

He 'Ōlelo Wehewehe
An Explanation for Readers

I prefer to use 'ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian language) terms, especially those that refer to institutions and kinship connections, because many Hawaiian terms do not have a direct correlation in English. Although I offer translations throughout *Facing the Spears of Change*, and might even repeat a definition of a term in different chapters to remind readers of their meaning, in this section, I give working definitions and contextual information on a few culturally laden terms that require more than a brief explication. However, my explanations are not meant to be an exhaustive treatment of the terms found herein. Moreover, all translations are mine unless indicated otherwise. Furthermore, I do not italicize Hawaiian words. When quoting Hawaiian text, I do not add diacritics (the kahakō indicates a macron and the 'okina indicates a glottal stop) unless they are in the original. If the quoted text uses apostrophes as a diacritic instead of 'okina, I report it as such, but I will use 'okina in my translations of that passage. In my translations of quoted text, I add diacritics when the meaning of a word is evident by the context in which it is being used. In my own discussion, I use diacritics. Importantly, Hawaiian names have meanings, and the use of diacritics fixes a meaning rather than allowing the possibility of several. If I am unsure of a name's meaning, I avoid

assigning it one by adding diacritics. In this case, I follow Noenoe Silva's example: "for names of persons, I conservatively avoid using marks, except in cases where such spelling has become standard (e.g., Kalākaua) or where the meaning of the name has been explained or is obvious."¹ Although I may add diacritics to names in my own discussion, when citing works consulted, I write them as they originally appear (e.g., Ii, "Na Hunahuna," June 12, 1869, versus 'Īi, "Na Hunahuna," June 12, 1869). Lastly, any emphasis in quoted material is found in the original, and any emphasis I add is noted.

ALI'I, ALI'I NUI, AND MŌ'I: The term "ali'i," often translated in English using the male-gender-inflected term "chief," is a gender-neutral term referring to a Hawaiian or Hawaiians belonging to the ruling class, whether they rule or not. Members of this class were further distinguished according to rank, which was ultimately based on genealogy. Historian Davida Malo offers ten different classifications, and historian Samuel Mānaiakalani Kamakau offers seven. Their classifications differ, but they both place the offspring of unions between siblings at the top of the hierarchy.²

The term "ali'i nui" refers to the ali'i who belonged to the highest echelons of the general class known as ali'i. Generally, ali'i nui were the product of selective inbreeding. According to our cosmogonic genealogy chants, the ali'i nui were the direct descendants of our gods, and as such, they were considered and treated as divine humans. Thus, the ali'i nui practiced inbreeding to maintain the purity of their lineage. The closer the relationship between parents, the less diluted the lineage. Offspring of unions between ali'i nui siblings were of the highest rank, especially if their parents had also been the product of inbreeding. Next in rank were the offspring of uncle/niece and aunt/nephew pairings. At the opposite end of the spectrum were the lowest-ranking ali'i, who often served their higher-ranking relatives.³

The word "mō'i" refers to an ali'i who had supreme jurisdiction or power over a district or island.⁴ In Privy Council Minutes, which are given in Hawaiian and English, "mō'i" is translated as "king." The difference between ali'i nui and mō'i can be understood this way: while mō'i such as Liholiho (Kamehameha II) and Kauikeaouli (Kamehameha III) were ali'i nui, not all ali'i nui were mō'i (e.g., Keōpūolani, Kamehameha I's sacred wahine and mother of Liholiho, Kauikeaouli, and Nāhi'ena'ena).

In addition, I capitalize ali'i, mō'i, and kuhina nui when they are used as titles before a name. When they are being used as generic nouns, I do not capitalize them (e.g., ali'i children as in "royal children"). Lastly, I treat the 'Ai Kapu and Kapu System as proper nouns. Moreover, rather than spell "Ai Kapu" as "Aikapu," I separate it to draw attention to its core meaning (the idea of food or food consumption as sacred and therefore in need of restriction). A search for the terms "Ai Kapu" and "Aikapu" in the *Papakilo Database* reveals both spellings were common in the Hawaiian-language newspapers. This is also true for many other terms.

HOAHĀNAU, MAKUAHINE, MAKUAKĀNE, PO'OLUA: The word “hoahānau” is a general term for a sibling or near cousin, while makuahine and makuakāne refer respectively to a mother or aunt, and a father or uncle, which speaks to the inclusive nature of ‘Ōiwi kinship even though ‘Ōiwi recognized the biological difference between a sibling and a cousin, or a parent and a parent’s sibling. My decision on whether to spell these words as “hoahānau” versus “hoa hanau,” or “makuakane” versus “makua kane,” is based on my search in the *Papakilo Database* to see which term was most used. I also use “hoahānau” as a mass noun, that is, the hoahānau Keaka and Luluka, because in this case its use as a plural is clear. In the case of po’olua, I have adopted the spellings John Papa ‘Ī‘i used in his writings when he described his parentage, which was “poolua,” rather than “po’o lua,” the spelling adopted in the *Hawaiian Dictionary*. Po’olua refers to a child who is recognized as having two fathers, that is, the child’s mother had two kāne (male partners) at the time she conceived. I apply this same rule to other words or place-names (e.g., ‘Ī‘i writes “Hale o Keawe” rather than “Haleokeawe,” as Kamakau spells it).

KANAKA MAOLI: Kanaka (pl. Kānaka) refers both to Hawaiians specifically and to humankind generally. Maoli refers to that which is “native, indigenous, aborigine, genuine, true, real, actual.”⁵ Although Mary Kawena Pukui translated Kanaka Maoli as *Full-blooded Hawaiian person*,⁶ it is commonly used today to refer to any descendant of the seafaring people who arrived nearly two thousand years ago at ko Hawai‘i Pae ‘Āina (the island chain known today as the Hawaiian Islands). Over hundreds of generations, our language and culture evolved, shaping us into a distinct people referred to today as Hawaiians.

The first use of Kanaka Maoli in searchable Hawaiian-language newspapers on the electronic archive *Ulu kau* is on April 18, 1834, in *Ka Lama Hawaii* in an acknowledgment that alcohol had a negative influence in the lives of “kanaka maoli” and “malihini” (foreigners), which was signed by thirty-four foreign ship captains and sailors.⁷ In the earliest newspapers (*Ka Lama Hawaii* and *Ke Kumu Hawaii*), which ran from 1834 to 1839, there were 59 instances of “kanaka maoli” and one instance of “wahine maoli,” while “kanaka” appears 73,583 times. Also, “kanaka maoli” was used to describe the indigenous peoples of Asia on August 15, 1838.⁸ Other identity markers commonly used include “Kanaka Hawaii” (first use is on December 24, 1834),⁹ “Oiwī” (singular and plural, first clear use in connection with people is on January 16, 1864),¹⁰ “Poe Oiwī” (first use on October 3, 1868),¹¹ “Kanaka Oiwī” (first use on October 14, 1875),¹² “Oiwī Hawaii” (first use on August 10, 1876),¹³ and “Kanaka Oiwī Maoli” (first use on March 15, 1897).¹⁴ I use these identity markers interchangeably with “Hawaiian.” Also, I use “Kanaka Maoli” as a mass noun rather than “Kānaka Maoli” (e.g., Kanaka Maoli culture as in “Hawaiian culture”).

More research needs to be done on the identity markers earlier 'Ōiwi used for themselves and the evolution of those terms after the increase in numbers of foreigners in Hawai'i. The idea of "native" or "indigenous" is embedded in our descriptors for ourselves that include "maoli," but I believe that descriptors using this qualifier are linked to an increase in foreign visitors and residents, and the need to distinguish between 'Ōiwi and foreigners in general discourse, or perhaps even as a discursive strategy to mark our kuleana to ko Hawai'i Pae 'Āina. My point is supported by the fact that Kanaka, rather than Kanaka Maoli, was the term used most often for Hawaiians in early newspapers. In contrast, terms like Kulāiwi and 'Ōiwi, which include the word "iwi," or bones, are descriptors that are rooted in 'Ōiwi ways of knowing and being. Bones carry our mana (spiritual power, or essence). A part of us—who we were when we were alive—remains in our bones after we die. The bones of our ancestors are buried in the 'āina or hidden in its crevices and caves. In other words, our identity is tied to the awareness that for countless generations the mana of our people has been a part of ko Hawai'i Pae 'Āina.

The issue of how to translate our Hawaiian-language descriptors for ourselves only arises when we use these terms when we are writing in English, then are required to define them. Despite the history of terms that include "maoli," I prefer not to add the qualifiers Native, Ethnic, Indigenous, or Aboriginal to "Hawaiian" because we are, by right of genealogy, the indigenous peoples of Hawai'i. Larry Kimura has also adopted this strategy in his report "Native Hawaiian Culture" in *Native Hawaiians Study Commission: Report on the Culture, Needs, and Concerns of Native Hawaiians, Pursuant to Public Law 96-565, Title III. Final Report, volume 1*. An editorial footnote states: "Mr. Kimura uses the term 'Hawaiian' in the same way that 'native Hawaiian' is used in the majority of this Report; that is, to signify those persons who have any amount of the blood of those who inhabited the Hawaiian Islands prior to 1778."¹⁵

I suspect the discursive practice of adding qualifiers such as Native, Ethnic, Indigenous, or Aboriginal is a reaction to the American practice of marking identity according to place of residence, that is, Californians live in California, as evidenced in the U.S. Government Press Office Style Manual.¹⁶ While I understand the rationale behind this strategy, I feel it inadvertently validates the misconception that whoever resides in Hawai'i can be termed Hawaiian regardless of their ethnicity. Adding the qualifier "Native" underscores our status, and thus I recognize its use as an act of insistence and resistance. However, the very need or desire to mark our indigeneity using "Native Hawaiian" rather than "Hawaiian" is worth pondering. Furthermore, it also puts the burden of marking indigeneity on 'Ōiwi because "Hawaiian" has been appropriated.¹⁷ This appropriation is especially egregious given the role the United

States has played in Hawaiian history, which ultimately resulted in the Hawai'i Kingdom becoming the fiftieth state.¹⁸

KĀNE AND WAHINE: Kāne refers to a man, male, or romantic partner of a woman. Wahine refers to a woman, female, or romantic partner of a man. Because 'Ōiwi did not have anything like the Western institution of marriage, the Western concepts of "husband" and "wife" do not accurately capture the many nuances of kāne and wahine according to a traditional understanding of the term in connection with the idea of partner. Although the union known as ho'āo is translated as "marriage,"¹⁹ Pukui offers that it probably meant "to stay until daylight," since "ao" refers to day or daylight.²⁰ Thus, we should understand ho'āo not as a ritualized union, but more as a question of habit or intention. However, after Christianity was introduced to ko Hawai'i Pae 'Āina, 'Ōiwi did formalize unions through the rite of Christian marriage. That ho'āo was not a Hawaiian equivalent to the rite of Christian marriage is evidenced by the use of "male" (ma-lay) or "mare" (ma-ray), a transliteration of "marry" or "married" in marriage announcements rather than "ho'āo" in Hawaiian-language newspapers.

