
Of Colonization and *Pono* in Hawai'i

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On December 8, 2003, exactly 62 years after the Japanese Imperial Navy attacked the tiny U.S. outpost of Howland Island (1,650 miles southwest of Hawai'i), the living relatives and friends of Joseph Keli'ihananui and Richard "Dicky" Whaley, two Native Hawaiians killed on the island, laid the bodies of the two young men (ages 26 and 19) to rest at the Hawai'i State Veterans Cemetery in Kane'ohe, O'ahu. This (re)burial service was the latest chapter in a tale of American colonization and empire that, like the bodies of Keli'ihananui and Whaley, had been buried under the militarized landscape of modern Hawai'i and forgotten for many years by all but a few.

In all likelihood, these young men and the larger project that ended with their deaths would have remained hidden in obscurity were it not for an important act of public and collective remembering that took place in the summer of 2002. In partnership with community scholars, Kamehameha Schools, the University of Hawai'i (UH) Center for Oral History, and surviving "colonists" and their family members, the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum in Honolulu developed a traveling exhibit entitled "Hui Panala'au: Hawaiian Colonists, American Citizens." The exhibit brought to light a little known episode of Hawaiian and American history in which over 130 young men, most of whom were Native Hawaiian, "colonized" five small islands in the equatorial Pacific as employees of the U.S. Departments of Commerce and Interior between the years of 1935 and 1942. "Hui Panala'au," or "Society of Colonists," was the name adopted by the colonists and former colonists who formed an association in 1939 and received a charter of incorporation from the Territory of Hawai'i in 1956.

One of the most important outcomes of the Bishop Museum exhibit was the reinvigoration of the men and families of Hui Panala'au and their subsequent efforts to achieve justice for those who gave so much but received little in return. Largely through the efforts of Noelle Kahanu, Bishop Museum project manager and granddaughter of an early colonist, the Panala'au members and families successfully petitioned the state government to have the bodies of Keli'ihananui and Whaley disinterred from an out-of-the-way and (following the 9/11 attacks on the U.S.) increasingly restricted military cemetery at Schofield Barracks, and reburied at the Hawai'i State Veterans Cemetery in Kane'ohe.

At the service, Moana Whaley Espinda (niece of Dicky Whaley) addressed a small crowd of about fifty and stated, "Today, on the 62nd anniversary of their death, we are blessed with the cooperation of family, community, and the military, acknowledging the great sacrifices of our *kupuna* [ancestors/elders]. This final resting place helps to make everything *pono* [right/just/proper/good]."

Herein, I reflect on this statement and raise the following questions: Can *pono*—defined here as social justice—ever be fully achieved in this situation? If so, how? For whom? In looking for answers to these questions, I describe the history of the colonization project of 1935–1942, contextualizing it in the larger national and international politics of sovereignty and representation. I then highlight some of the legacies of the Hui Panala’au, especially those that were spurred on by the traveling exhibit, to which I contributed as a researcher and oral history interviewer. I end by commenting on how the experiences, stories, and struggles of the Panala’au articulate with other Native Hawaiian initiatives for social justice today.

By 1935, the Kanaka ‘Oiwī Maoli (indigenous Hawaiian) population had experienced massive depopulation from epidemics and suffered widespread loss of land and sovereignty. The political economy of the Territory of Hawai‘i was controlled by the “Big Five” sugar interests whose leaders—primarily *haole* (white) American missionary descendants and business owners—had been instrumental in the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1893 and the equally unlawful annexation of the islands by the U.S. in 1898. These same plantation barons had imported thousands of Asian laborers to work the plantations since the mid-1800s, and by the 1930s Kanaka ‘Oiwī had become a minority in their own homeland. As the infrastructure to support the sugar economy developed, many Hawaiians relocated to Honolulu in search of wages on the docks and in blue-collar government jobs. While a landed elite of Hawaiian royalty enjoyed the benefits of political alliances with the Republican Party, as McGregor points out in *Kupa’a i ka ‘Aina: Persistence on the Land*, a great deal more urban Hawaiians families struggled to get by.

At the same time, the U.S. government was busily fortifying its Pacific outpost as tensions with an expanding Japanese empire grew. The number of U.S. military personnel and dependents and defense expenditures in Hawai‘i skyrocketed with the construction of two airfields, a naval air station, and a naval magazine. Conversely (though not unrelated), Hawai‘i’s image as a tourist destination, characterized by its unique culture, music, and *hula*, was increasingly being marketed and consumed with new developments in advertising, mass media, and aviation.

The final element, aviation, served as the initial (at least public) justification for the colonization project. In the early 1930s, the potential for the development of airways between California and Australia made it imperative that the U.S. claim islands along these routes. Barren, flat as a pancake, sun-blasted specks lying on the equator, the islands of Jarvis, Howland, and Baker had been previously claimed by the U.S. under the Guano Act of 1856 and worked by the American Guano Company between 1857 and 1877. The company recruited hundreds of Hawaiians to work under deplorable conditions on the islands the laborers would name Puaka’ilima (Baker), Ulukou (Howland), and Paukeaho (Jarvis). After the American Guano Company ceased operations there, British companies asserted claims and worked the islands for a short period with their own Native Pacific Islander laborers. By 1935, ownership of the “Line Islands” or “Equatorial Islands,” as they were variously called, was uncertain. Since both American and

British companies were actively competing for new air routes, the U.S. government moved quickly and discreetly to assert sovereignty over the islands.

In March 1935, William T. Miller, Superintendent of Airways from the Bureau of Air Commerce, was sent by the Secretary of Commerce to Honolulu to organize a secret expedition to colonize Jarvis, Baker, and Howland. Through the War Department, Miller was given the assistance of Army personnel. The Navy provided much of the supplies, and the Treasury Department provided Coast Guard cutters for transportation. Even at this stage, the military interests were closely aligned with those of commerce, foreshadowing things to come.

Army Lieutenant Harold A. Meyer was given the responsibility for outfitting the expedition with supplies and with groups of colonists composed of three army soldiers put on furlough (one NCO, one cook, and one first aid) and two Hawaiians whose duties would include fishing, boating, and other miscellaneous camp activities. Through Albert F. Judd, a trustee of both the Kamehameha Schools (established for boys and girls of Hawaiian descent) and the Bishop Museum, Meyer procured the services of collections curator Dr. Edwin H. Bryan (who would eventually become the unofficial historian and archivist of the expeditions) and Dr. Homer Barnes, principal of the Kamehameha Schools. The Kamehameha School for boys, with its curriculum in vocational and military training provided the "right type" of colonist for the job. Following Meyer's guidelines, Barnes, according to Bryan, identified young Hawaiian men who were "able to fish in the native manner, to swim excellently, and to handle a boat; ... disciplined ... friendly and unattached ... could stand the rigors that might have to be undergone ... would be able to 'take it.'"

Eventually six recent Kamehameha alumni were selected to accompany the 12 enlisted men. Abraham Pi'ianaia, one of the original colonists, later recalled being told only, "We have a project which is of top security and if you would like to join us, we would be happy to have you. We can't tell you about it until you get there." Yet like all the other Hawaiians and soldiers who were approached, Pi'ianaia jumped at the opportunity to go on "a great adventure;" moreover, the pay of three dollars a day was a substantial salary during the height of the Depression in Hawai'i.

On March 20, 1935, the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Itasca* departed from Honolulu to establish camps on Jarvis, Howland, and Baker. This official party included Miller, Meyer, Bryan, and a few other soldiers who accompanied the colonists. On March 25, after a brief stop at Palmyra atoll, the *Itasca* landed the first "survey party" on the island of Jarvis (about 1,300 miles south of Hawai'i). Five days later, parties were landed on Howland (about a 1,000 miles west of Jarvis) and Baker (a short 40 miles from Howland). The colonists had established tent camps, made weather readings and observations, staked out possible sites for landing strips, collected shells and other scientific specimens, and maintained good health and morale. In addition to providing a constant supply of fresh fish to supplement the party's military canned rations, the Hawaiian boys were participating in every aspect of the camp's activities. The official party returned to Honolulu on April 27, whereupon Miller reported the progress to Washington. A second expedition in June replaced the Army soldiers with two more Hawaiian boys on each island.

For the remainder of the yearlong Department of Commerce colonization

project, sometimes referred to as the “South Seas Surveys,” each island was occupied by four Kamehameha alumni (and eventually some students) at a time, who were rotated off the islands every few months. In addition to recording weather and meteorological readings throughout the day and night, the young men cleared mounds and filled holes for planned runways, mapped the features of each island, conducted studies of birds, and made various improvements to their camps. Much leisure time was spent in fishing, playing music, collecting shells, observing the thousands of birds, watching the rats and hermit crabs scavenge for food, and exercising and swimming in the afternoons.

Each island also had unique characteristics and histories that framed the experiences of the individual survey parties: the shipwrecked barkentine *Amaranth* on Jarvis, the pounding surf of Baker, Howland’s grove of stunted kou trees, the voracious rats of Baker and Howland, the sharks that inhabited all of the waters, remnants in ground of the guano-mining years, and the profound beauty of the stars, moon, and sun which often led the colonists to contemplate on their lives and on the “civilization” they were so far removed from.

Despite the clandestine nature of these initial expeditions, when the *Itasca* arrived back in port on June 26, 1935 from its second “cruise” (another frequently used term for the Coast Guard cutter trips), reporters immediately noticed that this was the second trip in just three months to a relatively obscure area in the Pacific. Thus in July the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* ran a three-part series of articles on the current project and the history of the islands during the guano period. This was but the first of a number of period publications in newspapers and magazines in Hawai’i and across the U.S. that would variously depict the adventures of the colonists as pioneers living the Robinson Crusoe life in America’s new frontier of transpacific aviation and commerce.

On May 13, 1936, the veil of secrecy (which had been virtually transparent since the return of the first party) was officially lifted when President Roosevelt claimed these islands and placed them under the control and jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior for administrative purposes (Executive Order No. 7368). Expeditions were re-initiated almost immediately as the U.S. raced Hawaiian colonists down to the islands in order to preclude any counter-claims made by would-be British occupiers. Cruises by Coast Guard cutters proceeded along the same schedule as had been carried out the previous year, making trips to the islands approximately every three months to refit and rotate the four colonists stationed on each island.

Under the Department of the Interior, the colonists initially carried out many of the same activities as before, with the addition of some new ones. The government dedicated more resources and materials to the clearing of airfields and construction of permanent structures and housings, tasks carried out by the colonists. The earlier policy of recruiting exclusively from Kamehameha students and alumni was abandoned, and both Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians became colonists for the U.S., including a number of Hawai’i-born Asian American (several Chinese and one Korean) radio operators and student aerologists. Amelia Earhart’s failed attempt to fly around the world and land on Howland gave the islands a new spotlight in the early months of 1937. A few months later a National Geographic Eclipse Expedition to Canton Island brought American

and British scientists and government officials together in a precursor to what would be a “friendly rivalry” in claims. In 1938, the U.S. co-colonized the islands of Canton and Enderbury (in the Phoenix Group), which had already been occupied by the British.

Eventually the media coverage of the project died down, and the romance of the adventure faded. In October 1938, the project suffered its first casualty with the loss of Carl Kahalewai, who died *en route* from Jarvis while being rushed to Honolulu for emergency surgery for a ruptured appendix. Meanwhile, Carl’s brother Sam was on Howland island facing his own struggle with life and death as supplies were depleted and the colonists had dug their own graves in anticipation of their impending doom; when writing of the experience in the 1970s, Sam, as he reported in *The Bee*, said that he discovered that the supply ship was delayed due to the presence of Japanese ships in the vicinity.

The experience of the Kahalewai brothers was a harbinger of things to come as the dangers the boys were facing took on a new reality. The project became more militaristic in nature, or more obviously militaristic (since the military dimension had been benignly present from the beginning). As the war in Europe raged and Japan expanded its empire, the Equatorial Island colonies were increasingly seen as U.S. defense outposts (this was being discussed publicly as early as 1936). Despite increasing hostilities in the Pacific and the threat posed to the colonists, the Department of Interior continued to place young, unattached men (by then, these appear to be the only criteria) on the islands, with no weapons and no preparation for battle.

Finally on December 8, 1941, the day after Pearl Harbor was attacked, the Japanese Imperial Navy bombed and shelled the islands of Howland and Baker. On Howland Island, two Hawaiian colonists—Joseph Keli’ihananui and Dicky Whaley—died of shrapnel wounds. Later that month a Japanese submarine attacked the island of Jarvis, but no one was injured. Colonists had already been removed from Canton in 1940 as administration of U.S. facilities was given over to Pan American Airways, who had established a base there. On Howland and Baker, nearly all the facilities and supplies had been destroyed in the early attacks, and the remaining boys were forced to hide during the day and scavenge for food and drink at night to avoid the Japanese bombers patrolling the area regularly. They survived thus for nearly six weeks before they were finally rescued by the U.S. Navy destroyer *Helm* on January 31. The rescue party picked up Thomas Bedermen and Elvin Mattson on Howland Island but left the bodies of Keli’ihananui and Whaley in the makeshift grave (a crater created by the bombs) that they were buried in.

The destroyer then went on to Baker, where the rescuers were unable to land due to the pounding surf. The Baker colonists were forced to swim through the waves and brave the sharks in order to reach the small rescue boat that was awaiting them beyond the breakers. When finally aboard, the colonists were given clothes, food, and water, and were taken back to Honolulu. Elvin Mattson recalls being interrogated in seclusion from family and friends for a day and a half and being instructed to remain quiet about his experience (which he did for 60 years until the museum exhibit was launched and his oral history interview took place—in April 2002). Despite this, reports of the Howland and Baker attacks and rescues appeared in local newspapers shortly afterwards, and



Figure 1. "The forgotten eight."

Thomas Bedermen published a detailed account of the events on Howland in a March 9, 1942 issue of *Life*.

Though not subject to the same level of attack and surveillance as those on Howland and Baker, the colonists on Enderbury and Jarvis were forced to maintain radio silence and await an uncertain fate as their own supplies were depleted; they were not picked up until February 7 and 9, respectively. The U.S. Coast Guard cutter, *Taney*, transported the eight to Palmyra atoll, where they boarded a U.S. merchant vessel, *S.S. Oliver Olson*, which provided slow and uncertain passage back to Honolulu. Paul Phillips, stationed on Jarvis at the time and now the sole remaining colonist from this last group, notes that their return was unheralded and that the only thing he was given was the advice "Get yourself a job within the next ten days or you're gonna get drafted." Thus the return of the "forgotten eight" (as Phillips has dubbed their group) marked the conclusion of the project (see Figure 1).

Both the good times and the hardships forged strong bonds between the men. As early as 1939, members of previous trips formed a club to "perpetuate the fellowship of Hawaiian youths who have served as colonists on American equatorial islands." Initially they were called the "Hui Kupu 'Aina," which suggests the idea of sprouting, growing, and increasing land. By 1946 the group's name had changed to "Hui Panala'au," which was variously translated in different news stories as "Club of Settlers of the Southern Islands," "Holders of the Land Society," and "Society of Colonists." Interestingly, *Panala'au* is the same

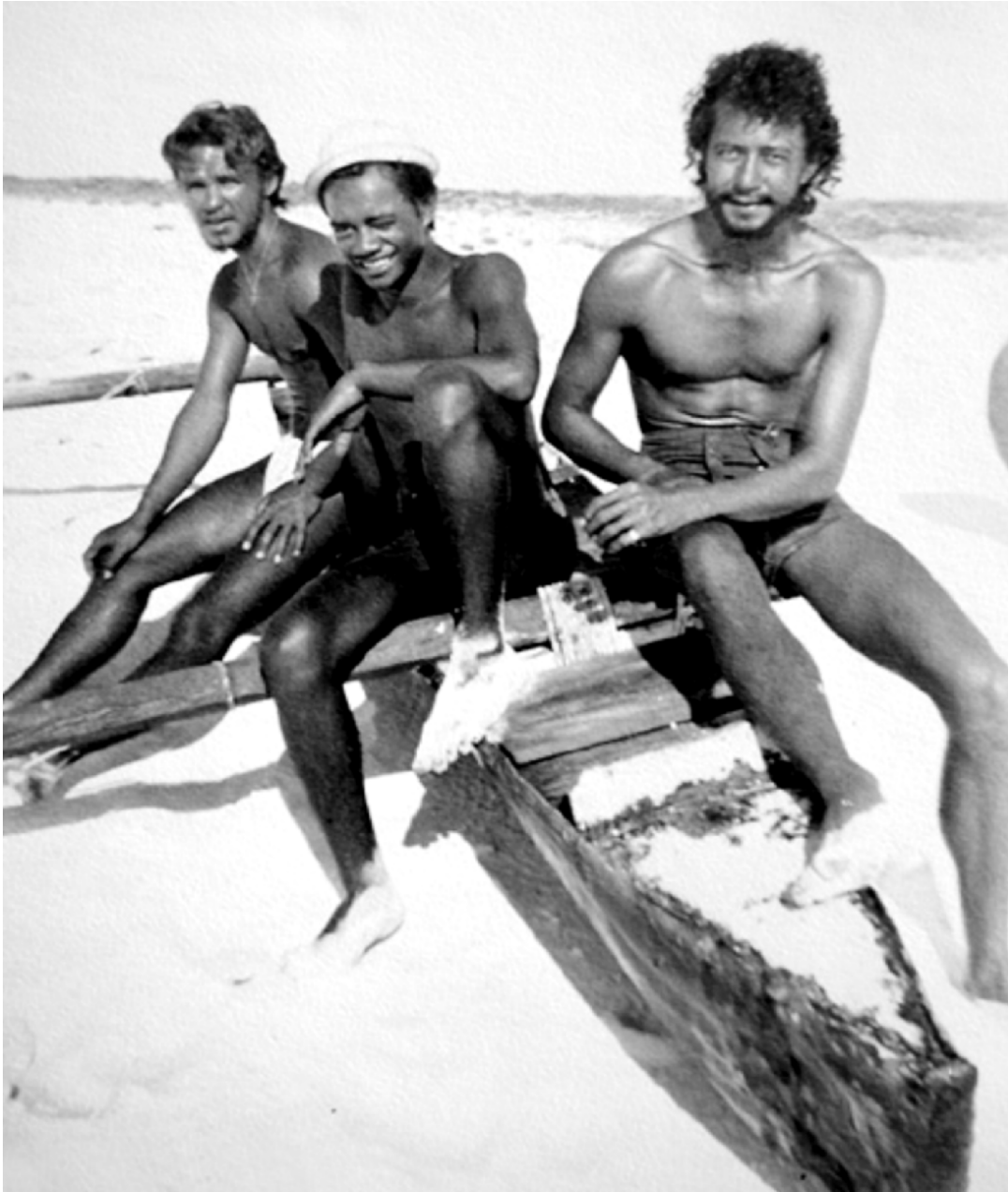


Figure 2. "Howland three."

word used for "Territory" in the Hawaiian-language version of the 1900 Organic Act of the Territory.

In July 1956, the group was given a charter of incorporation by the Territory of Hawai'i. In addition to the preservation of the group's fellowship, other purposes, according to Bryan, were to "foster and maintain in themselves ... the desirable traits of character constituent to the racial makeup of the members," to "honor and esteem those who died ... as colonists of the Equatorial Islands," and to "establish and provide scholarship assistance at the University of Hawai'i for deserving graduates of Hawai'i's high schools." The minutes from a May 11,

1959 meeting reflect that the Scholarship Committee's "policy has been primarily to help Hawaiian boys who needed help." At the time of the meeting, three boys had already received scholarships and were all doing well.

Over the years, the meetings became fewer and the scholarship program was eventually discontinued. In 1974, Dr. Edwin H. Bryan of the Bishop Museum published the only major written account of the expeditions in *Panala'au Memoirs*. A few short newspaper and magazine articles were published in the 1980s and early 1990s, but for the most part the Panala'au expeditions had slipped out of the collective memory of the Hawaiian people.

Yet the family members and close friends of the colonists still recalled the episode. One individual was Noelle Kahanu, a project director in the Bishop Museum's Education Department, whose grandfather, George Kahanu, Sr., had been a spare on the fourth cruise and a Jarvis Island colonist on the fifth. Because of her intimate knowledge of the project, Kahanu effectively brought together a number of researchers, institutions, documents, and, most importantly, living colonists (most of whom were in their eighties and nineties), and relatives to retell the stories of the Panala'au. The "Hui Panala'au: Hawaiian Colonists, American Citizens" traveling exhibit opened on May 25, 2002 and consisted of 46 graphic panels containing over 140 photographs, bound reproductions of daily log books, a 6-minute oral history video documentary, an interactive computer program, 7 cases of artifacts, and a 15-page humanities guide containing 7 essays on a variety of topics related to the project.

After the three-week opening run at the Bishop Museum, the exhibit was featured at Kamehameha School (Kapalama Campus, O'ahu), Keauhou Shopping Center (Kona, Hawai'i), and at Capitol Hill (Washington, DC) as a part of a Senate-sponsored series of events honoring Native Hawaiian, Alaska Native, and American Indian veterans. Museum staff, Panala'au colonists, and humanities scholars made presentations in a panel series at the Museum and at larger meetings such as the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement's first annual Native Hawaiian Conference and the annual convention of the Association for Hawaiian Civic Clubs. Dr. Warren Nishimoto of the UH Center for Oral History (with Kahanu and myself on occasion) conducted oral history interviews with eight of the surviving colonists and has been preparing the manuscript of their life stories for publication. Local newspapers and television stations reported on the exhibit and on the stories surrounding it, as did educational programs and publications sponsored by Kamehameha Schools.

The most recent chapter in this story has been the reburial of Joseph Keli'ihananui and Dicky Whaley at Kane'ohe Veteran's Cemetery, but only after many years of struggle. The U.S. military did not retrieve the bodies of the boys from Howland until 1954, and only then due to agitation on the part of the Hui Panala'au and family members. With no formal acknowledgement by the U.S. government of its role in the tragedy—that is, that they knowingly put these young men in harm's way in a project whose militaristic nature was never disclosed to its participants—the two were buried in a cemetery at Schofield Barracks, a U.S. Army base in a remote and rural part of O'ahu. Their obscure placement only underscored the lack of recognition (or even deliberate obfuscation) of the colonists and the colonial history they were a part of. As Ornetta

Keli'ihananui Ka'a'a (niece of Joseph) stated, "My dad never forgave the federal government. All his life he was hurt that they took away his brother without ever so much as an apology."

The Hui Panala'au exhibit and renewed public interest motivated the surviving colonists and families to once again strive for the justice that had been denied them. With the help of Kahanu, a small group representing the Panala'au petitioned Hawai'i's Congressional Delegation to assist with the following unresolved issues: fulfillment of verbal promises made to the Keli'ihananui and Whaley families by government officials to re-inter their loved ones at Puowaina, the Punchbowl National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu; retribution to families whose loved ones were lost (this could also include the Kahalewai family); and clarification/recognition of the status and role of the Hui Panala'au as a whole. (Some comparisons may be drawn with the ongoing efforts of Filipino veterans who fought during World War II to achieve recognition and veteran benefits from the U.S.).

In an August 7, 2002 letter sent to the Delegation members, Paul Phillips wrote, "I ... respectfully request your assistance in seeking clarification regarding the hui members—civilian employees who served in a military capacity for the federal government. Although precious few of us remain, might there still be some means of finally acknowledging the contributions and ultimate sacrifices made by the members of the Hui Panala'au ... ? Justice knows not the passage of time."

The petitions made by the new Hui Panala'au met with limited (and yet to be determined) success. A burial at Punchbowl was denied, but the possibility of burial at the Hawai'i State Veterans Cemetery received support. Yet even then, the state government initially resisted requests because of the two boys' civilian status. Only after the State Attorney General's office rendered a decision allowing for their burial (with stipulations regarding payment and withholding military honors) were the families of the Panala'au able to move forward.

Finally on December 8, 2003, a traditional Hawaiian ceremony was held in Kane'ohe to honor and lay to rest the young men whose memories would live on. Four of the surviving Panala'au were in attendance along with family, friends, and representatives from various private and state organizations. In the place of a 21-gun salute or the playing of Taps were the performances of Hawaiian ceremonial chants and dances and presentations of traditional hand-carved spears to the Keli'ihananui and Whaley families. Paul Phillips, Ornetta Keli'ihananui, and Moana Whaley Espinda made speeches that expressed gratitude for these long overdue steps toward making things *pono*, or right and just. In the preceding days and in the evening following the event, the local newspapers and television stations carried the story and highlights of the ceremony. The once buried and forgotten memories and bodies of the Panala'au had finally been recuperated and given a more enduring and honored place in the minds and hearts of Hawai'i's people.

While this reburial did bring about some sense of closure for the families of Joseph Keli'ihananui and Dicky Whaley, in many ways it reopened (and even raised new) questions, issues, and concerns. As with the majority of the project's history, the positions, motives, and actions of government officials should be (re)discovered and elucidated. As recently as March 2004, Noelle Kahanu

discovered 15 unexamined boxes of Department of Interior records about the “Equatorial Project” at the National Archives at College Park, Maryland, some of which shed new light on the Secretary of Interior’s advocacy on behalf of the Keli’ihananui and Whaley families for recognition and compensation.

Nonetheless, formal recognition or retribution in a public venue never materialized, and the families and surviving colonists still await the time when the government finally acknowledges the Panala’au (according to Kahanu, Representative Neil Abercrombie has made some effort to draft a recognition bill to be introduced in Congress in 2004). Although the U.S. government must take concrete steps to both acknowledge and redress the concerns and grievances of the Hui Panala’au, Kahanu wonders how, or even if, *pono* can be achieved. On the one hand, justice is indeed timeless; on the other hand, time is running out for those who were most directly affected, since many of the Panala’au have passed on, several within the last few years. For her, the most important step towards achieving justice is to tell and retell the Panala’au stories to as wide an audience as possible and to reinsert them into larger narratives of Hawaiian and/or U.S. history.

Personally, I struggle with the conflict of how those stories are to be interpreted in a larger framework of *pono* for Kanaka ‘Oiwi. Three months before the reburial ceremony occurred, I participated in the “*Ku I Ka Pono: Social Justice for Hawaiians*” march through Waikiki. Nearly 10,000 Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians had gathered to protest the ongoing legal attacks on Hawaiian entitlements that seek to end all Native Hawaiian programs, monies, lands, and cultural gathering rights. Such has been the struggle of Kanaka ‘Oiwi since the illegal overthrow in 1893 (and some would argue as early as 1778, when foreigners first landed on Hawaiian shores). ‘Oiwi have always contested loss of power and control of land, but in recent decades the movement of cultural nationalism (comprising both the cultural revitalization and the sovereignty movement) has been particularly vigorous and assertive.

Within this context, “recognition” is understood in a very different way. Certain Hawaiian organizations are striving for federal recognition as a distinct political entity—a nation within a nation—on par with American Indians and Alaska Natives. Others have taken their claims to the international community and sought recognition as an independent nation-state that was never extinguished by the U.S. (conceived of within this framework as an occupying state). Others have shied away from the political realm but maintain a strongly independent cultural identity and sense of community that eschew American hegemonic norms. In all situations, ‘Oiwi nationalists reject the assimilationist project that privileges an American identity or citizenship above (or at the cost of) a Hawaiian one.

At the same time, we Hawaiians honor our *kupuna* (ancestors) that have gone before us and seek to learn from their experiences and their teachings. The *kupuna* of the Panala’au speak of both betrayal by the U.S. (a point of commonality) as well as a strong devotion and love of that same country (a point of ambivalence or discord). The injustice for them is not that a foreign occupier or a colonizer has disenfranchised them of their Hawaiian government, lands, culture, and entitlements, but rather that the U.S. government has denied them

the entitlements due them as carriers and builders of the American franchise through their colonization of Pacific lands. As Kahanu comments,

I see *pono* as both a process and a destination point ... unless *pono* is achieved initially, we cannot move forward. As such, justice for the boys and families was foremost ... Moreover, throughout the process, all participants must be treated with respect, honor, and dignity. For example, to even assume the Federal Government treated our young Hawaiians as expendable, should this fact take away from what these young men achieved? This is the dilemma in seeking social justice through federal recognition legislation. If the moral underpinnings which force the government's hand in recognizing past wrongdoings is also that which undermines the accomplishments of our *kupuna*, then the means does not justify the end and social justice will remain elusive.

Part of the process of making things *pono* is to expose the injustice the U.S. committed against Native Hawaiians and the other peoples of these islands. At the same time, we must acknowledge the agency of our forebears who not only survived their own politically and culturally tumultuous times, but also made claims to territories of pride and honor in the ambivalent domain of American empire. These are the histories, both told and untold, that serve as the basis to *ku i ka pono*.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

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