

Ka I'a Hāmau Leo: Silences that Speak Volumes for Honouliuli

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ABSTRACT

This article will examine the silences that surround the i'a hāmau leo (the silent-voiced fish) known as the pipi (oyster), which was a major food source for the ahupua'a (land division) of Honouliuli and the entire moku (district) of 'Ewa. I will do that by first describing the respect given to the pipi by Kānaka Maoli (the Native Hawaiian people) and the interdependence and interconnectedness between the pipi, the people, and their environment. This interdependence exemplifies the unique relationship that existed between the Native Hawaiian people and their environment, which was based on mutual respect and a seeking of pono—harmony and balance between the needs of people to extract resources from a place for life and livelihood and the needs of a place and its other inhabitants to their own life and livelihood. The article will then examine another form of silencing that resulted from various forms of colonial influences, which created a rift in the relationship that existed between Kānaka Maoli, the pipi, and the environment in which the people and the pipi once lived and thrived. Various Hawaiian resources form the foundation of this work. These resources will include 'ōlelo no'eau (proverbial sayings), mele (song, poetry), and mo'olelo (histories, stories) that were written and published in Hawaiian language newspapers and books in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. I will interpret these in terms of historical, political, and cultural content—in order to better understand and articulate the intimate relationship that Kānaka Maoli established and nurtured with their land base in order that we, of this and future generations, can give life to these places through the knowing of them, by giving voice to their names, and their stories, and thereby honoring their lives.

The main title of this article, “Ka i‘a hāmau leo” comes from an ‘ōlelo no‘eau (proverbial saying)¹ that makes reference to the pipi (oyster) that was commonly found in the area known as ke awa lau o Pu‘uloa (the many bays of Pu‘uloa), that area that has since come to be known as Pearl Harbor. The ‘ōlelo no‘eau refers to the pipi as “ka i‘a hāmau leo” or a “silent-voiced fish.”² While in some cultural contexts, silence is seen as an oppressive action or one in which one is not allowed to voice its concerns, in the Hawaiian context, silence can be seen as a sign of disagreement or, in the case of the pipi, silence can be indicative of the reverence and respect that one must have and demonstrate when gathering the pipi.

These silences are especially relevant to this volume on the Honouliuli Internment and POW Camp as the camp is part and parcel of a larger silence surrounding the US military in Hawai‘i. In terms of content, this article is not related to the internment camp itself, but is included here to provide insight into the history and social processes that preceded the camp and thereby ensure that this volume doesn’t contribute to the further silencing of the voices of Honouliuli.

In this article, I will examine the silences that surround the i‘a hāmau leo, first describing the respect given to the pipi by Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian people) and the interdependence and interconnectedness between the pipi, the people, and their environment. I will then examine another form of silencing that resulted from various forms of colonial influences, which created a rift in the relationship that existed between the people, the pipi, and the environment in which the people and the pipi once lived and thrived. I will do this through the use and analysis of ‘ōlelo no‘eau, mele (song, poetry), and mo‘olelo (histories, stories) that were written and published in Hawaiian language newspapers and books in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. I will interpret them in terms of historical, political, and cultural content—in order to better understand and articulate the intimate relationship that Kānaka Maoli established and nurtured with their land base in order that we, of this and future generations, can give life to these places through the knowing of them, by giving voice to their names, and their stories, and thereby honoring their lives.

Ua lawa ka ‘ikena i ke awa lau: A Culture of “Sufficiency”

The above heading “Ua lawa ka ‘ikena i ke awa lau” is part of the third verse of a mele and it highlights an important cultural value of Kānaka Maoli

and their perspective toward ‘āina (land). This line describes the feeling of satisfaction that ke awa lau o Pu‘uloa engendered in the people. This affection and connection are the focus of this section.

The mele, entitled “Makalapua,” was composed in 1890 in honor of the future queen of the Hawaiian Kingdom, Lydia Lili‘uokalani Kamaka‘eha (de Silva 2003). The mele catalogs the then-princess and heir apparent’s traveling on the O‘ahu Railway & Land Co.’s (OR&L) railroad from its Kūwili station at Iwilei, near what is now downtown Honolulu, out to the Honouliuli station in ‘Ewa. Lili‘uokalani’s journey on the train took place sometime in the six-month period between July 1890 when this segment of the railroad opened and her ascension to the throne as the queen of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i following the death of her brother, David Kalākaua, in January 1891 (de Silva 2003). On the surface level, the mele is merely a travelogue, recounting the journey from Kūwili to Hālawā, past ke awa lau o Pu‘uloa, and then on to Mānana, Waipi‘o, and ending in Honouliuli.

A deeper interpretation of the mele, however, reveals a complex layering of expressions related to the social processes at play throughout Hawai‘i at the end of the nineteenth century, and also specifically, within the moku (district) of ‘Ewa. The mele asserts Hawaiian rights to lead the nation and the capabilities of the Kānaka Maoli leaders to do so, as seen in the first and last verses with the assertion that we follow the lead of Lili‘uokalani (“Ho‘ālo i ka ihu o ka Lanakila”). On the surface, these verses merely recount Lili‘uokalani’s traveling in the front of the train; however, with the train as a metaphor for the kingdom and an understanding that Lanakila is the name of the train but also translates as “success” and “victory,” then this line is an assertion of Lili‘uokalani’s position as the leader of the nation and her ability to lead the kingdom to success and victory in the challenges it faces.

This mele also exemplifies the importance of Hawaiian perspectives toward ‘āina through each verse’s recounting of Hawaiian place-names and references to their various characteristics and attributes. The train itself, however, exemplifies the tensions between these Hawaiian ways of knowing and seeing ‘āina—as an older sibling who cares for the people and is cared for in a reciprocal relationship of aloha (love, respect, affection)—and the perspectives of haole (Euro-American, Caucasian foreigners) toward land—as a commodity to be bought, sold, and “developed” for economic reasons as either real estate or as a part of a market agriculture, not grounded in the feeding of many, but with the growth of monetary wealth for a few (Kame‘eleihiwa 1992).

Here is the mele in its entirety:

Makalapua

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Eia mai au ‘o Makalapua
Hō‘alo i ka ihu o ka Lanakila | 1. Here I am, Makalapua
Leading the prow of the <i>Lanakila</i> |
| 2. ‘O ke ku‘e a ka hao a‘i Kūwili
Ka hiona ‘olu a‘o Hālawā | 2. The pistons move back and forth at Kūwili
Down the pleasant descent of Hālawā |
| 3. Ua lawa ka ‘ikena i ke awalau
Iā ‘Ewa ka i‘a hāmau leo | 3. The seeing/knowing of the many lochs of
Pu‘uloa is satisfying
The silent-voiced fish belongs to ‘Ewa |
| 4. Ua pua ka uahi a‘i Mānana
Aweawe i ke kula o Waipi‘o | 4. The smoke rises at Mānana
Streaming across the plain of Waipi‘o |
| 5. I kai ho‘i au o Honouliuli
Ahuwale ke ko‘a o Pōlea | 5. I am seaward of Honouliuli
The coral flats of Pōlea are exposed |
| 6. Ha‘ina ‘ia mai ana ka puana
Hō‘alo i ka ihu o ka Lanakila

He inoa no Lili‘uokalani
(Makalapua 1890) | 6. The refrain is told
Leading the prow of the <i>Lanakila</i> ³ |

Wahi pana (place-names, cultural sites) are a main focus of the mele. It mentions several ahupua‘a (semi-independent land division) in the moku of ‘Ewa (i.e., Hālawā, Mānana, Waipi‘o, and Honouliuli) as well as ke awa lau o Pu‘uloa. On the map below, notice the way that each and every single one of the 13 ahupua‘a that comprise ‘Ewa are directly connected to, curve around, and extend out into ke awa lau o Pu‘uloa.

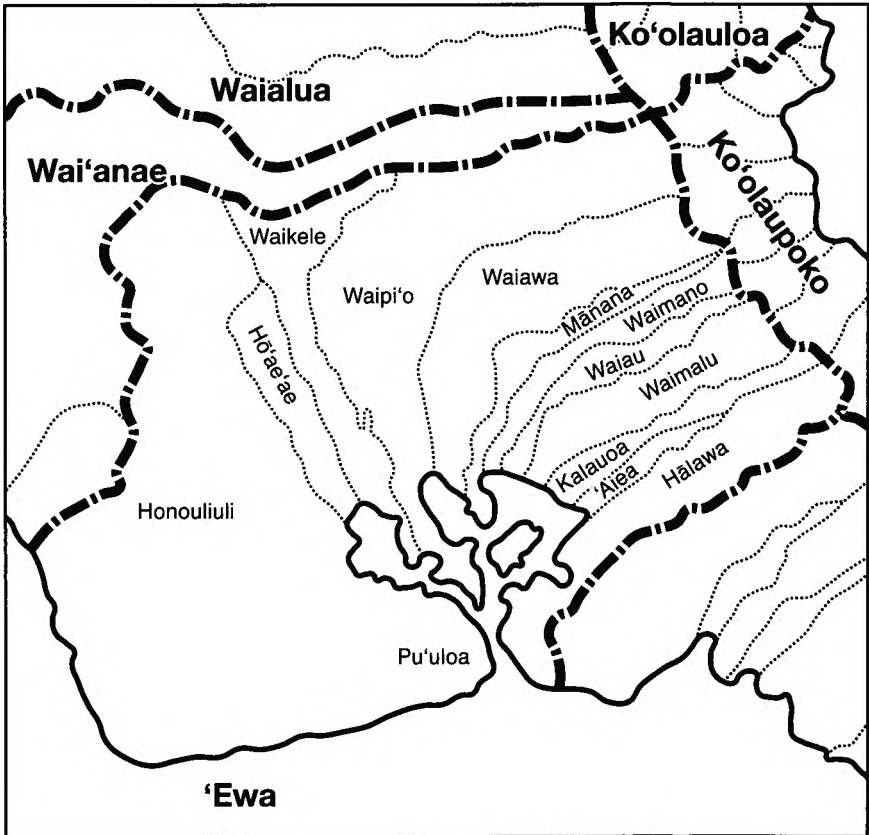
The third verse of the mele states, “Ua lawa ka ‘ikena i ke awa lau,” which translates as “The view of the many bays is satisfying.” The word “lawā” in Hawaiian is translated as “satisfying” here, but can also translate to “enough” or “sufficient.” It is important to note that these two words in English almost seem to indicate that something is barely enough, especially within a society in which “more is always better.” In a Hawaiian context, however, “lawā” is more than just merely sufficient, it is ample and all that is needed in order to sustain life, not just in the here and now, but for future generations as well. The “ikena” referenced here speaks not only to the “view” of the many bays and lochs, but also the “knowing” of these places. This is an assertion that the value of this place is not for what we can *use* it for and for what resources

may be extracted from it. Instead, it asserts that the awa lau of Pu'uloa are sufficient as they are, both in beauty and in use.

Sarah Nākoa, a kupa (native born) of 'Ewa describes her childhood in 'Ewa and of being raised gathering and eating pipi. She describes the appearance of the pipi as follows,

He hākeakea a hinuhinu kona iwi. He nui a kaumaha ka pipi i like 'ole me kekahi mau pūpū a'u i 'ike maka ai i ko mākou 'āina (Nākoa and 'Ahahui 'Ōlelo Hawai'i 1979:22).

Its shell is whitish and shiny. The oyster is large and heavy in a manner that is unlike any shelled-creature that I have seen in our land.



The moku of 'Ewa with ahupua'a indicated (Institute for Hawaiian Studies).

She also described the preparation and eating of the pipi as follows,

He ‘ono ‘oko‘a nō ka ‘aiwaha ‘ana o ka i‘a. ‘O ka i‘a i ho‘omo‘a ‘ia ka‘u i hānai
‘ia mai ai. Ho‘okomo ‘ia ka pipi i loko o ka ipuhao me ka wai e paila ikaika
ana. Hāmama wale a‘e nō ka pipi ke mo‘a iho ka i‘a. He ke‘oke‘o ka ‘i‘o. He
momona a he ‘ono kona ‘ai ‘ana (Nākoa and ‘Ahahui ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i 1979:23).

This i‘a has a different taste when it is eaten. I was raised eating this i‘a in
the cooked form. The oyster is placed inside of a pot with strongly boiling
water. The oyster opens right up when it is cooked. The meat is white. Its
eating is succulent and delicious.

Through these descriptions, the unique characteristics of pipi are high-
lighted. As further described by Nākoa and other authors, the relationship
between the i‘a hāmau leo and the wahi pana of ‘Ewa is also unique.

Wahi pana are vitally important to Hawaiians and while we have experi-
enced a great loss of knowledge of our language, our mo‘olelo, and even our
place-names, we continue to recognize the importance of ‘āina and continue
to have affection for it. This affection is evidenced in our naming of it, an act
which honors its personality, individuality, and even its own inherent rights.
Hawaiians named large areas of land—lands, districts, and ahupua‘a—but
they didn’t stop there. As described by Pukui et al.,

Hawaiians named taro patches, rocks, and trees that represented deities
and ancestors, sites of houses and heiau (places of worship), canoe landings,
fishing stations in the sea, resting places in the forests, and the tiniest spots
where miraculous or interesting events are believed to have taken place.
(Pukui 1974:x)

Here are the names of the 13 ahupua‘a that comprise the moku of ‘Ewa,
beginning at its border shared with the moku of Kona to the east and extend-
ing to its border with the moku of Wai‘anae in the west.

- | | |
|------------|----------------|
| 1. Hālawā | 8. Waiawa |
| 2. ‘Aiea | 9. Waipi‘o |
| 3. Kalauao | 10. Waikele |
| 4. Waimalu | 11. Hō‘āe‘āe |
| 5. Waiau | 12. Honouliuli |
| 6. Waimano | 13. Pu‘uloa |
| 7. Mānana | |

While many of the ahupua‘a names are still heard and known, most people are largely familiar with them only as names of elementary schools (i.e., Waiau, Waimalu) and shopping centers (i.e., Waikele, Waimalu). Usage of other ahupua‘a names, however, have largely disappeared from daily usage (i.e., Kalauao), while others (i.e., ‘Aiea), have grown in size due to their designation as a distinct zip code area by the US Postal Service. I would conjecture that most people (myself included prior to this research project) are not conscious of these wahi pana as ahupua‘a extending from the mountain ranges on the inland side and curving around ke awa lau o Pu‘uloa and extending down to the shoreline and out to sea.

Honouliuli is another traditional ahupua‘a name that is not widely known or used. With the advent of this research into the Honouliuli Internment and POW Camp of which this article is a part, it’s important that we don’t make similar connections by which we begin to limit Honouliuli merely to the camp site. Honouliuli is the name of the entire ahupua‘a in which the internment and POW camp sat. Honouliuli is by far the largest ahupua‘a in ‘Ewa. Perhaps due to its length and the difficulty of properly pronouncing the name Honouliuli, the ahupua‘a has commonly come to be known by the names of either ‘Ewa or ‘Ewa Beach, or by the small (but growing!) residential areas found within it (i.e., Makakilo, Kapolei).

This process of erasure is part and parcel of the colonial history of Hawai‘i that began at contact with Westerners in the late eighteenth century and escalated exponentially throughout the nineteenth century. The moku of ‘Ewa is somewhat unique in the multifaceted nature of the colonialism it experienced. In the mid to late-1800s, following the privatization of land, ‘Ewa was acquired and developed as both residential and commercial real estate and also as a part of an intensive agriculture-based economy. Both of these processes were instrumental in dispossessing Kānaka Maoli from not only their land, but also the very fabric of their society in terms of cultural and social practices. Land transformed into real estate and private property requires money not only at time of purchase but also on an ongoing basis for taxes. This need for money then became an impetus for Kānaka Maoli to become laborers for plantations, abandoning their land- and ocean-based subsistence lifestyle (Kame‘eleihiwa 1992; Kelly 1989). These two processes—an agriculture-based economy and privatization of land—were experienced throughout Hawai‘i. In addition to these, however, ‘Ewa experienced a military industrialization of “Pearl Harbor” that is largely unequalled in scope and intensity (Osorio 2010).

Mai wala‘au o makani auane‘i: Interconnections of People and Elements

The above heading, “Mai wala‘au o makani auane‘i” is another ‘ōlelo no‘eau about the pipi. This proverb translates as “Don’t speak lest the wind blows” and refers to the interconnection between the land and elements, the plants and animals, and the people. While the land and elements and the plants and animals are sources of life in terms of providing food and resources for humans, they are also understood and revered as both figurative and literal ancestors. In this section, I will explore the interconnections between the people, the pipi, and the wind—each with its own kuleana (rights, responsibilities).

As previously mentioned, the pipi are referred to as “ka i‘a hāmau leo” or silent-voiced fish. This is not because the pipi themselves were silent, but because when fishing for them, it was the humans who needed to be silent. Some assert that the voices warn the pipi who would then dig down under the sand and soil, making it more difficult to find and gather them. Kānaka Maoli, however, were aware of a deeper connection that existed between the wind, the pipi, and the humans who gathered them. In actuality, there was another entity involved in the communication with the pipi—the wind. This is described in the ‘ōlelo no‘eau “Mai wala‘au o makani auane‘i” wherein the cause and effect are clearly delineated. If one spoke, the wind would blow and it was the wind that gave warning to the pipi.

Here is Nākoa’s (1979) description of the effects of speaking while one is gathering the pipi. She wrote,

A pēlā ihola ka mana‘o nui o ka hāmau ‘ana o ka leo i ‘ole nō ho‘i e ‘ale‘ale mai ke kai a ‘ōlepolepo nō ho‘i. Ke wala‘au a pēia mai ke kai, ‘a‘ole hiki ke ‘ike ‘ia aku ua pipi waiwai nui lā me kona hale i hāmama, a ‘a‘ole ho‘i hiki ke maopopo ‘ia ka nui o nā pipi e loa‘a me ka ma‘alahi.

And that is the main idea behind keeping the voice silent, so that the sea will not become choppy and murky as well. If you speak and the sea becomes like this [choppy and murky], then these highly-prized oysters with their open houses [shells] cannot be seen, and one cannot comprehend the size of the oyster meat with ease.

Here is another author’s description of this phenomenon as he described it, and tested it, his first time out. The author was not a native of ‘Ewa, but had married a woman from the area, and it was she who introduced him to the appropriate protocols when fishing for pipi. He described his first experience in the following manner:

Ao-a-o mai la kela ia'u, ai hele kaua i kahakai mai walaau oe o makani auanei pilikia, oiai i ka makahiki 1870, e ikeia ana no keia ia o ka bipi, hele aku la maua a hiki i kahakai o Keamonaale ka inoa o keia wahi, he lo'i [sic] a malie loa keia la, aohe ani makani he la'i malie ke kai a au aku la mau [sic]. ("Na Wahi Pana o Ewa" 1899a:2)

She advised me, when we go to the shoreline, don't speak or the wind will blow and we will have problems, since in 1870, this fish known as the oyster was still being seen. So we went until arriving at the shoreline, Keamonaale is the name of this place, and it was a calm and peaceful day, there was no wind and the ocean was calm and peaceful and so we waded out.

In the above section, the author's wife shares the practice of not speaking while fishing. The author, however, did not believe her and so tested it, as he described in the following manner,

Ia maua e au nei ike iho la i ka bipi he like me ka Papaua, a ke ohi ala me ka pane leo ole, a no ka pau ole o ko'u hoomaloka, ua kahea aku la au me ka leo nui. E mama? Nuiloa ka bipi ma keia wahi, a hoomau aku la no au i ke kahea ana. Aole i hala elima minute mahope iho oia manawa, ua uhipuia mai la maua e kamakani, akahi no a pau ko'u hoomaloka. ("Na Wahi Pana o Ewa" 1899b:2)

While we were wading, we saw oysters like the Papaua, and we were gathering them without speaking, but due to my continued disbelief, I called out with a loud voice. "Mama? There are a lot of oysters in this area," and I continued calling out. Not five minutes passed after that time, and we were enveloped by the wind, and only then did my disbelief end.

Through these descriptions, we are able to discern multiple pieces of information, foremost of which may be that in 1870, when military use of Pearl Harbor was minimal, pipi were still abundant and people were able to gather them. In addition, we have an eyewitness account of the cause and effect that speaking had—a clear indication of the intimate relationship between the wind and the pipi, and the people as well. The author's speaking was not just a sign of his disbelief but also a sign of his lack of respect for the pipi, the place, and the social and cultural practices of the people. This lack of respect had consequences, but in the case of the author, he learned his lesson and, from then on, treated the pipi, the place, and the people with the respect and care they demanded and deserved.

Iā 'Ewa ka I'a Hāmau Leo: 'Ewa's Responsibility to and for the Pipi

The title of this section also comes from the third verse of the mele "Makalapua" shown previously, and it asserts that the kuleana for ke awa lau

o Pu‘uloa rests with ‘Ewa. In this section, I will highlight the conflicts and problems that arose when ‘Ewa no longer was able to maintain that kuleana—when another entity, the US military, took it over and began its long legacy of disrespect and abuse of our lands and environment, plants and animals, and our people.

By the mid to late nineteenth century, ke awa lau o Pu‘uloa had become embroiled in the colonial processes of the market-based agriculture, land privatization, and military industrialization. Not only were the people and land affected, but so were the pipi. Kānaka Maoli writing in the mid-1800s recognized the intersection between these colonial forces. One writer, Moses Manu (1885), makes a connection between the decrease of the Hawaiian population due to Western diseases and the decrease of pipi found in ke awa lau, writing,

Mai ka wa i ike nui ai kela i-a ma Ewa, a i na makahiki mamua ae nei, oia paha ka makahiki 1850–53, oia hoi ka wa i luku nui ia ai keia lahui e ka mai hebera, ua hoomaka aku keia i-a e nalowale. (P. 1)

From the time that this fish was seen frequently in ‘Ewa until recently, perhaps in the years 1850–1853, which is the period of time when this nation of people (Hawaiians) were decimated by smallpox, this fish began to disappear.

Here, Manu highlights the vital connection between Kānaka Maoli and our environment, in which the life of our people is connected to the life of our environment. He then goes on to describe a possible correlation between this decrease of the pipi and other events in the following manner,

I ka wa i nalo aku ai keia pipi, ua ulu ae la kekahi mea nihoniho keokeo ma na wahi a pau o ke kai o Ewa, a ua kapa iho na kanaka o Ewa i kona inoa he pahikaua, he mea oi keia. (Manu 1885)

At the time that these oysters disappeared, a white jagged, serrated object arose in each and every place on the ocean side of ‘Ewa, and the people of ‘Ewa named this object a “pahikaua,” which is a sharp, pointed thing.

I have chosen not to translate the word “pahikaua” above in order to provide an additional interpretation of it. Manu here is employing kaona (a hidden or multilayered meaning). On one level, the word “pahikaua” refers to another species of bivalve shellfish and so Manu’s words could be interpreted to mean that the pipi was replaced by this other species. However, separated into two parts, the term “pahi” refers to a “knife” and “kaua” refers to “warfare.” In this interpretation, Manu is more than likely referring to the guns

and cannons of the US military's warships and is articulating his belief that the pipi were decreasing due to the impact of the military in the waters of ke awa lau o Pu'uloa.

Other authors also asserted this correlation between the US military's presence in ke awa lau o Pu'uloa and the decrease of pipi. By 1899–1900, when the author of the next piece was writing, even more had changed on political, economic, and militaristic levels. The Kingdom of Hawai'i had been overthrown in 1893, and in 1898, less than a year prior to its publication, the United States had illegally annexed Hawai'i through a joint resolution rather than a treaty as called for by its own constitution. Also in 1898, the United States had become an active combatant in the Spanish-American War and was using Hawai'i, and Pearl Harbor especially, as a place from which to deploy troops and warships. The industrialization of Pearl Harbor was continuing to increase as was its impact on the surrounding environment and community.

The unidentified author shows his concern over the irrevocable changes being experienced in the moku of 'Ewa in his title. He called his work, "Na Wahi Pana o Ewa i Hoonalowale Ia i Keia Wa a Hiki Ole ke Ike Ia." A quick look at the main title indicates that its focus is on the place-names and cultural sites of 'Ewa ("Nā Wahi Pana"), but a closer look at the title reveals a political message and motivation in that the author describes these place-names not simply as disappearing, which would be "nalowale," but as "ho'onalowale 'ia," indicating that the place-names are intentionally being made to disappear. The title doesn't stop there but goes on to describe these places as things that had become "incapable of being seen" ("hiki 'ole ke 'ike 'ia").

Although this piece was published in the newspaper, it was not a single article, but rather appeared weekly in the newspaper *Ka Loea Kalaiaina* from June 1899 through January 1900. This newspaper was grounded in Kānaka Maoli political analysis, as indicated by its title, which refers to a "skilled" and "expert" ("loea") form of politics, known as "kālai'āina" in Hawaiian.

The article opens with the raising of a question that the author, and apparently the community, is asking, stating,

Eia paha ka ninau a kahi mea, A pehea ihola hoi i nalowale ai na Bipi nei o Ewa? ("Na Wahi Pana o Ewa" 1899a:2)

Here perhaps is a question of some, "And how did the Oysters of 'Ewa disappear?"

The author then goes on to answer the question through the sharing of a story about the abuse experienced by an elderly woman who resided in Honouliuli and who was fishing at ke awa lau o Pu‘uloa. Although she had permission only to fish for crabs, she also gathered pipi at the same time. The author describes the event in this way.

Aia no i Manana kekahi luahine kahi i noho ai, oiai keia e kaau Papai ana ma ke kai o Kaholona, me ke manao o ua luahine nei aohe mea na na oia e ike mai. Iaia nae e lalau ana i ka Papai, hemo pu mai la me ka bipi ua hele a makolukolu, ike ia mai la keia, a kii ia mai la a kahi huli—lau ana wawahi ia iho la—kiola ia aku la iloko o ke kai. A auhau ia mai la keia e uku i 25 keneta. (“Na Wahi Pana o Ewa” 1899a:2)

It was at Mānana that an elderly woman lived, and while she was scooping crab at the shoreline of Kaholona, she thought that there was no one who could see her. Therefore, when she was grabbing the Crab, she also removed some oysters that had become plump, but she was seen and her basket was confiscated and destroyed—tossed into the ocean. And she was fined and made to pay 25 cents.

So, not only are her crabs and oysters discarded, but she is made to pay a fine for her actions. Although not specifically named, the “konohiki” (“caretaker,” “overseer”) of Pu‘uloa is charged as the culprit in this abuse, and the konohiki of Pearl Harbor at the time was the US military (and the US government). Their presence and use and abuse of land had begun to impact Kānaka Maoli access to the land and food sources of Pu‘uloa. In addition, taxes and other regulations imposed by the US government were impediments to the “seeing” and “knowing” of these places. Once again, we see the manner in which people’s access to subsistence living is compounded by an additional need for cash funds.

As punishment for this abuse, Kānekua‘ana, a spiritual guardian of the woman and of Pu‘uloa intercedes, speaking through the woman and stating,

E lawe hou ana wau i ka bipi i Tahiti i kahi a‘u i lawe mai ai, aole e hoi hou keia bipi a pau na pua a keia kanaka i ka make, alaila; hoi hou ka bipi ia Hawaii nei. (“Na Wahi Pana o Ewa” 1899a)

I am going to once again take the oysters to Tahiti to the place where I brought them from, this oyster will not return again until all of the “pua” of this person have died, then, the oyster will again return to Hawai‘i.

Here then is described the true cause of the disappearance of the pipi as well as what it will take for them to return—the end of all of the “pua” of the

current caretaker. Once again, I have chosen not to translate the word “pua” because of the kaona inherent in the word. On one level, it can refer to the “offspring” and “descendants” of an individual, however, it can also refer to all of that which “issues” or “emerges” from someone, in terms of speech and action even. As such, the essential lesson of this, the first mo‘olelo to appear in this extended article about the place-names of ‘Ewa is an assertion of the need for all remnants of the current caretaker and overseer, the United States and its military, to not just go away, but to be completely and simply “pau” (ended, finished).

Unfortunately, this goal has not yet been achieved. In the ensuing years of the twentieth and now into the twenty-first century, the legacy and impact of the US military in Hawai‘i, and, especially in Pearl Harbor, continues. Part of that legacy is the Honouliuli (and other) internment and prisoner-of-war camps, which are the focus of the other articles in this publication. Another part of that legacy is the extreme degree of contamination of Pearl Harbor, which has been classified as a “Superfund contamination site” by the US Environmental Protection Agency since 1991. The EPA defines a “Superfund contamination site” as an “abandoned hazardous waste site,” and provides Three-Mile Island as an example. While it is somewhat comforting to know that the EPA recognizes the need for cleanup, it is, however, still disturbing due to the fact that ke awa lau o Pu‘uloa is hardly “abandoned,” but still an active site that the US military continues to (ab)use. Even though the Pearl Harbor Naval Complex has been identified as a Superfund site, the media continues to report that the contamination is not dangerous. A *Honolulu Advertiser* article in 2006, described it as follows, “pollution at Pearl Harbor does not pose a public threat at current levels of use, *as long as residents don’t eat fish or crabs caught in the basin*” [emphasis supplied] (TenBruggencate 2006). This caveat essentially means that Pearl Harbor is a threat, because the residents of Hawai‘i, whether Kānaka Maoli or not, should be able to access our shorelines and their resources for food and recreation. The fact that we cannot—that the power of the US military means that they can incarcerate our citizens in internment camps (or other designated military installations) and destroy not just our environment, but the very foods we eat—is exemplary of an abuse of power which should not just be remembered, but questioned and critiqued. Only then will the “pua” of the US military’s actions end.

Hopefully, the day will soon arrive when people will once again be able to gain both physical and spiritual sustenance from our lands and our seas—

when we can care for our ‘āina and its inhabitants with a respect exemplified in silence. Ironically, though, in the meantime, our voices are essential to bringing back the i‘a hāmau leo and the kānaka who love and respect it. We must act out and speak out on behalf of the i‘a hāmau leo—defending our ‘āina and asserting our rights to a reciprocal relationship with it. There is a time to be silent and a time to let the winds rise with our voices so our ‘āina are protected from further desecration and our pipi can once again respond to our silences—e ō mai, e ka i‘a hāmau leo. ❖

Glossary

ahupua‘a	semi-independent land division within a district
‘āina	land, earth
aloha	love, affection, respect, compassion
haole	Caucasian, white foreigner of American or European descent
ka i‘a hāmau leo	the silent-voiced fish (a metaphorical reference to the pipi)
kaona	hidden or multilayered meaning
ke awa lau o Pu‘uloa	the many bays of Pu‘uloa (a traditional reference to Pearl Harbor)
konohiki	caretaker, overseer, headman of an ahupua‘a land division under the chief
kuleana	rights, responsibilities
kupa	native born
mele	song, chant, poetry
moku	large district comprised of multiple ahupua‘a
mo‘olelo	history, story, fable, tale
‘ōlelo no‘eau	proverbial saying, wise saying
pipi	oysters
pua	progeny, descendants; to issue, appear, come forth, emerge, said especially of smoke, wind, speech
wahi pana	place-names, cultural sites

Notes

1. Throughout this text, the Hawaiian language will be used. Because of its status as an official language of the State of Hawai'i, these words will not appear in italics (except in quotes where italics appear in original). The first time a word is used, however, it will be defined in parentheses or within the text itself. Subsequent uses of the Hawaiian word will not be defined but will appear in the glossary. When warranted, additional information will be included within a footnote reference to help the reader better understand the meanings and uses of the word.
2. Note regarding use and translation of the word "i'a" in Hawaiian. The word "i'a" is translated as "fish," however, in Hawaiian, "i'a" is a term used for all foods that come from the ocean, whether they fall into the more narrow meaning of fish in English or not. Therefore, even though "pipi" ("oysters") are not considered to be fish in English, they are "i'a" in Hawaiian, as are "ula" ("lobsters") and even "limu" ("seaweeds").
3. All translations by author of this article unless otherwise noted.

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