

Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders

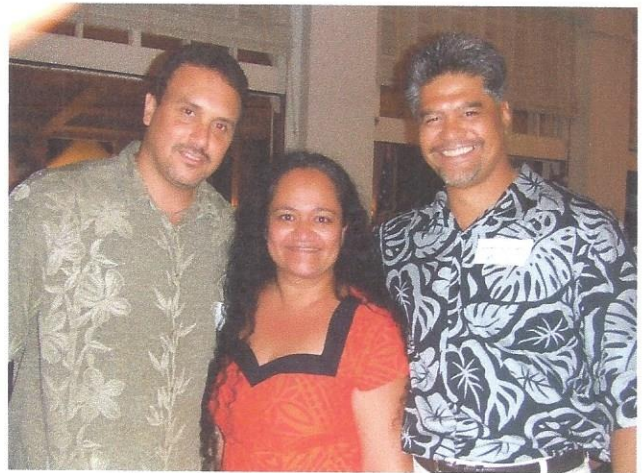
Who We Are

We are called **Native Hawaiians** and **Pacific Islanders**. Modern day voyaging has taken hold of many of our family members and dispersed us to lands beyond our homelands to the Americas, Europe, and Asia, but we remain the Indigenous Peoples from the islands and seas that surround them within the great ocean, *Moananuiloa*.



We are referred to as Polynesians, Micronesians, and Melanesians; we have brothers and sisters called Aborigines, Carolinians, Chamorros, Chuukese, Fijians, Hawaiians, Kosraeans, Marshallese, Belauans, Pohnpeians, Rarotongans, Samoans, Tongans, Tuvaluans, Yapese and many more. But we know ourselves from whence we come – we are of the land (*kama 'aina, honua, vanua, enua*) – and we call ourselves Maori, Ma Ori, Maoli, Vaka-viti or something similar which has the connotation of joy, life, health, happiness, and authenticity.

Our families (*'ohana* or *'aiga*) are large. We are a highly diverse population with an even more diverse historical background, cultural traditions, and over 20 living traditional languages.



Our stories begin with Creation in the Universe – Motion in Space and time. Across *Moananuiloa*, Father of All Spirits and Sun Mother; Male (Putan) and Female (Fu'una); and Sky Father (*Wākea, Ranginui*) and Earth Mother (*Papa, Papatuanuku*) are all part of our story.



There was a time when everything was still. All the spirits of the earth were asleep – or almost all. The great Father of All Spirits was the only one awake. Gently he awoke the Sun Mother. As she opened her eyes a warm ray of light spread out towards the sleeping earth. The Father of All Spirits said to the Sun Mother,

“Mother, I have work for you. Go down to the Earth and awake the sleeping spirits. Give them forms.”

The Sun Mother glided down to Earth, which was bare at the time and began to walk in all directions and everywhere she walked plants grew. After returning to the field where she had begun her work the Mother rested, well pleased with herself. The Father of All Spirits came and saw her work, but instructed her to go into the caves and wake the spirits.

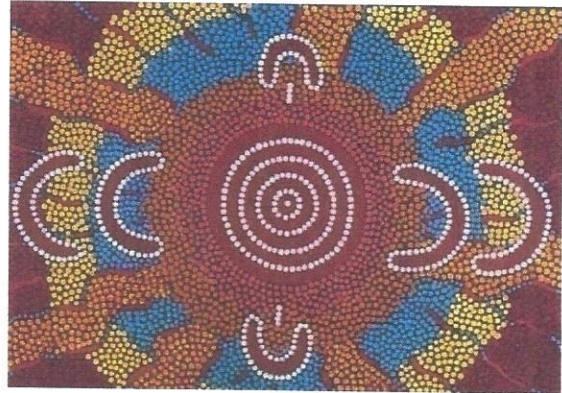
This time she ventured into the dark caves on the mountainsides. The bright light that radiated from her awoke the spirits and after she left insects of all kinds flew out of the caves. The Sun Mother sat down and watched the glorious sight of her insects mingling with her flowers. However once again the Father urged her on.

The Mother ventured into a very deep cave, spreading her light around her. Her heat melted the ice and the rivers and streams of the world were created. Then she created fish and small snakes, lizards and frogs. Next she awoke the spirits of the birds and animals and they burst into the sunshine in a glorious array of colors. Seeing this the Father of All Spirits was pleased with the Sun Mother’s work.

She called all her creatures to her and instructed them to enjoy the wealth of the earth and to live peacefully with one another. Then she rose into the sky and became the sun.

The living creatures watched the Sun in awe as she crept across the sky, towards the west. However when she finally sunk beneath the horizon they were panic-stricken, thinking she had deserted them. All night they stood frozen in their places, thinking that the end of time had come. After what seemed to them like a lifetime the Sun Mother peeked her head above the horizon in the East. The earth’s children learned to expect her comings and goings and were no longer afraid.

At first the children lived together peacefully, but eventually envy crept into their hearts. They began to argue. The Sun Mother was forced to come down from her home in the sky to mediate their bickering. She gave each creature the power to change their form to whatever they chose. However she was not pleased with the end result. The rats she had made had changed into bats; there were giant lizards and fish with blue tongues and feet. However the oddest of the new animals was an animal with a bill like a duck, teeth for chewing, a tail like a beavers and the ability to lay egg. It was called the platypus. The Sun Mother looked down upon the Earth and thought to herself that she must create new creatures less the Father of All Spirits be angered by what she now saw. She gave birth to two children. The god was the Morning Star and the goddess was the moon. Two children were born to them and these she sent to Earth. They became our ancestors. She made them superior to the animals because they had part of her mind and would never want to change their shape.



Chamorro/Guam

Puntan, a male, and Fu'una, a female, are brother and sister... A very long time ago, Puntan and Fu'una devised a plan in which their supernatural forces would be put to extremely powerful use. Puntan instructed his sister to take apart his body and create the parts of the world. One of his eyes would become the sun, and the other would be transformed into the moon. Puntan's eyebrows would become rainbows. His back would become the earth.

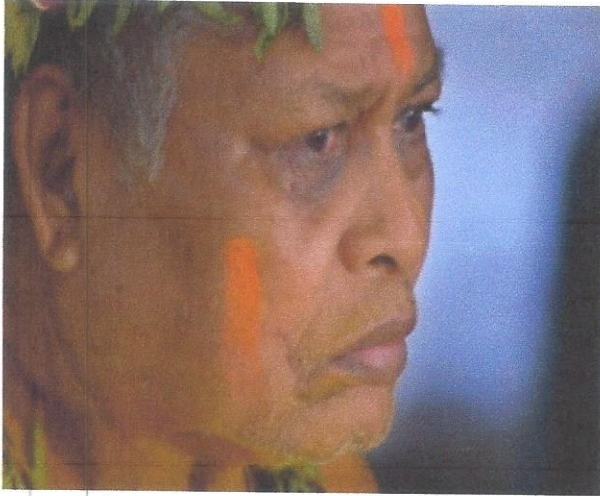
Fu'una had supernatural powers of her own. She used her energy and spirit to bring to life the parts of her brother's body that now formed the world. With her power, she made the sun shine and the earth blossom. After she completed her task of bringing new life to Puntan's body parts, Fu'una decided to create life out of her body, as she had her brother's. She threw her body into the earth and created Fouha Rock, sometimes called Creation Point. Out of Fouha Rock, the first human beings emerged.

Maoli/Hawai'i

KUMULIPO - Ka Wa 'Akahi

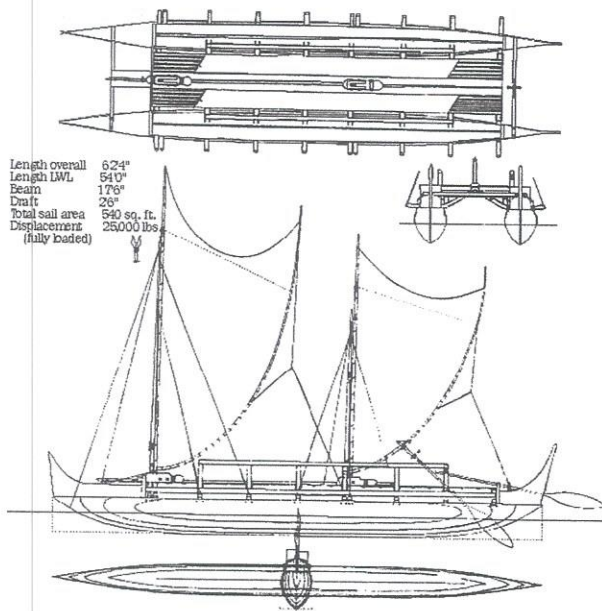
<i>'O ke au i kahuli wela ka honua</i>	Time was altered when the earth became hot
<i>'O ke au i kahuli lole ka lani</i>	Time was altered when the sky turned inside out
<i>'O ke au i kuka 'iaka ka lā</i>	A time when the days were dark
<i>E ho 'omālamalama i ka mālama</i>	Brightened only by the moon
<i>'O ke au o Makali 'i ka pō</i>	A time of Makali 'i
<i>'O ka walewale ho 'okumu honua ia</i>	The earth originated in slime
<i>'O ke kumu o ka lipo i lipo ai</i>	With its origins in darkness
<i>'O ke kumu o ka po i pō ai</i>	With its origins in night
<i>'O ka lipolipo, 'o ka lipolipo</i>	Darkness, darkness
<i>'O ka lipo o ka la, 'o ka lipo o ka pō</i>	Darkness of day, darkness of night
<i>Po wale ho 'i</i>	Engulfed in night
<i>Hānau ka pō</i>	The night gives birth
<i>Hānau Kumulipo i ka pō, he kane</i>	Kumulipo gives birth at night to a male
<i>Hānau Po 'ele i ka po, he wahine.</i>	Po 'ele gives birth in the night to a female.

In our Creation, darkness becomes light. We are part and parcel of and related to all things. All of the ocean's living creatures and those on land and in the sky are *kinolau* (related) to one another and part of our family as well. We come from the source – the clam, the soil, or the surrounding seas. The natural environment is part of us and we a part of it. Even our rocks carry within them the embodiment of our ancestors, faces from another time.



Our road maps are the stars, the ocean currents, and the prevailing winds. The canoe (*waka, wa'a, camakau, sakman*) is our transport system. It provides us with safety and gives us a vehicle to traverse the pathways of the seas (*ke ala o ke kai*).

Our history is one of voyaging and exploration. Our double-hauled canoes (*va'akaulua, wakatou* '369 *ava'atele, tipairua, tongiaki, ndrua*) have sailed across the great oceans from Australia to the Americas, from Hawai'i to New Zealand. We honor the great exploring exploits of Ru, Laka, Karika, Tangiia, Nuku, Hema, Tafa'i, Vahieroa, Rata, Hiro, Mahuta, Kupe, Wahanui, Mo'ikeha, Kila, Kaha'i, La'amaikahiki, Tupaia, and, most recently, Mau Pailug.



Our leaders, our chiefs (*adi, ali'i, ariki, ari'i, ratu, tui, tu'i*) – Malietoa, Kamehameha, Pomare, Lavelua, Taufa'ahau, Makea, Abba Thule, Lamari, Linani, Cakobau, Lili'uokalani, Ma'afa, and Karaok- remain living legacies to our political past, a past marked by our more recent struggles with stronger political powers from the East and West including Spain, Germany, England, Japan, and the United States. In spite of initial repression and suppression by our colonizers, we remain steadfast to our heritage which now includes not only our traditional culture but also semblances of these other intervening cultures. We wrestle with how best to blend these many semblances into modern societies that make sense to us. We continue to struggle in developing political structures that make sense for us. Today, we are independent nations, territories, and smaller political divisions within the fabric of larger nations, but we all come from one cloth as island people.



We come from the oral tradition. We are expert at seeing what is not said and understanding what is not read. Our stories and legends contain our history, and we continue to excel in our abilities to speak the truth as we see it. We retain our values that have been shaped by thousands of years of living on islands, interdependent upon one another for survival yet fiercely independent in terms of maintaining our space. Correct process and protocol are important and sometimes vital to our daily living.

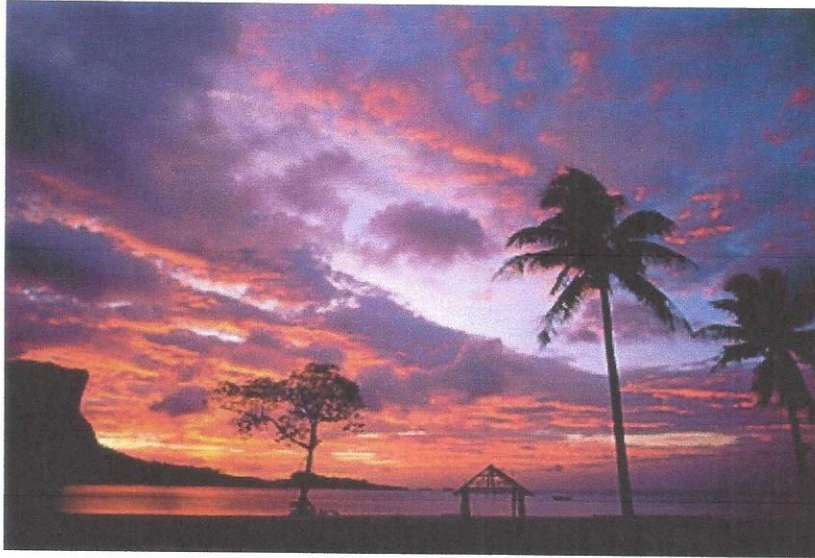
When we greet you or bid you farewell until our paths cross once again, we do so from the very inner essence of our soul with the breath that we breathe. And, though now the foreign way may be to clasp hands, we do so still within the true feelings of *alofa, aloha, aroha, aroa, bulabula, bula vanaka, kia orana, kia ora, hafaadai, Isa lei* and *Ia ora*.

Our families form the basis of who we are. We value our elders for their knowledge and life experiences, remembering that we are but the most recent of generations and have multitudes of elders (kupuna, tupuna) resting upon our shoulders or perhaps upon whose shoulders we are standing. We are the sum total of their former lives, and it is from them that we garner strength in times of need. Knowing our genealogy is the means by which we honor those who have come before us.

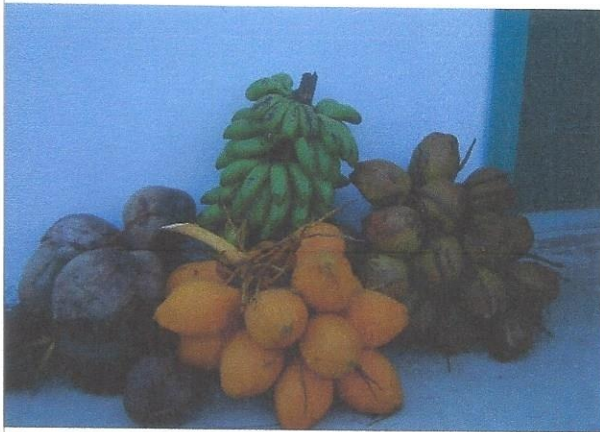
We do best when we work together. Many hands make the task light (laulima). Our ancestors taught us this. Our great works speak for themselves – Lelu, Nan Madol, Latte stone construction, Taga quarry, Chamorro Star Cave, Tia Seu Lupe (star mounds), Kūkaniloko, Moai, Heiau o Pu‘ukoholā, Heiau o Pi‘ilanihale, Pu‘uhonua o Hōnaunau, Kiki a Ola, and Taputapuatea. And these are but a few of our elders’ legacies. Their lessons teach us that the group is more important than the individual. True leadership emerges from the group and includes reciprocity. In order to lead, a leader must provide.



We are spiritual people. We believe in what we believe. We respect and honor our family guardians and traditional practices, yet, we are of this world and call upon today’s religions for help and salvation. Our faith gives us hope and our culture gives us strength.



We are a healthy people made weak by behaviors foreign to our culture. Our culture survives through our dances, sports, foods, crafts, traditional healing practices and medicines, relationships and values, spirituality, and languages. But our families have tasted the ill-effects of war and, more recently, nuclear testing, and foreign substances and drugs. Our traditional sources of sustenance have been broken.



Our traditional foods have provided us with sustenance for life for thousands of years. Our staple taro (*kalo*) is our older brother and we thrive on yams (*'ufi, uhi*), manioc (*manioka*), coconut (*niu*), seaweed (*limu*), bananas (*mai'a*) and the later Americas' import, sweet potato (*kumara, kumala*). The pig, dog, and chicken as well as fish and other ocean creatures of all varieties gave us our protein and made our bodies strong. Today, many of us and our children linger on foreign foods which have sapped our energies and destroyed our health.

Our children are entrenched in foreign ways beamed into our communities through "boxes"-radios, movie screens, televisions, and computers. Our sharing of resources through our own labors (*inafa`maolek*) and our barter systems (*rai, udoud, toluk*) have been replaced by paper and metal coin. Though we live in changing times, we must find ways to hold fast to our cultural values appropriate for today's living. We must recapture our spirit and remold ourselves in ways that will provide us sustenance for our voyages in this new millennium yet keep us true to who we are

and balanced in our lives, respecting who we are and our relationship with our environment and with our creator (*Lōkahi*). We need to be *pono* (righteous)

In times past, our canoe was small and fashioned for survival on one ocean. Our new canoe must be large enough to carry with it the hopes and dreams of all our peoples and their families across many oceans. It still is a voyage for survival. For this voyage, we all need to be healthy and well. This is our challenge today.

