to the chief and are taboo.” That phrase, “what belongs to the chiefs” referred, in fact, to his own son.

By the time there was freedom from this prayer-obligation (*a noa keia pule*), his illness was more severe. His increased weakness made him unable to stretch out his hand. When the day came on which the outdoor temple would again impose its obligation, he spoke, this time to Liholiho, his son: “The trip to your god’s prayers—I cannot. Our prayer will go out from here where we are lying.” Thereupon, no sooner was a ritual finished in honor of Kukailimoku, his feather-god, than he took the advice of a worshipper whose god was a bird, and who had said, “It will cure him of his illness.” This god of his was named *Flower* (*Pua*); there is an edible bird here, the gallinule, and such was this god’s body. They did have two living-places constructed. While Kamehameha was staying in these houses, he no longer took any food, and he was much weaker. (*Mo. Hw. R/P, pp. 118, 120*)

The writer implies, though he stops short of saying in his more usual didactic style, that indulging in a new cult was instrumental in finally killing Kamehameha. The tone of the passage sets off not pagan cult against Christianity, but one pagan cult against another. Kamehameha’s reputed words to the chiefs and the *kahuna* are: “He kapu ke kanaka na ke’i’i.” But, in requoting it, to analyze it, the writer changes “na ke’i’i” (belonging to the chief), singular, to a plural—“na nalii” (that which belongs to the chiefs). Ownership by the *ali’i* class, at least in the writer’s offguard moments, is seen as overriding ownership by an individual enlightened *ali’i* like Kamehameha.

In the above passage it is expressly stated that human sacrifice was averted, though more by the prudent escape of the people, than by Kamehameha’s semi-legendary resistance to the principle of human sacrifice. In the following passage, taking place just after Kamehameha’s death, the avoidance of human sacrifice is only vaguely implied, at least in Rémy’s text. In Pogue’s text, a one-sentence disclaimer of any human sacrifice is made, which Rémy may not have had in his sources, or may have considered an awkward interpolation. Rémy’s text reads:

Then the *kahuna* spoke again to the chiefs and to the high chief: “Let me now speak to you about those who will accompany him in death: If he lies as he now lies, then it would be one man; but if he is carried outside, and the death ceremonies take place outside, then it would be four men. But if we carry him to a grave, and the ceremony takes place there, then ten people are to die, but if he is already inside the grave when
the ceremonies take place, then a total of fifteen are to die. But if this night becomes day, there is an immediate taboo, and the presence of any dead man thereupon means that a sum total of forty must die.” Then his ritual was over. But the kahuna who had assembled them (kahuna hui) then stood up, holding a pig, performed his own ritual, and struck the pig down. That, too, was a complete performance of his ritual. (Mo. Hw. R/P, pp. 124, 126)

Who “the kahuna who had assembled them” was, remains obscure, and John Pogue’s text has kahuna nui (“great kahuna”)⁸ instead of kahuna hui as in Rémy’s text. (On the principle of lectio difficilior, kahuna hui would seem to be the probable reading. Rémy seems to have accepted this reading but to have been at a loss to translate it, saying merely “another “priest” (un autre prêtre)). Rémy adds in a footnote: “Kamehameha died on May 8, 1819. The funeral ceremonies took place without any shedding of human blood, but a sacrifice of three hundred dogs was made.” He evidently feels that the text itself in no way makes clear that no human blood was shed. The particle no ho’i in the sentence describing the second kahuna’s action implies that this action was parallel to, not in contrast to, that of the first kahuna. His translation, in describing the second kahuna’s action, is: “... ses fonctions furent également remplies.” (Pau no hoi kana oihana)—His functions, as well, were fulfilled, i.e. like those stated to be necessary by the first kahuna. The disclaimer found in Pogue’s text reads:

“Aole pau na oihana i hana ia ma ia ahaolelo. A keia hebedoma aku e ike ia ka koena.” (What were not fulfilled were the rituals that [would have been] fulfilled in accordance with that assembly [by the first kahuna].) And that week became known as the “Mourning”.⁹

The late words hebedoma, a New Testament word for “week” taken over directly from Greek, and ahaolelo, a coined word later used for legislature or congress, may have made these two sentences suspect to Rémy, and though he knows from other sources that no human sacrifice took place, he sees the writer as leaving that interpretation open. He accordingly translates “Alaila pau kana oihana” as “Alors ses fonctions furent remplies.” The Hawaiian words will bear the meaning: “His function (oihana) did not go beyond that,”—i.e., did not go beyond merely prescribing what would have to be done under such and such circumstances. But they also bear the meaning, that, as Rémy puts it, his (prescribed) functions were fulfilled. By either interpretation, we are presented with two rival kāhunas, one of whom prescribes a ritual that, under various circumstances, would be increasingly bloody; while the other, in a rather perfunctory way, performs a simple animal sacrifice. Obviously this is not the monolithic pagan life that the writers, in their didactic passages, describe. Rather, we are shown two possible outcomes.
of a situation in which human sacrifice was a possibility, without being given any emphatic assurance that the sacrifices either did or did not take place—a climax to which, under Western narrative criteria, the passage would have to have built up to. Taken in connection with the earlier hint that Kamehameha had a personal aversion to human sacrifice, it represents the writers' willingness to diversify the ano—the aspect—of pagan life, which (elsewhere they assure the reader) was uniformly bad. Kamehameha's humanitarian efforts are not as easy to discover as, for example, his courage, or his steadfastness, or his sagacity, but as long as there is any evidence of what would be a virtue under the new order, the writer seizes upon it. The passages that are not self-consciously pro-Christian and anti-pagan, bring forward an individualized paganism.

Political, with a religious base (or, a sceptical Westerner might say) religious, with a political base, is the general description of Kekuaokalani’s motivation to revolt against Liholiho’s court. Though he has already been introduced by name in an earlier passage, and not further identified, as if too well known for that, he is here introduced as if for the first time, with his family connections mentioned. This passage, evidently by a different writer from the earlier one, is one of the few in which the multiple authorship creates an awkward phrasing, or hurts the unity of the whole work:

A certain chief, Kekuaokalani, a son of one of Kamehameha’s younger brothers, heard that the great chief, Liholiho, had been eating, free from taboos. He became very angry at Kaahumanu and at all of her brothers, because they had instigated this removal of taboos, in the king’s case; they had also removed royal taboos in general. For that reason, this chief was angry, being one of those who wanted there to be taboos (he make kapu e kona). In fear of the removal of taboos, he began to live in isolation at Kaawaloa. Certain kahunas and certain people skilled in war then left Liholiho and settled where Kekuaokalani was living. They encouraged him to persevere in the matter of the eating taboos. They spoke to him as follows: “There has been no offense by chiefs in earlier times that can compare with this offense, even though there were some by which chiefs lost their realms and were left without one.” They presented the land to this chief, as their gift. There was really a similar saying among the ancient people here: “A leader in ritual can raise a district up, and there are chiefs who can leave it in poverty.” And this chief did become, you must realize, more obstinate because of these words by the kahunas, in the matter of the eating taboos, and his intention was to destroy those who ate, free of them. (Mo. Hw., R/P, pp. 140, 142)

This is one of only two places in these writings, where a proverb from the old times is cited. (The other also is in connection with Kekuaokalani.) The construction he . . . kona (in he make kapu e kona), unusual for this work, parallels a usage in the earlier cited passage, on Kamehameha’s last days: he akua manu kona—concerning the worshipper “whose god was a bird.” The context in both cases is one of failure, with a consequent embarrassment on the part of the narrator; but it is very far from being
an outright condemnation of the stance taken by Kekuaokalani. As compared to the “set speeches” made against the chiefs, the kahunas, and the life-style of lealea (pleasure-seeking) elsewhere in the text, it is a neutral, even somewhat admiring, depiction. Kekuaokalani’s party is even said, a little later, to be in the majority among both chiefs and people. This is the point, the numerical majority of the kapu-supporters (rather than the military superiority of the royal party that Bingham emphasized) which impressed the writer. Also, the chiefs who sided with Kekuaokalani are not enumerated, but there is an interest in the fact that many kua‘aina and maka‘ainana took his side:

The common people (maka‘ainana) began to dance attendance on Kekuaokalani, and there was a rebellion on the part of a certain man of Hamakua, on Hawaii, a man from the country on the windward side (kanaka kua‘aina) whose name was Kainapau.

And the chiefs at Kona heard of that rebellion, and a certain man belonging to Liholiho, namely Kainapaunoakai, was sent there to observe that fighting. He and his men came up against the warriors who were commoners (maka‘ainana) at Mahiki. And the “Kainapau” whose status was that of a chief (Kainapau wahi ali‘i) was struck down by the Kainapau from the country (Kainapau kua‘aina), and was killed. Two of the king’s men died in this battle against the commoners (maka‘ainana). (Mo. Hw. R/F, p. 142)

As in the case of the fighting on Kaua‘i later, the issue of land, and who is to own it, makes its appearance here. There is a strong suggestion of a revolutionary element in the quickness of the kua‘aina and maka‘ainana to join Kekuaokalani’s revolt. It is even doubtful if Kekuaokalani may be said to have actually revolted. Rather, in this account, the aggressive parties are first the kua‘aina of Hamakua, under Kainapau, and then Kalanimoku’s royal party, after diplomacy with Kekuakaolani has been tried and failed. Samuel Kamakau (though he is also the probable author of the above passage) was to say later, in the Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii, that the rebel at Hamakua was not Kainapau but “a lesser chief named Lono-akahi.” In the Lahainaluna account, even if by the youthful Kamakau, an informant seems to have noted a dramatic irony in the situation of Kainapau of the royal court having the “same” name as Kainapau, the kua‘aina, even though it was necessary, to bring this out, to shorten the chief’s name, Kainapauonoakai, to Kainapau, and such shortening was not done lightly.

The shortest, but perhaps the most obscure of the three passages in question is one in which Liholiho appears to participate again in, or at least condone participation in, the old religion:

And on a certain day, the chiefs and the king embarked for Kawaihae, where, again, the chiefs and the people held a ritual. Once again, the people fulfilled the eating-taboos. The life at Kawaihae had its religious rituals, its drunkenness, and its pleasure seeking as well. At that time, a ship from France anchored, and Kalanimoku was baptized by a
certain kahuna belonging to the pope, aboard that ship. Liholiho, when his stay was over, went back to Kona, and placed a taboo on the outdoor temple of his god at Honokohau. When the taboo on that temple was lifted, Kaahumanu sent a man as messenger to tell the king her thoughts. (Emphasis added). (Mo. Hw. R/P, pp. 136, 138)

In this passage, the writer reveals little except that something in a pagan context happened in which the people (kanaka) participated, something in a Christian context happened in which Kalanimoku participated, and something, again in pagan context, happened in which Liholiho participated. There is little but religious rituals, of one kind or another, to hold the passage together. The passage says that the life, or life-style (or perhaps merely the stay, or the visit (noho) at Kawaihae comprised three things: ritual, drunkenness, and pleasure-seeking (haipule, ona (sc. lama), and lealea).

Though it is true that drunkenness and pleasure-seeking are disparaged elsewhere in these texts, they appear here to be merely enumerated in a neutral way. This made the passage so puzzling to Rémy, that, in a rare departure from a fairly literal translation, he inserted into this passage the phrase, "Il etait dévots, de leur maniere ...." Dévots is meant to express haipule of the original, and this is plausible, even though haipule probably has a nominal, not an adjectival sense here. "De leur maniere" is merely inserted in order to give the passage more coherence, for Rémy senses that the writer is perhaps condescendingly remarking that the old religion was better than no religion at all, much in the manner of Bingham's remarks about the "atheism" of Kalanimoku and those who opposed Kekuaokalani. Taken at its face value, the passage neither praises nor condemns the old haipule. The baptism of Kalanimoku is probably thought to be in line with, rather than in contrast to, the other events of the passage. A passage having to do with religion evidently "belonged" here in the writer's mind, but if he was conscious of why it belonged here, he did not say. Rémy also uses the word "dévôt" as a noun, earlier, in describing the "worshipper" of Pua, the alae-god, whose advice was taken by the dying Kamehameha. But in that passage, the Hawaiian word in question is ho'omanana, not haipule, as here. The word hou, used twice in the underlined passages above, is translated by Rémy, first as "nouvel" and then as "encore." The haipule, or ritual for which the stay at Kawaihae takes place, is, indeed, called a "new" ritual, "another" ritual, or a ritual performed "again," but we are left in doubt what the implied previous ritual was. Samuel Kamakau, the probable author of this section, expanded it somewhat, years later, in his Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii:

... No one else (i.e. no one other than Kauikeaouli) dared to eat with... [Keopuolani] by day because of her tabu which was so strict that even Kamehameha had been obliged
to uncover and remove his loin cloth in her presence; only at night was it less severe. Liholiho however remembered his kahu’s (i.e. Kekuaokalani’s) instructions and did not eat with his mother and brother. The next day he and his chiefs joined Kekuaokalani at Kawaihae and found him at prayer, and so finding him, they too worshipped, and again a tabu was put upon free eating by chiefs and commoners and they took to games and rum drinking.

At this time there arrived at Kawaihae a ship from France on board of which was a Roman Catholic priest. When Kalanimoku learned from John Young that this man held office from his government as a priest of the true God in heaven he had himself baptized by the priest as pope over the islands. (Emphases added)

It should be noted that Kamakau amends the Lahainaluna writer (probably himself) by putting the Kawaihae incident into a more definite time frame (“the next day”—i.e. the day after the first serious breaking of the eating-taboos by members of the ali‘i class); next, that he specifies Kekuaokalani as their host at Kawaihae; he says that both chiefs and commoners, not commoners alone (kanaka of the Lahainaluna passage) reinstituted the kapus temporarily; and finally, that Kalanimoku’s motivation for Catholic baptism was to be a sort of “pope” over the islands, under French sponsorship—similar to the haipule leadership role that Vancouver suggested for Kamehameha earlier in a National, liberal Protestant context.

All in all, the Lahainaluna passage sounds like a garbled, or at best poorly abridged, version of the Kamakau passage; if the chronology of the two were unknown, we could rest with this interpretation, but the fact of Kamakau’s writing much later makes it untenable. The probability is that the young Kamakau, under strong missionary influence, did not want to place any emphasis on Kalanimoku’s nominal conversion to Catholicism, but still knew of it and recounted it as part of the “Kawaihae” events, which he syncopated somewhat from what had been told to him by older Hawaiians. In later years, at his leisure, he was able to expand upon it, though, at the same time introducing additional problems—that of Kalanimoku’s motivation, and that of exactly how much the royal court and its supporting chiefs were ready to compromise with Kekuaokalani: Not ready to compromise at all, the younger Lahainaluna writer would have answered. But there is a general attitude toward the effort to conciliate (as in the case of the court versus Kekuaokalani) that retains a consistency throughout the Lahainaluna writings, and some understanding of the patterns that such efforts followed is necessary in order to understand how well the chiefs, in their last months before missionary influence, as well as after that influence came among them, were able to uphold principles of unity and statehood implicit in the legacy that Kamehameha had left to them.
It was the policy of the real powers at Liholiho’s court—Kaahumanu and Kalanimoku—to separate from any potential power base all possible rivals, including Liholiho himself. Thus, a rough-hewn diplomacy emerged, in which military action could be precluded by a negotiated surrender of the potential breakaway power, in which that power would be brought to Kailua, for proximity to the court, as a condition of the settlement. This could be considered the reverse of exile as a political implement; security, for the established powers, lay in staying near, not in putting at a distance, their would be rivals. This seems to have been an ad hoc policy, not influenced by the limited experience that the Hawaiians of this time had with European diplomacy. It had its roots in the close kinship relations of the leading chiefs; thus, a subordinate position without loss of face by the subordinate was offered; this was one option and war was another. Banishment was not an option. But success, from the point of view of the side offering the terms, depended on how well the subordinate-to-be understood himself to have undergone no real loss of status, that is, no loss perceptible to himself or to his followers. In this way, though it may be comparable in principle to house-arrest, it stopped short of house-arrest as that tactic has been known in Western and Far Eastern countries.

In the case of the embassy by Naihe, Hoapili and Keopuolani to Kekuaokalani, they fail to bring him back peacefully, because he does not accept their offer of letting his soldiers march by land without him, while he goes by sea with the envoys; and also, because, in the dispute about the recently abandoned kapus, they are willing to concede no more than that Kekuaokalani himself will be allowed to observe them—if he chooses to, in the atmosphere where everyone else has given them up. Not even a token observance on the part of the court is offered, even though Liholiho himself, at Kawaihae, has recently let his retinue drift back into observing the kapus. They are the victims, too, of a trick on the part of Kekuaokalani or of someone close to him, when an announcement is made during the night that everyone should prepare to go to Kailua in order to eat free from the kapus. This announcement enrages a crowd of Kekuaokalani’s followers who demand the deaths of Hoapili and Naihe. Kekuaokalani then saves their lives—after, perhaps, skillfully putting himself into a position where he could play that role. This embassy, in which both sides take a hard line, is a failure and war results.

Less is disclosed, unfortunately, about an “embassy” that ended in success—that of Kekuanaoa to Poki, at Waikiki, at a time when Poki is said by the writers to be making definite war preparations against Kaahumanu. At first, Kanaina accompanies Kekuanaoa on horseback
from the area of Honolulu harbor, but asks to turn back when they have reached the Kewalo Basin:

Kanaina, in fact, did return, while it was Kekuanaoa who rode on. On horseback, he arrived at Waikiki. There he saw Poki’s people; the kou-grove of Kahalea was crowded with them, and their hands held guns. Hardly a voice was raised on either side, though two men did greet Kekuanaoa, and he greeted them in reply. Poki, for his part, also saw Kekuanaoa, but he averted his eyes. Still Kekuanaoa came forward, at a quicker pace, confidently and without anxiety, and stood face to face with Poki. He spoke kindly, and to Poki’s liking, and there was a sharp break in what Poki had been proceeding with.

Thus it was that Poki and his wife rose up, time after time: what was more, they both led Kauikeaoulani (Kamehameha III) in the direction of wrong-doing. For these reasons the rioting in the land was very extensive, people were again committing adultery, while some were again worshipping images. (Mo. Hw. R/P, pp. 238, 240)

The incident is followed up, not by describing its successful result, but merely by summarizing Poki’s generally rebellious behavior, and the essence of whatever were Kekuanaoa’s words to Poki is missed, though in the case of the embassy to Kekuaokalani, even though unsuccessful, the ‘ōlelo—the speech on both sides—is of great importance, and remembered evidently word for word. Kekuanaoa also succeeded by means of speech, but the episode seems to go against the grain of the writers’ general intent—the denigrating of Poki as an unreasonable chief—and the successful embassy is brushed over rather hurriedly, despite its dramatic qualities.

Embassies that may be regarded as partially successful are those which the royal court sent out to bring Liholiho back to Kailua, Kona, from other parts of the island of Hawaii. As the nominal, but not the real, ruler of the kingdom, Liholiho is dangerous to Kaahumanu and Kalamamoku, insofar as he consorts with more distant chiefs, like Kekuaokalani, who have little or no concept of a united kingdom, but a very clear concept of their own chiefly status that makes them at least the equals of the royal chiefs.

Liholiho’s second reported recall to Kailua, interestingly, comes on the eve of the abolition of the kapus, but it is the attraction of a pagan religious ceremony that brings about his agreement to return:

The king . . . said [to a messenger from Kaahumanu]: “What is the message for me that brings you here?” The man replied, “I am sent by your honored guardians, so that you may have your god’s image lined with ti leaves, provided you come to Kailua.” (Mo. Hw., R/P, pp. 136, 138)

Liholiho agrees, although the alcoholism from which, in the writers’ view, he suffers, makes him unable to reach Kailua under his own power. (They suspected Poki also of being alcoholic, or at least make this as clear, in these two cases, as is possible for a concept that medical science
itself had not yet designated.) This is another example of a disease brought into Hawaii by foreigners. King Kalakaua, much later, was to expand on this drinking episode, without condemnation of it in the manner of the Lahainaluna writers, but seeing it in a rather fatalistic way: Liholiho is seen as drawn in two directions: toward the old religion (not even “old,” of course to him and his contemporaries, but challenged) and also toward something very like the vacuum that modern historiography stipulates, the “atheism,” as Bingham called it, of Kalanimoku and the royal court establishment.

... a message had been sent by Kaahumanu [to Liholiho] informing him that on his return to Kailua, she would openly set the gods at defiance and declare against the tabu. . . .

He knew that his arrival at Kailua would precipitate the crisis, and compel him either to renounce or defend the gods of fathers. . . .

It was feared that his courage would fail, and he was not left to himself for a moment until he led the way to the feast. . . .

Hewahewa rose, and, glancing at the troubled face of the king, lifted his hands, and said with firmness: “One and all, may we eat in peace, and in our hearts give thanks to the one and only god of all.”

The words of the high priest restored the sinking courage of the king. . . .

That Liholiho was to line his god’s image with *ti* leaves, as in the Lahainaluna account, is overlooked by Kalakaua, or is assumed to be a ceremony of formal abolition, not a regular, cyclical celebration of *kapu/ha*. Most in contrast with the Lahainaluna version is what the king says near the close of his melodramatic account of this event:

No creed was offered by the iconoclasts in lieu of the system destroyed by royal edict, and until the arrival of the first Christian missionaries, in March of the year following, the people of the archipelago were left without a shadow of religious restraint or guidance. 

By the 1880’s the “religious vacuum” theory was fully accepted. The Lahainaluna writers, on the other hand, show only a very rudimentary, theological and not political, form of that theory; they merely echo the missionaries’ teaching that the chiefs, even though for wrong reasons, worked the will of God in overthrowing the *kapu* system. In their view, however, the Hawaiians, in religion and in politics, might well have continued to work out their own system, uninfluenced by foreigners. If the “real” foreigners are the traders and sea captains, as, by the later stages of the *Mo‘olelo*, the writers are convinced is the case, then it is inevitable that the early missionary groups will come to be thought of as less and less foreign. This is because their hostility to the trading group of foreigners is obvious. The missionaries will pass through a stage of being anti-foreign, and finally into a stage of being non-foreign.
Their sons and grandsons (descendants mainly of later missionary arrivals, not of the original group that is so much defended in these writings) could at last be seen as foreigners. But along the way to annexation, there were foreigners-with-a-difference in the government of the monarchy, statesmen like Charles Coffin Harris in the 1860's and Walter Murray Gibson in the 1880's. By the second half of the century, it was increasingly Britain, not America, that was providing the not-so-foreign group with whom the Hawaiians, the maka'ainana especially, could feel the same kind of solidarity that Malo, Kamakau and the other writers had felt with the first missionary arrivals. But the short prayer by Hewahewa that Kalakaua quotes—or imagines—above is neither an Anglican blessing nor a Hawaiian pule. It resembles, anachronistically, a grace recited by the missionaries who were to arrive some months later. Kalakaua can only wonder at Hewahewa's joining the cause of the royal court, in abolishing the kapus: he must have been sincere since he, of all people, had nothing to gain from the change. But, sincerity or not, he is a pitiable figure when compared to Kekuaokalani. Hewahewa's sudden lapse into a strict monotheism, as shown in his reputed prayer, is hardly credible. It must derive from a desire on Kalakaua's part to place the turncoat "high priest" firmly in the camp of the missionaries. This simplistic picture is far removed from the one presented by the Lahainaluna writers, closer to the scene, in time. In defense of Kalakaua's historiography as compared to theirs, however, it can be said that they were spared the rhetoric of English-language mid-Victorian writings which must necessarily have been a strong influence by the time the king was writing. Between their era and Kalakaua's, the great mahele, the abortive annexation by Britain, the Reciprocity Treaty, and many other events of the greatest importance had taken place. Unlike Kalakaua they had definitely come to terms with the two rival foreign groups, as they observed a conflict presented in very stark form. Their overall view of the diplomacy that the chiefs worked out, apart from either missionary or merchant foreign influence, makes it clear that they could foresee a Hawaii in which conflicts would remain, but would be more peaceably worked out than they had been in the days before Kamehameha I. Above all, these conflicts would not be the conflicts of foreign groups played off against other foreign groups, or of Hawaiians played off against Hawaiians. This meant accepting the missionaries as arrivals in the tradition of Vancouver, not as "foreign powers." But mainly their history is that of a real, not an ideal world, as it existed in the first decade of the missionary presence. However mistaken their idea of missionary influence as an unmixed good, they did have a keen eye for exploitation from any other foreign source.
In the closing episodes of the *Mo'olelo*, even Poki and Liholiho take on the status of tragic figures. They become real human beings, missed and mourned, not stock figures of political satire. Liholiho, with some premonition of death, never returns from his voyage to “kahiki”—Britain in this case. Poki, in the final episode, leads a disastrous expedition to the New Hebrides in search of sandalwood that has been depleted by foreigners and chiefs in his own islands. It is only in this episode that the writer realizes continuity; he sees that he is writing about an event that still has its effects in his own times. His story had begun with *malama*—light; and surprisingly, it offers a methodology, in the manner of a modern sociological work. It then goes on to speculate on the origins of the Pacific land masses. Creation by the Christian God is brought in only as an afterthought: perhaps all the European scientific theories are wrong, and there was land here from the beginning, the writer muses. But the work, overall, is in the rational, 18th Century, not the romantic, early 19th Century, tradition. The key phrases are *malama* and *ke olelo a ke Akua*—the word of God. Emphasis is on the word as a force, as if *mana-*bearing, rather than on the events and personalities of the Scriptures. Concurrently with these writings, the Bible was being translated into Hawaiian, and was being heard regularly in church readings on Sundays and Wednesdays. But only Adam and Eve, and Noah of the Old Testament, and only Jesus, Herod, and St. Paul of the New Testament are mentioned by name. Thus a Polynesian world view which dispenses with the idea of a creator, blends with a Western thought-pattern of the recent past—that of the 18th Century enlightenment. The *na‘au* (intestines), in which the intelligence was pictured as residing, became the important organ. David Malo wins his argument with Kaahumanu about the case of William Richards, when he finally convinces her that “our *na‘au*”—hers and the prosecution side’s—“is in darkness.”

The methodology that the writers offer, similar though it is to contemporary procedures in oral history, is less interesting than their consensus point of view which pervades the work. (In length, to compare it with an early Western work that also had its oral origins, it is about equal to two books of the histories of Herodotus.) George Santayana was later to say that those who cannot remember history are condemned to repeat it. F. Scott Fitzgerald, still later, countered with the view that he was one of those “condemned to be able to see both sides of a question. . . . The world is better, after all, looked at from one window.” Santayana’s dictum has become more proverbial, but Fitzgerald’s (his own or one that he sadly gives to a character) more truly represents what guides most Western historians. To remember the past, as Santayana
thought it should be remembered, means a frequent change of windows, a looking at both, if indeed there are only two, sides of a question. Neither rationalism, nor the oral tradition of Polynesia, could give this power to the Lahainaluna historians. “To be sure, it is not all over yet,” one of them announces, in closing a harangue about the socio-economic power wielded by the chiefs and the kāhunas in the wa kahiko. But for the most part, history was not for the purpose of forewarning, in their view. They would probably have agreed with Fitzgerald more than with Santayana. But a vigor is imparted to what they wrote by their love for mo'olelo, and by the fact that they see writing as only increasing their power to recall the past: it has become a commonplace in the West, on the other hand, that nothing destroys an oral tradition more surely than writing. That they alternated a narrative style, with a didactic, sometimes even a “preaching” (in the popular sense) style, may be regretted, but it is hard to imagine a different kind of effort. And the two styles affected each other, so that an incentive was added to the narrative style by the beliefs expressed in the didactic style. This brought about the increasingly eloquent closing of the work, in which it was seen that malama was not everything. Hiram Bingham gives Poki’s sandalwood expedition “his blessing,” but this is done only in the colloquial, not the religious, sense of the phrase. And as Poki is no longer (after a public confession) the villain that he was earlier in the work, Bingham is no longer a complete hero. Few who sail with Poki ever return, and the Hawaiians, the sincere Christians among them not least, are confronted with a sadness not broken through by the malama, highly praised though that is.

NOTES

1 Ka Mooolelo Hawaii/Histoire de l'Archipel Hawaïen (îles Sandwich); Texte et Traduction Précédés d'une Introduction ... par Jules Rémy (Lipalani). (Paris, Leipzig: A. Franck, 1862.) A translation by Roland F. Perkins is under consideration by the Lahaina Club, Lahaina, Hawaii for 1980. Citations of the Lahainaluna writings in this paper are from the above Rémy-edited text, hereafter cited as Mo. Hw. (R/P), with page references to the Hawaiian text which is on alternate pages with Rémy’s French translation.

2 Mo. Hw. (R/P), p. 188: “... Hpeo kahuna keia no he Akua kiekie loa” — words spoken by a Hawaiian who is a holokahiki, or voyager to foreign lands and has returned with the first missionary arrivals.


James Macrae, *With Lord Byron at the Sandwich Islands in 1825*, being *Extracts from the ms. Diary of James Macrae, Scottish Botanist.* (Honolulu, 1922), p. 43.


*Moolelo of Ancient Hawaii* [edited] by John F. Pogue. Tr. from the Hawaiian by Charles W. Kenn (Honolulu: Topgallant, 1978) Appendix B, p. 54. Rémy’s text (*Mo. Hw. R/P*, p. 124) reads, “*hookahi kanaha e make*” which he translates, “... *il faudra la mort de quarante hommes.*” Pogue’s text, on the other hand, reads “... *hookahi kanaka e make.*”

Ibid. Kenn translates only the first of these two sentences: “But the ceremony in its entirety, was not ended.” (*Moolelo of Anc. Hawaii*, p. 99.)


*Mo. Hw. R/P*, pp. 146, 148; *Moolelo of Anc. Hawaii* Appendix B, p. 58, translated, p. 407; Kenn interprets *mauka* in this passage to mean not that Kekuaokalani insists on travelling by land, but that he objects to travelling in the seaward canoes of the convoy.


(*Mo. Hw. R/P*, p. 166)