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Abstract

Kanaka maoli (Indigenous Hawaiians) are blessed with a written literature that documents observations and relationships with our environment in the form of chants, stories, and genealogies passed down orally for centuries. These literatures connect us to our ancestral knowledge and highlight species, places, and processes of importance. Sayings, such as this one from the Kumulipo (our creation story) *Pua ka wiliwili, nanahu ka manō*, is an example of the place of nature, man, and a specific creature the shark in ecological phenology. We chose to focus on sharks or manō because of the availability of historic references, and their importance in Hawaiian culture in contrast to the relatively little available scientific knowledge. Manō are

understood through Hawaiian Indigenous Science in their roles as ‘aumakua and as unique individuals. By using manō as a lens in which to recognize the uniqueness of the Hawaiian worldview we highlight the classification system developed and apply this framework when analyzing management scenarios. Using the Indigenous Science of Kanaka maoli we can adapt new ways in which to classify our environmental interactions and relationships that will bring us closer to our living relatives. Management decisions regarding culturally important species need not be based solely on the most current Western Science data, but the much longer dataset of knowledge stored in our oral literature.

Kanaka Maoli (Indigenous Hawaiians) are blessed with a written literature that documents observations and relationships with our environment in the form of chants, stories, and genealogies passed down orally for centuries (Silva 2017). These literatures connect us to our ancestral knowledge, and highlight species, places, and processes of importance (McDougal 2016). Sayings, such as the following one from the Kumulipo (one of our creation stories), are an example of the place of the roles of nature, man, and a specific creature – in this case, sperm whales- during creation (Liliuokalani 1978).

O ke Akua ke komo,	It is the god (environmental entity) who enters (belongs),
ʻAʻole komo kanaka	Man does not enter (not a place for mans presence)
O ke kaʻina a palaoa e kaʻi nei	In the lead the sperm whales proceed

This particular phrase is repeated after the birthing of plant and animal relatives, generations before man enters in this creation chant. There are various interpretations to these lines, both literal and metaphorical, and although I include just one version in the translation above, the intention of this phrase is clear - setting the boundaries and conditions of man and how other creatures sees the role of man in the Hawaiian environment (Liliuokalani 1978).

The Kumulipo informs us of biological hierarchy and describes Kanaka Maoli mental modeling of their natural environment (McDougal 2016). Indigenous science, such as the information found in this chant, helps us navigate both the cultural protocols of interacting with our environment, and the systems in which we categorize our relations (Johnson et al. 2016). These chants and stories are not just of entertainment value, but hold the truths of our environmental ethics, values and Indigenous knowledge (Kanahele 2005). One such traditional

saying “Pua ka wiliwili, nanahu ka manō” relates the time in which a wiliwili (*Erythrina sandwicensis*) flower is in bloom to the behavior of manō (sharks) biting (Pukui 1983). This saying is documenting an important environmental cycle that occur simultaneously in both species; the presence of sharks in the ocean is related to the natural phenology of a terrestrial tree on land. This nanahu, or biting in the saying is not just in respect to sharks attacking people, but also signifies a time when sharks are in active mating season and have heightened arousal. These sayings are well known to connect land and ocean processes, documenting phenological timing and the depth of observations that occurred across landscapes.

Understanding the role of manō in Kanaka Maoli culture not only highlights the important ecological relationships between sharks and their environment, but can also lend lessons to be used in shark management. The abundance and distribution of sharks can be a very sensitive topic for the modern, general public, as well as for fishery managers (Sutcliffe and Barnes 2018). For non-Polynesians, a fear of sharks is proliferated through media, including cinema and literature. Proposed shark culling due to their preying on young monk seals, eco-tourism shark diving in State waters, and shark finning for the shark fin market are all examples of shark management concerns in Hawai‘i heightened by a worldview that perceives sharks as only a fierce predator. Another highly controversial topic is the effectiveness and necessity of shark hunts after shark attacks on humans (Wetherbee et al. 1994). In this paper, I use a biocultural analyis of sharks in Kanaka Maoli culture to illustrate an understanding of manō in the Hawaiian worldview and to learn more about an animal that is greatly misunderstood and in need of better management protocols.

Basic ecological facts and research regarding manō are summarized in Sharks of Hawai‘i and their Cultural Significance by Leighton Taylor (1993) and Hawaiian Shark Aumakua

(Beckwith 1917). In Taylor's book, the author examines the Hawaiian cultural significance of manō, providing a list of ʻōlelo noʻeau (sayings of wisdom), manō ʻaumakua (guardian sharks), as well as other information from well-known Hawaiian scholars such as Samuel Kamakau. Taylor also highlighted the amount of information that is unknown and the need for more in-depth research. His search was limited to western knowledge of manō written in the English language, while another database laid untouched -that is the Kanaka Maoli database of knowledge, the historical moʻolelo, kaʻao, and mele (broadly identified as Hawaiian literature) of the Hawaiian people. Beckwith (1917) accessed some of these sources in her search to share more information about the concept of ʻaumakua, focusing on sharks. These sources are the result of thousands of years of observations of the natural environment found in the Hawaiian archipelago.

My motivation in this research project is to learn more about an animal that is greatly misunderstood and to assess how a different way of knowing can influence management and scientific understanding. This paper focuses on sharks, generally termed manō in Hawaiian, because of the availability of historic references to manō and their importance in Hawaiian culture (Beckwith 1917) in contrast to the relatively little scientific knowledge that is available on them. Here I understand the spatial distribution of manō in moʻolelo, and identify references to manō behavior and their interrelationships with humans.

Materials and Methods

Our research focused on re-connecting to historical Hawaiian literature, oral history interviews, newspaper articles, and books including shark stories, chants, and proverbs. Storytelling is a common method of recording indigenous knowledge, and as a methodology needs to be

understood as an integral process to indigenizing ecology (Goodyear-Kaʻōpua 2016). Not commonly used as a source of data, moʻolelo (stories) are a treasured component of our Hawaiian literature.

> "To truly see and appreciate the knowledge left by our ancestors, we need to do more than simply read through their moʻolelo. When the readers of moʻolelo take the time to untwine the beautiful details of information and knowledge left by our Hawaiian ancestors, what we will find is that our ancestors have left us with more than just stories, tales, histories, and genealogies. We find that they have left us intimate knowledge of their world." (Mānoa 2019).

There are numerous references of manō from locations across the Hawaiian Islands, so as a way to begin, I focused my search first for stories and individuals on Hawaiʻi Island (where this author was raised). One particular story I accessed was Kaʻehuikimanōopuʻuloa the shark of Puʻuloa.* The story chronicles the life of a shark, born on Hawaiʻi Island, who travels throughout the Hawaiian Islands. Extremely detailed, at 47 pages long and written in its complete form in only the Hawaiian language this story allowed us to triangulate information found in other stories and legends.

Looking through Hawaiian sources of history and stories in electronic databases such as ulukau.org and Papakilo.org helped us to identify references of manō behavior and their interrelationships with humans. I also accessed a database of shark attack records for the State of Hawaiʻi and compared the spatial distribution of recorded shark attacks with the information found within Kanaka Maoli literature. I categorized the stories shared into topics and identified four main categories of information from these sources. For this paper, I will use the knowledge shared from

10 sources as a summary to the larger literature of information I read and to begin highlighting the bio-cultural relationships of Kanaka Maoli with manō (Table 1).

Results

Classification System

As discussed by Jordan and Evermann (1903) Kanaka Maoli have about 5 general names for manō, of which only a few are identified with species specific scientific classification (Table 2). The niuhi is described as a fierce shark and generally associated with both Great White (*Carcharodon carcharias*) and Tiger (*Galeocerdo cuvier*) sharks, which look decidedly different yet have similar behaviors. Manō seem to be classified by not only their physical body traits but also by their circumstances or personality traits - guardian, leader, angry or provoked, etc. - and each possessed their own individual identification or name (Gutmanis 1983). In the story of Kaʻehuikimanōopuʻuloa and others, manō were classified as niuhi, manō aliʻi, manō aloaliʻi, manō ʻaumakua, manō hoaaliʻi, manō huhū, and manō kupua (Uaua 1871; Table 3). These classifications provide a window into the ethnotaxonomy used by Kanaka Maoli to explain interactions, expectations, and behaviors of sharks (Barron et al. 2015). Kanaka Maoli did not differentiate between species of manō as they so commonly did for plants, birds, marine animals, and most other species.

These classes of sharks also had different mana (hierarchy or power). Manō ʻaumakua are approachable and can be fed or feed their human families while niuhi are untouchable except by high-ranking aliʻi (chiefs). Aliʻi were the only people with the privilege to hunt niuhi, and their success secured them higher mana. Some places were known to hunt and eat manō regularly, particularly the lālākea and kihikihi (Kahaulelio 2006). The care and respect given to manō that

were hunted is demonstrated in the methods of preparing, capturing, and final usage of the manō body (Curtis 1998; Titcomb 1972).

The classification of manō in a system similar to the Linnaean system was unnecessary when the individual behaviors of manō were a more important category for classification and understanding. Stories of manō as individuals with unique personalities and names are recounted, with over 300 names of sharks recorded, many with personal geneaologies (Uaua 1871; Beckwith 1917). Individual names recognize both their classifications and that each manō is unique. Legends and stories are told of sharks that have human form, sharks that reside in specific sites around the Islands, and sharks that journey and have adventures. Each shark in old Hawai‘i seemed to have a personal name.

‘Aumakua

Numerous Hawaiian family stories also share the intimate reciprocal relationship that exists between individual sharks and specific families, termed ‘aumakua (Maly and Maly 2003). Beckwith speaks about the reluctance of her informants to discuss the role and function of ‘aumakua, and specifically those with sharks (1917). Families held the stories and guardianship of ‘aumakua, and their relationship with these manō as private. Kepa Maly’s interviews with kūpuna on Hawai‘i Island included 9 people who referenced sharks in their personal family stories (Maly and Maly 2003). Their recollections included the caring for sharks (hānau poli), places well known for sharks, and specific shark stories of ‘aumākua. Pakaiea and Kua were two such manō that Mary Kawena Puku‘i described seeing as a little girl (Craighill Handy and Pukui 1958). These personal intimate relationships that were cultivated between manō and humans

highlight the important role of sharks in the marine environment and also the depth of ecological knowledge Kanaka Maoli developed in regard to these species.

Appetite

Manō kupua or manō kanaka are oftened described as beings who are both shark and man (never woman). These kupua are often born as children and raised with a vegetarian diet. In the story of Nanaue, his mother was specifically instructed to never serve him meat, for once he tastes meat, Nanaue's hunger for flesh will become insatiable (Nakuina 2002). Many similar stories exists on all islands, describing the forewarning of serving these men/manō meat and their hunger for kānaka once awakened. Other manō stories in which human flesh is desired are told, such as the story of Mikololou (Webb 1923). Manō that are described as hungering for human flesh are never connected to human families as ʻaumakua nor do they act under the bidding or direction of humans. In these stories, it is usually a shark god or ʻaumakua that tries to intervene and kill these manō with hunger for flesh. Niuhi are hunted for sport by aliʻi but never eaten as food (Titcomb 1972).

Spatial Distribution

Kua is a manō from Kaʻū, Kaʻahupahau is from Puʻuloa, Kamohoaliʻi is from Kahoʻolawe. These manō are associated with specific places, and even though they enjoy traveling and have relations with sharks from different islands, they have a home that they return to and from which they are known. Manō that change between man and manō (manō kupua) are usually associated with places near rivers in which they can travel from inland to the ocean. Manō kupua are known from Hāmākua, Molokaʻi, and Kauaʻi – wet places. Areas with little river presence are not

known for these manō kupua and instead have many more moʻolelo of manō ʻaumakua, such as in Kaʻū and South Kona – dry places (Maly and Maly 2003). Similarly, manō huhū as described in the story of Kaehuikimanōopuuloa were found in abundance on Maui (Uaua 1871).

These storied patterns can be correlated to modern day shark distributions and are particularly interesting when looking at the Register of Shark Attacks database. Although data on current shark attacks are not publicly available as they once were, notable spatial trends include the prevalence of shark attacks on Maui, while Puʻuloa, an estuary protected by Kaʻahupahau, has not had a single occurence (Balazs 1997; Pukui 1994). In the story of Kaʻehuikimanōopuʻuloa, his largest conflicts occurred with the sharks outside of Maui, and Puʻuloa was a harbor of refuge where all but man-eating sharks were welcomed by Kaʻahupahau (Uaua 1871).

Discussion

Intimate Behavior and Personal Relationships

Manō as ʻaumakua: particular sharks were identified and cared for as family members, given names and stories associated with a specific shark. In Kaʻehuikimanōopuʻuloa, an intimate relationship is revealed between himself and his parents, Hōlei and Kapukapu, who took care of him, feeding him ʻawa and breast milk, as well as blessing him with prayers before his journey to Kahiki (Uaua 1917). In return, Kaʻehuikimanōopuʻuloa provides his parents with an abundance of fish. This intimate reciprocal relationship is seen in other moʻolelo, such as in "The Shark that Brought Poi", which describes how a manō secured food for an elderly couple who could no longer fend for themselves (Pukui 1996). These moʻolelo reveal to us today that relationships

with ‘aumākua were not one sided, but were in fact a reciprocal relationship where each took care of each other.

Treating a species such as a shark as part of the family is not something that most fishery biologists would consider. Yet, as Titcomb (1972) points out, most areas along the coast had a resident ‘aumakua and a kahu (caretaker) for that manō. This relationship was not given. Kānaka fed the manō bananas and ‘awa to show their love and respect for this family member. If we are hoping to understand the behavior and ecology of sharks, this familial relationship among kanaka and manō must start with our acknowledging that we need to begin to uphold our part of this relationship. We need to address manō as individuals with unique personalities and find those kahu who can care for them. Kānaka, and others, need to spend time in these environments, re-learning our relationships to our ocean relatives as an indigenous, ecological methodology of aloha (love). The development of familial relationships of kanaka and sharks should be recognized and encouraged by research scientists and managers interested in becoming more intimate with particular waters. As shark tagging and modern DNA techniques allow us to learn more about shark geography and culture, we must recognize that kanaka maoli did this by simply being present, by actively cultivating relationships. This indigenous methodology was documented through our mo’olelo and both these techniques can be used again as part of modern marine management techniques.

This recognition that manō can be identified and have unique personalities to relate to is perhaps why so little information can be obtained regarding the Hawaiian names of different manō species. Titcomb (1972) tried to list the variety of manō in the Hawaiian language but acknowledged that the decriptions used were very vague. Manō within mo‘olelo are more often than not named and attributed with specific personality traits. Some manō like Kauhuhū in

Kaʻehuikimanōopuʻuloa are angry, while others serve as protectors for the people against niuhi or man-eating manō. This is very different from the views many today have of manō that stereotype all manō as man-eating predators. In the moʻolelo of Punia, we see that a specific group of sharks were man-eaters, the aliʻi of whom was named Kaiʻaleʻale. Kaiʻaleʻale is responsible for killing Punia's father, and thus Punia seeks revenge on this particular shark and his alo aliʻi, or followers (Hale Kuamoo 2015). Kanaka Maoli distinguished between good and bad manō by recognizing their individual personalities and characteristics and by nurturing these intimate relationships. As managers are learning in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, particular sharks are responsible for the take of young monk seals and a management response must take into account each individual sharks behavior instead of relying on large scale culling (https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/hawaiian-monk-seal#conservation-management). A holistic response in shark management recognizes the cultural importance of these species as well as individual shark behavior.

Kahaulelio (2006) has a section where he talks about hoʻomoemoe fishing where the sharks kihikihi and lālākea are eaten. Titcomb (1972) explains this further sharing that only these sharks were known to be eaten, and flesh of the niuhi wasn't consumed but used for other purposes. Coincidentally, these are the most well associated names that align a Latin taxonomic name with a Hawaiian name. The manō were given "species" names when there was practice associated with a general type of manō (such as being a food source), and given individual names when personal relationships were cultivated (such as ʻaumakua). These categorizations of sharks can be used by scientists and managers as a way to define different levels of management actions and to guide research interests.

Perspective

By using manō as a lens through which to recognize the uniqueness of the Hawaiian worldview, I am able to identify an ethnotaxonomy implemented by Kanaka Maoli. Linguists, anthropologists and biologists have used ethnotaxonomy to compare indigenous methods to Latin frameworks. I have instead highlighted the epistemology of Kanaka Maoli relationships to sharks not for documentation purposes but to illuminate the utility of this enthotaxonomy. Using the Indigenous Science of Kanaka Maoli we can adapt new ways in which to classify our environmental interactions and relationships that will bring us closer to our living relatives. Manō are just one of many culturally important species that have numerous documented literature and observations that can assist current managers. Recognizing individual manō and knowing that their personality types can be understood, management decisions regarding these and other culturally important species need not be based solely on the most current Western Science data, but the much longer dataset of knowledge stored in our oral literature and currently being gathered through indigenous methodologies.

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Footnote: *Pu‘uloa is the inland waters now referred to as Pearl Harbor. His name is descriptive, describing him as the the little red shark that descends from Pu‘uloa.

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Table 1. Short Description of Manō Behaviors and the Source of Information

Source (manō)	Author	Summary
Kaʻehuikimanōopuʻuloa	WH Uaua	Maps the movement patterns and pilgrimage of this young manō throughout Hawaiʻi and Kahiki
Nanaue	Nakuina	Teaches about feeding behavior and man's role
He moʻolo kaʻao no Punia	Hale Kuamoʻo	A story about man-eating sharks and the boy who outsmarted them
Ka hana lawaiʻa a me nā koʻa o nā kai ewalu	Maly	Interviews of elders talking about human-shark relationships
Register of shark attacks in the Hawaiian islands	Balazs	Documented shark attacks, 1779-1993
Hawaiian shark aumakua	Beckwith	Collection of ʻaumakua stories and a listing of manō names
Mikololou	Webb	A man-eating manō that was forced out of Puʻuloa when he tried to attack humans
Shark that Came for Poi	n/a	A manō faithfully carries paʻi ʻai to an old couple who no longer could farm kalo for themselves
Capturing a Tiger Shark	n/a	Hawaiian aliʻi (chiefs) methods to prepare, capture, and use manō
Kaʻahupahau	Pukui	Many people in Puʻuloa had a close relationship with this guardian shark who ensured no man-eaters entered the harbor.

Table 2. Correlation of Shark Nomenclature

Hawaiian	Common	Scientific
Manō	General term for sharks	
Manō kihikihi	Scalloped Hammerhead	*Sphyrna lewini*
Manō kihikihi	Smooth Hammerhead	*Sphyrna zygaena*
Manō pāʻele	Blacktip Reef	*Carcharhinus melanopterus*
Manō laukahiʻu	Thresher	*Alopias pelagicus*
Lālākea	Whitetip Reef	*Triaenodon obesus*
Niuhi	Tiger	*Galeocerdo cuvier*
Niuhi	White	*Carcharodon carcharias*

Table 3. Common Manō References as Defined Using the Pukui and Elbert Dictionary

Hawaiian	Translation
manō aliʻi	Shark chief or ruler
manō aloaliʻi	Shark of the royal court
manō ʻaumakua	Family god, deified ancestor in shark form
manō hoaaliʻi	Companion of a shark chief, fellow shark chief
manō huhū	Angry or offended shark
manō kupua	Shark that possesses powers, a supernatural being possessing several forms
niuhi	Man-eating shark; large and fierce shark longer than 3.5 m