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Paniolo culture—rooted in the ways of Mexican-Spanish vaqueros—has a nearly two-hundred-year history in the Hawaiian Islands. In 1832, Mōʻī (King) Kamehameha III imported the first "cowboys" from the San Diego area of what was then the Republic of Mexico to tackle the problem of a growing cattle population running rampant over Honolulu. From these foreign roots grew a rich and skilled local cowboy tradition that at its peak in the early 1900s saw Hawaiian cowboys proclaimed world champion steer ropers at a major US competition. A robust ranching business in Hawai'i has helped keep paniolo life alive, far from its continental origins, out in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

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