

THE WIND GOURD OF LA'AMAOMAO

The Hawaiian Story of Pāka'a and Kūapāka'a

Revised Edition, 2005

MOSES KUAEA NAKUINA

"This rich and very readable translation should become a classic in Hawaiian/English literature." —Tino Ramirez, *Honolulu Star Bulletin*

"... a brilliant achievement. Mookini and Nākoa's *The Wind Gourd of La'amaomao* is yet another important contribution to the growing canon of precious Hawaiian works rendered into English. It should grace the libraries of all intellectually curious Hawaiians and Hawaiians at heart" —Niklaus R. Schweizer, *The Hawaiian Journal of History*

"The Moses Nakuina version of Kūapāka'a is a native Hawaiian literary classic which has never been fully reproduced in English translation. Now that it is available in this joint effort by Esther T. Mookini and Sarah Nākoa, a wider public may enjoy it. The heroes in the story are Pāka'a and Kūapāka'a, the son and grandson of Kūanu'uanu, the iwikuamo'o or 'backbone' retainer of Keawenuia'umi, the ruling chief of Hawai'i. Pāka'a's ambitious competitors at court have caused the king to wrongfully remove him from his place of honor. The emphasis in the heroic outcome of the challenge to right wrongs is given to adolescent courage against the formidable power and skill of clever but undeserving, sycophantic cheats in government. The heroes overcome their opponents by remarkable skill in the language of riddling, but not without the love of their parents and the practice with training to prepare them for the test of their lives." —Ruby Kawena Johnson, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

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TRANSLATED

BY

ESTHER T. MOOKINI & SARAH NĀKOA

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*The Hawaiian Story
of
Pāka'a and Kūapāka'a*

*Personal Attendants of Keawenuia'umi
Ruling Chief of Hawaii
and
Descendants of La'amaomao*

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INTRODUCTION

The Wind Gourd of La'amaomao is a translation of *Moolelo Hawaii o Pakaa a me Ku-a-Pakaa, na Kahu Iwikuamoo o Keawenuiaumi, ke Alii o Hawaii, a o na Moopuna hoi a Laamaomao* ("The Hawaiian Story of Pakaa and Ku-a-Pakaa, the Personal Attendants of Keawenuiaumi, the Chief of Hawaii, and the Descendants of Laamaomao"), a traditional legend collected from various sources, edited, and expanded by Moses Kuaea Nakuina, and published in 1902. In his preface, addressed to "those who truly love the Ali'i and the Lahui [Hawaiian Nation]," Nakuina says he felt great mana (power) in the book and explains its value: "First, it is written in the authentic Hawaiian language as it was heard in the past. Second, some songs, improvised chants, and sacred chants have been forgotten, and others will soon be forgotten; we will never remember them if books such as this one are not published. Third, the book contains the names of the winds of all the Hawaiian Islands, known as the Territory of Hawaii today. Fourth, and most importantly, the book expresses the sincere love for the Ali'i the kānaka of Hawai'i felt in the past and still feel today." Nine years after the overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy in 1893 by Americans, Nakuina was calling on his Hawaiian readers to remember their true leaders, nation, and culture: "Here are Pāka'a and Kūapāka'a searching for all of you; recognize them if they peep in at your doors, and call out and welcome them into your homes."

Set mainly on Hawai'i, Kaua'i, and Moloka'i, the story concerns the close relationship between the ali'i and his kahu iwikuamo'o, or personal attendant, and their responsibilities to each other and the people they ruled. The story portrays the ideal attendant as one who was caring and just toward both his ali'i and the maka'ainana, or commoners. Ancestry was essential in establishing status and access to privileges and special powers (such as control over the winds); but also important was the ability to carry out efficiently and fairly the duties of leadership.

Judging from its extensive development and the number of versions recorded in Hawaiian after Hawaiians adopted the haole writing system

in the 19th century, the story seems to have been highly regarded both for its artistry and for promoting such values as honesty, generosity, loyalty, filial piety, and justice (which included vengeance). The first known publication of the legend in Hawaiian is a rendition by S.K. Kuapuu simply entitled *He Wahi Moolelo*, which appeared serially in the Hawaiian newspaper *Ka Hae Hawaii* from April 17–June 19, 1861. A version by S.M. Kamakau entitled *He Moolelo no Pakaa* (“The Story of Pakaa”) appeared serially in the Hawaiian newspapers *Ke Au Okoa* and *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* from 1869–1871. Another Hawaiian text of the Pāka’a story appears in Fornander’s *Hawaiian Antiquities and Folk-lore* (Vol. 4, 72–135). This rendition, accompanied by an English translation, does not contain all of the incidents and chants that appear in Nakuina’s, but the two stories are similar and some of the chants are identical. Nakuina seems to have used all three of these earlier Hawaiian texts as sources for his expanded version.

English renditions of the story include a long version in William Hyde Rice’s collection *Hawaiian Legends* (1923); a short version in Thomas G. Thrum’s collection *More Hawaiian Folktales* (1923); a short, young adult’s version in Cora Wells Thorpe’s *In the Path of the Trade Winds* (1924); a short children’s version in Mary Kawena Pukui and Caroline Curtis’ collection *The Water of Kane* (1951); and most recently, a book-length young adult’s version by Marcia Brown entitled *The Backbone of the King* (1966), which is based on a translation of Nakuina’s text by Dorothy Kahananui. Of the English versions, Rice’s most closely resembles Nakuina’s in its completeness of plot, although Rice summarizes or omits the chants, which are important elements in the artistry and plot of the story. According to the introduction to his collection, Rice heard the story from “a man from Hawai’i named Wiu,” but Nakuina’s story may have been the original source. This present text, unlike earlier English versions, is a complete translation rather than a simplification or summary.

The wind gourd referred to in the title of this legend was believed to contain all the winds of Hawai’i, which could be called forth by chanting their names. According to Handy and Handy, the gourd is an embodiment of Lono, the Hawaiian god of agriculture and fertility: “Lono is the gourd; the cosmic gourd is the heavens whence come winds, clouds, and rain” (220). In the Pāka’a legend, the gourd, along with the marvelous wind chants naming dozens of local winds, is passed down from La’amaomao, the Hawaiian wind

goddess (lit. “distant sacredness”), to her granddaughter La’amaomao; to her granddaughter’s son Pāka’a; to Pāka’a’s son, Kū-a-Pāka’a. In “The Triple Marriage of Laa-Mai-Kahiki” (Kalākaua, *The Legends and Myths of Hawaii*), La’amaomao is described as a god rather than a goddess. He accompanies Moikeha to Hawai’i from Kahiki and settles at Hale-o-Lono on the island of Moloka’i, where he was worshiped as an ‘aumakua, or deity, of the winds. The female gender of the wind deity in the Pāka’a story seems to be a Hawaiian development as the wind deity in other Polynesian traditions is male (Ra’a—Society Islands, Raka—Cook Islands, Raka-maomao—New Zealand).

In Mangaia, in the Cook Islands, a gourd representing the heavenly dome was also used in traditional times to control the winds: “...the high priest possessed a magic calabash, a miniature universe, which had holes bored in a circle at equal distances around its middle, representing the openings on the horizon through which the thirty-two winds of the compass were supposed to blow. When a voyage was contemplated to a distant island the priest was induced to stop up all the holes in the calabash except the one at the particular point of the compass from which the prospective travelers desired the wind to blow for the speedy consummation of the voyage” (Makemson 147). Lewis quotes Gill about the importance of knowledge of the winds: “In olden times, great stress was laid on this knowledge for the purpose of fishing, and especially for their long sea voyages from group to group. At the edge of the horizon are a series of holes ... through which Raka, the god of winds, and his children, love to blow...” (75).

In the Bishop Museum collection is a gourd named the wind gourd of La’amaomao. Its inscription reads: “The wind gourd of Laamaomao that was in the keeping of Hauna, personal attendant of Lonoikamakahiki I [Keawenuia’umi’s youngest son]. It was passed on to Pakaa, a personal attendant of Keawenuiaumi. It was placed in the royal burial cave of Hoaiiku on the sacred cliffs of Keoua, at Kaawaloa, island of Hawaii, and received by King Kalakaua I on January 1, 1883, from Kaapana, caretaker of Hoaiiku.” The gourd was donated to the museum by Princess Kalaniana’ole in 1923.

Dennis Kawaharada
Honolulu, 1992

MOSES KUAEA NAKUINA

Moses Kuaea Nakuina (born July 12, 1867, in Waialua, O'ahu) was the first president of the Christian Endeavor Union in Hawai'i (1903), a member of the Territorial House of Representatives (elected from Maui, Moloka'i, and Lāna'i in 1904), and editor of the Hawaiian newspaper *Ka Hoaloha* (1907). His parents were John and Kaimawaho Nakuina, who were married on Maui; he was the grandson of Puakaloheau, the great-grandson of Kekaiakea, and the nephew of Reverend Kuaea of Kaumakapili Church in Honolulu. Nakuina attended Royal School in Honolulu. He went to the boarding school in Malumalu, Kaua'i, when his father became a county judge in Hanalei. When his father was sent to teach in Hilo, Nakuina attended Hilo Boarding School. Later he continued his education at Royal School on O'ahu.

After his father's death, Nakuina went to work at the Government Records Office in Honolulu to support himself and his mother. The office was administered by Emma M. Beckley, a part-Hawaiian woman who was a commissioner of water rights, an authority on Hawaiian culture, and the first curator of Hawai'i's National Museum, as well as an author and storyteller. Moses married Emma (the widow of part-Hawaiian Fred K. Beckley) in 1887, the year he began working in the Records Office. In addition to serving in positions of business, government, and the church, Nakuina collected and published Hawaiian folktales and wrote and translated articles on Hawaiian culture. He spent the last years of his life as a minister of Kaumakapili Church, working strenuously with the prohibition campaign in 1910. He died at the age of 44 on August 3, 1911 at his Kaimukī home. In 1915, a bronze tablet in his memory was placed in Kaumakapili Church by the Christian Endeavor Societies.

In addition to *Moolelo Hawaii o Pakaa a me Ku-a-Pakaa* (The Hawaiian Story of Pakaa and Ku-a-Pakaa), Nakuina also published an incomplete story entitled *Moolelo Hawaii o Kalapana, ke keiki hoopapa o Puna* (The Hawaiian Story of Kalapana, a native-born child of Puna) in 1902. His articles and English translations of Hawaiian articles by other writers appeared in Thrum's Hawaiian Annual and include "Stories of Menchunes" (1895), "Hawaiian Surf Riding" (1896), "Fish Stories and Superstitions" (1901), "Ku-ula, the Fish God of Hawai'i" (1901), and "Aiai, Son of Ku-ula" (1902).

THE TRANSLATORS

Esther T. Mookini is a retired Hawaiian language and history instructor. Her publications include *O na Holoholona Wawae Eha o Ka Lama Hawaii/The Four-Footed Animals of Ka Lama Hawaii*, 1985) and *The Hawaiian Newspapers* (1974). She is also co-translator with Erin C. Neizmen of *He Moolelo no Kamapuaa/The Story of Kamapuaa* (1978) and co-compiler of *Place Names of Hawaii* (1974), *The Pocket Hawaiian Dictionary* (1975), and *Pocket Place Names of Hawaii* (1989).

Sarah Nākoa (1911-1990) taught Hawaiian Language at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and Kamehameha Schools and was a translator for the Hawai'i State Archives. She is the author of *Lei Momi o 'Ewa* (1979), a collection of stories about her home district of 'Ewa.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Sarah Nākoa and I decided to translate the Pāka'a legend in the summer of 1985, and for five years she worked closely with me. She passed away soon after the translation was completed in 1990.

Aunty Sarah had a deep and intimate knowledge of the Hawaiian language, Hawaiian values, and the Hawaiian way of life and gave meaning to many words, phrases, and lines which are esoteric today. The chants in the Pāka'a story were especially problematic. They are full of puns, riddles, allusions, and archaic words that make them difficult for the modern translator to understand and render into English. The translations of the chants in the Fornander collection have been used as guides and adopted in places.

My teacher and friend Ruby Kawena Johnson also helped clarify some difficult passages containing puns and riddles. She has graciously answered my calls for help and has given her knowledge unselfishly. Mahalo au iā 'oe, e Kawena.

Richard Hamasaki and Kihei de Silva read the translation carefully and made important and insightful comments.

John Charlot has been a steady supporter. For allowing me to read his collection of information on Nakuina, my deep gratitude. To his student Leinaala Simmons, thank you for doing the initial research on Nakuina and for allowing us to use it in this work.

Ruth Horie of the Bishop Museum Library was also a great help, answering my questions and sending me materials from the library. She compiled the Nakuina biographical material with the help of Leinaala Simmons' and John Charlot's notes and collection of photocopied material, and accompanied me on my visits to Aunty Sarah on a number of occasions. Mahalo nui loa, e Luka. Verlie Ann Malina-Wright, Mahealani McClellan, and Oakleigh Akaka of the Kamehameha Schools Continuing Education Program helped make every step of the translation project move along smoothly, and Kawao Durante gave her support from the start. To Dennis Kawaharada, my friend and editor, he lei nou, no kou lokomaika'i.

Esther T. Mookini
Honolulu, 1992

In Memory of
Sarah Keli'ilolena Lum Nākoa
(September 2, 1911--June 14, 1990)