

‘Auhea Wale ‘Oe e Kahalakea

An Essay by Kīhei de Silva

Haku Mele: Kīhei de Silva. Dec. 30, 2013.

Sources: J.W.K. Kaulilinoe, “Ka Moolelo no Kamaakamahiai, Ka Niuhi Ai Humuhumu o Kahului i Maui, Ke Puhi Nau Okaoka Hoi O Kona Mau La Koa, Ka Hiluhilu Hoi O Kona Wa Ui,” *Kuokoa*, June 18, 1870, through January 21, 1871.

This mele was inspired by my reading of “Ka Moolelo no Kamaakamahiai,” the story of a Maui-born kupua child who, after putting the rule of his own island to rights, journeys to Ka‘ōhao,¹ Kailua, where he helps Olopana to regain control of O‘ahu, marries Olopana’s daughter Keoholupalupa, returns to Maui to quell the rebellion of his own brother Mana‘o, helps the ali‘i of Hawai‘i (Nāluaalele) and Kaua‘i (Manōuli, his grandfather) to regain control of their islands, and – now an old man – gives the nod of approval to his great-grandson Olopana II whose turn has come to take up the legacy of bringing order to the land.

“Kamaakamahiai” was published by J. W. K. Kaulilinoe in 21 not-quite-consecutive issues of *Nupepa Kuokoa* beginning in June 18, 1870, and ending on January 21, 1871. The mo‘olelo includes 43 chants (most of them story-specific and otherwise unknown), detailed descriptions of Ko‘olapoko, O‘ahu (in particular: Ka‘ōhao, ‘Ālele, Mahinui, Mōkapu, the inland plain of Pāniōi², and the pali of Hilaniwai³), action-hero battle scenes,⁴ and ho‘oniua pu‘uwai⁵ love affairs – all held together and given meaning by love for justice, land, and family – by ke aloha ‘āina.

One of the story’s most moving expressions of this abiding commitment occurs early on, when the first Olopana stands before his assembled warriors at Ka‘ōhao and rallies them to a battle from which he does not expect to return:

Auheā oukou e kuu poe koa, ka poe hoi a‘u i hilinai nui loa ai maluna o oukou ko kakou lanakilia, a maluna no hoi o oukou ko kakou pomaikai, nolaila ke haawi pu nei kakou ia kakou a pau i loko o ka make i keia la, a me he mea la o ka la hope loa paha keia o ko kakou ike ana i keia ao maikai a hanohano hoi, a o ka la hope no hoi keia e pau ai ka moe pumehana ana o ke kane a me ka wahine, a e pau ana hoi ko kakou lohe ana i na leo aloha o na keiki, no laila, e noonoo pu mai kakou a pau loa i ke kumu e mau ai ka noho pumehana pu ana me ka ohana, a me ke kumu hoi e ai ia ai kalo mo-a o Koolau nei, a me ka i-a ku o Kawainui, o ke kumu nui a‘u i manao ai oia no ke kuupau ana i ko kakou mau wahi ikaika uuku i loaia ia kakou. A pau no hoi na olelo a ke alii, ea! Nana aku no hoi i na koa a me na poe e noho mai ana aohe waimaka paa i ke aloha i na olelo a ke alii, ka haku kanu o ua Koolau la.

“O listen my warriors, those on whom I rely for victory and on whom all my good fortune rests. I offer you my thoughts today in the face of death, as this might be the last time we see the fine and glorious light of day. It might be the day on which ends our warm sleeping of man with woman, and after which we will no longer hear the beloved voices of children. Therefore I ask that we consider together the reason for our having lived so long in the comfort of our families, the reason we have enjoyed the cooked taro of our Ko‘olau home and the stunned fish of Kawainui. And the reason that I come to is this: we are a people who try with all our might, with every last bit of energy we have.” And when the ali‘i’s speech was done, ‘eā! One could see on the faces of the warriors and those who would stay behind that no tears had been left unshed, all for love of the words of the hereditary chief of this Ko‘olau land.⁶

Kauaililinoe’s mo‘olelo speaks of this legacy of unwavering aloha ‘āina; it is a defining characteristic of Kamaakamahi‘ai and it is amplified over the generations through his marriage to Olopana’s daughter and their succession of Kailua-rooted children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren: through their daughter Kahelekūlani, her son Keakaokū, and his son Olopana II. Their goal is always the harmony of gods, land, and people; their work is always to restore order, to set their world to rights. By story’s end, we come to understand this as a welo ku‘upau⁷ of Kama’s Kailua descendants; they are defined by an all-in commitment to champion that which is pono “i mea e kuleleiwi ‘ole ai ka nohona.” So that life will not be destitute, will not be one of wind-scattered bones.

“‘Auhea Wale ‘Oe e Kahalakea” is meant to express the same ku‘upau loyalty for our still beleaguered home. It is a call to the mamo of today’s Kailua to defy the latest wave change that would erase our legacy of stewardship at Kawainui and make us guests in our own land.⁸ The first verse of our mele invokes Kahalakea, the lesser-known of the two mo‘o guardians of Kawainui, describes the trampled-on state of the once-sacred land of Wai‘auia (now the empty “ITT lot” at the entrance to Kailua Town), and asks “When will you reclaim it?”

Kahalakea, of course, will not reclaim anything unless we first prepare the way. She lived in the hala grove along Kawainui Stream (now Hāmākua) and adjacent to Wai‘auia. With her companion Hauwahine (who lived at the other end of the pond below what is now Le Jardin Academy), she was responsible for bringing a wealth of fish and food to Kailua when Kailua was in balance – and for taking it away with her when Kailua was not.⁹ No pono, no Kahalakea. We see it as our duty to reclaim and restore this balance so that she can then return.

The ensuing verses of “‘Auhea Wale ‘Oe e Kahalakea,” describe the imbalance of today’s Kailua – the encroaching ‘Āpuakea, the overcrowded plain, the jealously guarded beach front – and turn with great hope and affection to our children, the next generation of ke aloha ‘āina with whom we intend to establish a foothold of cultural excellence at Wai‘auia. We rally them to the cause in language reminiscent of that used by Keakaokū in encouraging his son, the second Olapana, to the defense of their Kailua home; may the

spears of your enemy fall from you like bath water, may they become a lei aloha in honor of your courage:

E lilo ana ka ihe i waiauau
I puu pale hoi no kuu kamalei
I lei aloha ka ihe me ka pololu
I hoa kaana hoi no ka la koa

The spears will be like bathwater
Like a shield for my beloved child
The short and long spears will be a lei aloha
A dear companion on this day of valor¹⁰

Wai‘auia is the land adjoining the now non-existent mākāhā of Kawainui Pond. In one tradition, Wai‘auia is identified as home to the fish-attracting Mākālei tree.¹¹ In another, it is the site from which Kahinihini‘ula, the mo‘opuna of Haumea, uses the Mākālei branch to lead all the fish of Kawainui and Ka‘elepulu into hiding until Kailua can be set to rights.¹² In yet another, it is the most sacred of Kailua’s lands; its residents, who bow to no one, are identified by their ability to leap over the arms of those who guard it.¹³ In a kanikau for Ka Haku o Hawai‘i, it is identified as the land ruled by the ali‘i Muliwai‘ōlena.¹⁴ In a chant credited to Haumea herself, it is associated with the sacred enclosure of Muliwai‘ōlena at the mākāhā of Kawainui.¹⁵ In “Kamaakamahiai” it becomes the final chiefly residence of the younger Olopana,¹⁶ and its praises are sung by the aforementioned Keakaokū:

He aloha mai la au ia Waiauia,
I ke ala a-eku a ka malihini,
Ke olokea la na’lii i ke alanui,
E kuhi ana aohe e helea mai,
He mea ole ia i ke kupa o kuu aina,
E aea ana ka lani kapu ihiihi.

O how I love Waiauia
For the road that brings strangers to a stop
The ali‘i are blocking the road with crossed arms
Indicating that no one can proceed
But this is nothing to the kupa of my land
Where the most sacred ones will rise up.¹⁷

“Auhea Wale ‘Oe e Kahalakea” comes to a close with the sweet sound of Keakaokū’s whistle as he calls us to Wai‘auia. It is here that we intend to build our hālau, our center for excellence in traditional arts, and a preserve for the scattered iwi of Kailua. We will call it *Hika‘alani* in honor of an old woman of Kawainui who, in the 1895 Water Commission hearings, mourned the passing of all who could remember and reclaim the lands of old.

“No, there is none of these old folks living. They are all dead excepting myself and my foster mother, the person who took care of me, she is so old she can’t walk, she has to crawl...There is no one living...”¹⁸

Don’t lose hope, Hika‘alani. Your bones will not be lost in wind. We are still here, kūpa‘a i ke aloha ‘āina.

‘Auhea Wale ‘Oe e Kahalakea

‘Auhea wale ‘oe e Kahalakea
Ka nihina mai a ka noe a loa‘a
He aloha mai au iā Wai‘auia
I ke ala ‘a‘e kū a ka malihini
‘Ahea lā ‘oe ho‘iho‘i mai?

Ka ‘iniki a ka ua ‘Āpuakea¹⁹
Ke ‘oloke‘a lā i ka lau o ke uki
Wai‘au‘au ia no ke kupa ‘āina
I ka pe‘a kapu o Muliwai’ōlena²⁰
Lamalama nō i ka poli o Meheu.²¹

‘Ike ‘ia ‘o ‘Alele²² ma hope pono
Pe‘ekue i ke one o Ahulili²³
Ke pi‘i ho‘ola‘i nei mākou
I ka i‘a ho‘opā ‘ili kānaka
A pau a ‘anakoe kīkīko‘ele.

Waianuhe a wale ‘oe e Keaka²⁴
Ke kani a ka pio hone i ke kula
I kuleleiwi ‘ole ai ka nohona
Ha‘ina ‘ia mai ana ka puana
Eia ‘o Hika‘alani²⁵ lawa ku‘u lei.

Where are you, Kahalakea?
I am caught up in the creeping mist
Oh how I love Wai‘auia
On the road now trampled by newcomers
When will you reclaim it?

The biting of the ‘Āpuakea rain
Criss-crossing the leaves of uki
Is like bath-water to the natives of the land
Who reside in the sacred house of Muliwai’ōlena
Glowing with health in the bosom of Meheu.

‘Ālele is seen directly behind us
Thick with houses on the sands of Ahulili
We have gone quietly inland
To the fish that touch the skins of kānaka
When all has been done to perfection.

Softly fragrant are you, Keakaokū
The sound of your whistle carries sweetly across the plain
So that life will not be one of wind-scattered bones
Tell the summary of the song
Here is Hika‘alani, my lei is complete.

Notes:

1. For most of the mo‘olelo, Olopana I maintains his royal residence in our own homeland of Ka‘ōhao. When Kama first arrives here, he engages Olopana’s sons in a spear-throwing game, an activity referred to briefly by “Old Solo” Mahoe in an interview with Kay Girdler (Sterling and Summers, *Sites of O‘ahu*, 239): “In the olden days the women lived here at Punawai while their menfolk practiced spear-throwing at Kaohao.”
2. Apparently Pānioi was a battlefield adjacent to the famed hala grove of Kekele which, in turn, grew at the foot of Nu‘uanu Pali.
3. Papa/Kamehaikana raised Kamaakamahi‘ai’s daughter Kahelekūlani here in an expansive, multi-chambered cave. The place is described as located high on the cliffs above Kalihi but within view of the Nu‘uanu Pali gap. The name might be a variation of Hi‘ilaniwai, a Kāne‘ohe stream.
4. For example, Kamaakamahi‘ai’s defeat of the leaping, levitating, nearly-invincible māhū warriors of Hā‘ena, Kaua‘i (*Kuokoa*, September 3, 1870) has a modern, almost video-game feel to it.
5. Heart-stirring. A favorite nūpepa adjective for romantic tales, as in “He Moolelo Hooniua Puuwai no Olando Kaaka.”
6. “Kamaakamahiai,” *Kuokoa*, August 6, 1870, p. 4. Translation ours.
7. A *welo* is a family trait or characteristic inherited from one’s kūpuna; a *welo ku‘upau*, in this case, is the family trait of trying with all one’s might.
8. The kalo and i‘a that once inspired Olopana and his people to risk almost certain defeat, are now barely in evidence, and the opposition we face is not from Pueonui of Kona but from the recent settlers of our community who want to protect the piko lands of Kawainui from our own careful, cultural use because we Kailua Hawaiians are: 1) misguided and naïve, 2) strong on vision but short on execution, 3) environmentally insensitive, and 4) sure to attract busloads of tourists. The members of our coalition (the 13 kumu hula of Kailua and Waimānalo, the Kailua

Hawaiian Civic Club, the native planters of ‘Ahahui Mālama i ka Lōkahi, and the po‘e wa‘a of ‘Ālele) think otherwise, and we are going forward with plans for agricultural and educational kauhale at four points on the Kawainui perimeter including HMI’s own Hika‘alani center for excellence at Wai‘auia.

9. Poepoe gives the names and residences of both mo‘o wahine: “Hookahi o keia mau moo wahine no loko pono i o Kawainui nei, a hookahi no kai o kela uluhala e ulu mai la. O Hauwahine ko uka nei o Kawainui, a o Kahalakea ko kai wahine” (*Kuokoa Home Rule*, July 9, 1907). Hooulumahie names only Hauwahine but gives a more detailed description of the other mo‘o’s home: “He wahine moo kela. Hookahi o laua no uka nei o Kawainui oia o Hiiaka ... A o ka lua o na moo no kai o kela uluhala e ku mai la ma o ae o kela kula palahalaha e waiho la, e kokoke ana i ka muliwai o Kaelepulu” (*Ka Nai Aupuni*, January 22, 1906).

10. Lines 6-9 of a 20-line chant in which Keakaokū, by means of his niu whistle, encourages his son Olopana II to defend Kailua against the invading army of Kona, O‘ahu (“Kamaaka-mahiai,” *Nupepa Kuokoa*, January 21, 1871, p. 1). The complete chant, “Ua Pihaku‘i Loko o ka ‘Oli‘oli,” is the oli that our Kapua Sterling will offer at the top of her Miss Aloha Hula kahiko presentation.

11. Sterling and Summers (*Sites of O‘ahu*, 231) cite these accounts as: Nathaniel Emerson, *Unwritten Literature*, 21; William Westervelt, *Legends of Gods and Ghosts*, 150; and Mrs. Charles Aiona, informant, *Oahu Place Names*, 1939.

12. Samuel Keko‘owai, “Makalei ka Laau Pii Ona a ka I‘a o Moa-ula-Nui-Akea i Kaulana,” published serially in *Nupepa Kuokoa*, 1922-1924, and discussed at length by Kahikina de Silva in *Kailua i ke Oho o ka Malanai*, Kailua Historic Society, 2009.

13. Gilbert McAllister, *Archaeology of Oahu*, 1933, site 370; Louis Mahoe, informant, Sept. 15, 1973, cited by Sterling and Summers, 230.

14. *Ka Hae Hawaii*, July 26, 1860.

15. “Makalei Ka Laau Pii Ona a ka Ia...” *Kuokoa*, Dec. 7, 1922.

16. “Hoi loa aku la i kona mau hale a noho i ka nuku wai o Kawainui, malaila no na hale o Olopana kahi i ku ai...” (He permanently left his houses [at the mouth of Ka‘elepulu stream] and lived at the mouth of Kawainui [which is Wai‘auia]; it is there that the houses of Olopana stood). “Kamaakamahiai,” *Kuokoa*, January 21, 1871, p. 1.

17. The first six lines of the 12-line chant offered by Keakaokū in anticipation of the birth of his brother. “Kamaakamahiai” *Kuokoa*, January 14, 1871, p. 1.

18. “Testimony of Hikaalani before the Commissioner of Private Ways and Water Rights for the District of Koolaupoko, Island of Oahu,” *Wong Leong et al. vs. W.G. Irwin*, June 10, 1895, 47-48 and 54-55. Hiikaalani testified in Hawaiian; we only have the commission’s English translation of her words.

19. ‘Āpuakea: A beautiful and vain young woman who foolishly insulted Hi‘iakaikapoliopole when the goddess passed into Kailua from Waimānalo. Hi‘iaka turned her into the ‘Āpuakea rain of Ko‘olaupoko; the rain is most often associated with Kāne‘ohe.

20. Muliwai'ōlena: Usually identified as either the mother of 'Āpuakea, a stream in Waimānalo, or a Mōkapu fishpond. But it is also given as the name of the ali'i of Wai'auia in a kanikau for Ka Haku o Hawai'i: "He hiwahiwa na Muliwaolena / He 'Li'i no Waiauaia" (*Ka Hae Hawaii*, July 26, 1860) and as a name associated with the mākāha at Wai'auia: "Ka i'a keokeo hui oolea / E holo ana i loko o Muliwaiolena / I ka makaha o ke kapu," ("Makalei Ka Laau Pii Ona a ka Ia..." *Kuokoa*, Dec.7, 1922). I use it here in its Wai'auia context.

21. Meheu: the first of the three gated, man-made berms that ran across Kawainui Stream (now Hāmākua Stream) ma kai of Wai'auia. These were opened and closed to trap fish and to flood the lo'i (and later the rice paddies) along the stream. Meheu might also have been the ford by which travelers crossed the stream in order to reach what is now Kailua town.

22. 'Alele: the long central plain of Kailua that extends from 'Alāla Point in the south to Mōkapu in the north.

23. Ahulili: an old name for the sands of 'Alele and the fishing grounds beyond: "O Ahulili ke one, o Alele ke kula" ("He Inoa no Kalaiwaa," *Kuokoa*, February 9, 1865); "Na kai lawaia o Mokulua, Ahulili, a me Kea," (*Ka Lahui Hawaii*, May 25, 1876).

24. Keaka: short form of Keakakūokalani. He was the grandson of Kamaakamahi'ai and Olopana I's daughter Keoholupalupa. He was the father, with Keoholaumaewa, of Olopana II. Keakaokū was mute; he communicated by means of chants that he voiced with his coconut whistle (pu'a niu).

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It is offered here in revised and updated form.