Explanatory Note on the Use of Hawaiian Terms in this Book

Where possible Hawaiian terms have been used for specifically Hawaiian institutions or objects.

Aliʻi is used to refer to Hawaiian chiefs in general. Aliʻi nui refers to senior chiefs as opposed to those with relatively little genealogical status. Mōʻi were the rulers of discrete polities known as moku. Makaʻāinana refers to all commoners, most of whom cultivated the land. But, within this group, there were commoners who served in chiefly retinues, and such people are distinguished by the term kanaka. The basic local land division was known as an ahupuaʻa. Akua refers to gods as opposed to ʻaumakua (spirits). In general, I have used the term gods for the broader sense of the supernatural world. When referring to particular deities, they are mentioned by name rather than as akua. Temples are referred to as heiau. Because of the large number of Hawaiian words that are used in the text, these have not been italicised or underlined so as not to disrupt the flow of the narrative.

Hawaiʻi is used for both the culture in general and Hawaiʻi Island. Where there may be ambiguity in sentences between the two usages, Hawaiʻi Island is used for the latter, and Hawaiʻi for the former.