Inoa

Lā

Hola papa

Kapa Inoa

**Article written by Hui Mālama: “Nā Inoa”**

In the early days of Hawai‘i, personal possessions were few, but highly valued. Poi pounders, woven mats, a man’s malo or loin cloth, the stone adze of a canoe maker, the bone hooks of a fisherman, the spear of a warrior – all these were prized. But even more precious was each man’s most personal possession, his name.

A Hawaiian name might tell the place and conditions of birth, reveal family lineage, an ancestor’s occupation, and particular mana. Inoa might also define social distinctions…. Whatever the meaning behind the inoa… the name itself had mana; the name itself might bear a kapu. Both could play a part in shaping the character, personality – even the fate and fortunes – of the bearer! (Nānā I Ke Kumu Volume I by Mary Kawena Pukui, E. W. Haertig, M.D. and Catherine A. Lee, p. 95)

**Categories for Naming in Hawaiian**

(Nānā I Ke Kumu pp. 94-98 and The Polynesian Family System in Ka‘u, Hawai‘i pp. 98-101.)

**Inoa Kupuna:** When a person hands his name down to a family descendant, the name becomes an inoa kupuna or ancestral name…. It was up to the owner of the name to make sure he did not hand down any kapu or harmful influences attached to the name (Volume I, p.96) After the death of a beloved chiefess, the name Keli‘ipa‘ahana (the industrious chiefess) was given to a kupuna of Mary Pukui and handed down through generations to her mother and to a cousin.

**Inoa Hō‘ailona:** Name given via a vision, mystic sign in the clouds, the flight of birds, or other phenomenon.

**Inoa Ho‘omana‘o:** A name given to commemorate or remember an event. When King Kalākaua was playing billiards with a man named Ika‘aka, his wife was giving birth to a baby. Kalākaua told him to name her Ke-li‘i-pahupahu-o-Kalākaua which means ‘Kalākaua is a billiard playing chief.’ Lili‘u Kamaka‘eha (Bernice Pauahi’s hānai sister) was born on September 2, 1838, to the High Chief Caesar Kapa‘akea and High Chiefess Keohokālole. She was named Lili‘u (Smarting) Kamaka‘eha (The Sore Eye). It may seem as if the baby had an eye problem when she was born, but this was not so. The High Chiefess Kīna‘u, who gave Lili‘u her name, was the one with the sore eye. Besides Lili‘u Kamaka‘eha, her Christian name was Lydia, a name given her at her baptism. It was not until years later that she was called Lili‘uokalani. (Lili‘uokalani by Ruby Hasegawa Lowe, p.3)

**Inoa Pō:** Inoa pō means “night name.” This name is given in a dream to a member of the ‘ohana, or family. Refusal of the name will result in a crippled body and, if this warning goes unheeded, death for the child. …a baby girl was born on the island of Hawai‘i. Shortly after the birth of a baby girl, an aunt was given an inoa pō for the child. But because she had become a Christian, the aunt kept the name a secret and the child was not given the mystically-indicated inoa. The little girl soon became ill. The ‘ohana held a ho‘oponopono during which the aunt told about the inoa pō. Clearly, the family agreed, an offended ‘aumakua was making the child sick. And so after a mōhai (sacrificial offering, in this case, food), a feast, and many prayers, the old name was severed or removed (‘oki ‘ia) and the child was given the inoa pō. And forthwith Ka-wena-‘ula-o-ka-lani-a-Hi‘iaka-i-ka-poli-o-Pele-ka-wahine-‘ai-honua (The rosy glow in the sky made by Hi‘ iaka, reared in the bosom of Pele, the earth-consuming woman”) recovered and grew up to be Mary Kawena Pukui. (Volume I, pp.95-96)

**Inoa ‘Ūlāleo:** Name given via a mystical voice speaking or an oblique message and it was a gift from the ‘aumakua (family god). An infant was having problems with her eyes and the ‘ohana did not know what to do. Some visitors came over one day, and one of them heard a voice. She said the baby’s name should be ‘Iolani. When the name was uttered, something fell from her eyes and she recovered. The baby was thus renamed.

**Inoa Kūamuamu** Less than a century ago (from 1972), Hawaiian youngsters were still occasionally being named Makapiapia, Kūkae or similar names. The fact that Makapiapia means “sticky eyes” and Kūkae is the word for “excrement” bothered no one, least of all the child so named. A frail, sickly youngster was often thought to be bothered or even possessed by a harmful spirit. To make the spirit disgusted and stay away, the child was given a name that connoted something loathsome…As soon as the child was old enough to understand, he was told the reason for his name and assured that he would have a new name in a few years. Later, the reviling name was severed (‘oki ‘ia) and a dignified new name was given. Also an inoa kūamuamu…had the quality of a commemorative name, but in a negative context. The ideal situation for such naming came when someone living close by had hurt or insulted another family. Then when the insulted family had a baby by birth or hānai (adoption-like practice), the child was named with a phrase that referred to the offense. Each time the youngster was called, the neighbor heard a reminder of her misdeed. (Volume I, p.97)

* + Given to ridicule another person:
  + An arrogant woman spoke badly about her neighbor, so the neighbor gave her adopted child the following name. Whenever the haughty woman heard the child’s name, she would be reminded of her wrongdoing. Wahine-ho‘okano-noho-i-ka-ina-hui/Haughty (Woman who lives in the plantation house)
  + Given to protect a child:
  + A boy in Ka‘ū was given the name kūkae (excreta), a girl the name Pelekunu (filthy-moldy-odor) and another boy Pupuka (ugly) in order to protect them from a harmful spirit.

**Receiving Names**

It was a common practice amongst our ali‘i to receive multiple names in their life based on events that occurred.

For example, young Kamehameha received from chiefs and fighting men of Maui the name Pai‘ea. During his life, Kamehameha also received names like Kūnuiākea and Ka‘iwakīloumoku, and even the name Kamehameha itself.

Although Queen Emma was named Emma Naea soon after birth, she received the name "Kaleleokalani" after her son Albert passed away, and later the name was changed to "Kaleleonālani" (The flight of the heavenly ones) after the death of her husband Alexander Liholiho Kamehameha IV.

**Meaning of Ali‘i’s Names**

**Kamehameha** means the lonely one. He was named after the rearing of a very kapu and beautiful chiefess named Lilinoe. She was reared in complete solitude in a cave called Kahikipaialewa. Kamehameha himself was raised in solitude. (Kamehameha and His Warrior, Kekūhaupio, p. 243)

* **Pai‘ea**, a hard-shelled crab. Kamehameha was named this by his defeated enemies, as a tribute to his courage and endurance and in saving Kekūhaupi‘o. (Ruling Chiefs of Hawai‘i, p.84)
* **Ka‘iwakīloumoku** means the ‘iwa bird that hooks the islands.
* **Kana‘iaupuni** means the conqueror of the nation.
* **Pauahi** means consumed by fire. Pauahi was named after her aunt, the sister of her mother Konia, who when she was just a baby “experienced a narrow escape from being burnt to death by an accidental ignition of gunpowder, by which five men were killed, her home destroyed, and she badly burned.” (Black and Mellen p. 8) Because of that incident, she was given the name Pauahi. In Hawaiian, pau means “finished” and ahi means “fire.” Pauahi means “destroyed by fire, burned; to put out a fire.” (Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop by Julie Stewart Williams, p.3)
* **Lili‘u** (smarting), **Kamaka‘eha**, (the sore eyes) and **Loloku** (the pouring tears) were names given to Queen Lili‘uokalani. Kamehameha’s daughter Kīna‘u was once troubled with sore eyes and her doctor kept her in a dark room until she became well again. (Nā Mele Welo 137)
* **Keohokālole** means straight hair. She was the mother of Kalākaua and Lili‘uokalani and was named by Ka‘ahumanu for the straight hair of her father ‘Aikanaka.

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**Kapa Inoa**

1. Inā ʻO kou koko lāhui ka Hawaiʻi, Kōlea, Pākē, Kepanī, Pokoliko, Kelemania a i ʻole Pukikī …he mea maikaʻi paha ka ʻike ʻana i ka manaʻo o kou inoa?

1. ʻO wai kou inoa piha?

1. ʻO wai ka mea i kapa aku iā ʻoe?

1. Inā ʻo kou inoa he inoa Hawaiʻi, pehea i kapa ʻia ai ʻoe? He aha ke ʻano o ke kapa ʻana (inoa pō, inoa ʻohana, ia mea aku)?

1. He moʻolelo ko kou inoa?