

‘O WAI KA MAUNA¹
(Mele Komo²)

‘O wai ka mauna³?

‘O Maunakea/Maunaloa/Hualalai/Kōhala ka mauna

‘O wai ka moku?

‘O Hilo/Puna/Ka‘ū/Kona/Kōhala/Hāmākua ka moku

‘O wai ke ahupua‘a?

‘O (list ahupua‘a of districts)

I aha ai kou hiki ‘ana mai?

I komo, i komo aku au i o Kahiko mā

He aloha ē, he aloha!

Hōmai he leo

A he leo wale nō.

Hoe! ‘Ō, ‘ō, ‘ōia!

¹ “‘O Wai Ka Mauna” chant is delivered in two-party style of chanting called kāhoahoa. Kāhoa means friend or companion, but it also means to lash, as one does a house or a canoe. By extension, the friendship lashing between two chanting parties extends to a third party- the place/space under visit.

² “Mele Komo” are cultural requisites when entering profound spaces, be it natural or human made (i.e., heiau, village sites, etc). As reflected here, mele komo (1) acknowledges name of space being visited; (2) it states the intention of visit (to bring aloha into the process of environmental kinship); (3) offer front-end a gift to gain entrance (in this chant it is our collective “hoe” breath offering).

³ The higher degree of relating to kāhoahoa is to relate to the teachers as a human-medium through which nature makes her inquiry into the purpose to the students. We have this practice in hula when we offer ‘awa to the hula shrine and the shrine chants back their approval through a human-medium. This is a deep cultural reality, humans can serve as the voice of nature.

Translation

T/E⁴: Who is the mountain?

SB⁵: Names one of Hawai'i's four mountains

T/E: Who is the district?

SB: Names one of Hawai'i's six districts

T/E: Who is the land section?

SB: Names appropriate ahupua'a

T/E: For what reason have you come?

SB: To Enter, to enter into the presence of the Ancient Ones (Nature)

We bring Aloha⁶ [we bring our commitment to learn]

Please grant us the voice of approval to enter

Your voice is our key to proceed forth

All: Let us "hoe" on the count of 1, 2, and 3...!
(Inhale and expel with a soft-whistling sound)

⁴ T/E = Teacher or teacher's elect to lead the chant.

⁵ SB= Student body who responds to questions.

⁶ "Aloha" here represents the gift the human person brings to Nature, which is their understanding of and contribution to environmental kinship as the means to sustain and grow Nature.