I ka ʻŌlelo nō ke Ola (In Words there is Life): An Introduction to Hawaiian Rhetoric

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Introduction

This resource introduces students to Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) rhetoric as a robust tradition that ranges from ancient political counselors and priests who engaged in debate, dialogue, and speechmaking (all with reference to expansive genealogies) to post-contact and contemporary movements to preserve, promote, and fight for the people of the land.

Natural environments are intrinsically linked to Kanaka Maoli identity. Kanaka Maoli creation myths involve the appearance of things like coral, fish, plants, and birds before the gods or humans come on the scene, and these myths weave genealogical and familial lines between all of these creations. As such, Kanaka Maoli see themselves as part of nature and the land rather than apart of them. A love of and responsibility for the ocean and land flow naturally from these beliefs. Kanaka Maoli persuasion assumes specialized, grounded knowledge of the geography of each island and the plants and creatures that inhabit it. Kanaka Maoli approaches to communication also take knowledge of and appeal to these genealogies as preconditions for successful persuasion. Hawaiian terms for rhetorical genres and figures reflect these epistemologies.

The illegal seizure of the Kingdom of Hawaiʻi by British and American businessmen and politicians and subsequent repression of Kanaka Maoli cultural practices and language continues to cast a shadow on the islands. From the moment Captain Cook set foot on the islands, there have been efforts to fight back and preserve and maintain Kanaka Maoli culture. When European and American missionaries brought the printing press to Hawaiʻi, many Kanaka Maoli scholars immediately sought to document their cultural practices, making a point to publish their work both in English and Hawaiian. These efforts to not only document but also sustain their culture guide Kanaka Maoli rhetorics to this day. This ongoing "Hawaiian Renaissance" that has led to major developments such as the rewriting of the Hawaiʻi State Constitution and the founding of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs in 1978, the 1993 U.S. Apology Resolution, and a wealth of cultural flourishing. With the goals of both cultural and political sovereignty, Kanaka Maoli rhetorics look both backward and forward, defining not only the rhetoric of the past but also the rhetoric of the future.

Finally, Kanaka Maoli rhetoric invites students to engage in similar acts of recovery and recontextualization. When Polynesian navigators from the Marquesas Islands and Tahiti originally arrived in Hawaiʻi hundreds of years ago, they brought with them a broad range of communicative practices that are shared to this day by Moana cultures across Polynesia and to some extent across all Oceania. The occasional notes for the terms below suggest some of these linguistic and cultural connections. The Kanaka Maoli remained in contact with neighbors of the other island groups; however, these new arrivals would of course go on to make these practices uniquely their own. As such, Kanaka Maoli rhetoric serves not only as a site to understand a single culture but also as a starting point to explore other Moana rhetorics.

Course Applicability

Undergraduate Courses

Introduction to Rhetorical Theory
Comparative Rhetoric
Cultural Rhetorics
American Literature
Rhetorical Style
Argumentation and Debate

Graduate Courses

History of Rhetoric
Rhetorical Theory
Research Methods
Indigenous Rhetoric
Decolonial Rhetoric
Indigenous Literatures

Key Pedagogical Themes

Relationality. Kanaka Maoli rhetoric provides students with many opportunities to think about who we are in relation to others, whether that is in the beginning of a course or later when we engage in peer review. In the West, genealogies are often used to divide, to show how we are unique and not related to others. The Kanaka Maoli concept of moʻokūʻauhau invites students to think differently, to see genealogies as tools for strengthening ties to each other and to all nature.

Cultural context of figures. Kanaka Maoli rhetoric has much to offer our discussions of figures. When teaching about metaphors, for example, we often discuss how metaphors work but not why we use metaphors beyond clarification. Kanaka Maoli rhetoric is less concerned with "metaphors we live by" than with "metaphors we commune by."

Dialogue and Debate. Hoʻoponopono and hoʻopāpā are two key genres of persuasion in Native Hawaiian culture with multiple meanings across time. Hoʻoponopono originally meant something more like conciliary dialogue while hoʻopāpā meant riddling debates. Both genres are mentioned in Haunani-Kay Trask's 1993 speech on Hawaiian sovereignty as still being relevant to Kanaka Maoli culture today.

Rhetorical and Aesthetic Sovereignty. In *Finding Meaning*, McDougall asserts that Kanaka Maoli writers should and do strive for aesthetic sovereignty, to define their own aesthetics and standards of taste. The concept of aesthetic sovereignty builds on and extends discussions of the rhetoric of survivance and rhetorical sovereignty.

Historical Recovery. While many rhetorical practices continue to this day and outstanding theorists abound, Hawaiian rhetoric has also been very dependent on scholars who seek to recover forgotten rhetorical practices. Malcolm Chun and Hiapo Perriera are noteworthy examples of recovering kākāʻōlelo, a practice somewhat lost in the forced *letteraturizzazione* of Kanaka Maoli rhetoric. Both rely on historical descriptions as well as cross-cultural comparison with other Moana cultural practices named and unnamed, historical and contemporary.

Essential Terminology

Kākāʻōlelo ("fence [with] words"): Native Hawaiian orator who gives haʻiʻōlelo or speeches; compare to the Samoan tulafale and failauga who give lāuga and the Māori kaikōrero who gives whaikōrero; also used to refer to oratory itself. Drawing Davida Malo's description, Chun explains that traditionally the kālaimoku or king's counselor specialized in kākāʻōlelo. Ing also notes that, post-contact, this term has also been used to refer to lawyers and logic. Due to strictures on Hawaiian oral traditions and the turn to writing, kākāʻōlelo is much less common today; however, Chun and Perriera have both worked to recover and reconstruct kākāʻōlelo for modern use through comparative rhetorical analysis with other Moana traditions of oratory.

Meiwi (combination of mele and iwi, "song bone"): Rhetorical figure or literary device, sometimes referred to as meiwi moʻokalaleo, "literary devices."[1] These devices include moʻokūʻauhau (genealogies), helu (lists), pinaʻi (repetition), inoa (names), mele (chant), ʻōlelo noʻeau (proverbs), hoʻokalakupua (supernatural characteristics), ʻēkoʻa (oppositional but complementary dyads), kīkahō (interjections), hoʻolauna (introductory remarks), hopena (use of the phrase "a hiki i kēia lā" [until this very day]), kuʻi (transition), kohu (imagery), hoʻokanaka (personification), akapili (apposition), hoʻomakili (flashforwarding).[2] Nordstrom and hoʻomanawanui also include hoʻomaoe (allusions), kaona (hidden meanings), and pono (balance).[3] These terms are significant not only for the cross-cultural analyses they enable but also the fact that they are culturally situated and serve as manifestations of deeper Kanaka Maoli beliefs.

Moʻokūʻauhau ("genealogical succession"): Genealogies; compare to Tongan hohoko and Māori whakapapa. As outlined in the *Kumulipo* or Hawaiian creation myth, all of creation– ocean, land, plants, animals, gods, humans– are genealogically related to one another. Thus, every formal interaction, speech, or story must begin by defining how the agents are related to one another in this greater cosmogonic genealogy.

Kaona ("hidden meaning"). Kaona refers to the use of metaphors, allusions, double meanings, and other forms of concealed reference. Kaona "can be found in all genres of Hawaiian expression."[4] As McDougall explains, however, there is much more to kaona than a mere process of figuration. Through the process of creating and discovering layers of meaning, kaona constitutes communities and can "effect change, especially decolonial change, through assertions of rhetorical and aesthetic sovereignty within those communities."[5]

Moʻolelo ("succession of talk"): Hawaiian history, narrative, literature and/or storytelling; compare to the Samoan tala and fāgogo and the Māori kōrero. These stories are told through mele either with or without accompanying hula. These stories often tell of historical and mythologized figures such as Lonoikamakahiki, a chief who was proficient in hoʻopāpā and relied on his own wits more than on his kālaimoku. These stories are not merely accounts of distant beings; rather, these stories are connected to specific people in Hawaiians' moʻokūʻauhau and the specific spaces they

1. See Perriera, *He Haʻiʻōlelo Kuʻuna.*
2. Perriera, *He Haʻiʻōlelo Kuʻuna* p. xv.
3. Nordstrom and hoʻomanawanui, *He Inoa no ke Kanaka,* pp. 504-505.
4. McDougall, *Finding Meaning* p. 23.
5. McDougall, *Finding Meaning* p. 25.

inhabited on the ʻāina. As McDougall explains, these moʻolelo also include many layers of kaona and are connected to one another as well through kaona connectivity.

ʻŌlelo noʻeau ("wise sayings"): Proverbs; compare to the Samoan ʻalagaupu, Tongan palōveape, and Māori whakataukī. In many instances, the ʻōlelo noʻeau can be better understood in context of the moʻolelo from which they are derived.

Hoʻoponopono ("to put right"): A process of healing relationships through counseling and dialogue; uniquely Hawaiian, but consider the Tongan talanoa and the Māori hui. As Pukui explains, hoʻoponopono is nowadays primarily a family matter involving prayers, self-reflection, honesty, restitution, and forgiveness. However, Chun identifies moʻolelo in which chiefs would engage in similar dialogues in the presence of counselors (both kahuna and kālaimoku) who were familiar with the parties' genealogies– a form of counseling that conceives of family much more broadly. Despite colonial efforts to suppress traditional Hawaiian healing practices, Pukui's work draws attention to the ways in which hoʻoponopono continues to be practiced in family settings. Unfortunately, New Age gurus have also taken notice, and often drown out Kanaka Maoli approaches to this practice by making it more about meditation than about mediation.

Hoʻopāpā ("to touch"): This term typically refers to a debate or contest of wits. In the traditional use, hoʻopāpā might entail training children in logic using riddles (nane) or interlocutors challenging each other with higher stakes riddles.[6] Pukui considers hoʻopāpā a type of "constructive aggression" that "called for a debater's logic, quick thinking, good vocabulary, and a store of background knowledge."[7] As such, kaona is central to this genre. In more recent times, the term has come to mean to dispute or debate.[8]

Mele ("song/chant"): Mele is a general term referring to songs and chants; compare to the Māori waiata. These typically fall into two categories: mele hula or chants with accompaniment and mele oli or chants without accompaniment. The many subgenres include mele inoa (honorific name chants), mele koihonua (genealogical chants), mele maʻi (genital chant), mele kanikau (death chants), mele kāhea (entrance chants), mele hai pule (religious songs), mele hoʻoipoipo (love songs), and mele hoʻonānā keiki (lullaby songs). Mele become fully embodied through hula.

6. see Charlot, *Classical Hawaiian Education.*
7. Pukui, Haertig, and Lee, *Nānā I Ke Kumu* p. 218.
8. see Trask, "Speeches from the Centennial of the Overthrow."

ʻĒkoʻa ("opposites"): This term refers to complementary opposites, such as darkness/light and male/female. These pairings are in many ways architectonic; the *Kumulipo* itself is divided into several epochs of darkness and several epochs of light, with many lists of husband/wife pairings. As a figure, use of opposites suggests this primordial balancing.

Primary Sources

The Kumulipo: An Hawaiian Creation Myth. **Translated by Queen Liliʻuokalani. Kentfield, CA: Pueo Press, 1978. Reprint of *An Account of the Creation of the World According to Hawaiian Tradition*, 1897. https://sacred-texts.com/pac/lku/index.htm**

As the title suggests, the *Kumulipo* is the main Hawaiian creation myth, and many Kanaka Maoli rhetors through the years (including historical figures such as Queen Liliʻuokalani and more recently poets such as Jamaica Heolimeleikalani Osorio) reference this text to assert their rights and connections. As hoʻomanawanui explains, this account is divided into eight epochs of night and eight epochs of light and demonstrates the use of helu (listings) and ʻēkoʻa (complementary pairings; and, as such, is a great place for students to see meiwi in action, consider how culture springs from mythic roots, and explore a text that has been used for rhetorical purposes.[9] Moʻokūʻauhau is especially central to this myth, and the *Kumulipo* weaves a genealogical mat from the birth of the universe itself up to the birth of aliʻi Kalananuiʻiamamao, showing how all things, from coral to humans, are related to one another.

Pukui, Mary Kawena, Haertig, E.W., and Lee, Catherine A. *Nānā I Ke Kumu (Look to the Source*). 2 Vols. Honolulu: Hui Hānai, Queen Liliʻuokalani Children's Center, 1972. Volume 1: https://ulukau.org/ulukau-books/?a=d&d=EBOOK-QLCC1. Volume 2: https://ulukau.org/ulukau-books/?a=d&d=EBOOK-QLCC2.

A key text of the Second Hawaiian Renaissance, this book explores psychology and mental health in terms of Hawaiian cultural concepts and practices manifest in the lives of families served by the Queen Liliʻuokalani Children's Center. Taking the form of an ongoing dialogue with cultural specialist Mary Kawena Pukui, *Nānā I Ke Kumu* discusses a wide variety of concepts relevant to comparative rhetorical study,

9. See hoʻomanawanui, "Ka Liʻu o ka Paʻakai," pp. 250-251.

including an especially detailed description of hoʻoponopono in Volume 1 that could be used to introduce students to Indigenous strategies of peacemaking; as well as descriptions of pule (prayers) and hoʻopāpā (contest of wits) in Volume 2. Students might also compare Pukui, Chun, and Charlot's accounts with popular YouTube videos of hoʻoponopono (there are many) and discuss the ways in which cultural appropriation affects Indigenous rights and accurate representation of their practices.

ʻŌlelo Noʻeau: Hawaiian Proverbs and Poetical Sayings. **Collected, translated, and annotated by Mary Kawena Pukui. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1983.**

Mary Kawena Pukui presents 2942 proverbs with the original Hawaiian language, English translation, and brief explanations, including 141 references to speech and kinds of speech.[10] As a learning activity, students might practice unfolding the kaona of proverbs by considering the stories from which they spring. Take, for instance, #197: "ʻAʻohe o kāhi nānā o luna o ka pali; iho mai a lalo nei; ʻike i ke au nui ke au iki, he alo a he alo" – "The top of the cliff isn't the place to look at us; come down here and learn of the big and little current, face to face," of which Pukui writes: "Learn of details. Also, an invitation to discuss something. Said by Pele to Pāʻoa when he came to seek the lava-encased remains of his friend Lohiʻau."[11]

Kamakau, Samuel Mānaiakalani. ***The Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii, Revised Edition.*** **Translated by Mary Kawena Pukui, Thomas G. Thrum, Lahilahi Webb, Emma Davidson Taylor, and John Wise, with notes by Martha Beckwith. The Kamehameha School Press, 1992. https://ulukau.org/ulukau-books/?a=d&d=EBOOK-CHIEFS**

Samuel Mānaiakalani Kamakau was, with Davida Malo, one of the founders of the Royal Hawaiian Historical Society that inaugurated the first Hawaiian Renaissance; and his history includes a comprehensive account of the Hawaiian royal genealogies and the mo'olelo of the kings. Chun demonstrates that these moʻolelo include descriptions of multiple kākāʻōlelo, their speeches, and hoʻoponopono negotiations grounded in analysis of moʻokūʻauhau; and Charlot also notes moʻolelo of hoʻopāpā. In the classroom, some of these speeches (such as Liliha's speech or Kinau's speech) could be paired with speeches from

10. *ʻŌlelo Noʻeau* p. 340.
11. *ʻŌlelo Noʻeau* p. 24.

other cultures such as the speech of Nathan before King David in *The Book of Samuel* or Nestor's speech to Agamemnon and Achilles in the *Iliad* book 1), followed by a discussion not only of how but why these speeches differ culturally.[12]

Trask, Haunani-Kay, and Trask, Mililani. "Speeches from the Centennial of the Overthrow: ʻIolani Palace, January 17, 1993." In Jeffrey Carroll, Brandy Nalani McDougall, and Georganne Nordstrom, *Huihui: Navigating Art and Literature in the Pacific.* Honolulu: University of Hawaiʻi Press, 2015, pp. 99-114. Video of speech can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwWNigoZ5ro

In this impassioned speech, Haunani-Kay Trask makes a point of emphasizing that her moʻokūʻauhau is Native Hawaiian, not American; outlines why the fight for sovereignty is necessary; and describes what that sovereignty should entail. Directly invoking Kanaka Maoli rhetorical practices, Trask argues that Hawaiians should reject hoʻoponopono; rather, Hawaiians should fight and engage in hoʻopāpā debate. This speech can be used to introduce students to the rhetoric of sovereignty as well as considerations of which rhetorical traditions are most conducive to current political exigencies.

Malo, Davida. *The Moʻolelo of Davida Malo. Volume 2: Hawaiian Text and Translation.* Translated by Charles Langlas and Jeffrey Lyon. Honolulu: University of Hawaiʻi Press, 2020.

In Chapter 38 of this general history of Hawaiʻi, Davida Malo, a royal genealogist, provides an important description of the kālaimoku (royal counselor), who, with the kahuna (chief priest) provided counsel to the aliʻi or royal class. Among their other responsibilities, the kālaimoku engaged in kākāʻōlelo and hoʻoponopono, working closely with the royal genealogists to ascertain the moʻokūʻauhau of the people approaching the aliʻi and leveraged moʻokūʻauhau as a means of peacemaking. In the classroom, the traits of the king's counselor might be contrasted with cognate descriptions of counselors in the *Guiguzi* and/or *The Book of the Courtier*. (This translation is more complete and accurate than the widely available 1898 translation by Nathanael B. Emerson.)

12. For Liliha's speech, see Kamakau, *The Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii* pp. 300-1; Chun, *No Nā Mamo* pp. 238-9. For Kinau's speech, see Chun, *No Nā Mamo* pp. 239-40.

Poepoe, Joseph Mokuʻōhai. "Kakaolelo—Logika," in Michael David Kaulana Ing, "Kakaʻolelo: Logic in Hawaiian Terms," *The Philosophical Forum* 55 (2024): 385-398. https://doi.org/10.1111/phil.12380

In a series of columns here translated by Michael Kaulana Ing, Joseph Mokuʻōhai Poepoe, a lawyer and editor of an important Hawaiian language newspaper, *Hawaii Homomua* (1891-1895), refers to logic as kākāʻōlelo and goes into a description of logic for a Kanaka Maoli audience. His description of logic brings together both European-American and Hawaiian concepts of logic. As a relatively new find and translation, this text presents students with a unique opportunity to investigate an intercultural account of logic and discuss the ways in which other traditions do and do not separate logic from rhetoric.

Secondary Sources

Beckwith, Martha W. "Hawaiian Riddling," *American Anthropologist* 24, no. 3 (1922): 311-311. https://www.jstor.org/stable/660008. See also Martha W. Beckwith, "The Hawaiian ʻHoopapa,'" *American Anthropologist* 25, no. 4 (1923): 580-581. https://www.jstor.org/stable/660057

In these early analyses (including a correction by Mary Pukui), Martha Beckwith collects instances of hoʻopāpā in collections of moʻolelo, giving several example riddles (nane) with their answers. She also reviews moʻolelo of hoʻopāpā encounters and considers descriptions of how counselors and chiefs trained for hoʻopāpā. This resource, along with Pukui, Charlot, and Perriera's discussions, can aid students in better understanding what hoʻopāpā entails.

Silva, Noenoe. *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004.

Silva writes in response to those who believe that Kanaka Maoli simply let foreigners take over their country, presenting early Kanaka Maoli efforts to frame their encounters with foreigners (chapter one); their debates in Hawaiian newspapers (chapter two); their performance art (chapter three); and Queen Lili'uokalani's many efforts to control the narrative and fight to maintain Hawaiian sovereignty (chapter five). In this history, Silva also conducts rhetorical analysis of these arguments

using Hawaiian terminology such as moʻokuʻauhau and kaona. Her inclusion of mele the Queen composed while under house arrest (listed in Appendix B) and analysis of these mele (in chapter five) provide ready examples to introduce students to Hawaiian rhetorical terms and sovereignty aims.

Charlot, John. *Classical Hawaiian Education: Generations of Hawaiian Culture*. Lāʻie, HI: Pacific Island Institute, Brigham Young University-Hawaiʻi, 2005.

In this 900-page masterwork, John Charlot discusses various dimensions of Kanaka Maoli education, contextualizing this education relative to the *Kumulipo* and Hawaiian regard for the ʻāina, emphasizing ways in which children were raised as kamaʻāina, children of the land. In chapters three and four, he reviews educational values and practices, including attention to ʻēkoʻa as an organizing principle and hoʻopāpā not only as a type of debate but also as a pedagogical tool that reveals the structure of Kanaka Maoli thought.[13] Charlot's extended discussion of hoʻopāpā can further nuance students' understanding of this term as they consider parallels with disputation and debate in other traditions.

Perriera, Hiapokeikikāne Kichie. *He Haʻiʻōlelo Kuʻuna: Nā Hiʻohiʻona me nā Kiʻina Hoʻāla Hou i ke Kākāʻōlelo* [*Classical Hawaiian Speechmaking: Aspects and Revitalization of Hawaiian Oratory*]. Hilo: Ka haka ʻUla o ka Lani Center for Hawaiian Studies, University of Hawaiʻi at Hilo, 2011. https://ulukau.org/ma-phd/?a=d&d=MAPhD201112-01.1.1 See also Perriera, Hiapokeikikāne Kichie. "No ke Kakaʻolelo ma ka Moʻolelo Hawaiʻi Kahiko a i ka MH 1860," *Palapala: A Journal for Hawaiian Language and Literature* 1, no. 1 (2017): 30-50. http://hdl.handle.net/10125/43989.

Perriera is the foremost expert in the study of the kākāʻōlelo and makes a point to only publish in Hawaiian; and, in the English summary of his dissertation, Perriera returns to the Samoan lāuga and Māori whaikorero as well as Kanaka Maoli histories and publications (including published collections of speeches printed in Hawaiian newspapers) to recover the Kanaka Maoli traditions of haʻiʻōlelo and hoʻopāpā. Perriera then provides a reconstruction of a typical haʻiʻōlelo arrangement as well as an extensive list of meiwi moʻokalaleo before

13. For ʻēkoʻa, see Charlot, *Classical Hawaiian Education* pp. 247-273. For hoʻopāpā, see Charlot, *Classical Hawaiian Education* pp. 287-320.

explaining how he teaches his Hawaiian language students how to perform these speeches in the classroom. The associated article (also in Hawaiian) provides tables showing how the term kākāʻōlelo was used in early Hawaiian language newspapers. Together, these sources would be excellent for introducing graduate students not only to the process of historical recovery and language revitalization but also the politics of language and publishing in non-English languages.

Chun, Malcolm Nāea. *No Nā Mamo: Traditional and Contemporary Hawaiian Beliefs and Practices.* Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011.

This book collects Chun's Ka Wana series of Hawaiian culture monographs published between 2005 and 2010 as part of the Pihana Nā Mamo project supported by the U.S. Native Hawaiian Education Act, and includes essential analyses of practices relevant to comparative rhetorical study, including pono (justice; chapter one), aʻo (education; chapter four), hoʻoponopono (peacemaking; chapter six), alakaʻi (leadership; chapter eight), and kākāʻōlelo (oratory; chapter nine)–and each section is written in a very accessible style. Chun's analyses are grounded in cross-cultural analysis of Hawaiian and other Polynesian cultures as well as a careful reading of Davida Malo and Samuel Mānaiakalani Kamakau's histories (both of which Chun was involved in editing and translating), and each chapter ends with a list of key features and discussion of contemporary application. Along with Perriera, Chun is an excellent example of using both history and cross-cultural analysis to recover and reconstruct rhetorical theory and practices.

McDougall, Brandy Nālani, and Nordstrom, Georganne. "Ma ka Hana ka ʻIke (In the Work is Knowledge): Kaona as Rhetorical Action." *College Composition and Communication* 62, no. 1 (2011): 98-121. https://www.jstor.org/stable/23006899.

One of the few sources written specifically for a rhetoric and writing studies audience, McDougall and Nordstrom's "Kaona as Rhetorical Action" is situated in conversations on Indigenous rhetorics, particularly in terms of rhetorics of survivance, rhetorical sovereignty, and cultural citizenry. They describe kaona as intimately concerned with audience; and audiences, in turn, are expected to put in the effort to discover these many meanings. They then analyze Queen Lili'uokalani's *Hawai'i's Story by Hawai'i's Queen* and Haunani-Kay Trasks's poetry collection *Night is a Sharkskin Drum* to show how kaona acts as a constitutive rhetoric. This piece would be a great

introduction to the concept should there not be enough time to focus on McDougall's full monograph on kaona.

Clark, Gregory, and Pahinui, Chelle. "He Huakaʻi ma Hāʻena: Treasured Places and the Rhetorical Art of Identity," in Jeffrey Carroll, Brandy Nālani McDougall, and Georganne Nordstrom, eds., *Huihui: Navigating Art and Literature in the Pacific*. Honolulu: University of Hawaiʻi Press, 2015, pp. 219-236. See also Clark, Gregory. "'A Child Born of the Land': The Rhetorical Aesthetic of Hawaiian Song." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 42, no. 3 (2012): 251-270. https://www.jstor.org/stable/41722434

Clark and Pahinui explore hula as a sacred art that engages participants (dancers and observers) in aloha ʻāina and mālama ʻāina through a combination of both rhetoric and aesthetics. They describe a traveling workshop series He Huakaʻi e Pana na i ke Ea that engages participants in chants and hula of at special locations in the islands. While describing these workshops, Clark and Pahinui share how the program includes sharing moʻolelo and the mele hula Hāʻena Beach in Puna, Hawaiʻi, and consider how the connection between the moʻolelo, hula, ʻāina enables the aesthetic pleasure of kaona to manifest. The Clark and Pahinui chapter are accessible for undergraduates, while Clark's solo article would work better for a graduate audience.

hoʻomanawanui, kuʻualoha. "Ka Liʻu o ka Paʻakai (Well-Seasoned with Salt): Recognizing Literary Devices, Rhetorical Strategies, and Aesthetics in Kanaka Maoli Literature," in Jeffrey Carroll, Brandy Nālani McDougall, and Georganne Nordstrom, eds., *Huihui: Navigating Art and Literature in the Pacific*. Honolulu: University of Hawaiʻi Press, 2015, pp. 247-265.

hoʻomanawanui further explores the concept of meiwi moʻokalaleo introduced by Perriera with special attention to moʻokuʻauhau or genealogies, commenting on the transition from orature to literature in the Kanaka Maoli tradition and noting how meiwi moʻokalaleo manifest in all Hawaiian discourse regardless of mode or genre and occurs in the *Kumulipo* and other moʻolelo. hoʻomanawanui then looks at moʻokuʻauhau in a biography of King David Laʻamea Kalakaua, Queen Liliʻoukalani's autobiography *Hawaiiʻ's Story by Hawaiʻi's Queen*, a biography of statesman Iosepa Kahoʻoluhi Nāwahīokalaniʻōpuʻu, and in the political essays and poems of Haunani-Kay Trask. This source can help students understand how to conduct a meiwi analysis.

McDougall, Brandy Nālani. *Finding Meaning: Kaona and Contemporary Hawaiian Literature.* Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2016.

Hawaiʻi State Poet Laureate Brandy Nālani McDougall explores kaona as a master trope in Kanaka Maoli literature. In chapter one, she begins by defining kaona and explaining its relationship to concepts such as authorial intention, audience inclusivity/exclusivity, language, and degrees of concealment, and outlines a theory of "kaona connectivity" and "aesthetic sovereignty" that amplifies discussions of rhetorical sovereignty.[14] In succeeding chapters, explores the practice of kaona in the *Kumulipo* and moʻolelo of Papa, Wākea, Hāloa Naka, Pele, and Hiʻiaka, as well as modern literary allusions to these moʻolelo (and in McDougall's own poetry). This book provides students with many examples to see how Kanaka Maoli writers both past and present employ kaona to its fullest extent.

Nordstrom, Georganne, and hoʻomanawanui, kuʻualoha. "*He Inoa no ke Kanaka* (In the Name of the Person): *Mele Inoa* as Rhetorical Continuity," in Hui Wu and Tarez Samra Graban, *Global Rhetorical Traditions,* Anderson, SC: Parlor Press, 2023, pp. 480-505.

Nordstrom and hoʻomanawanui's chapter in the *Global Rhetorical Traditions* is an excellent introduction to Kanaka Maoli rhetorics, providing a rhetorical analysis of mele that is especially useful for understanding the use of meiwi in this genre. Their analysis focuses on mele inoa in honor of Kaumualiʻi, Queen Liliʻoukalani, and Barack Obama, emphasizing the context in which the haku mele (composer) spoke and the meiwi they employ. This analysis will be especially helpful for teaching students meiwi analysis.

Discussion Questions

1. Reviewing the historical accounts, what was the role of the kālaimoku? What rhetorical practices did they engage in and why? How do these practices compare to how oratory and counsel function in other cultures?

14. For more on kaona connectivity, see McDougall, *Finding Meaning* p. 25. For more on aesthetic sovereignty, see McDougall, *Finding Meaning* p. 44.

2. What genres did the ancient Hawaiians engage in? What sociocultural purposes did these genres serve? In what ways have these genres remained relevant in Kanaka Maoli culture?
3. How is moʻokūʻauhau similar or different to how you usually think of genealogy? What are some implications of this relationality to how we treat one another, other creatures, and our environment? What other aspects of your worldview might not be shared by other cultures and why?
4. Why do you think Queen Liliʻoukalani decided to translate the *Kumulipo* while under house arrest? What rhetorical purposes may she have had in doing this translation?
5. What dimensions of culture must be understood to begin to unwind kaona? How does understanding moʻolelo help with untangling the kaona of ʻōlelo noʻeau?
6. What is the social value of weaving kaona? How can kaona support goals of rhetorical and aesthetic sovereignty rather than mere interpretation?
7. What historical and contemporary definitions exist for hoʻoponopono and hoʻopāpā? What are the political potentialities of these genres? What might be the role of moʻokūʻauhau in defining who we should hoʻoponopono with and who we should hoʻopāpā with?
8. What is aesthetic sovereignty, and how does it work with rhetorical sovereignty?
9. How do you feel when listening to and watching Kanaka Maoli mele and speeches? In what ways do these performances meet or challenge your expectations? What techniques seem to contribute to the aesthetic power of these performances? How might the terms included here account for some of that power?
10. Why is so much research published in the English language? Why might someone want to write in another language, for example, how Perriera chooses to write primarily in Hawaiian?

Appendix 1: Suggested Activities

Relationality. A unit on relationality could begin by reading excerpts from the *Kumulipo* or Hawaiian creation myth, with special attention to where humans fit in this lineage. The class might then consider the first chapter of Queen Lili'uokalani's *Hawai'i's Story by Hawai'i's Queen* and the circumstances that led her to translate the *Kumulipo* into English (see McDougall for more background on this translation). Alternatively, students could look at how moʻokūʻauhau manifest in Nordstrom and hoʻomanawanui's collection of mele, or read about how Hawaiian orators would use moʻokūʻauhau in the process of hoʻoponopono or dispute resolution (recorded and discussed in Pukui and Chun). Trask's denial of Western moʻokūʻauhau can also lend to important discussions of who we do and do not include among our relations. After discussing the use of moʻokūʻauhau, students could then write about how this expansive approach to relationality might affect how we treat one another.

Cultural Context of Figures. As part of a larger unit on stylistic figures, students might read definitions of select figures from multiple traditions– for instance, comparing definitions of Hawaiian kaona with definitions of metaphor in the Greco-Roman *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and the Chinese *Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*. Students might then be prompted to consider what each definition reveals and conceals, and explore what cultural logics might inform these definitions. Students might also investigate meiwi more broadly in various mele, such as the Queen's mele from *Aloha Betrayed,* the mele inoa from Nordstrom and hoʻomanawanui, the famous "Hawaiʻi ʻ78" (don't skip the outro!), or poems discussed in McDougall– either her own (at the beginning of each chapter), Donovan Kūhiō Colleps's "Kahulu," or Jamaica Heolimeleikalani Osorio's "Kumulipo."[15]

15. Mana Maoli Collective. "Hawaiʻi ʻ78 (Cover)," by Mickey Ioane and Israel Kamakawiwoʻole. *Mana Mele.* Accessed August 6, 2025. https://www.manamele.org/hawaii-78. The text of "Kahulu" with commentary can be found in McDougall, *Finding Meaning* pp. 40-43. For excerpts and commentary of "Kumulipo," see McDougall, *Finding Meaning* pp. 76-82. The full performance of "Kumulipo" can be found on YouTube: The Obama White House. "Jamaica Osorio Performs 'Kumulipo' at the White House Poetry Jam: (6 of 8)." Uploaded on November 2, 2009. YouTube video, 2:18. Accessed August 6, 2025. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kc176yYdcxY.

Dialogue and Debate. This unit would work better for a more advanced undergraduate or graduate course. Hoʻoponopono and hoʻopāpā are two key genres of persuasion that Haunani-Kay Trask mentions in her 1993 speech on Hawaiian sovereignty. In discussing dialogue and debate as rhetorical genres, students might begin with Trask's speech, then turn to the resources below to more deeply define what these genres entail; or turn the tables and start with how the terms were defined historically and then end with Trask's speech. Students might discuss why Trask calls for more hoʻopāpā and less hoʻoponopono. Hoʻopāpā might also be mentioned when discussing dialectical disputations and sophismata. As yet another approach, readings on the historical use of hoʻoponopono might be joined with readings on deliberative rhetoric from Aristotle, Diné restorative justice, and the full story behind the Māori proverb, "'He aha te mea nui o te Ao? He tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata" ("What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, it is people, it is people"), with emphasis on the role of genealogy in defining who the people are.[16]

Rhetorical and Aesthetic Sovereignty. In discussing the aesthetic dimensions of rhetoric as well as literary rhetoric, students might read McDougall's description of aesthetic sovereignty, then read excerpts from Kanaka Maoli personal essays, poetry, and speeches to consider what aesthetic connections these authors make. The class might then consider other decolonial readings from other indigenous movements to see how their aesthetics are also crafted not only to please but to build solidarity. Aesthetic sovereignty might also be brought into conversation with Scott Lyon's description of rhetorical sovereignty.

Historical Recovery. A unit on historical recovery might begin by using Chun and Perriera as inspiration for historical and comparative research methods, then follow similar lines of inquiry to gather research on other Moana rhetorics, such as Māori, Samoan, Tongan, Tahitian, and/or Fijian rhetorics; then ask students to produce guides similar to this one.

16. For Diné restorative justice, see Yazzie, Robert. "Life Comes from It: Navajo Justice Concepts," *New Mexico Law Review* vol. 24, no. 175, 1994. Accessed August 6, 2025. https://transformharm.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Life-Comes-from-It_-Navajo-Justice-Concepts.pdf. For more on this proverb, see Quince, Khylee. "It's Not People but Kaupapa, Russell McVeagh," *Newsroom,* April 7, 2018. Accessed August 6, 2025. https://newsroom.co.nz/2018/07/04/its-not-people-its-kaupapa/.