

‘Alo‘alo Ehuehu Pōkā

An Essay by Kīhei de Silva

Haku Mele: S. K. Kaloa, 1895.

Sources:

1. *Ka Makaainana*, 3-18-1895.
2. *Ka Leo o Ka Lahui*, 3-19-1895.
3. *Nupepa Ka Oiaio*, 3-22-1895.
4. F. J. Testa, *Buke Mele Lahui*, Honolulu: Hawaiian Historical Society, 2003, 15-16.

Our Text: *Buke Mele Lahui*, 15-16; orthographic editing and English translation by Kīhei de Silva.

S. K. Kaloa is listed as a “carpenter, residence Alakea and King” in Polk’s 1893 *Directory and Handbook of the Hawaiian Kingdom*. He would later become an O‘ahu representative of the Hawaiian Patriotic League, a minister, a member of Hui Kuokoa, and a loyal supporter of Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana‘ole in the prince’s party-switching run for congress.¹

Kaloa is also listed as one of the imprisoned counter-revolutionaries of January 7, 1893.² He was tried and convicted of treason on the 25th of that month after giving the following testimony to the Dole and Thurston tribunal:

Ua lawe au i kekahi pu raipela maluna o ko‘u hokua no ke kue i ke aupuni
Repubalika e ku nei; ua hiki au ma ke kahua o ka hana e hooko i kela manao o‘u e
hakaka, mai ka hora 12 o ka po Poaono, ke Sabati a me ka po Poakahi, ua
maopopo ke kulana hiki ole i na koa Hawaii ke kupaa, noiaila, ua haalele ia ke
kahua kaula a auhee; o ko‘u wahi i hopu pio ia ai ma Koolau.

O ke kahua o ka manao nana i kukulu ko‘u lunaikehala e kue ike aupuni
Repubalika e ku nei, oia no ka Amerika olelo hoohele kekee loa i hoopuka mai
iloko o ka Aha Senate e olelo ana—“na ka lahui Hawaii no e imi a e loa ko lakou
pono ma keia mua aku;” malalo o ia mau olelo i kono ia ai au e hooko i ka ho-
pena, a ua hele iloko o na kaula no ke aloha i ka aina me kona lahui e kupaa nei.³

Kaloa was sentenced to hard labor in Hale Pa‘ahao ‘o Kawa (O‘ahu Jail in the mudflats of Iwilei) for this seditious loyalty to Queen and nation. Like many of his *hoa pio kālai‘āina*, his political prisoner companions, Kaloa took up the one weapon then available to him, the pen. With it he composed “‘Alo‘alo Ehuehu Pōkā,” a song of resistance, pride, and ‘ai pōhaku patriotism. It appeared that March in three Hawaiian language newspapers – *Ka Makaainana* (3-18), *Ka Leo o ka Lahui* (3-19) and *Ka Oiaio* (3-22). Because Kaloa was not released from prison until September 7, we can conclude that his *mele* was among those that had been smuggled from Kawa and published by the royalist press in an ongoing effort to counter the Republic’s attempt to stifle and misrepresent the voice of the *lāhui*.⁴

The geography of “‘Alo‘alo Ehuehu Pōkā” suggests that Kaloa had been under the leadership of Wilcox – not Nowlein – at the time of the royalist retreat from Diamond Head. Wilcox took his men through Pālolo, Mānoa, and Nu‘uanu while Nowlein’s campaign ended in earlier defeat at Mau‘umae near Pālolo valley. Nowlein surrendered on Monday, January 14; Wilcox surrendered a week later in Kalihi.⁵ Kaloa testified that he was arrested in the Ko‘olau district (“‘ko‘u wahi i hopu pio ‘ia ai ma Ko‘olau”), which means that he probably separated from Wilcox at Nuku o Nu‘uanu and descended from there into Kailua.

The trajectory of Kaloa’s engagement and flight – from Daimana Hila to Maunawili – inspired a two-part composition that is unusual in the *Buke Mele Lahui* collection of the nationalist songs of 1890-95. A number of these mele focus on the “bullet dodging” and “rifle smoke” at Diamond Head and Pālolo,⁶ others express devotion to land and queen,⁷ and many contain elements of both,⁸ but “‘Alo‘alo Ehuehu Pōkā” alone balances the two and separates them neatly with a medial ha‘ina.

Kaloa delivers his first paukū in exemplary mele lāhui fashion: he avoids all mention of defeat, and he refuses to acknowledge the trauma of armed conflict. Instead, he refers to the Diamond Head battle scene as a “piko that fascinates flowers,” the retreat from Waikīkī to Wai‘alae under heavy cannon and rifle fire as “romancing with lightning,” the tension and miscommunication of the first night at Ka‘alāwai as “the beloved, sweet sound of the sea,” and the loss at “exalted” Pālolo as a “piling up of kukui leaves.” Kaloa then brings his almost-love-making paukū to a close with the unrelenting bravado of “how wonderful it is to work in earnest, to join with friends in love for the land, to seek justice for kānaka.” As Amy Stillman notes, this is the language of people who would not give an emotional inch to their foes; if they could not restore the nation on the field of battle, they would retake it, first and forever in their hearts.⁹ They would be as unrelenting in their search for justice as they were in denying the military failure of their counterrevolution.

A marvelous thing happens in Kaloa’s second paukū: in what must have been the desperation and despair of flight, he finds comfort and inspiration in the land. He is embraced by the mists of Mānoa, and he sees, in the lama blossoms of the uplands, the emblem of an enlightened, unrivaled Hawai‘i. If this were not enough to heal him, he is uplifted, on his descent into Ko‘olaupoko, by an epiphany of almost unbearably poignant attachment to Lili‘uokalani and to the glory of their land. He takes in the view of Maunawili, Keaniani Ridge,¹⁰ and the Mōkapu peninsula, and he realizes that this is the same view enjoyed by his “haku,” his queen, when she vacationed at the Boyd estate and witnessed, against the backdrop of Kailua and Kāneohe, the sweet display of affection that inspired “‘Aloha ‘Oe.” “Tell the story,” he concludes, “May Hawai‘i live forever.” There is no bravado here, nor is there resignation, and we who share his love for queen and land, see into the depths of his undefeated heart.

“‘Alo‘alo Ehuehu Pōkā” takes us on journey from west to east, Waikīkī to Mōkapu, denial to confirmation. Lilinoe Sterling’s “‘He Inoa no Kaleimakali‘i” takes us back along the same path – from her present day home on the Mōkapu peninsula to her ancestral

home in Kālia, Waikīkī. The two mele, strung across the gap of more than a century, complete a lei of aloha ‘āina that still glories, still resists, still emulates the po‘e ‘alo‘alo ehuehu of then and now.

‘Alo‘alo Ehuehu Pōkā

Aia i ka piko o Daimana Hila
I laila nā pua i walea ai
Ho‘oheno a‘e ana me ka uila
‘Ike i ka nani a‘o Ka‘alāwai
‘O ka hone a ke kai ka‘u aloha
Ku‘i aku ka lono nā mokupuni
Hanohano Pālolo i ka‘u ‘ike
Ho‘onu‘a i ka lau o ke kukui
‘Akahi Hawai‘i a hana‘i‘o
Hō‘ike (i) ke aloha o ka ‘āina
He aloha ka helena me nā hoa
A e imi i ka pono o ke kanaka
Ha‘ina ‘ia mai ana ka puana
Nā hoa ‘alo i ke ehū pōkā.

Kilakila Mānoa i ka uhiwai
Ha‘aheo i ka pua o ka lama
Lamalama i ke alo o Kawaikini
Nā kini kupa ia o ka ‘āina
Eia Hawai‘i ua kaulana
Aia i ka papa helu ‘ekahi
Aia i ka luna ‘o Maunawili
Ka‘ana pū ana me Keaniani
Ki‘eki‘e Mōkapu i ka ‘ehukai
Hanohano i ka maka ke ‘ike aku
I laila ku‘u haku ‘ike iho ai
Mahalo i ka nani o ka ‘āina
Ha‘ina ‘ia mai ana ka puana
E ola Hawai‘i a mau loa.

There at the summit of Daimana Hila
Is where the descendants are engaged
Romancing with lightning
Witnessing the beauty of Ka‘alāwai
The sweet sound of the sea is what I love
The news of the islands spreads
Pālolo is exalted in my eyes
Heaping up the leaves of kukui
Hawaiians are now working in earnest

To demonstrate their love for the land
How wonderful to join with friends
Seeking justice for our people
Tell the summary
Patriots who dodge the spray of bullets.

Majestic is Mānoa in the mist
Cherished for its lama blossoms
Illuminating the face of Kawaikini
Are the many descendants of the land
Here is Hawai‘i whose fame is known
There at the top of the list
There in the heights is Maunawili
Sharing together with Keaniani
Prominent is Mōkapu in the sea spray
Glorious to the eyes when seen
It is there that my Lady took in the view
Admiring the beauty of the land
Tell the summary
May Hawai‘i live forever.

Notes:

1. Carpenter, etc.: Polk, 157. Reverend Kaloa: “Marriages, Oahu Island, 1832 – 1910, Vol. 2, p. 294; Kiaaina, Mrs. C.K.N. to Rev. S.K. Kaloa, 5-20-1909”; Hawai‘i State Archives. O‘ahu delegate to the Hawaiian Patriotic League: www.hawaiiankingdom.org/memorial_1898.shtml. Hui Kuokoa: *Evening Bulletin*, July 24, 1902. Support of Kalaniana‘ole: *Honolulu Republican*, October 9, 1900; *Ke Kiai*, Sept. 18, 1902.

2. “SK Kaloa” is one of 313 Kawa-imprisoned counterrevolutionaries named by Thomas Spencer (ed.) in “Ka Papa Inoa O na Poe i Hopu ia...” *Kaua Kuloko*, 1895, 133-136. His first name is given, at one point in Spencer’s collection as “Sam” (116).

3. “I put a rifle on my shoulders to defy the standing Republican government; I entered into the course of action by which I would fulfill that desire to do battle on the 12th hour of Saturday night, [and I fought through] the Sabbath and Monday night, [when] I realized the impossibility of the Hawaiian soldiers holding their ground; therefore, I left the battlefield and fled; the place at which I was taken prisoner was Ko‘olau. The source of the idea that inspired my conscience to rebel against the standing Republican government was the incredibly twisted, crooked American language put forth from within Congress which said: “It is up to the Hawaiian people to find justice from this time forth;” under the influence of these words, I was invited to fulfill the goal, and I entered into battle for love of the land and its steadfast citizens.” “Ka S K Kaloa Mau Olelo-ike,” in Spencer, 106; English translation: Kīhei de Silva.

4. The names of those pardoned on the 7th are given in “Na Pio Kalaiaina” *Ka Makaainana*, September 9, 1895. The captive composers include Henry Enoka, S. Kaili, S.K. Kaloa, J.W. Kamali, H.J. Kapu, J.K. Kaulia, D.K. Koa, Kalaniana‘ole, and Haimoeipo (the Queen herself).

Outside of these smuggled mele, the only reports that the lāhui was then “getting about the Queen and the situation of the people who were imprisoned was from the government newspapers, that is, from their enemies” (Noenoe Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 151).

5. These events are detailed in Albertine Loomis’s, *For Whom Are the Stars?* The University Press of Hawaii, 1970. They are also summarized by Amy Stillman in “History Reinterpreted in Song; The Case of the Hawaiian Counterrevolution,” *The Hawaiian Journal of History*, vol. 23 (1989), 3-6.

6. Henry Enoka, “Na Keiki Alo i ke Ehuehu,” 12-13; J.K. Kamali, “Ke Aloha i ka Puuwai,” 15. Kaaea, “Weli ka Honua,” 30.

7. W. Olepau, “Liliu Lei a ka Lahui,” 6; Kalani Honua, “Haku Lani a ka Lahui,” 32; “S. Kaili, “Halepiowai,” 86.

8. D.K. Kaumiumi, “Hoolulu ke Aloha Aina,” 15; J.W. Kamali, “Alahele Pali o Nuuanu,” 41-42.

9. “History Reinterpreted as Song,” 19.

10. Keanaini ridge separates Maunawili from Waimānalo; its literal meaning (“mirror, transparent, clear) contributes to Kaloa’s sense of reflection and revelation.

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