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The Pursuit of Power in Hawai‘i from 1780 to 1796

This chapter introduces the third main theme of this book – that historical details matter and unification of the Hawaiian Islands was not inevitable simply because the necessary structural conditions were in place. The structural features proposed as essential prerequisites for unification were all in place in Hawai‘i well before the 1790s. Specific events and decisions influenced the course of history. Hawaiian traditions place limited emphasis on settlement patterns, carrying capacity and other structural characteristics of Hawaiian society. They focus on battles fought, rivals slain and marriage alliances successfully concluded. Environmental factors, political and social organisation may have set limits on action, but they could not dictate the specific course of events. That was a matter for the gods and ali‘i.

A detailed examination of Hawaiian traditions suggest that events in the 1780s and 1790s allowed the relatively young and militarily weak chief Kamehameha to seize power through fortuitous circumstances and conciliatory practices pursued initially through his weak position but later, as his power consolidated, through choice. The 1780s saw the foremost military tactician and military innovator Kahekili expand his realm, while Kamehameha was preoccupied with consolidating his political heartland against older, more established subordinates. Kahekili overextended himself and alienated his new subjects with repressive measures, thereby weakening his realm and fatally dividing his polity into warring factions upon his death. Their fighting undermined their cohesive strength and allowed Kamehameha to achieve a relatively easy victory over

their remnants in 1795. Detailed accounts of the battles of the 1790s, accompanied by battle maps, reveal that firearms and cannon did not and could not have been as decisive as many modern commentators suggest. The chapter concludes by noting that victory was relatively easy: Kamehameha's real struggle lay in consolidating this temporary ascendancy into sustained control.

Two paths to power: Political consolidation versus territorial expansion in the 1780s

In recent decades, European historiography's traditional focus on the lives and clashes of political elites has lost ground to analysis of the social and economic structures around which societies are organised. Without attention to historical narratives, however, there is a danger that structures are seen to determine events. Historical trajectories then take on an air of inevitability. The chaos and randomness of human activity is lost. While the general pattern already outlined holds true for this period, the following detailed account of events shows the influence on history of specific events and decisions.

When Captain James Cook's expedition arrived in the archipelago in 1778, the islands were divided between four *mō'i*. Kalani'ōpu'u ruled over Hawai'i and had also established a presence in east Maui. His main protagonist was Kahekili, who controlled the rest of Maui, Lāna'i and Kaho'olawe. Pelei'ōhōlani, the ruler of O'ahu, had recently conquered Moloka'i. Beyond O'ahu, Kāneoneo presided over Kaua'i and Ni'ihau.¹

Kalani'ōpu'u was probably the most powerful of the four *mō'i* in the late 1770s. As well as maintaining the unity of Hawai'i, he had preserved the foothold he secured in east Maui during the reign of Kahekili's predecessor, his brother Kamehamehanui. His recent attempts to invade west Maui had been repulsed, however, Kahekili suffered heavy losses in the process of preserving his territory. Although he still accompanied his army to war, Kalani'ōpu'u was ageing. Ship's surgeon on the Cook expedition David Samwell estimated that he was over 60 and described him as 'very tall and thin, seemingly much emaciated by debauchery, tottering as he walks along, his skin is very scurfy and his eyes sore with ava [kava]'.²

1 King, in Beaglehole (1967), 3:1, pp. 500, 614; and Thrum, vol. 5 (1918–19), p. 310.

2 Samwell, in Beaglehole (1967), 3:2, p. 1162; King, in Beaglehole (1967), 3:1, p. 512; Clerke, in Beaglehole (1967), 3:1, pp. 597–98; and Fornander (1969), p. 214.

Kahekili had become the ruler of Maui relatively late in life, after the death of Kamehamehanui. Abraham Fornander dates this succession to the mid-1760s, but it may have been a decade later, as Kalani'ōpu'u and Pelei'ōhōlani's attacks on Maui lands in the mid-1770s may have been an attempt to exploit the death of Kamehamehanui. Samwell described Kahekili as 'a middle aged man ... of rather mean appearance'. He proved to be a skilled military tactician. In his later years he was described as a stern, resolute man, with a cold, calculating manner.³ Pelei'ōhōlani was also a formidable opponent who successfully maintained the unity of O'ahu, which was forged by his immediate predecessor, Kūali'i. When he invaded Moloka'i, he killed or exiled most of the local ali'i in revenge for the murder of his daughter by ali'i from windward Moloka'i.⁴ Kāneoneo became mō'i of Kaua'i by marrying his cousin, Kamakāhelei. Both were of very high rank. Unlike his three counterparts, Kāneoneo did not launch any expeditions against rival rulers. Kamakāhelei exerted much influence on Kaua'i, and the young Kāneoneo's hold on power at Wailua was to prove tenuous.⁵

Cook was able to learn little about the balance of power in the chain when he arrived at Kaua'i in January 1778. By the time he returned to the islands in November of that year, Kalani'ōpu'u and Kahekili were at war in east Maui. After raiding Lāna'i and parts of Maui, Kalani'ōpu'u had been confronted by the forces of Kahekili in Hāmākualoa. A battle was fought and, when Cook arrived off east Maui, Kalani'ōpu'u's forces were retiring in good order towards Hana through Ko'olau. Kalani'ōpu'u remained in east Maui until January 1779, when he returned to Kealakekua Bay with part of his force. His return seems to have been prompted by Cook's presence at Kealakekua Bay rather than internal dissent elsewhere in the island. Gananath Obeyesekere proposes that Kalani'ōpu'u returned to Kealakekua Bay to try and recruit Cook as his foreign priest to counter the influence of Kahekili's priest, Kaleopu'upu'u of O'ahu, who came from a lineage of foreign priests. Fornander makes it clear that Kaleopu'upu'u's religious ability was believed to be the reason behind Kahekili's recent victory on Maui.⁶

3 Samwell, in Beaglehole (1969), 3:2, p. 1151; Fornander (1969), pp. 214–15; and Kamakau (1961), pp. 166–67.

4 Thrum, vol. 5 (1918–19), p. 310; and Handy & Handy (1972), p. 278.

5 Fornander (1969), p. 297; Valeri (1985a), p. 166.

6 Obeyesekere (1992), p. 81; Cook, in Beaglehole (1967), 3:1, pp. 476 ff.; King, in Beaglehole (1967), 3:1, p. 511; Dibble (1909), p. 22; Kamakau (1961), p. 91; Fornander (1969), pp. 146–79; and Pogue (1978), p. 71.

On 14 February 1779, followers of Kalani'ōpu'u killed Cook when he tried to take the old mō'i hostage to secure the return of the ship's cutter, which was stolen the previous night. The effect of the confrontation between Kalani'ōpu'u's people and Cook's party on the old mō'i's rule is unclear. A number of Hawaiians were killed by British punitive measures in the days following Cook's death and before peace was restored.⁷ Kalani'ōpu'u and his followers were left with an early insight into the power of European cannon and muskets, and mana from their possession of most of the bones of the great captain. Samwell and James King were led to believe that Kalani'ōpu'u received the legs, thighs and arms of Cook, while his great warrior-chief Kekūhaupi'o received his head. Kalani'ōpu'u's nephew, Kamehameha, was given Cook's hair. The rest of the body was burnt.⁸

As the British expedition made one last journey through the islands, they discovered two more conflicts. On 27 February 1779, King learned that the fires they had seen on Moloka'i were probably due to the fighting between Pelei'ōhōlani and Kahekili. The fact that Kahekili later sought Halawa Valley on Moloka'i from Pelei'ōhōlani's successor suggests Kahekili's attack was unsuccessful.⁹ The British learnt that Ka'eokulani, the half-brother of Kahekili, had recently supplanted Kāneoneo as Kamakāhelei's consort on Kaua'i. Only days before the British arrival on 28 February, Kāneoneo had been defeated in battle by the combined forces of Kamakāhelei, her son Keawe, and Ka'eokulani. Kāneoneo had escaped, but his remaining support on Kaua'i was uncertain. Keawe was installed as mō'i, although it soon became apparent that the real influence lay with Ka'eokulani and Kamakāhelei.¹⁰

Pelei'ōhōlani died of natural causes sometime in 1779 or 1780, and was succeeded by his son Kumahana. There is no record of any succession disputes, although an unspecified number of O'ahu ali'i deposed Kumahana soon afterwards in response to his increasingly despotic rule. A council of O'ahu ali'i 'elected' Kahahana, the young son of the powerful 'Ewa ali'i Elani, as the new mō'i. Kumahana was allowed to return to Kaua'i with his family, where relatives of his mother and sister at Waimea

7 King, in Beaglehole (1967), 3:1, pp. 549 ff.; and Clerke, in Beaglehole (1967), 3:1, pp. 531 ff.

8 Samwell, in Beaglehole (1967), 3:2, p. 1215; King, in Beaglehole (1967), 3:1, p. 566; and Kamakau (1961), p. 103.

9 King, in Beaglehole (1967), 3:1, pp. 584–85.

10 Clerke, in Beaglehole (1967), 3:1, p. 577; Valeri (1985a), p. 166; and Stokes (1937), pp. 36–37.

took them in. Kumahana's son Kāneoneo was probably here also after his recent overthrow in Puna. There is no indication that their line posed a serious threat to the new power clique at Wailua.¹¹

Although the new *mō'i* of O'ahu had blood links with Kaua'i, his ties with Maui had the greatest influence on the future of O'ahu. Kahahana was closely related on his mother's side to Kahekili of Maui and had been raised in Kahekili's household. Fornander claims that Kahekili made Kahahana promise to cede the sacred O'ahu site of Kualoa in Ko'olaupoko to him before allowing him the leave for O'ahu. Kahekili also requested *palaoa pae*, the right to whalebone washed up on shore, for O'ahu. This right was usually reserved to the *mō'i* of the land. Kahekili increased his leverage over the O'ahu *mō'i* by keeping his wife Kekuapoiula at his court. Fornander asserts that the only reason Kahekili did not invade O'ahu to take advantage of the disruption created by Kumahana's overthrow was the threat that Kalani'ōpu'u posed to Maui through his continued presence in Hana.¹²

Time was on Kahekili's side. Kalani'ōpu'u was ageing and, with each passing month, Kahahana became increasingly at odds with his subject *ali'i* over Kahekili's demands. Kahahana's announcement of Kahekili's demands had caused divisions in the O'ahu *ali'i*. The *kahuna nui* Kaopulupulu was particularly critical, claiming the handing over of sacred Kualoa was disrespectful to the gods and the granting of *palaoa pae* was tantamount to recognition of Kahekili's right to rule O'ahu. Kahekili created a rift between Kahahana and Kaopulupulu by claiming the O'ahu *kahuna nui* had twice offered the government of O'ahu to him behind Kahahana's back. On the second occasion, Kahahana was already ruling as *mō'i*. In the wake of Kaopulupulu's continued criticism of his rule, this was apparently enough to convince Kahahana to summon his *kahuna nui* and have him killed. The slaying of Kaopulupulu and his son Kaholupue alienated many on O'ahu.¹³

11 Kamakau (1961), pp. 128–29; Fornander (1969), pp. 217, 297–98; Thrum, vol. 5 (1918–19), pp. 282–83; and Kirch & Sahlins (1992), p. 36, n. 1.

12 Fornander (1969), pp. 218–19; Thrum, vol. 5 (1918–19), p. 282; and Kamakau (1961), pp. 128–29.

13 Fornander (1969), pp. 221–22; Thrum, vol. 5 (1918–19), pp. 287–88; and Kamakau (1961), pp. 133–34.

Kalani'ōpu'u confined his activities to touring his moku with a sizeable court. The tour was perhaps a response to restlessness among his people over the prospect of his declining health and imminent death. Sometime in 1780 or 1781 the Puna ali'i 'Īmakakaloa rebelled against Kalani'ōpu'u. The rebellion received much support from ali'i and maka'āinana, who were disgruntled at the excessive demand for provisions from their mō'i's large touring party. The rebellion, however, seems to have been confined to Puna. After consecrating a heiau to his war god at Ohele in Hilo, Kalani'ōpu'u attacked 'Īmakakaloa in Puna. The rebellious ali'i was defeated after a long struggle. Kalani'ōpu'u went on to neighbouring Ka'ū and built another heiau at Pakini in preparation for the capture and sacrifice of 'Īmakakaloa to Kū'kā'ili-moku as thanks for victory. 'Īmakakaloa avoided capture for upwards of a year before Kalani'ōpu'u lost patience and ordered Puna ravaged until the vanquished leader was handed over. Loyalty had its limits: 'Īmakakaloa was soon betrayed and killed.¹⁴

Signs that Kalani'ōpu'u's death would result in a succession struggle emerged at the ceremony of sacrifice in Pakini heiau. While Kalani'ōpu'u's son Kīwala'ō was conducting the preliminary rituals, Kamehameha boldly usurped his role and offered up the body of 'Īmakakaloa himself. Kalani'ōpu'u had signalled his recognition of Kamehameha through the division of Cook's remains, and Kamehameha's close friendship with Kalani'ōpu'u's greatest warrior-chief Kekūhaupi'o was well known. But, by this action, Kamehameha stepped beyond the bounds of acceptable behaviour. Much anger resulted among the assembled ali'i and, on Kalani'ōpu'u's advice, Kamehameha left the court and retired to his estate at Halawa in Kohala.¹⁵

It is uncertain when ali'i began committing themselves to the contending successors to Kalani'ōpu'u. It is also uncertain if Kalani'ōpu'u had declared Kīwala'ō as his heir and Kamehameha as the guardian of his war god at Waipi'o in Hāmākua prior to the Puna rebellion or on his deathbed, or whether he had clearly indicated his wishes at all. Whatever the case, it would be the alignment of the moku's ali'i and not the will of a dead mō'i that would decide the issue.¹⁶

14 Fornander (1969), pp. 200–01; and Kamakau (1961), pp. 105–08.

15 Fornander (1969), pp. 202–03; and Kamakau (1961), p. 109. On Kekūhaupi'o, see S. L. Desha, *Kamehameha and his Warrior Kekūhaupi'o*, F. N. Frazier (trans.) (Honolulu: Kamehameha Schools Press, 2000).

16 Fornander (1969), p. 299; Kamakau (1961), p. 107; I'i (1959), p. 13; and Dibble (1909), p. 42.

Kalani'ōpu'u died in Ka'ū in January 1782. Kīwala'ō succeeded his father. Tension mounted as the time for the new mō'i's announcement of land redistribution approached. Many ali'i brought their retinues to the site of the announcement. The ali'i assembled at Hōnaunau in South Kona, where Kīwala'ō deposited the bones of his father in the Hale o Keawe mausoleum. Kīwala'ō's uncle, Keawemauhili of Hilo, pressured the young mō'i into ensuring that he did well out of the redistribution. Keawemauhili and his windward allies did indeed benefit at the expense of leeward ali'i, and even to the detriment of Kīwala'ō's brother, Keōua Kuahu'ula, and Kīwala'ō himself. The result was just what the leeward ali'i had feared and prompted them to mobilise their forces behind their chosen leader, Kamehameha, to mount a challenge to Kīwala'ō's party. Their forces gathered in the vicinity of Kealakekua Bay a few miles north of Hōnaunau.¹⁷

The fighting began when Keōua attacked some of Kamehameha's allies. Skirmishing continued for the next few days while the ali'i aligned themselves with one or other party and forces were assembled. The resulting coalitions were more marriages of convenience than coherent entities, reflecting a complex interaction between self-interest, opportunism, blood ties and personal rivalries. Kamehameha headed a coalition centred on the forces of five powerful Kona chiefs: Kekūhaupi'o, Ke'eaumoku, Keaweheulu, Kame'eiamoku and Kamanawa. Other blood ties bonded this group together. Kamanawa and Kame'eiamoku were twins. Keaweheulu lost out to Keawemauhili in seeking the hand of Ululani and, through her, the control of Hilo. They were supported by some Kohala chiefs and Kamehameha's brothers: Kalaimamahu, Kawelookalani and Kalanimalokuloku-i-Kapo'okalani. Kīwala'ō, Keōua and Keawemauhili were the most prominent ali'i in the other coalition. Their forces were numerically superior and were drawn predominantly from Hilo, Puna and Ka'ū. Some Kona and Kohala ali'i sided with them, however, the most notable being Kamehameha's paternal uncle Kānekoa and his brother Kahai.¹⁸

17 Fornander (1969), pp. 204, 302–06; Kamakau (1961), pp. 118–19; and Kahananui (1984), p. 198.

18 Fornander (1969), pp. 307–09; Kamakau (1961), p. 120; and Valeri (1985a), p. 167.

After three or four days of skirmishing, matters came to a head when Kīwala'ō encountered Ke'eumoku on the battlefield among the rough lava country of Moku'ōhai. The terrain forced the combatants to fight in small groups. The fighting was open and fluid, with ali'i to the fore. The crucial moment came when warriors accompanying Kīwala'ō failed to finish off Ke'eumoku after he became isolated and was badly wounded. A warrior rushing to Ke'eumoku's rescue struck Kīwala'ō with a sling stone, allowing Ke'eumoku to crawl over to the disabled mō'i and dispatch him with a shark's tooth dagger. The death of Kīwala'ō triggered the rout of his forces. Keōua and his men fled to their canoes and sailed to Ka'ū. Others fled into the mountains and eventually made their way back to their homes on the other side of the island. A large number of prisoners were taken, including Keawemauhili. He managed to escape, and fled to Hilo. Kamehameha only arrived at the battlefield late in the day after conducting religious observances, but participated in the fighting and killed at least one enemy ali'i.¹⁹

Kalani'ōpu'u's moku was now effectively divided between three rulers: Kamehameha, Keawemauhili and Keawe. Kamehameha controlled Kona, Kohala, northern Hāmākua and eastern Maui. Keawemauhili declared himself mō'i over the rest of Hāmākua, Hilo, and part of Puna. As a nī'aupi'o ali'i, Keawemauhili was the highest ranking ali'i of the three and, perhaps, the most powerful given the resources of his power base and the fact that he had governed Hilo since well before the death of his brother Kalani'ōpu'u. Keōua was acclaimed as Kīwala'ō's successor by the Ka'ū ali'i.

Keōua was prepared for now to acknowledge the superior rank of his uncle Keawemauhili, and to align himself with him against the threat of Kamehameha. Kamehameha's family estate in Kohala and his personal retinue were probably small compared to his rivals. Rather, his power seems to have derived from his willingness to rule in accordance with the wishes of the more established Kona ali'i, the so-called Kona uncles. Fornander describes this relationship as an 'open and tacit partnership'.²⁰

19 Fornander (1969), pp. 309–11; Kamakau (1961), pp. 120–22; and Dibble (1909), p. 43.

20 Fornander (1969), pp. 315, 311–12; and Kamakau (1961), p. 122.

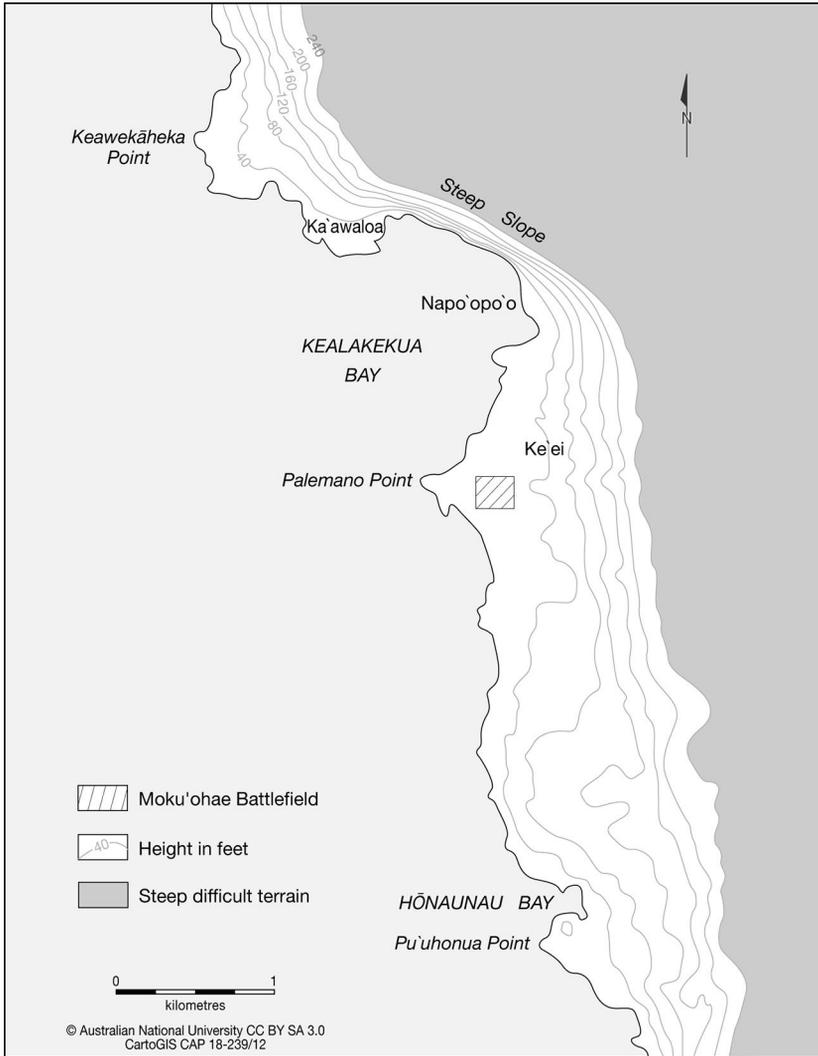


Figure 9: The battle of Moku'ohai, 1782

Source: CartoGIS, The Australian National University.

Kamehameha's relatives Kānekoa and Kahai fled to Hilo with their followers after the defeat at Moku'ohai. Keawemauhili granted them refuge and gave them lands. For unknown reasons the two ali'i soon rebelled against Keawemauhili. They were soundly defeated and fled to the lands of Keōua where they were again granted refuge. Yet again they rebelled and were defeated. Kānekoa was slain and Kahai fled to Kamehameha and threw himself upon his mercy. He was forgiven and

does not figure in Hawaiian traditions again.²¹ It is unclear how many ali'i moved between mō'i like this. They seem to have represented a small minority, and such movements were probably more pronounced during succession disputes. The fortunes of Kānekoa and Kahai suggest no mō'i was powerful enough at this stage to ignore the opportunity to increase their fighting strength, regardless of the risk involved in taking on people who had already deserted other mō'i.

Kahekili was not slow to exploit the divisions that arose after Kalani'ōpu'u's death. He offered an alliance to Kamehameha after hearing of his victory at Moku'ōhai. It is unclear whether this was a genuine offer. There were rumours that Kahekili was Kamehameha's true father. Kamehameha refused the offer, and found himself confronted by an alliance of Kahekili, Keawemauhili and Keōua. Kahekili moved against the Hawai'i forces that still occupied east Maui. Confronted by a two-pronged attack through Kaupo and Ko'olau, and probably outnumbered, the defenders retired to the sanctuary of Ka'uiki Head, without attempting to block Kahekili's progress. Ka'uiki Head was invested and a long siege ensued. Kahekili also sent a contingent of Maui warriors under Kahahawai to Hilo to assist Keawemauhili.²²

Kamehameha and his main ali'i met at Kawaihae to decide how to counter the powerful coalition arrayed against them. It was agreed to strike before the enemy could launch a concerted attack. While Ke'eaumoku distracted Keawemauhili with a fleet of canoes off the Hilo coastline, Kamehameha and the main army marched over the Humuula Saddle to the Kilauea area. From here Kamehameha could prevent Keōua's and Keawemauhili's forces joining, and defeat them in detail.²³ The two leeward forces reached their destinations, despite rough seas off the windward coast, and rain and cold foggy conditions in the mountains. According to Samuel Kamakau, Kamehameha's army encountered elements of Keawemauhili's forces near Kilauea crater in cold, rainy conditions. The engagement was thereafter referred to as Kau-ua-awa, the battle of the bitter rain.²⁴ Another council of war was held and it was decided to combine with Ke'eaumoku's forces and move against Keawemauhili. Kamehameha's forces were met five to six kilometres from Hilo Bay at Pua'aloa. The leeward forces were routed

21 Fornander (1969), p. 316; and Kamakau (1961), p. 124.

22 Fornander (1969), pp. 216, 315–17, 220 n. 1; Kamakau (1961), pp. 115–16; and Dibble (1909), pp. 40–41.

23 Fornander (1969), pp. 220–22; and Kamakau (1961), p. 124.

24 Kamakau (1961), p. 125; and Fornander (1969), p. 317.

after a fierce contest at close quarters. Kahahawai and his Maui contingent played a decisive role in the victory. The fact that Kamehameha's forces were able to seek sanctuary on Ke'eaumoku's canoe fleet lying just offshore raises questions about the extent of their defeat and rout. The leeward forces retired up the Hāmākua coast to Laupāhoehoe to recover.²⁵

The windward coalition did not follow up the victory, as Kahekili recalled the Maui forces for a more important enterprise. Locked in a stalemate deep in enemy territory, Kamehameha withdrew to Kohala. Kamehameha's retreat was also spurred by news that Ka'uiki Head had fallen to Kahekili after a long siege. Kahekili had recently discovered that the stronghold's main water source lay beyond its defences and had moved to cut access. When a desperate sortie by the defenders failed to recover access to it, they were left with no choice but to surrender. Most were put to death. Only a few escaped.²⁶

Kahekili was now free to direct his forces elsewhere. With Hawai'i divided into hostile camps, he felt secure to exploit Kahahana's troubled reign on O'ahu. After assembling his forces at Lahaina, the Maui mō'i sailed for O'ahu, touching briefly at leeward Moloka'i on the way. Keawemauhili and Keōua supplied several canoes for the fleet. Kahekili's invasion seems to have taken Kahahana by surprise. He was at Kawanākoā in the upper Nu'uanu Valley when the Maui forces landed at Waikiki at the beginning of 1783. Kahekili sent his forces in three columns towards Nu'uanu from Waikiki by way of Puowaina, Pauoa and Kapena. Kahahana gave battle near the small stream of Kaheiki in the Nu'uanu Valley with the forces he had been able to hastily assemble (see Figure 12 for locality). He was routed and fled into the Ko'olau Mountains. Kahahana led a precarious life as a fugitive during the two years he evaded capture. The O'ahu ali'i did not rally behind him, and he was eventually captured and killed after being betrayed by a relative.²⁷

The victory at Kaheiki did not secure O'ahu for Kahekili. The island was divided among his ali'i after the battle, but many of the O'ahu ali'i had not fought at Kaheiki and remained undefeated. A coordinated island-wide rebellion was attempted sometime around 1785. While Kahahana's

25 Kamakau (1961), pp. 125–26; Fornander (1969), pp. 220–22, 311–12, 317–19; and Dibble (1909), pp. 45–46.

26 Fornander (1969), p. 216; Kamakau (1961), p. 116; and Dibble (1909), p. 44.

27 Fornander (1969), pp. 222, 324; Kamakau (1961), pp. 135–36; and Thrum, vol. 5 (1918–19), pp. 474–76.

father Elani was to lead an uprising in 'Ewa, the O'ahu chiefly supporters of Kahahana Makaioulu and Pupuka were to surprise and kill Kahekili and other Maui ali'i at Kailua, and two other O'ahu chiefs supporting Kahahana, Konamanu and Kalakioonui, were to lead an attempt against Kahekili's man in Waialua, Kiko Hueu. Kahekili was forewarned of the rebellion and was able to alert the majority of ali'i because they were concentrated in Ko'olaupoko, Kona and 'Ewa. Only Kiko Hueu, in distant Waialua, could not be warned in time. He and most of his retinue were wiped out. Kahekili moved rapidly and decisively against the rebellion. The main fighting centred on Kona and 'Ewa. Kahekili crushed all resistance, killing many non-combatants in the process. Most of the important O'ahu ali'i were killed and their bones used to adorn a house near Moanalua in Kona. It is even claimed that some female ali'i of kapu moe status were killed or mutilated.²⁸

The instability of Hawaiian polities was demonstrated by the fact that a number of prominent Maui ali'i sided with the rebels just as Kona ali'i had sided with the windward coalition at Moku'ohai. Kahekili's nephew, Kalaniulumoku, for example, was the son of the previous Maui mō'i Kamehamehanui, and met his death fighting for the rebels. Other Maui ali'i who supported the rebellion managed to escape to Kaua'i. They included Ka'iana and his two younger half-brothers Nahiolea and Namakeha. Their reasons for changing sides are not mentioned. Possibly they had been excluded from the upper echelons of power or fared poorly in Kahekili's redistribution of O'ahu lands. Kāneoneo had come from Kaua'i to join the rebels just prior to the uprising. Denied rule over Kaua'i, he was possibly seeking to re-establish his family's name on O'ahu after his father's overthrow there a few years earlier. He was killed during the fighting at Maunakapu on the descent to Moanalua on O'ahu.²⁹

It took time to stamp out the remaining embers of resistance on O'ahu, although the core of resistance was now broken. Kahekili remained on O'ahu overseeing the subjugation, while his son, Kalanikūpule, returned to restore order on Maui where there had been an uprising against abuses

28 Fornander (1969), pp. 225–27; Kamakau (1961), pp. 135–40; and Thrum, vol. 5 (1918–19), p. 478.

29 Thrum, vol. 6 (1919–20), pp. 288, 290–91, 298; Kamakau (1961), p. 140; and David G. Miller 'Ka'iana, the Once Famous "Prince of Kaua'i"', *Hawaiian Journal of History*, vol. 22, 1988, 1–9.

by the ali'i Kukeawe. The death of Kukeawe ended the fighting before Kalanikūpule arrived and his sympathetic pronouncement on the just nature of the grievances against Kukeawe was enough to restore order.³⁰

There is no record of fighting on Hawai'i in 1783 and 1784. While Kahekili expanded his domains, Kamehameha worked to consolidate his power. He married Ka'ahumanu, the daughter of Ke'eaumoku, one of his main supporters. She soon became his favourite wife and a valued political adviser. Kamehameha also put some effort into building up his logistical base, spending much time developing the agricultural capacity of the leeward districts. His fortunes suffered a setback in 1784 when Kekūhaupi'o was fatally wounded during a training exercise with spears.³¹

In 1785, Kamehameha moved against his enemies. He invaded Hilo and was met by the combined forces of Keawemauhili and Keōua. After a long, indecisive campaign he withdrew to Kohala.³² The next year Kamehameha sent his younger brother Kalanimokuloku-i-Kapo'okalani to retake eastern Maui. This was soon achieved, although all the gains were soon lost when Kalanikūpule dispatched a force from Wailuku under Kahekili's brother Komohomoho to meet this threat. In a fierce battle near Lelekea Gulch in Kīpahulu, the Hawaiian forces were driven back to Ma'ulili, where Komohomoho again emerged victorious. The defeated forces fled back to their island in disarray.³³

Kahekili dominated the Hawaiian political scene at the end of 1786. He ruled over Maui, Lāna'i, Kaho'olawe, Moloka'i, and O'ahu and he was on good terms with his half-brother Ka'eokulani, the mō'i of Kaua'i. His warriors seemed invincible in battle. The remnants of the O'ahu and Kaua'i ali'i, who might oppose them, posed little threat from their refuge in Kaua'i Kona. Hawai'i remained divided between three mō'i, none of whom was able to conquer the others. Kamehameha was the only one of the three who had been able to launch offensive campaigns.

Kahekili's ascendancy was built on shaky foundations. Internal coherence mattered as much as territorial size. While Kamehameha worked to consolidate his existing power, Kahekili was pushing his to the limit. The rapidity of the conquest of east Maui, Moloka'i and O'ahu stretched his

30 Fornander (1969), pp. 227–28; and Kamakau (1961), pp. 142–43.

31 Kamakau (1961), pp. 126–27; Fornander (1969), p. 319; and Kame'elehiwa (1987), pp. 107–08.

32 Fornander (1969), pp. 319–20; and Kamakau (1961), p. 126.

33 Fornander (1969), pp. 228–29; and Kamakau (1961), pp. 143–44.

Maui contingents thinly and meant local loyalty could not yet be assured. O'ahu forces were serving in his army by 1791 but only at the price of wiping out much of the island's fighting core between 1783 and 1786. The remainder of the population lived with the memory of Kahekili's brutal repression. Prior to the fall of Ka'uiki Head in 1782, much of Hana and Kipahulu had been outside of Kahekili's sphere since at least the mid-1770s. He had to be informed of Ka'uiki's vulnerable water source by locals. His long siege of Ka'uiki exhausted local resources while, prior to 1782 and during their invasion in 1786, Hawai'i ali'i treated the local population and their livelihood with respect. Kalanikūpule was given charge of Maui after 1783 so that Kahekili could turn his attention to O'ahu. Much of his effort was spent building up the devastated Kona district. The trader George Dixon found that the plain behind Waikiki was crowded with new plantations when he visited O'ahu in September 1787.³⁴ Kahekili's relocation to O'ahu is perhaps explained by the concentrated wealth of the Kona–Ko'olaupoko area, but the need to be on hand to consolidate his new lands must also have figured in his considerations.

From late 1787, the Hawaiian Islands played host to increasing numbers of European trade vessels seeking provisions for their operations in the north-west Pacific fur trade. Among the items traded were metal cutting weapons, other metal that could be moulded into weapons, and small amounts of firearms and ammunition. Although visiting vessels tended to favour Kealakekua Bay, Waikiki, and Waimea on Kaua'i as ports of call, no mō'i appears to have gained a decisive advantage in European weaponry over his rivals in the early years of this trade.³⁵

There appears to have been a relative lull in hostilities between moku in the late 1780s. The only significant fighting was a 1788 rebellion against Ka'eokulani on Kaua'i. The rebels were based in Waimea, although there are no indications that access to trade influenced their move against the Kaua'i mō'i. The rebellion failed.³⁶ Nahiolea's involvement in the rebellion prevented his brother Ka'iana returning to Kaua'i in December 1788 after a trip to China on board a European trading vessel. Ka'iana sought refuge with Kamehameha when the vessel touched at Kealakekua Bay. Kamehameha realised the value of the small cache of weapons and

³⁴ Dixon (1968), p. 266.

³⁵ Fornander (1969), pp. 229–30; Kamakau (1961), p. 144; Pogue (1978), p. 77; and Kahananui (1984), p. 176.

³⁶ Fornander (1969), p. 321; and John Meares, *Voyages Made in the Years 1788 and 1789 from China to the North-West Coast of America* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1968), p. 335.

knowledge of firearms that Ka‘iana had acquired on the trip, and accepted him into his moku. Kamakau claims that Kamehameha soon gave Ka‘iana command of a force to attack Keōua in Ka‘ū. This appointment angered his other ali‘i, who felt that they were being passed over. There are, however, doubts about this incident. Fornander does not mention the campaign, and Kamakau’s description of Ka‘iana’s victory over Keōua reads suspiciously like a campaign between the two that occurred in 1791, for which there is agreement between sources. In Kamakau’s narrative, this campaign is placed after events in 1790.³⁷ This lull in hostilities may be explained by two observations made by Captain James Colnett at Kailua in 1791. He noted a resurgence of volcanic activity in leeward areas of Hawai‘i between 1788 and 1791, and the appearance of a previously unknown sickness among the population. This was almost certainly the result of renewed European contact after 1786.³⁸

The virtues of moderation: Kamehameha I’s road to military victory, 1790–96

The relative peace between moku ended in 1790. In March of that year Kamehameha received a windfall of European military equipment when Kame‘eiamoku seized a small trading vessel in North Kona. Kame‘eiamoku attacked the schooner *Fair American* to avenge the beating and abuse he had suffered at the hands of a previous visiting ship’s captain. Only one of the six crew members survived the attack. The sole survivor was an Englishman named Isaac Davis, who was only spared on the personal intercession of another ali‘i. When Kamehameha learnt of the attack, he marched to Kame‘eiamoku’s lands with a sizeable force and took Davis, the schooner and the small cannon and firearms on board.³⁹ Meanwhile another vessel, the *Eleanora*, arrived at the Kona coast and anchored at Kealakekua Bay. To prevent news of the attack of the *Fair American* reaching the *Eleanora*, Kamehameha put a kapu on the bay. When the ship’s boatswain, John Young, came ashore he was detained until

37 Vancouver (1801), bk 1, p. 403; Kamakau (1961), pp. 153–54; and Ellis (1969), pp. 209–10.

38 Sahlins (1989), p. 379, citing James Colnett, *Colnett’s Journal Aboard the Argonaut* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), p. 220.

39 Fornander (1969), pp. 231–34; Kamakau (1961), pp. 146–47; and Vancouver (1801), bk 3, pp. 227, 230; bk 5, p. 59.

the *Eleanora*'s captain tired of waiting for him to return and sailed away.⁴⁰ Kamehameha's caution was more justified than he realised. The captain of the *Fair American* was the son of the *Eleanora*'s captain, and the latter had just come from Olowalu in Maui where he had massacred hundreds of locals by opening fire on their canoes with his cannon for a perceived grievance.⁴¹

In a few days Kamehameha had gained a cannon, firearms and two Europeans to assist in their use. Whether this good fortune changed the actual balance of power is debatable. Kamehameha had already obtained a small swivel cannon and muskets by 1790 without enhancing his military position. The swivel had been mounted on a double canoe, but there is no record of it being used prior to 1790. The *Fair American*'s small crew cannot have carried many firearms. The captured vessel, its cannon and two Europeans to operate it were, however, potentially valuable assets for Kamehameha.

Despite the poor showing of Hawaiian armies against the forces of Maui in the previous decade, Kamehameha now decided to attack Maui. Memories of the damage inflicted by trained gun crews in the wake of Cook's death, and tales of the recent carnage at Olowalu against exposed canoes, possibly raised expectations of the effect that cannon would have in local warfare. A recent reconciliation with Keawemauhili also influenced Kamehameha's decision. Keawemauhili sent canoes for the expedition against Maui as a sign of his good faith. Keōua remained defiant, but now Keawemauhili could watch him while Kamehameha pursued his ambitions elsewhere.⁴²

Kamehameha crossed over to Hana with a force of 8,000 men in a fleet of 2,000 canoes. The landing seems to have been uncontested. Fornander mentions some preliminary raids prior to the main invasion,⁴³ but the first mention of fighting on which all sources agree was a battle in Hāmākualoa, where Kamehameha encountered a force sent from west Maui by Kalanikūpule under the command of Kapakāhili. An initial engagement

40 Fornander (1969), pp. 233–34; Kamakau (1961), p. 146; Daws (1968a), p. 34; Henry B. Restarick, 'John Young of Hawaii, an American', *21st Annual Report of the Hawaiian Historical Society for the Year 1912* (Honolulu: 1913), p. 29; and C. H. Barnard, *A Narrative of the Sufferings and Adventures of Captain Charles H. Barnard in a Voyage Round the World During the Years 1813, 1814, 1815 and 1816* (New York: J. Lindon, 1829), pp. 224–29.

41 Kamakau (1961), pp. 143–46; Pogue (1978), pp. 83–84; and Daws (1968a), p. 34.

42 Fornander (1969), p. 235; Kamakau (1961), p. 147; and Westervelt (1922), pp. 28–29.

43 Thrum, vol. 5 (1918–19), p. 470 n. 18.

between the two vanguards at Pu'ukoa'e near Hanawana ended in favour of the forces from Hawai'i. The main forces met in the same area a few days later. Despite promising omens, Kamehameha's men fared badly and looked like being defeated. They were saved by reinforcements, who helped turn the day and rout the enemy. Kamehameha led from the front throughout. The Maui forces were pursued vigorously to prevent them from rallying and, when the exhausted fugitives turned and attempted to make a stand near Kokomo, the issue was decided by single combat between Kamehameha and the Maui commander. Kamehameha slew his rival and the enemy's resistance crumbled. The road to Wailuku lay open.⁴⁴

Kamehameha regrouped his forces before moving against west Maui. Kalanikūpule prepared to meet him at Wailuku with the fugitives from Kapakāhili's forces and whatever other combatants he could assemble. With the canoe fleet accompanying it, Kamehameha's army advanced to the eastern end of Kahului Bay (see Figure 10). From there they moved overland to Wailuku on the banks of the 'Īao stream. Accounts of the battle are vague. It seems that the Maui forces offered prolonged resistance over a number of days, and were only gradually driven back towards the 'Īao stream. The local topography suggests that a small ridge between the stream and Kahului Bay may have served as a focal point for the defenders to make a stand, with sand hills and marshes around the bay impeding the attacker's advance. Eventually the Maui forces retired or were driven into the upper 'Īao Valley. Here the valley narrowed between steep mountains, allowing the defenders to make a stand on a narrow front that could not be outflanked. They were broken when Lopaka, the *Fair American's* cannon, was brought up and fired at them with great skill by Davis and Young. Its effect on the Maui forces as they stood, packed between the steep valley walls, was devastating. The 'Īao became choked with bodies. Resistance crumbled. Many more were killed as they tried to flee up the cliff faces lining the valley.⁴⁵

Traditions remember the battle as ka'uwa'u pali (clawed off the cliff) and ka pani wai (the damming of the waters). Casualties are unknown although it has been noted that the upper 'Īao could be dammed by as few as 100 bodies. Significantly, no Maui ali'i of any consequence was killed or captured. Kalanikūpule and his main ali'i and advisers were able

44 Kamakau (1961), pp. 147–48; and Fornander (1969), p. 236.

45 Fornander (1969), p. 236; Kamakau (1961), pp. 148–49; Dibble (1909), pp. 48–49; and Stokes (1937), p. 37.

to flee over the mountains and sail to O‘ahu. The lack of noteworthy ali‘i casualties may mean that, after the reverses of Hāmākualoa, much of Kalanikūpule’s force consisted of hastily assembled maka‘āinana levies from west Maui. Kahekili’s expansion into Moloka‘i and O‘ahu may have forced a watering down of the ali‘i fighting core on Maui even before Kamehameha’s invasion. It may also mean that Lopaka was only directed against a blocking force made up predominantly of maka‘āinana or lesser ali‘i.

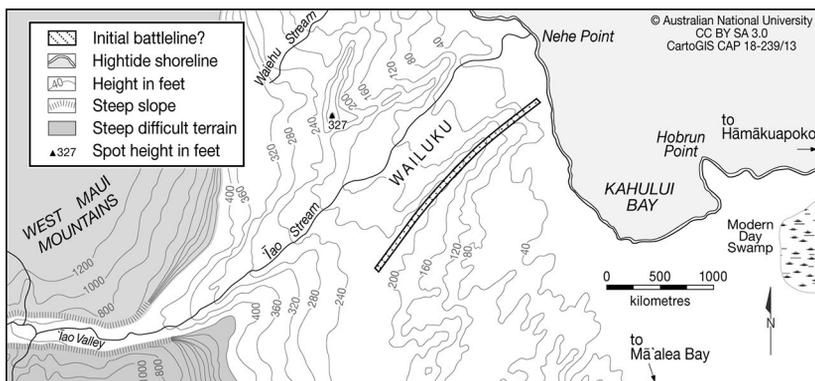


Figure 10: The battle of ‘Iao, 1790

Source: CartoGIS, The Australian National University.

The battle gave Kamehameha control of Maui, which he divided among his followers before going on to secure Moloka‘i, apparently without opposition. On Moloka‘i he sought to enhance his family’s future status by seeking the hand of the ni‘aupi‘o ali‘i Keōpūolani. This was also an attempt to bring about reconciliation with Kīwala‘ō’s family, the older branch of the powerful Keawe dynasty. Keōpūolani was the daughter of Kīwala‘ō and also had connections with the Maui ruling dynasty. The overture was accepted. Kamehameha sent word to Kahekili that he intended to attack O‘ahu and challenged him to set a place of battle. But he showed that his mind was also concerned with securing control of Hawai‘i when he sought advice from the respected Kaua‘i soothsayer Kapoukahi on how best to achieve this goal. Kapoukahi advised him that, once he had built a large heiau to his god at Pu‘ukoholā near Kawaihae, he would gain control of the whole island without further loss of life.⁴⁶

46 Fornander (1969), pp. 238–40; I‘i (1959), p. 70; Kamakau (1961), pp. 149–51, 208; and Kame‘eleihiwa (1986), pp. 60–61.

Kamehameha was forced to return to Hawai'i when news arrived that Keōua had attacked Hilo and defeated Keawemauhili in battle near Alae. Keawemauhili had been killed in the battle and resistance in Hilo had collapsed. Keōua had moved on to Hāmākua and ravaged Waipi'o. As the news reached Kamehameha, Keōua was already moving against the Waimea Saddle. There was no time to lose. Kamehameha hastened back to Kawaihae and set out for Waimea at the head of an army accompanied by Lopaka. Keōua withdrew to Pa'auhau and prepared to give battle. Kamehameha's forces approached and battle was joined. Lopaka did not intimidate Keōua's forces. Neither side would give ground. The stalemate was broken when two of Keōua's warriors, Ka'ia'iaiea and Uhai, led a charge against Lopaka while it was being reloaded and captured it. The battle continued without either side being able to gain an advantage. Fighting ended when fire from Kamehameha's foreign musketeers persuaded Keōua to withdraw from the field. No clear victor had emerged despite heavy casualties on both sides.⁴⁷

Battle was renewed again the next day a short distance away at Koapapa. The battlefield consisted of a broad, open plain with a small grove at its southern end. Hawaiian accounts of the battle make no mention of Lopaka, however, muskets were prominent. As at Pa'auhau, neither side was prepared to give ground. Descriptions of the battle imply Kamehameha's musketeers skirmished between the two armies and did enough damage to cause Keōua's side discomfort. Lacking firearms, Keōua's men rushed forward and seized enemy muskets. When the gunpowder they had been able to seize began to run out, Keōua's forces retired from the field. Neither side had gained a decisive advantage. Kamehameha retired to Kohala and Keōua continued his withdrawal towards Hilo.⁴⁸ While Lopaka and muskets were a focal point of the battle narratives, they do not seem to have been numerous enough or deadly enough to supplant the influence of personal bravery on the final outcome.

After dividing up Hilo among his followers, Keōua set out for Ka'ū with the rest of his forces. Kilauea crater erupted while they were in the vicinity. Clouds of poisonous gases from the volcano enveloped the middle section of Keōua's army and the division was wiped out, with sources putting the loss of life anywhere between 80 and 2,000 people.⁴⁹ Perhaps seeking

47 Fornander (1969), pp. 240–41, 323–24; Kamakau (1961), p. 151; and Dibble (1909), p. 50.

48 Kamakau (1961), p. 152; and Fornander (1969), p. 324.

49 Fornander (1969), p. 324; Kamakau (1961), p. 152; and Stokes (1937), p. 38.

to capitalise upon Keōua's misfortune, Kamehameha launched a two-pronged attack upon his lands sometime in the later part of 1790 or early 1791. Although sorely pressed, Keōua held out. Ke'eaumoku attacked his lands in Hilo while Ka'iana led a force against Ka'ū. Little is known about the operations in Hilo, but traditions pertaining to the Ka'ū theatre suggest that, despite Ka'iana's advantage in firearms, the honours were once again even. A number of battles were fought. In some battles, Ka'iana was forced to fall back to his fleet while, in others, he was victorious. Kamakau claims that the outcome of the battles was influenced by the generalship of Keōua and his two commanders, Ka'iana's personal bravery, and the latter's use of firearms. Some years later, Archibald Menzies was shown a battle site where Keōua's men had countered Ka'iana's advantage in firearms by digging small holes to squat into when they saw the flash of the musket's ignition powder. The campaign ended with Ka'iana withdrawing from Keōua's territory.⁵⁰

Ka'iana's withdrawal from Ka'ū was possibly a response to events in the leeward islands. During the makahiki season of 1790–91, Kahekili and Ka'eokulani concluded an alliance against Kamehameha. The potency of Kamehameha's mana after his victories on Maui could not remain unchallenged without eroding their own mana. Ka'eokulani joined Kahekili on O'ahu soon after the makahiki season ended in 1791. Their combined forces then sailed for Maui. Kalanikūpule was left as Kahekili's regent on O'ahu, while Enemo ruled Kaua'i on Ka'eokulani's behalf. Faced with this powerful new coalition and continued defiance from Keōua, Kamehameha abandoned Maui and Moloka'i without a fight in favour of defending his Hawai'i heartland. Kahekili valued Ka'eokulani's assistance enough to offer him the sovereignty of Maui in return for his support. When Ka'eokulani began to divide up Maui between his followers, however, Kahekili's sons and other Maui ali'i were enraged. The Kaua'i and Maui ali'i came to blows near Waiehu. The rift was somehow patched up and the two forces proceeded on towards east Maui, but they now sailed separately. Kahekili was paying the price for overextending himself across a multi-island polity.⁵¹

The coalition now moved against Kamehameha on Hawai'i. Ka'eokulani's forces sailed from Hana to Waipi'o in Hāmākua and proceeded to ravage the valley. Meanwhile Kahekili sailed from Mokulāi and landed

50 Menzies (1920), p. 110; Fornander (1969), pp. 245, 326–27; and Kamakau (1961), pp. 153–54.

51 Fornander (1969), p. 242; and Kamakau (1961), pp. 159–60.

at Halawa in Kohala where he fought a series of inconclusive skirmishes with Kamehameha's forces. He then moved onto Waipi'o and joined Ka'eokulani.⁵² Kamehameha was in Kona when these attacks were launched. He soon mobilised a large fleet and moved against his enemies. The two fleets encountered each other off the windward Kohala coast near the Waimanu valley. Kamehameha's fleet now included the *Fair American* and a number of double canoes on which cannon were mounted. Davis and Young accompanied the fleet and probably assisted with the firing of the cannon. Ka'eokulani's force also included cannon and a foreign sharpshooter known as Mare Amara (Murray the Armourer?). Little is known about the battle except that no significant ali'i lost their lives. The fact that the battle became known as Kepuwaha'ula'ula (the battle of the red-mouthed gun) suggests that cannon played a prominent role. The battle ended with Kahekili and Ka'eokulani disengaging their forces and retiring to Maui. Sheldon Dibble claims that they lost the greater part of their fleet in the action, but this is not in keeping with the lack of important ali'i among the casualties. On the other hand, it was to be the last offensive action by Kahekili and Ka'eokulani against Kamehameha. It is unclear if the previous rift between the Maui and Kaua'i forces affected the outcome of the fighting and the subsequent defensive outlook of the Maui-Kaua'i coalition.⁵³

Kamehameha also achieved final victory over Keōua around this time, although sources are divided on whether this occurred just before or just after the victory over Kahekili and Ka'eokulani. The heiau at Pu'ukoholā was completed and Keōua was invited to attend. Keōua accepted the offer and arrived at the heiau with only a small escort. He was promptly killed and sacrificed to the Kū'kā'ili-moku. Thus, the prophecy of Kapoukahi was fulfilled. While Gavan Daws and Greg Denning hint at treachery on the part of Kamehameha, Kamakau and Fornander suggest that Keōua realised the fate that awaited him. Before sailing into Kawaihae Bay, he prepared his body for sacrifice and chose a small body of men to accompany him to the heiau as his moe-pu (companions in death).⁵⁴ The preceding events seemed to suggest that the gods were abandoning

52 Kamakau (1961), pp. 160–61.

53 Fornander (1969), pp. 243–44; Kamakau (1961), pp. 161–62; Dibble (1909), p. 51; Thrum vol. 5 (1918–19), p. 474; and Hiram Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands* (2nd edn) (Hartford: Hezekiah Huntington, 1849), p. 40.

54 Fornander (1969), pp. 327–35; Kamakau (1961), pp. 155–58; Dibble (1909), p. 53; Daws (1968a), p. 36; Valeri (1985a), p. 162; and Denning (1988), p. 89.

Keōua in favour of Kamehameha. Keōua had been forced to constantly defend his own lands in the recent campaign against Ka'iana. At one stage of the campaign he had to abandon Ka'ū for Puna. The Kilauea disaster must also have affected his morale, especially in light of the fact that Kamehameha had already begun construction of the Pu'ukoholā heiau as the prophecy of Kapoukahi demanded. These recent misfortunes and Kamehameha's victory off Waimanu seem to have convinced Keōua that resistance was hopeless.

The fate of Keōua's followers is unclear. Keōua left his fleet under the command of his half-brother, Pauli Ka'oleioku, before sailing into Kawaihae Bay. Kamehameha was rumoured to be the father of Ka'oleioku.⁵⁵ The traditions are silent on whether Ka'oleioku's genealogy tempered Kamehameha's treatment of Keōua's people and it is unclear whether Keōua's followers peacefully submitted to Kamehameha's rule after the death of Keōua. Given the longstanding animosity between windward and leeward ali'i on the island, it seems reasonable to assume that Kamehameha needed time to consolidate his rule over his new subjects in Hilo, Puna and Ka'ū. Certainly, Kamehameha did not wage campaigns against other islands in the chain over the next few years.

An uneasy stand-off now developed between Kamehameha and his leeward island rivals, with neither side willing to attack. George Vancouver found both sides professed a desire for peace, but neither could overcome deep suspicion of the other and agree to Vancouver's offer to mediate between them.⁵⁶ Vancouver noted that firearms were in great demand. Although Vancouver refused to supply weapons, some of the increasing number of trading vessels calling at the islands had no such qualms. No one knows for certain how many firearms came into the islands during these years. While one second-hand account claimed that Kamehameha's forces possessed 5,000 muskets by 1795, confirmed sightings by visitors and accounts of battles in the mid-1790s suggest the figure of 600 muskets, which was given to Urey Lisiansky in 1804, is probably closer to the mark. Visiting ships' captains never reported seeing more than 20 to 30 muskets in any one place during the 1790s.⁵⁷

55 Fornander (1969), p. 335; and Kamakau (1961), p. 153.

56 Vancouver (1801), bk 3, pp. 261, 306, 313, 317, 319, 321, 357 (Feb.–Mar. 1793); and bk 5, p. 83 (Feb. 1794).

57 Contemporary accounts of muskets are listed in Appendix 2, and Vancouver (1801) bk 2, pp. 353, 355, 391; bk 3, p. 224; bk 5, p. 49.

The influence of European technology should not be overemphasised. The maintenance of internal coherence in moku continued to be the crucial issue for the pursuit of power. After his triumph over Keōua, Kamehameha divided the districts of Hawai'i between his trusted followers and he continued to rely on his original supporters, the Kona uncles. By February 1794, Ke'eaumoku governed Kona, Kame'eiamoku presided over Kohala, Keaweheulu saw to Kamehameha's interests in Ka'ū, and Kamanawa ruled over Hilo. Kamehameha's half-brother, Kalaimamahu, was given the relatively unimportant district of Hāmākua, and Ka'iana was given charge of Puna. At the beginning of 1793, Vancouver was told the most powerful vassal ali'i of Kamehameha was 'Kahowmotoo' (Ke'eaumoku), followed by 'Commanow' (Kamanawa) and 'Kavaheero' (Keaweheulu).⁵⁸ It may be significant that Kamehameha's most troublesome subordinate, Ka'iana, was placed in Puna between two of the most powerful and loyal ali'i. Their districts had also been the heartlands of Kamehameha's last two rivals, Keōua and Keawemauhili.

Vancouver noted tensions between Kamehameha and Ka'iana on a number of occasions, including one instance involving an affair between Ka'iana and Ka'ahumanu. Ka'iana was linked to Kamehameha's old windward rivals, the I and Keawe families of Hilo, through his parents' blood lines. In February 1793, Vancouver was told a rift had developed between the leading ali'i on Hawai'i. The malcontents did not openly challenge Kamehameha, however, as he retained the support of the majority of ali'i. Kamehameha had the support of Ke'eaumoku, Kalaimamahu and Keaweheulu, while Ka'iana had the backing of his brother 'Nomatahah' (Namakeha) and 'Tamaahmottoo' (Kame'eiamoku). Vancouver described Kame'eiamoku as the proudest man on the island.⁵⁹ When he had massacred the crew of the *Fair American* for an affront to his mana by the crew of a preceding vessel, Kamehameha had deemed it judicious to take a large force with him to recover the vessel for himself. It may not have been coincidental that Ka'iana and Kame'eiamoku were put in charge of districts at opposite ends of the island. The power of Kamehameha's close collateral kin was also restrained. Kalaimamahu governed Hāmākua, the weakest district on the island. Another of Kamehameha's half-brothers,

58 Vancouver (1801), bk 3, p. 235, bk 5, pp. 26, 50–53; and Sahlins (1981), p. 62.

59 Vancouver (1801), bk 3, pp. 215–17 (Feb. 1793); bk 5, p. 10 (Jan. 1794) and pp. 40–46, 59; Thrum vol. 6 (1919–20), p. 288; and Miller (1988).

Kalawahi had no significant territorial holdings. Kalanimokulani-Kapo'okalani fades from prominence in the traditions after his defeat on Maui in 1786.⁶⁰

The alliance of Kahekili and Ka'eokulani also had problems in the years following their repulse from Hawai'i. The two *mō'i* kept their forces mobilised on Maui from 1791 through until at least 1793 to guard against invasion from Kamehameha. The task of feeding this large force caused severe hardship on Maui. By 1793 supplies were also being sent from Lāna'i and Moloka'i, and these islands were beginning to struggle under the strain. Vancouver also found it difficult to obtain supplies on O'ahu in 1792 and 1793.⁶¹ No further conflict is noted between the Kaua'i and Maui contingents, but future events suggest that tensions persisted. Ka'eokulani's aspirations on Maui may also have been an influence on the continued mobilisation of his forces there.

Ka'eokulani's prolonged absence from Kaua'i weakened his influence there. In his absence, Enemo had become increasingly despotic and increasingly frail. His ageing frame was no longer able to support his body and he bore the signs of excessive 'awa consumption. A rebellion soon took place in 1793 when the rebels mobilised on a small hill near Enemo's residence at Puna. Enemo was warned of the impending attack and moved decisively to pre-empt the rebel plans. He assembled his supporters and marched to the hill. While the seven Europeans in his service gave covering fire with muskets from the base of the hill, Enemo's warriors attacked. Three rebel ali'i fell, along with four of their men. The rest of the insurgents fled. A number of the surviving ringleaders and other suspects were taken prisoner. These included Ka'eokulani's half-sister, who was one of his favourite wives and had borne him a child. Enemo sent the captive rebels to Ka'eokulani for judgment. One of the Europeans in Enemo's service told Vancouver that the rebellion had been provoked by Enemo's excesses, and that the people were still loyal to Ka'eokulani and his son, Kaumuali'i, on whose behalf Enemo governed.⁶²

Enemo declared his independence from his *mō'i* a year later in February 1794. As they tried to land, the contingent sent by Kahekili to investigate was met by local warriors and Europeans armed with muskets.

60 Vancouver (1801), bk 5, pp. 90–91; and Sahlins (1981), p. 62.

61 Fornander (1969), p. 244; Vancouver (1801), bk 2, pp. 352, 361–63; and bk 3, pp. 296, 301, 342, 359–60.

62 Vancouver (1801), bk 3, pp. 367–70, 375–76; and Menzies (1920), p. 134.

The Europeans opened fire and drove off the approaching party with much slaughter. Kahekili reacted with uncharacteristic restraint and political skill. He persuaded Captain William Brown of the *Butterworth* to take him to Kaua'i from O'ahu and used his vessel as a neutral venue for talks with Enemo. The meeting on board ended with Enemo agreeing to revert to being merely regent in Ka'eokulani's absence and Kahekili would return back to O'ahu. In his younger days Kahekili would not have been so forgiving.⁶³

Kahekili was now over 60 years old and only had a few months to live. Like many other elderly ali'i, he was increasingly debilitated by 'awa.⁶⁴ Kahekili's interaction with Enemo raises the question of Ka'eokulani's position and aspirations at this time. In March 1793, Vancouver was under the impression that Ka'eokulani was subordinate to Kahekili rather than being an equal ally. An ali'i named 'Tamahanna' (Namahana) seemed to be in command on Maui, and appeared second only to Kahekili in consequence. Kalanikūpule continued to rule O'ahu on his father's behalf. Subsequent events suggest that Ka'eokulani kept his forces with him from 1791 to 1794. He spent these years on Maui and Moloka'i. His absence from Kaua'i in the wake of its internal troubles suggests that he harboured ambitions elsewhere. By the middle of 1794, Ka'eokulani was in effective control of Maui, Moloka'i and Lāna'i. His position was strengthened in February 1794 when the main powder magazine on Maui exploded and killed Namahana while he was inside it.⁶⁵

Kahekili died at Waikiki in July 1794.⁶⁶ Ka'eokulani and Kalanikūpule were the obvious contenders to inherit his mantle. While Ka'eokulani, who was about 50 years old, was beginning to show signs of 'awa consumption, he retained his sharp mind.⁶⁷ Kaua'i may have been his in name only by this stage. The degree to which he was able to supplement the Kaua'i followers accompanying him with Maui, Moloka'i and Lāna'i personnel by this time is unclear. Their loyalty may have been inclined towards Kalanikūpule, who was technically the successor to the Maui

63 Fornander (1969), p. 260; and Vancouver (1801), bk 5, pp. 125–26.

64 Vancouver (1801), bk 3, p. 305; and Menzies (1920), p. 104.

65 Vancouver (1801), bk 3, pp. 304–05 (Mar. 1793); bk 5, p. 118 (Feb. 1794); Kamakau (1961), p. 168; and Fornander (1969), pp. 214, 244.

66 Fornander (1969), p. 260.

67 Fornander (1969), p. 262; Kamakau (1961), p. 168; and Vancouver (1801), bk 3, p. 314 (Mar. 1793).

dynasty as Kahekili's oldest son. Ka'eokulani's occupation of Maui denied Kalanikūpule access to its manpower and resources should the two come to blows.

Kalanikūpule's position on O'ahu was also uncertain. He possessed high genealogical status, but defeat at 'Īao had eroded his mana. On O'ahu, he represented a recently imposed alien dynasty with a bloody record against the local population. The core of his support continued to be transplanted Maui ali'i and their retinue. He had the advantage, however, of benefiting from trade with the vessels that began to frequent Pu'uloa in the 1790s, although this contact had probably also brought disease. In 1793 Kalanikūpule suffered a puzzling illness that had left him emaciated and temporarily unable to use his legs.⁶⁸

In November 1794, Ka'eokulani sailed from Maui with his ali'i and warriors, ostensibly to make a long overdue visit to Kaua'i. An attack on Maui by Kamehameha was apparently no longer his most pressing concern. Subsequent events suggest that a number of Ka'eokulani's men increasingly resented their long absence from Kaua'i. Ka'eokulani must also have realised the value of securing the resources of Kaua'i for future power struggles. On learning of the approach of his uncle's fleet, Kalanikūpule took the precaution of fortifying the Ko'olaupoko coast with trenches and earthworks. The fact that he knew which coastline the fleet would sail down suggests he had been forewarned of the route, and perhaps of Ka'eokulani's true intentions. An attempted landing soon followed Ka'eokulani's arrival off Kukui in Ko'olaupoko. This was repulsed in a severe battle during which a prominent ali'i was shot and killed by Ka'eokulani's gunner, Mare Amara. The fleet remained just offshore for the next two days and nights, exchanging shots with those on shore. Kalanikūpule then made overtures to his uncle to end the fighting. The two met at Kalapewai in Kailua and parted a few days later with the goodwill between them restored.⁶⁹

Ka'eokulani continued his journey up the windward coast of O'ahu to Waimea. Here he discovered a plot to throw him overboard during the crossing to Kaua'i. The conspiracy was serious enough to involve his close adviser Kai'awa and a number of other ali'i. Uncertain of his support, Ka'eokulani chose not to confront the ringleaders and instead sought to

68 Vancouver (1981), bk 3, pp. 357–58 (Mar. 1793); and Daws (1968a), pp. 37–38.

69 Fornander (1969), pp. 262–63; and Kamakau (1961), p. 168.

divert the conspiracy by proposing war against Kalanikūpule. His gamble worked. To stiffen the resolve of the combatants, the canoes were hauled on shore and dismantled: there would be no turning back. As they marched overland towards 'Ewa, their ranks were swelled by warriors from Waialua and Wai'anae.⁷⁰ These districts had never taken kindly to the imposition of rule from Kona–Ko'olaupoko, regardless of whether the instigators were from Maui or O'ahu.

Kalanikūpule advanced from Kona to meet the threat at 'Ewa. He concluded an agreement with vessels reprovisioning at Pu'uloa for them to provide him with a contingent of musket-armed sailors in return for 400 hogs.⁷¹ The two sides first encountered each other at Punahawele in 'Ewa. Details are sketchy. It appears that the two sides contented themselves with skirmishing, until Kalanikūpule's forces retreated after Mare Amara picked off some of the sailors accompanying them. Kamakau states that some Hawaiians were killed also. Fighting continued over the next few days as Ka'eokulani's forces gradually advanced through 'Ewa. Kalanikūpule only committed part of his forces to these encounters and gathered the rest at Aiea near the boundary of 'Ewa and Kona.⁷²

Kalanikūpule occupied a strong position at Aiea (see Figure 11). His battlefield was probably little more than 2 kilometres long. Its left flank rested on the shores of Pu'uloa and its right flank merged into the steep foothills of the Ko'olau Mountains. The Kalauao Stream ran in front of his battleline. Kalanikūpule commanded the centre of his line. His brother, Koalaukani, led the right wing that occupied the heights of Kuamo'o, Kalauao and Aiea. The left flank rested firmly against the harbour at Malei Beach and was commanded by Kalanikūpule's uncle, Komohomoho. The contracted sailors were to provide flanking fire from long boats just offshore. The narrow coastal plain beyond the Kalauao Stream was covered in irrigated taro fields that would impede movement. Further inland the Kalauao's steep-sided ravine ruled out any chance of being outflanked.

The battle took place on 12 December. With his canoes dismantled and a quick victory as the only way to avoid open dissent, Ka'eokulani had no option but to assault Kalanikūpule's strong defensive position.

70 Fornander (1969), pp. 263–64; and Kamakau (1961), p. 168.

71 Kamakau (1969), pp. 168–69.

72 Fornander (1969), p. 264; and Kamakau (1969), p. 169.

A fierce and bloody struggle raged for most of the day, despite the hail of musket and cannon shot fired into Kaʻeokulani’s flank from the harbour. The decisive blow came late in the day. Koalaukani led his men in a determined charge down from the heights and drove into the flank of Kaʻeokulani’s forces. The flank buckled and Kaʻeokulani’s forces were in danger of being hemmed against the shoreline. They panicked and fled, despite their leader’s attempts to rally them. Kaʻeokulani was forced to flee as his army disintegrated. As he hid from his pursuers in a small ravine near the shoreline of Puʻuloa, his bright battle cloak betrayed him to the sailors offshore. While they pinned him down with musket fire, Kalanikūpule’s men closed in on him. He died, fighting bravely, together with his wives and the aliʻi and warriors still with him.⁷³ The fate of the survivors from Kaʻeokulani’s forces is unknown. There is no reference to punitive measures being taken against Waiʻanae and Waiulua. Nor is it certain if the survivors were able to escape to Kauaʻi or elude capture on Oʻahu.

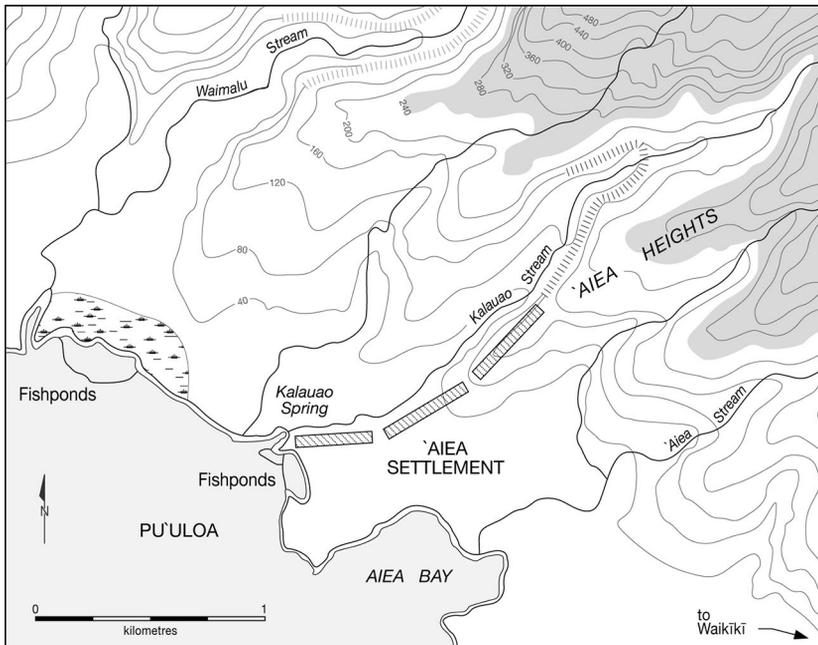


Figure 11: The battle of ʻAiea, 1794

Source: CartoGIS, The Australian National University.

73 Fornander (1969), pp. 264–65; and Kamakau (1961), p. 169.

Kalanikūpule's success at Aiea seems to have encouraged him to contemplate extending his rule beyond O'ahu. On 1 January 1795, he suddenly turned on his European allies and seized their vessels, the *Prince Lee Boo* and the *Jackal*, as they lay anchored in Pu'uloa. Only a few of the crew were spared to help sail the vessels, and probably also to assist in manning the ship's cannon. The seizure of the two vessels also provided a supply of muskets and ammunition. Instead of satisfying themselves with filling the vacuum created by Ka'eokulani's defeat, Kalanikūpule and his advisers decided to move directly against Kamehameha. Three weeks later their forces set sail for Hawai'i in their newly acquired vessels and a fleet of canoes. Just off O'ahu, the surviving crew managed to seize some firearms and drive their captors overboard. Kalanikūpule was among the passengers expelled. The O'ahu mō'i had now lost his European vessels and most of his firearms and ammunition. Contrary to the advice of Komohomoho, Kalanikūpule had stored all his guns and ammunition on board the two ships instead of distributing them among his followers. The invasion was aborted and the surviving crew of the two ships proceeded to Hawai'i and informed Young and Davis of Kalanikūpule's loss. They may even have traded or given their former captor's arms to Kamehameha.⁷⁴

Kalanikūpule was now particularly vulnerable. Although he may have been able to concentrate his remaining supporters from Maui, Moloka'i and Lāna'i on O'ahu before Kamehameha attacked, he had not had time to consolidate his hold over the multi-island moku since defeating Ka'eokulani. His control beyond O'ahu was tenuous and, even on that island, the shaky loyalty of many ali'i had been demonstrated by their recent support of Ka'eokulani. On Kaua'i, Kaumuali'i had succeeded his father and could hardly be relied on for support.⁷⁵ To make matters worse, Kalanikūpule was now at a serious disadvantage to Kamehameha in European military technology.

Kamehameha wasted little time in organising an attack on Kalanikūpule. Messengers were dispatched all over Hawai'i to mobilise men and canoes. Kamehameha set sail for Maui at the head of a large force. The fleet now also included a small schooner with 12 cannon that Vancouver had helped Kamehameha to construct. There is no mention of any resistance on Maui. The traditions imply Kamehameha merely stopped briefly at Lahaina and

74 Kamakau (1961), p. 170; Fornander (1969), pp. 267–68; Dibble (1909), pp. 55–56; and Daws (1968a), p. 240.

75 Kamakau (1961), p. 169.

moved on to the Kona coast of Moloka‘i.⁷⁶ The sheer size of his fleet may have been enough to intimidate these islands into submission, or to persuade those opposed to Kamehameha to flee to O‘ahu.

At Moloka‘i, Ka‘iana resolved to join Kalanikūpule. There had been tension between Ka‘iana and Kamehameha for some time, and most of Kamehameha’s main ali‘i were now antagonistic towards him. He began to suspect the worst when he was excluded from the war councils on Moloka‘i. As the fleet crossed over from Moloka‘i to O‘ahu, Ka‘iana and his supporters separated from the main fleet and headed for Ko‘olaupoko instead of the intended landing place at Waikiki in Kona. Ka‘iana’s breakaway does not seem to have been contested. From Ko‘olaupoko, Ka‘iana proceeded over the Ko‘olau Mountains to join Kalanikūpule in the Nu‘uanu Valley.⁷⁷

The main fleet landed at Waikiki. Kamehameha’s force numbered around 10,000 men. Although some sources claim that 5,000 of these had firearms, the figure was probably closer to the 600 firearms of Kamehameha’s army in 1802. The army also possessed 12 cannon that were commanded by Europeans. Even allowing for Ka‘iana’s defection and forces left on Hawai‘i, Maui, Lāna‘i and Moloka‘i, Kamehameha’s army almost certainly outnumbered its opponents, and definitely outgunned them.⁷⁸ Kalanikūpule did not contest their landing on the open coastal plain, and made his stand in the Nu‘uanu Valley (see Figure 12). Kalanikūpule had chosen his ground well. A gradual slope led up to his battlefield, giving him the advantage of the high ground. The steep valley walls meant that, as at Aiea, his battlefield was relatively narrow and hard to outflank. After spending a few days at Waikiki, Kamehameha moved against Kalanikūpule’s position. One source claims the battle was preceded by a brief delaying action, but most simply refer to the main battle in the valley. The defenders resisted with great determination but, according to Fornander, were gradually worn down as:

the superiority of Kamehameha’s artillery, the number of his guns, and the better practice of his soldiers, soon turned the day in his favor, and the defeat of the O‘ahu forces became an accelerated rout and a promiscuous slaughter.⁷⁹

76 Fornander (1969), pp. 343–44; Kamakau (1961), pp. 170–71; and Bishop, in Roe (1967), pp. 141–42.

77 Fornander (1969), p. 347; and Kamakau (1961), p. 172.

78 Boit (n.d.), p. 5; and Bishop, in Roe (1967), p. 141.

79 Fornander (1969), pp. 347–48.

The broken forces of Kalanikūpule were pushed into the increasingly narrow confines of the heavily forested upper Nuʻuanu Valley, where they were hemmed in by its steep slopes. The valley ended at the Nuʻuanu Pali, a 304-metre cliff on the windward face of the Koʻolau Mountains. A narrow trail leading down the slope beside it linked Kona with Koʻolaupoko. According to some accounts the retreating forces attempted to make a stand at Laʻimi behind a stone wall on top of a steep slope. Cannon were dragged up the valley and used to dislodge them. In one account, this stand ended when Kalanikūpule was wounded, and splinters resulting from a cannonball hitting the wall killed Kaʻiana. Young later told Lisiansky that Kaʻiana was killed by a spear, and Fornander claims Kaʻiana and his brother Nahiolea were killed early in the battle. The stone wall referred to was possibly at the original battleline further down the valley.⁸⁰

Most of Kalanikūpule's forces seem to have escaped up the valley's slopes and along the ridges of the Koʻolau Mountains, or down the trail into windward Oʻahu. Given the length of the valley and the tree cover of its upper reaches, it is possible that the pursuers did not reach the Pali by nightfall. Some defenders were trapped against the Pali and condemned to a grisly death on the rocks at the foot of its steep cliffs. A fortified ridge-top position at the head of the valley⁸¹ may have served as the location for a final stand by those that could not, or would not escape. The reference to Kaʻiana being struck down by a spear suggests that firearms and cannon did not dominate the fighting. The following year the trader Bishop was told that Kamehameha's side lost only 20 men and inflicted at least 500 casualties on the enemy. William Broughton was told the defenders' losses were 300 men. William Ellis's claim that 400 men were driven over the Pali is, therefore, probably an exaggeration.⁸²

80 Kamakau (1961), pp. 171–72; Fornander (1969), pp. 347–48; Thrum, vol. 5 (1918–19), p. 474; Campbell (1967), p. 97; Lisiansky (1967), p. 132; Jarves (1872), pp. 84–85; and Thomas G. Thrum, 'The Battle of Nuuanu', in Thomas G. Thrum (comp.), *Hawaiian Almanac and Annual for 1899* (Honolulu: Press Publishing Co., 1899), pp. 111–12.

81 Kirch (1985), pp. 116, 273.

82 Bishop, in Roe (1967), p. 180; Broughton (1967), p. 71; and Ellis, cited in Stokes (1937), p. 38.

TRANSFORMING HAWAII'

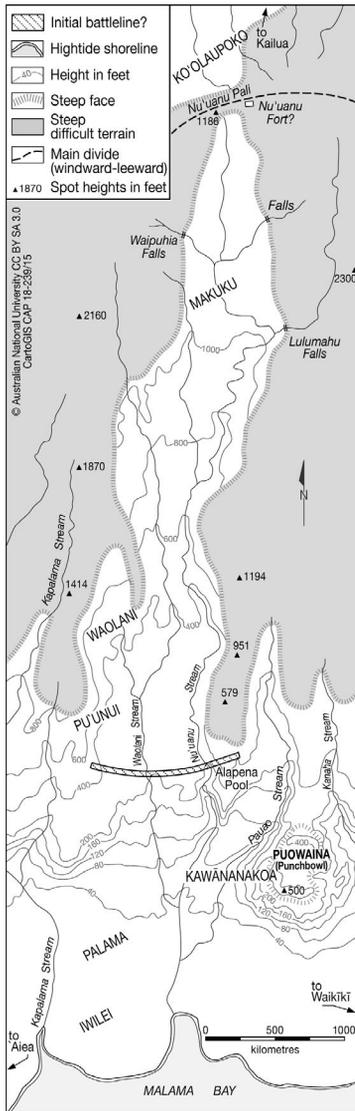


Figure 12: The battle of Nu'uaniu, 1795

Source: CartoGIS, The Australian National University.

Kalanikūpule escaped into the Ko'olau Mountains and hid there for some months, until he was finally captured and killed. His body was brought to Kamehameha and offered as a sacrifice to Kū'kā'ilimoku. Ka'iana and other prominent enemy ali'i killed at Nu'uaniu had been sacrificed straight after the battle and their heads stuck on the palings of the heiau. Kalanikūpule's brother Koalaukani is the only member of the vanquished side's leadership that seems to have escaped to Kaua'i.⁸³

The Hawaiian army remained on O'ahu for over a year while Kamehameha prepared to invade Kaua'i. Part of the preparations included the construction of a 36-tonne European-style vessel by his foreign carpenters at Honolulu.⁸⁴ The consolidation of his recent territorial acquisitions also had to be attended to. Many of the female ali'i nui of O'ahu were married off to Kamehameha's supporters. Young, for example, was married to Namokuelua of O'ahu in 1795.⁸⁵ The prolonged stay of Kamehameha's forces on O'ahu (which probably increased the island's population by 25 per cent) severely strained local food resources and produced famine.

83 Kamakau (1961), p. 172; Fornander (1969), p. 348; and Lisiansky (1967), p. 132.

84 Kamakau (1961), pp. 172–73; and Broughton (1967), p. 71.

85 Westervelt (1922), p. 26; and John F. G. Stokes, 'Nationality of John Young, A Chief of Hawaii', *47th Annual Report of the Hawaiian Historical Society for the Year 1938* (Honolulu: 1939), pp. 15–16.

Visitors to O‘ahu reported the population to be in a desperate state by 1796. No mention is made of food being brought in from other islands under Kamehameha’s control. No leader emerged on O‘ahu to encourage an uprising, as had happened in the 1780s. Agricultural production was stepped up after the disruption of war and, by 1798, O‘ahu seemed to be recovering from its ordeal.⁸⁶

Kamehameha was ready to invade Kaua‘i in the summer of 1796. His attempt was thwarted when much of his fleet was capsized by strong winds during a night crossing of the channel between O‘ahu and Kaua‘i. Many more canoes would have been lost if the fleet not been close enough to O‘ahu to reach the safety of shore.⁸⁷ Kamehameha remained in O‘ahu waiting for another opportunity. He probably used the time to replace his losses. In the meantime, Kaumuali‘i had faced a serious challenge from his half-brother, Keawe, on Kaua‘i. Keawe was based in Waimea and had Europeans serving with him. When Broughton visited Kaua‘i in July 1796, Keawe was also in control of Wailua and Kaumuali‘i was his prisoner. Keawe died soon after taking power, however, and Kaumuali‘i was restored as mō‘ī of Kaua‘i.⁸⁸

Kaumuali‘i was spared the danger of a second attempt on Kaua‘i later in the year by divisions within Kamehameha’s domains. News arrived from Hawai‘i that Ka‘ū, Puna and Hilo had rebelled against Kamehameha. The rebellion was led by the ali‘i nui Namakeha. In the absence of Kamehameha and his army, they were encountering little opposition and were threatening the Kona heartland. There had been some skirmishes involving the loss of life, but most of Kamehameha’s subjects seemed lost without their ali‘i to lead them. Davis found it necessary to send to Kamehameha for help. Kamehameha returned to Hawai‘i in September 1796 and marched against Namakeha, crushing the rebels in battle at Hilo. In January 1797, Kū‘kā‘ili-moku once more received the body of one of Kamehameha’s opponents as Namakeha was offered up as a sacrifice.⁸⁹

86 Kirch & Sahlins (1992), p. 41, citing Bishop, *Journal*, 21 Feb. 1796; Townsend (1888), p. 72; Broughton (1969), pp. 40, 71; and Schmitt (1970), p. 111.

87 Kamakau (1961), p. 173; Broughton (1967), p. 71; and Daws (1968a), p. 41.

88 Broughton (1967), p. 44; Bishop, in Roe (1967), p. 145, n. 1; and Stokes (1937), p. 41.

89 Kamakau (1961), pp. 173–74; Thrum, vol. 5 (1918–19), p. 476; Broughton (1967), pp. 69–70; Daws (1968a), p. 41; and Sahlins (1983), pp. 535–36.

While Hilo was Kamehameha's last battle, it did not secure lasting control of Hawai'i any more than the battle of Nu'uaniu ensured his rule over O'ahu. Just as Kahekili had felt the need to remain on O'ahu to consolidate his victory over Kahahana, so Kamehameha's advisers had cautioned against Kamehameha leaving O'ahu to deal with Namakeha in 1796. His old enemies might be dead, but the prospect of new challengers loomed once the army was broken up and power decentralised in the usual way among district ali'i. In February 1796, Broughton noted dissent among Kamehameha's ali'i over the proposal to invade Kaua'i.⁹⁰ When considering who to put in charge of O'ahu while he was absent attempting to quell Namakeha's rebellion, Kamehameha was reputedly advised:

Do not appoint a chief over O'ahu, for during your absence in Hawaii he would rebel against you. The best thing to do is to leave none but commoners on O'ahu and take the young chiefs with you.⁹¹

Heeding this advice:

Kamehameha therefore put his steward Ku-i-helani in charge of O'ahu, and Ka-lani-moku appointed his man Ka-hanau-makai'i, to collect taxes. Ke-kua-manoha', although among those who fought for Ka-lani-ku-pule and plotted against Kamehameha, was left on O'ahu because many of his relatives were among Kamehameha's followers.⁹²

It was a move that contained both compromise and innovation. With it, the seeds for a new order were planted.

90 Broughton (1967), p. 144.

91 Kamakau (1961), p. 173.

92 Kamakau (1961), pp. 173–74, 182.

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