3

I MANA I KA ‘ŌIWI

Dignity empowered by repatriation

Edward Halealoha Ayau

Introduction

Hawaiians place high value on all that is ancestral, especially the sanctity of human remains, funerary possessions and places of interment. Values and practices of ‘ohana (family), mālama (care), kuleana (responsibility) and kūpale (protection) are paramount to an interdependent relationship in which the living and deceased look after one another. International repatriation of iwi kūpuna (Ancestral Remains) and moepū (funerary possessions) is a dutiful expression of these cultural traditions. Over the past thirty years, efforts by Native Hawaiians to return iwi kūpuna and moepū from domestic and foreign institutions were undertaken to continue restoration of the ancestral foundation, to return mana (spiritual essence, energy) to the homeland and living descendants and to support the rebuilding and empowerment of all that is Hawaiian. This chapter seeks to provide insight into these repatriation experiences, beginning with a discussion of various sources of authority relied upon to conduct repatriation in the absence of express legal authority. Next, the experiences and impacts of select international repatriation cases will be shared, involving three museums, one each in Switzerland, England and Germany. Finally, some of the strategic approaches that were undertaken to achieve thirteen international repatriation cases are discussed along with valuable lessons learned along the way. The chapter concludes with the impact that repatriation has had to empower Hawaiians to help restore our human dignity.

A Native Hawaiian organisation named Hui Mālama I Nā Kūpuna O Hawai‘i Nei (Group Caring for the Ancestors of Hawai‘i, hereinafter Hui Mālama or HM), established in 1988 by Edward and Pualani Kanahele of Hilo, Hawai‘i, was trained in contemporary and traditional cultural and spiritual practices regarding the care of iwi kūpuna and moepū. The repatriation cases discussed in this chapter were conducted in principal by this organisation.¹ Hui Mālama was formally recognised in the United States’ Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) as having standing to assert repatriation claims in institutions that receive federal funds. This allowed us to conduct just over 100 national repatriation cases. The international repatriation cases are the focus of this chapter and Table 3.1 provides an inventory of these cases.
Foundations for repatriation

Repatriations within the jurisdiction of the United States were conducted pursuant to the legal authority of the National Museum of the American Indian Act (NMAI Act 1989) and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), which applied to the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History and any federal agency or institution that received federal funding. Upfront, repatriations beyond the boundaries of the United States seemed dependent upon the laws and policies of a particular jurisdiction, and not all had laws allowing for the return of Indigenous remains. For Hui Mālama, given the priority placed on Ancestral Remains and their possessions and the imperative need for their return in support of the well-being of the family, reliance on foreign laws and policies for repatriation was unacceptable. Based upon the cultural lessons taught by kumu (teachers; knowledge sources) Edward and Pualani Kanahele, Hui Mālama came to understand that the only proper foundation for repatriation claims were not laws but rather Hawaiian cultural values including ‘ohana (family), mālama (care), kuleana (responsibility) and kūpule (protection). This is based upon the self-truth that treatment of human remains and funerary possessions is principally a family matter. All other asserted interests are ineffective because they exist outside the family circle. While science is an important consideration, it is not an absolute right and should not be allowed to be imposed over the needs of the ‘ohana. Moreover, thievery must be addressed. Unlawful acquisition cannot give rise to continued lawful possession. Instead, it is the will of the family vis-à-vis deceased family members that is controlling and clearly and unequivocally demonstrated by the act of ceremonial interment. For Hawaiians, this act creates a permanent commitment and bond to the ‘āina (land), the spiritual realm of Pāpāhānaumoku.2 By extension, any action inconsistent with permanent interment raises the issue of requisite family authorisation. Absent free, prior and informed consent, all acquisitions of ancestral Hawaiian skeletal remains and funerary possessions are illicit and must be made pono (righteous) through repatriation and reburial.

Table 3.1 International repatriation efforts conducted by Hui Mālama O Hawai‘i Nei from 1992 to 2014, and in partnership with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs from 2011 to the present.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foreign Institution and Country</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Iwi Kūpuna and Moepū Repatriated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Zurich, Switzerland</td>
<td>March 1992</td>
<td>1 complete skeleton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australian Museum, Australia</td>
<td>August 1992</td>
<td>2 skulls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Ontario Museum, Canada</td>
<td>August 1992</td>
<td>1 skull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Edinburgh, Scotland</td>
<td>October 2000</td>
<td>49 skulls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Edinburgh, Scotland</td>
<td>February 2001</td>
<td>1 mandible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statens Historiska Museut, Sweden</td>
<td>November 2009</td>
<td>5 skulls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karolinska Institutet, Sweden</td>
<td>November 2009</td>
<td>17 skulls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maidstone Museum, England</td>
<td>August 2010</td>
<td>2 skulls, 2 funerary objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunterian Museum, Royal College of Surgeons of England, England</td>
<td>September 2011</td>
<td>1 skull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural History Museum, England</td>
<td>August 2013</td>
<td>144 skulls, 1 post cranial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Museum/Wellcome Trust, England</td>
<td>August 2013</td>
<td>1 skull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford Museum of Natural History, England</td>
<td>August 2014</td>
<td>1 skull, 1 brain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum für Volkerkunde Dresden, Germany</td>
<td>October 2017</td>
<td>1 cranium, 3 calvarium, 1 mandible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hui Mālama asserted claims for Ancestral Remains in foreign jurisdictions based primarily on our kuleana or cultural duty as living descendants to provide proper care and that we were the only party that held such responsibilities to the ancestors. Museums and private parties place themselves in the position to take from the ancestors. On the other hand, we seek to give the ancestors back their place in their 'ohana (family) and into the loving bosom of Papahānaumoku.4 We further asserted that there is simply no room at the family table for the museum’s asserted rights to continue possession absent consent. We considered this approach an effective expression of our humanity. That we seek to restore our ancestral family reflects kindly upon us; that museums seek to keep our family apart reflects poorly on them. There is no statute of limitations on our ability to assert aloha (love) for those whose bones were disturbed and who yearn to return to Hawai‘i. We advocate for repatriation out of a duty of care owed to disturbed iwi kūpuna and moepū as an expression of the interdependent relationship between the living and the deceased. In caring for those who came before us, we sought their support to look after us and our families as we undertook to restore them to theirs.

In addition, we asserted the belief in a universal human right of dignity for ourselves and our ancestors. We believed that every Indigenous person should have the ability to be free of undue influence upon their honor and their integrity, and this standard extends into the grave. We are fellow occupants of the planet Earth and as your neighbors, we insist that you as a museum not loot our ancestral burial sites or continue to house Ancestral Remains acquired through looting. When Hawai‘i was an independent sovereign kingdom, cultural values were codified into law to protect family members and their final burial places. On 24 August 1860, King Kamehameha IV and the Nobles and Representatives of the Hawaiian Islands enacted ‘An Act for the Protection of Places of Sepulture’, which provided in part that

[i]f any person, not having the legal right to do so, shall wilfully dig up, disinter, remove or convey away any human body from any burial place, or shall knowingly aid in such disinterment, removal, or conveying away, every such offender and every person accessory thereto, either before or after the fact, shall be punished by imprisonment at hard labor for not more than two years, or by fine not exceeding one thousand dollars.5

Where documentation existed indicating collection of Ancestral Remains and funerary possessions after August 1860, we would assert the argument that, absent consent, removal of ‘any human body from any burial place’ was in violation of the law and therefore an illicit acquisition for which the remains must be returned. We further argued that authorisation to export the remains out of the Kingdom was required and also inquired whether the museum had proof that there was authorisation by the host country for the import of the remains. Absent both these express authorisations, and given the illicit acquisition, the ability for the museum to continue possession was defeated and the only remedy was to return the remains. This Kingdom law to protect places of sepulture continued in effect for several years following the unlawful overthrow of our country in 1893 by the United States.

In more recent times, we began to assert Article 12 of the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which provides:

1 Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practice, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religions and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains. [emphasis added]
2 States shall seek to enable the access and/or repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains in their possession through fair, transparent and effective mechanisms developed in conjunction with Indigenous peoples concerned.

While availing ourselves of these various foundations and sources of authority to repatriate, another key tool (or weapon, depending on the museum’s willingness to cooperate) was our relentless advocacy efforts. Hui Mālama aggressively researched and identified institutions worldwide that acknowledged possession of skeletal remains from Hawai‘i. Some cases lasted over twenty years, and during that time Hui Mālama kept the pressure on the museum until they authorised the release of the iwi kūpuna.

Three international repatriation cases

Universität Zurich – Irchel, Anthropologisches Institut und Museum
(University of Zurich Department of Anthropology and Museum)

This case represented the first time an international institution released iwi kūpuna for return home to Hawai‘i. It started with research by the author, whereby I came across an article entitled ‘The Foot Musculature of an Australian, a Hawaiian, and a Chinese’, by Berry Campbell, Department of Anatomy, Johns Hopkins University (Campbell 1936). The article states:

The racial study of the foot musculature and its variations has been impeded by the lack of published protocols on nearly all races except those regularly dissected in medical schools. The following observations contain the first published descriptions of the pedal muscles of the Australian aboriginal . . . and of the Hawaiian . . . also an adult male, is full-blooded.

(J.H. Anat. No. 720E – skeleton now P.A.L. No. 22; emphasis added)

This case revealed kaumaha (spiritual trauma) with the realisation that this ancestor was utilised as a cadaver for study purposes and was never buried. Moreover, it raised questions as to how this person was acquired and whether he willing donated himself to science. We later learn of the possibility that this Hawaiian may have been a sailor on ship who was donated to the Johns Hopkins Department of Anatomy following his death.

Pursuant to the authority vested in us by NAGPRA, Hui Mālama sent a letter to the Johns Hopkins University Department of Anthropology citing the aforementioned article and requesting an inventory of this Hawaiian skeleton. However, unbeknownst to us at the time, we had mistakenly identified the skeleton as PAL 23. The response from Dr Alan Walker, Professor of Cell Biology and Anatomy informed us:

The Laboratory of Physical Anthropology used to be here in Johns Hopkins University many years ago. The Director at that time was Professor Adolf Shultz. He left to start the Anthropology Institute at the University of Zurich, Switzerland in the early 1950’s. The specimen number of skeleton P.A.L. No. 23 indicates it was in the laboratory of physical anthropology. As far as I’m aware, Professor Shultz took all human and nonhumans with him.
Two written requests to the University of Zurich for this Hawaiian skeleton were made on 29 July 1991 and 14 November 1991. A response finally came, dated 13 February 1992, in which Professor Dr R.D. Martin stated:

We are currently in the process of reorganizing and cataloguing our large collection of human skeletal material. . . . At present, we do not have a comprehensive catalogue for the collection, although we hope to complete a preliminary version by the end of 1992. We therefore had to check through the catalogue notes for P.A.L. specimens left by Professor Shultz. In these notes, there is no reference to a specimen P.A.L. 23. In order to cross-check this, we searched through the cabinet in our collection, but found no trace of a specimen with this number. As far as I can tell at present, therefore, there is no evidence that Prof. Shultz ever brought specimen P.A.L. 23 back to Zurich with him when we came here 40 years ago. Should this specimen be found in the course of the reorganization that is currently under way, I shall contact you again.

Following further review, I realize that the PAL number could not be 23 because that number – according to the Campbell article – belongs to an adult Chinese. In an immediate follow-up communication with Professor Dr Martin, we stated the belief that

[t]he number of the ancestral Hawaiian could possibly be either P.A.L. 21, 22 or 27. Therefore, I respectfully request that your staff check your records and collections.9

In addition, in response to a request by Dr Martin to explain the background of our request for repatriation, we stated the following:

[t]he basis for Hui Mālama’s repatriation request is simple: utmost respect for nā iwi (the bones) of our ancestors. Kānaka maoli (Native Hawaiians) believe all descend from Hāloa, progenitor of our lāhui (race). Hui Mālama I Nā Kūpuna O Hawai‘i Nei members represent genealogies from each major island. We are living descendants of ancestral kānaka maoli. The basis for our repatriation request is a cultural foundation comprised of generations of ancestral kānaka maoli.

(emphasis added)10

Just prior to receiving the 13 February missive, a chance meeting with a Hawaiian man arbitrarily revealed that he was planning a trip to Zurich in a few weeks for family reasons. In that conversation, the situation with the missing skeleton was explained and a request made for him to serve as our liaison and meet with Dr Martin to see whether the remains have been located. We were shocked but excited at the possibility that this man might play a role in the return of these iwi kūpuna. In our response of 14 February 1992, we further stated a request for Dr Martin to meet with this person, ‘to discuss the status of this request, and repatriation should the remains be located’. What followed was nothing short of a miracle. In the early part of March 1992, I received a call from our liaison that he had met with Dr Martin but that the remains had not yet been located. Moreover, he would be in Zurich for a few days and would check in with Dr Martin again before departing. A day or so later, I called our liaison and was told that Dr Martin had found PAL 22 and had confirmed it was, in fact, the remains of the missing Hawaiian! In addition, I learned that Dr Martin intended to discuss the matter with his colleagues and wanted
to release the remains. However, Professor Shultz had willed the collection of human remains to the canton of Zurich, and the mayor’s authorisation for any dispersal was required. A day later, we learned that Dr Martin wrote to the mayor urging release and followed up with a call. On Saturday, 7 March 1992, I received a call from our liaison, who stated that the mayor had authorised release and that he had picked up what appeared to be a complete skeleton from Dr Martin in the original wooden container labelled PAL 22. Moreover, he had signed a written release on our behalf which was countersigned by R.D. Martin, Institute Director, and dated 6 March 1992 which stated, ‘I hereby confirm that I have collected one human skeleton of Hawaiian origin (A.H. Shultz collection, specimen PAL 22) for repatriation and reburial.’

The iwi kūpuna were victoriously hand-carried home. Imploring the Hawaiian cultural tradition of hānai (to support those in need), a family adopted this ancestor and the remains were placed under their care for reburial.

In this, our first international repatriation effort, we experienced the importance of trusting our cultural practices, especially prayers requesting from our ancestors the tools necessary to be successful, which included:

E hō mai ka ‘ike
Grant us knowledge
E hō mai ka ikaika
Grant us strength
E hō mai ka akamai
Grant us intelligence
E hō mai ka maopopo pono
Grant us true understanding
E hō mai ka ‘ike pāpālua
Grant us an avenue of communication
E hō mai ka mana.
Grant us spiritual essence.

We also learned the powerful lesson of including the ancestor being reclaimed as part of those whom we call upon for guidance, courage and clarity of thought. Involving the ancestor being claimed in his own rescue was critical for our success and growth in understanding how to be effective repatriation advocates. As it was explained to us by our kumu, we need to continue to return to who we are.

**Natural History Museum (NHM), London, England**

This second case involved the largest number of iwi kūpuna (145) repatriated internationally by Hui Mālama and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. It is also involved the second longest time to resolve (twenty-three years). Comparatively speaking, Zurich took fifteen months. The NHM case started with a 1990 request from the State of Hawai‘i Historic Preservation Officer, William Paty, who inquired of 200 museums around the world as to whether the institution held collections of Hawaiian skeletal remains or funerary possessions and, if so, to provide inventories of such collections. By letter dated 8 November 1990, Dr L.R.M. Cocks, Keeper of Palaeontology of the NHM, responded, stating:

*We hold about 140 registered items from Hawaii (or the Sandwich Islands), most of which are crania. We look after the scientific collections of this Department with great care and sensitivity, and therefore normally only release details about them to bona fide scientific research workers. Therefore, before I can provide any further details, I would need to have more knowledge from you about the reasons for your interest in this material.*

The state forwarded the response to Hui Mālama for follow-up. At this same time, Hui Mālama was undertaking efforts to repatriate all iwi kūpuna and moepū from the island of Molokai held by the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum (Bishop Museum) in Honolulu. It would be the first
of numerous repatriations from this local institution. Toni Han, the Collections Manager of the
Bishop Museum, notified the author that

- enclosed are copies of the accession records for human skeletal remains we have
  from Molokai . . . Regrettably, one skull listed under 1907.10 (James Munro) is not
  here. It was sent to the Cranmore Ethnographic Museum in Kent, England, some-
  time around 1910. Since that time the Cranmore, which mainly housed the Beasely
  Collection has closed, and artifacts from that rather significant collection have been
  auctioned and/or donated to various museums . . . Apparently good catalogs were
  kept of the Beasely Collection, so there is a good chance that the whereabouts of the skull
  could be traced.12

Unbeknownst to anyone, both of these cases would one day intersect. With regard to the Natu-
ral History Museum, Edward L. H. Kanahele of Hui Mālama initiated the organisation’s foray
into this case with a letter on 8 February 1991, which stated in part:

I understand that 140 Hawaiian crania are in the possession of the Natural History
Museum. I realize the aforementioned federal laws lack authority in England. Never-
theless, I believe the intent behind such laws to provide proper treatment to Hawaiian
skeletal remains is clear. Proper treatment for Native Hawaiians amounts to return and
reburial. Such honorable intentions I believe transcend both national jurisdictions and
cultural peculiarities. I respectfully request the Natural History Museum allow the return of all
140 Hawaiian crania and any other Hawaiian skeletal remains for proper reburial pursuant to
traditional Hawaiian custom and believe [sic]. This request is purely humanitarian.13

During this time, several national and international repatriation claims were pursued by Hui
Mālama. Dr Cocks responded to Mr Kanahele’s request a year later, stating:

We recognize and respect your people’s concern over the remains of their ancestors.
However, we also recognize the genuine scientific value of the world-wide collections
of human remains, from many parts of the world. In this Museum, the collections are
actively researched, and give valuable insights into our human history, including the
nature of diseases and changes in diets. In addition, as I explained on the telephone, we
are precluded by the British Museum Act of 1963 from disposing of any items from our collec-
tions. Any modifications of that Act needs a decision of the British Parliament. Consequently,
there is a genuine and difficult problem that cannot be readily resolved.14

These early communications are shared to illustrate how the central issues in the case were
framed. The two primary concerns for the Natural History Museum were that there was a legit-
imate scientific interest in all of its human remains collections including those from Hawai‘i, and
that British law prohibited release. For Hui Mālama, the primary focus was to obtain the return
of the ancestors based upon traditional Hawaiian custom and belief which is humanitarian in
nature. Our work requires a complete inventory identifying the types of remains collected, their
provenance, the circumstances surrounding their original acquisition, and confirmation that the
remains are those of ancestral Hawaiians.
What ensued lasted for just over two decades and involved back-and-forth correspondence, travel to the UK for face-to-face meetings, support from US senators, solicitation of support from dignitaries from the United States and UK, documentation reports of the basis for repatriation, enactment of an Act of Parliament, establishment of the Human Remains Unit at the museum, compliance with the museum’s repatriation policy, and ultimately the return of the iwi kūpuna in 2013.

In addressing the NHM’s first concern regarding the legitimate scientific interest in its human remains collection, Hui Mālama acknowledged the legitimacy of science but insisted that it was not an absolute right that could be imposed upon Indigenous people without willing consent. In September 1999, three members of Hui Mālama travelled to London for our first face-to-face meeting with officials of the Natural History Museum.

We explained our cultural foundations and in turn museum officials talked about their commitment to research of the human past. We learned that the Hawaiian remains collection had never been utilised as part of any formal scientific inquiry. Moreover, Hui Mālama agreed to the conducting of metric measurements and non-metric analysis for the limited purpose of confirming Hawaiian identification of the remains identified to have originated from Hawai‘i (also known as the Sandwich Islands). We insisted on the ability to pray with the ancestors to mihi (apologize; explain) the decision we made and why we believed it was necessary in order to facilitate their eventual return. Our request was denied. Nonetheless, important progress was made to resolve the museum’s initial concern regarding the ability to conduct scientific inquiry.

The second museum concern was that British law prohibited release. The British Museum Act states that:

5 Disposal of objects

(1) The Trustees of the British Museum may sell, exchange, give away or otherwise dispose of any object vested in them and comprised in their collection if—

(a) the object is duplicate of another object, or
(b) the object appears to the Trustees to have been made not earlier than the year 1850, and substantially consists of printed matter of which a copy made by photography or a process akin to photography is held by the Trustees, or
(c) in the opinion of the Trustees the object is unfit to be retained in the collections of the Museum and can be disposed of without detriment to the interests of students: Provided that where an object has become vested in the Trustees by virtue of a gift or bequest the powers conferred by this subsection shall not be exercisable as respects that object in a manner inconsistent with any condition attached to the gift or bequest.

(2) The Trustees may destroy or otherwise dispose of any object vested in them and comprised in their collections if satisfied that it has become useless for the purposes of the Museum by reason of damage, physical deterioration, or infestation by destructive organisms.

(3) Money accruing to the Trustees by virtue of an exercise of the powers conferred by this section [or section 6 of the Museums and Galleries Act 1992] shall be laid out by them in the purchase of objects to be added to the collections of the Museum.
Hui Mālama argued that the British Museum Act allowed trustees to determine if objects were ‘unfit to be retained’ and that they could dispose of such items, if doing so would not harm ‘the interests of students’. The museum was not prohibited from weighing the value of the iwi kūpuna to science and consider whether Hawaiian perspectives or legal and ethical concerns might make the iwi ‘unfit’ Museum possessions and determine to dispose (repatriate). The museum did not agree, viewing the British Museum Act as a prohibition on their ability to release the iwi. Another approach involving legislative change would be necessary to resolve this impasse.

By letter dated 23 August 2001, Hui Mālama received an announcement from Professor Norman Palmer, Chairman of the Working Group on Human Remains, calling for submissions from organizations that have an interest in the subject of human remains and their treatment in publically [sic] funded UK museums and galleries . . . [w]ritten submissions should be received by 30 November 2001.

The Working Group was formed:

1. To examine the current legal status of human remains within the collections of publicly funded Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom.
2. To examine the powers of museums and galleries governed by statute to deaccession, or to otherwise release from their possession, human remains within their collections and to consider the desirability [of] the possible forms of legislative change in this area.
3. To consider the circumstances in which material other than but associated with, human remains might properly be included within any proposed legislative change in respect of human remains.
4. To take advice from interested parties.17

Hui Mālama was pleased to have been notified of this important opportunity to provide testimony in the United Kingdom given its ongoing efforts with the Natural History Museum which maintained that the law prohibited releasing the Hawaiian skeletal remains. Hui Mālama submitted its 126-page testimony which included the following topics:

The Fundamental Responsibility to Care for the Ancestors
Loss of the Ability to Care for the Ancestors
Establishment of Hui Mālama I Nā Kūpuna O Hawai‘i Nei
Restoring the Ability to Care for the Ancestors
Legal and Cultural Grounds for Repatriation
Qualified Organization to Conduct Repatriation
Consultation with the Natural History Museum
Support for Release Based Upon Human Rights
Declarations Regarding Human Remains and Funerary Items
Recommended Action by the Working Group

Attachments included copies of two US laws on repatriation, Hui Mālama’s repatriation efforts from 1990 to 2001, and its report to the Natural History Museum.

The report prepared by the Working Group was provided to the UK Minister for the Arts in 2003. The report influenced the insertion into the Human Tissue Act 2004 of Section 47, which
released nine UK museums from any legal impediment to de-accession of human remains fewer than 1,000 years old, including the Natural History Museum, ‘if it appears to them to be appropriate to do so for any reason’ (Human Tissue Act 2004: ch. 30, s. 47).

This significant development addressed the second concern raised by the Natural History Museum and removed the legal barrier of the British Museum Act that the Museum had regarded as prohibiting repatriation.

For Hui Mālama, the immediate focus was then to obtain a complete inventory identifying the types of remains collected, provenance, circumstances surrounding original acquisition, and confirmation that the remains were those of ancestral Hawaiians.

Following the September 1999 meeting at the museum, Hui Mālama had been provided with a hard copy of a preliminary listing of the human remains from Hawai‘i. The information was more useful to us in a spreadsheet and I undertook to create one with the help of my daughter Hattie Hāpai. I asked her to read certain types of information as I entered them into the spreadsheet, and in doing so a twenty-year-old question was answered. Hattie said something to the effect of ‘Beasley No. 525 Cranium . . . Malakai . . . I think they mean Molokai’. And in fact, the provenance turned out to be Mo‘omomi, Molokai. The Beasley Collection originated at the Cranmore Ethnographic Museum in Kent, England. It was confirmed that this was the kūpuna that was transferred from the Bishop Museum in 1910, the skull whose whereabouts we tried to trace years ago. We were led to believe that the Cranmore Ethnographic Museum had been severely damaged by Nazi bombing during the Second World War and that it was likely that the skull had been destroyed. None of the institutions named by the Bishop Museum had human remains from Hawai‘i. We were finally in a position to complete the Molokai repatriation conducted in 1991.

With the growing claims for repatriation, the Natural History Museum established a Human Remains Unit led by Dr Margaret Clegg. In September 2011, a face-to-face meeting was held whereupon we learn from Dr Clegg that the museum was fairly confident all 153 remains are those of Native Hawaiians. Moreover, that re-association of the craniums and mandibles may result in lowering of the number of individuals, as over time there was separation. However, the museum had not yet completed its re-assessment of provenance, which had taken considerable time.

Dr Clegg raised an additional issue relating to consent. As a matter of process, she said, the Repatriation Unit and the Natural History Museum are committed to immediately returning any human remains determined to have been acquired illicitly. However, the documentation indicates that the human remains from Hawai‘i were acquired as a gift from William L Green, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs for the Kingdom of Hawai‘i who served under King David Kalākaua. Upon questioning, Dr Clegg acknowledged that the documentation did not establish that the King was aware of or authorised the collection. More importantly, there was no evidence that the families authorised removal and, absent consent, acquisition was de facto illicit. This discussion helped address an important element of the museum procedures for a claimant to obtain a determination to repatriate.

Just over a year later, Oliver Stocken, Chair of the Board of Trustees, Natural History Museum, officially notified Hui Mālama in writing:

The Trustees of the Natural History Museum have met to consider the request by Hui Mālama I Nā Kūpuna O Hawai‘i Nei for the permanent release and repatriation of the remains of ancestral Hawaiians that are currently held in the Natural History Museum . . . In reaching a decision, Trustees considered the perspective of the
Hawaiian community; scientific and archival information on the remains, and past and potential value for science. The Trustees acknowledge the strong feelings of connection of the community to the remains and of continuing responsibility by the community for the care of the remains. The Trustees have decided to return the remains of 145 individuals to your organization.19

( emphasis added)

In a statement recognising the respective views on the proper treatment of ancestral human remains, Chairman Stocken further stated in the same correspondence:

Trustees have asked in addition that the Museum should, as part of the process of return, discuss with you the nature and value of the science that is conducted on the human past here. This is a dialogue that has been of interest to other communities in informing their decisions about care following return, although we know that your traditional responsibilities will be your primary concern in making decisions about future care for the remains from Hawai‘i.

The logistics of shipping out of the United Kingdom is a daunting task. It took almost a year to work out all details, hire a company to build the crates that meet museum standards and coordinate with UK and US Customs. In August 2013, Hui Mālama and Office of Hawaiian Affairs members travelled to London to conduct the repatriation and document the historic event (see Figures 3.1 and 3.2, and video Ka Ho‘ina: Going home 2013). The Ancestral Remains were then ceremonially reburied, bringing an end to twenty-three-year effort.

**Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden, Germany**

This third case represents Hui Mālama’s longest standing claim which was resolved in October 2017. During public comments at a press conference arranged by the museum and German officials as part of the handover events, I stated in part:

This struggle for us started in 1991 and it started with a simple request. And for 26 years I struggled to find the right words to say ‘please, give us back our kūpuna’. We are not asking for special treatment, we are not asking for anything out of the ordinary. All we are asking for is to allow us to bring our family back together. And we are grateful and humbled that that message was received and now we are moving forward.

The process began in response to a formal inquiry to the Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden (Dresden Museum) by the State of Hawai‘i Historic Preservation Officer, William Paty. Dr. Ingrid Wustmann responded on 27 March 1991 that two calvarium, a cranium and a mandible from Hawai‘i were in museum collections.20 The State provided the inventory information to Hui Mālama, whose President Edward Kanahele wrote to the Dresden Museum to respectfully request the Staatliches Museum FurVölkerkunde Dresden provide for the return of all Hawaiian remains identified herein to Hui Mālama I Nā Kūpuna O Hawai‘i Nei for proper reburial pursuant to traditional Hawaiian custom and believe [sic].21
In 1992, Dr Heinz Israel, director of the State Museum for Ethnology, Dresden, responded to Hui Mālama’s request for repatriation:

I wish to inform you that the State Museum for Ethnology, Dresden, cannot consent to the return to Hawaii of the requested parts of the anthropological collection. These parts came to Dresden between 1896 and 1904 and have since been state property. We as safekeepers of the free state of Saxonia, Federal Republic of Germany, are bound to protect the right of ownership regarding the museum sector.²²

(emphasis added; this is a translation, as the original letter was written in German)

In 1993, Hui Mālama members travelled to Washington, DC, to meet with Goetz Reimann, a representative of the embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, to press our repatriation claim. Reimann shared a communication from a person named Kohn of the Germany Ministry
of Science, who in response to the Hui Mālama’s request for repatriation from the Dresden Museum stated:

[t]he relics of Hawaiian origin in the anthropology collection were received by the Museum of Ethnology between 1896 and 1904. It is impossible that the acquisition was illegal, Arthur Baessler, the collector was a respected co-worker at the Museum and was known
Edward Halealoha Ayau

...for his good and friendly contacts with the Natives... There is no reason to believe that the above mentioned human remains in the anthropology collection of the Museum of Ethnology was not accorded 'proper treatment'.

(emphasis added)

Reimann stated that the Germany embassy had adopted the same position. Since the original request for return by Mr Kanahele, our claim had thus been opposed by the Dresden Museum, the German Ministry of Science, and the German Embassy in Washington, DC. The resulting discourse with German officials was disturbing in that the Ancestral Remains were referred to as owned property, as relics, and not as the remains of ancestral Hawaiians who are owed a duty of care by living Hawaiians to be returned home. Moreover, as a matter of process, our requests for documentation demonstrated the conditions surrounding collection of these four Ancestral Remains and for evidence of consent from the families to collect these remains were not responded to. Our ability to conduct a meaningful consultation was effectively undermined. The prospect of eventual repatriation was nowhere in sight and years would pass without any forward movement.

In January 2015, Hui Mālama formally dissolved. Before doing so, we collaborated with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to submit a letter pursuant to the 2013 German Recommendations for the Care of Human Remains in Museums and Collections (2013 Recommendations), requesting to re-set the claim for repatriation with the Dresden Museum which was effectively transferred to OHA.

In 2016, I was requested to co-author an article with my colleague Honor Keeler to critique the 2013 Recommendations and offer our perspectives on the approaches being taken by the German Museum Association. The article included the aforementioned failures with the Dresden Museum to provide information as to acquisition, the lack of indicia of consent, the resulting inability to conduct meaningful consultation, and the consistent refusal to repatriate (Ayau and Keeler 2017). Unknown to me was that the article would raise awareness of the experiences Hui Mālama had endured with current museum and local government leadership that ultimately lead to a decision to repatriate.

In June of 2017 I was informed that Dr Birgit Scheps, Collections Manager and scholar of Australian Studies, was successful in pressing for the release and return of the Hawaiian ancestors. The Free State of Saxony, which under German law as the local government is the legal owner of the contents of state museums including the Dresden Museum, had agreed to hand over the remains for permanent release. We later learned that this would be the very first repatriation of human remains from the Dresden Museum and the entire Free State of Saxony.

At a public news conference on 23 October 2017, the day after the iwi kūpuna were ceremonially prepared for the journey home by OHA and Hui Mālama members, Nanette Snoep, director of the Museum of Ethnology, Dresden, Leipzig and Herrnhut stated:

Today is a very important day, perhaps one of the most important days of our museum history, of our 3 ethnological Saxonian museums since they have been founded at the end of the 19th century. Today is for the first time that we restitute ancestral remains from Hawai‘i back to their homeland. Back to their earth, sand where they come from. Back to the people who has waited for more than 100 years for the return of their ancestors. Back home, forever out of those stores where human bones are stored, collected for Rassenkunde and physical anthropology who made the 20th century as one of the most murderest [sic] centuries. I feel relieved that we can finally restitute them.

(emphasis added)
Dr Marion Ackerman, director-general of the Dresden State Art Collections, stated:

_The Restitution of Human Remains has a great importance, it is an act of humanity_. Research together with the people of the Source Communities give strong evidence how important it is to return this Human remains – their Ancestral Remains – home to their country and families. The results of Provenience Research open up the way to give back those Ancestral remains an individuality and human dignity, they reconnect them with the cultural environments of their source communities and the customary sources of knowledge. That is an important part in the process of healing of historical injustice and for a better understanding and a common future in a global world. The Ancestral remains from Hawai‘i will find now their way back home. I want to make clear that we feel deeply sorry for the long-lasting way of the return and we apologize for that from all of our heart.

(emphasis added)\(^{28}\)

Dr Eva-Maria Stange, State Minister of Science and Arts of Free State of Saxony stated:

Human remains from all continents, in the main acquired in the 19th and in the early years of the 20th century through theft, grave robbery or in the course of colonial wars, also reached the collections of Saxony’s institutions in diverse ways. In this case, they became ‘scientific objects’. Today, after more than 100 years, we are looking at these collections from a different angle. They are being rehumanized: For us, these are no longer objects – they are the mortal remains of human beings. With their return, we are giving back their value to the deceased persons and their families. Their life stories made them victims in the name of science and colonialism.

(emphasis added)\(^{29}\)

In reflecting on what the Dresden repatriation effort involved and what it meant in the larger scheme of things, Noelle Kahanu, a Hawaiian experienced in repatriation who had written on Indigenous perspectives of museum issues, and who participated in the ceremonies at Dresden writes:

Someone asked recently, what is the future direction of repatriation? I responded that we should look to those examples rising from an international context. These returns happened, not because a federal law mandated it, but because of individual and institutional relationships that have developed over time, because doors were opened by those who understood the humanity in returning iwi kūpuna to their homelands, because they perceived as pono (just) the return [of] a feathered cloak and helmet once gifted to Cook well over two centuries ago. And if we can open a door, we can also hold it open for the next group petitioning for the return of their ancestors. It is a network of people working together, inside and outside of museums, redefining ethics and reasserting notions of human dignity, that will bring the last of our iwi kūpuna home. In doing so, we will be liberating museum relations into the future.

The Ancestral Remains that had been kept at Dresden were reburied following their return home, ending a twenty-six-year effort.
Kōnane: strategic approaches and lessons learned

After almost three decades of repatriation work, it has become clear that the following strategies were integral in the success of returning the ancestors home.

Commitment to traditional cultural values

The primary foundation for repatriation claims that formed the basis for our authority to act on behalf of ancestral Hawaiian remains and possessions removed from their original places of interment are the cultural values of 'ohana (family), mālama (care), kuleana (responsibility) and kūpale (protection). The treatment of human remains is principally a family matter and if one is not in the family circle, one must not be allowed to determine what is proper. The strategic value of this approach is the recognition that there is no limitation or prohibition against asserting Hawaiian cultural values in any jurisdiction. A Hawaiian claimant is always able to advocate for the return of ancestors without exception. Put another way, the absence of legal authority to repatriate in the international arena is not an obstacle, because cultural values already establish the norm that interment means ‘do not ever disturb’, and where disturbance occurs the only just outcome is reburial. I've been asked what to do when there is no legal authority like NAGPRA to authorise repatriation, and the answer for us was that exterior authority is not required when awareness of interior responsibility is present. The Natural History Museum case discussed above posed the challenge of what to do when there is a perceived prohibition to repatriate. The answer, it turned out, was to advocate for legal authorisation for permanent release. But even a legal prohibition did not prevent us from asserting our cultural duties of care as living descendants – duties that only we possess. We are not asserting a right to take from the ancestors, we are asserting responsibilities to give to the ancestors, which is their place in the family circle once again.

Second, cultural values ground the claim for return where it properly belongs – in the Hawaiian realm of values and beliefs and exclusively in the family circle. This sets the framework of required family consent for removal and, absent such consent, the removal cannot be allowed to stand. In addition, the ability to communicate cultural perspectives, alo a he alo (face-to-face) elevates effective advocacy. As fellow human beings, museum officials are able to experience first-hand the power of aloha, of humility and anguish, of sincere belief, and the focused commitment to help return the ancestors home. In the Natural History Museum case, following our 1999 meeting this strategy helped to solidify our integrity and initiate a growing respect between the parties. We also believe this is what convinced the University of Zurich to advocate for permanent release of the iwi.

Third, cultural values provide clear direction and set parameters that properly frame responses to issues raised by the museum in the course of consultation, including: (1) scientific examination of the remains (which we maintain is an intrusion of privacy, is highly offensive especially with regard to intrusive methodologies, can only be allowed in order to confirm Hawaiian identity when corroborating historic documentation is unclear or absent, and must include a mihi to ceremonially explain to the ancestors what is about to happen, who made the decision, and accepting responsibility for such decision as a means to get back home); (2) museum assumption of ownership based upon possession (which we insist is a violation of family honor and dignity because it is based on theft); (3) denying the importance of historic documentation relating to the original acquisition of the remains (which we assert undermines a museum’s duty to investigate the manner in which remains were originally acquired and clarify the legitimacy of acquisition based upon consent); and (4) ignoring the requirement of free, prior and informed
consent (which amounts to a violation of family authority). This consistency supports the overall integrity of the claim and reifies the foundation that it is family-based.

In addition, repatriation practitioners who train in traditional cultural practices are in an excellent position to hone the skills necessary to be effective advocates. Our training started with mo'okūʻahau (genealogy), pule (prayer) and mele (chant) and a commitment to empower intellectual skills with a cultural protocol skill set. It helped us understand the interdependent relationship to the ancestors starting with our own. Deeper understandings of these practices came with experience. As practitioners we learned to strive to reach higher levels of understanding and to put the well-being of the iwi kūpuna first. We were taught to start an effort by envisioning the result, keenly focusing on it and believing in it without doubt, and then work back from that vision to implement repatriation and reburial with the confidence that it would succeed. This strategy was effective for us in the Natural History Museum and Dresden Museum cases due to the long duration of our journey to resolution. We further learned that although the outcome is clear, the time frame is not, so we must hoʻomanawanui (be patient).

It was also critical that we learned how to effectively process kaumaha (mental/spiritual trauma) that results from realisations that Ancestral Remains and funerary possession were desecrated and stolen, that the family honor was violated, and that our dignity as human beings was disrespected. Prayers and ceremonial purification are effective means of protection and a healthy path toward healing from the harmful impacts of kaumaha. One must recognise that negativity demands a seat at the table and we must accommodate it and strive to mitigate its impacts rather than ignore its presence.

Another lesson is that ‘ike (knowledge) must be allowed to migrate from your mind to your naʻau (guts) through the continuity of cultural practice, allowing the intellect to meld with the spiritual and the emotional to support decision-making. In this journey, we must learn not to fear our ancestral shadow, which means develop the courage to let go and allow your ancestors to guide you, especially when undertaking important actions for the first time. Call upon your deceased ancestors by name and request their assistance. By doing so, by giving them function again to support the living family, they live on. Have the courage to return to who you are. It is also empowering to know that you are the sum of all your ancestors, all of the branches of the family tree and that duties of care for family members, as well as others unknown to you, are inherent in this understanding.

**Importance of networking**

As with other disciplines, it is imperative to identify supporters in the field of repatriation, especially those Indigenous people like the Māori of the Repatriation Unit at Tepapa Tongarewa for knowledge, inspiration, and the ability to elevate the level of information that you have access to (e.g. successful repatriations from other institutions). Comparing approaches, identifying stakeholders and decision makers, sharing the identities of institutions, sharing strategies and supporting efforts through prayer is critical. It also speaks to the larger family of humanity and the benefits of making the planet a smaller place and focusing on similarities rather than differences so that the dignity of mankind is promoted as well.

In the Dresden Museum case, had I not agreed to work with my colleague Honor Keeler on the article about the 2013 Recommendations, the inspiration created by our words that directly led to the decision to authorise repatriation may not have occurred. I did not agree to participate in drafting that article because I saw it as a strategy to secure repatriation, but it turned out that way without me understanding this outcome to be a possibility. The point is that we don’t always know how our actions in conjunction with others can inspire. We must never forget
that actions of a righteous nature have the power to motivate others to act similarly and, in the Dresden Museum case, that inspiration led to resolution of a twenty-six-year repatriation claim.

**Long-term approach**

Train the next set of repatriation advocates/practitioners and especially strive to develop their ancestral instincts. Training will also include lessons in strategy learned from playing the traditional Hawaiian game of kōnane, which involves continually finding moves to make in order to remain in play.31 We make it clear to our haumāna (students) that part of the goal in this training is to elevate the practice and the lessons being taught, and to not be satisfied with existing practice but to seek higher levels of understanding and performance. This is a time-honored tradition of our ancestors. We provide the kahua (foundation) of what has already transpired and arm them with the skill set and humility to promote cultural values and the understanding that Hawaiians did not bury family members with the intent to abandon or as an invitation for removal for purposes of sale, science, or barter. And that interment is a permanent commitment to the long journey, the integrity of which must be respected. These strategies and lessons served Hui Mālama well in our work to return the ancestors home.

**Conclusion**

Exercising kuleana (responsibility, duty, privilege) allows Hawaiians to undertake the duty to care for their ancestral past, including the proper treatment of Ancestral Remains and their possessions. Through repatriation and reburial, we were able to return the ancestors to their long journey and in doing so we are empowered to rebuild aspects of our dignity as human beings and as a lāhui (nation). As we continue our work in the international arena and face new challenges posed by institutions, including the Cambridge University Duckworth Laboratory, we are reminded of the path taken to get to this point, the teachings of our kumu Edward and Pualani Kanahele, the memories of those Hui Mālama members who have passed on,32 the strategies and lessons learned including perseverance and resiliency, the importance of training the next generation of advocate/practitioners and the need to network with others to continue this important work. We hope that the sharing of these strategies and lessons inspire those who work to return their ancestors home. What started with the disturbance of a large burial site at Honokahua, Maui, in the late 1980s continued with a focused effort to extend repatriation efforts to countries around the world. From these experiences we embraced the ability to heal ourselves from these transgressions, to maintain our aloha and respect for the family structure and ultimately to empower our dignity through repatriation. These abilities truly speak to who we are as Hawaiians. Ola nā iwi, the bones live!

**Notes**

1 The organization was intended from the outset to be an interim solution to the problem of burial disturbance. It was recognized in Hawai‘i State law (HRS Chapter 6E) and national laws including the National Museum of the American Indian Act (1989) and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1990) as having expertise in the care of Hawaiian remains and funerary possessions, as well as sacred objects and cultural patrimony and having requisite standing to repatriate these cultural items. Hui Mālama evolved into working for and completing 116 domestic and international repatriation cases. In January 2015, the corporate organization was formally dissolved. Key members, including the author, continue to work on repatriation cases by volunteering for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA). The author acknowledges with gratitude the support provided by OHA and the leadership role it is assuming regarding repatriation.
In debates with museums over who ‘owns the bones’, we would assert that they do not belong to the museum and they do not belong to us – they belong to Papahānaumoku (Earth Mother), to whom they were entrusted by their ‘ohana (family) during ceremonial interment. We are merely exercising the duties of the ‘ohana to restore the commitment to the land.

3 See United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Article 12, which provides: ‘Indigenous Peoples have the right to . . . repatriation of their human remains’. Article 11, section 2 provides the standard of taking without ‘free, prior and informed consent or in violation of their laws, traditions and customs’.

4 Once the iwi are interred, the journey involves them melding back into the elements, infusing the land with the mana (spiritual essence and power) of that person. Preservation was never the goal, disintegration was. At times, the bones of loved ones were kept and in other instances, iwi were misused when desecrating enemies.

5 Law of his Majesty King Kamehameha IV, King of the Hawaiian Islands, Passed by the Nobles and Representatives, at their Session, 1860. Honolulu: printed by Order of the Government, p. 21. See also: The Penal Code of Hawaiian Kingdom, compiled from the Penal Code of 1850, and the various penal enactments since made pursuant to the Legislative Assembly, June 2nd, 1868. Published by Authority, printed at the Government Press, Honolulu, Oahu, 1869, p. 162.

6 Letter dated 24 December 1990. This letter is on file with the author, as are all correspondences cited in this chapter.

7 Notably, the hard copy of the article reviewed was scanned from a book and difficult to read at the bottom of page 1, where the reference to the PAL number appeared. It turns out the PAL number was actually 22.

8 Letter to Ed L. Kanahele, President, Hui Mālama I Nā Kūpuna O Hawai‘i Nei from Professor Alan Walker, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, dated 16 April 1991.

9 Letter of 14 February 14, 1992, from Hui Mālama I Nā Kūpuna O Hawai‘i Nei to Dr R.D. Martin.


11 Letter from Dr L.R.M. Cocks, Keeper of Palaeontology of the NHM, 8 November 1990.

12 Letter from Toni L. Han, Collections Manager Department of Anthropology, Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, to Edward Ayau, 2 November 1990. Ironically, even though it was the museum that sent this skull away, it did not take any responsibility for doing so or offer any assistance to trace its whereabouts.


14 Letter from Robin Cocks, Natural History Museum Keeper of Palaeontology, to Hui Mālama I Nā Kūpuna O Hawai‘i Nei, 18 February 1992. Hui Mālama responded with a lengthy outline of legal authority for its repatriation claim. The museum responded by reiterating its previous position and stating, ‘I can only repeat our regrets that we cannot transfer these skeletons to you. Nor do I believe that any further correspondences on the matter would be productive’ (emphasis added). Letter from Neil Chalmers, Director, Natural History Museum, to Hui Mālama, 9 November 1993.

15 We nonetheless were able to conduct a ceremony near to where the ancestral remains were kept in the museum. We explained our decision and requested forgiveness if any offense was taken. We also reaffirmed our commitment to their return and reburial.


18 Following provenance research and the analysis of 153 remains to re-associate the loose mandibles to skulls, some of the skulls were determined not to be Hawaiian, thereby reducing the number of Hawaiian remains to be repatriated to 145.

19 Letter from Oliver Stocken, Natural History Museum, to Edward Halealoha Ayau, Executive Director Hui Mālama I Nā Kūpuna O Hawai‘i Nei, 28 November 2012, p. 1.


23 The letter, dated 29 July 1993, in the German language and its English translation is on file with the author.
In September 1999, three Hui Mālama members travelled to Dresden and met with then Museum Director, Dr Annegret Nippa, who stated that she was unable to return the ancestral remains unless there was clear proof of theft and that the burden of proof was upon the claimant to establish. There is a presumption of ownership in the museum which must be overcome.

OHA was established in 1978 through amendments to the Hawai‘i Constitution to achieve self-governance for aboriginal Native Hawaiian people to take action to better the conditions of Native Hawaiians, and to advocated for the lawful interests of Native Hawaiians through the leadership of an elected Board of Trustees and hiring of professional staff. See Constitution of State of Hawai‘i, Article 12, Sec 5–6 (1959) and Hawai‘i Revised Statutes Sec 10.3 (1979).

Joint Hui Mālama and OHA letter to Director General Hartwig Fischer, Besucherservice der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen, Dresden, 2 January 2015; a copy is on file with author.

Nanette Snoep, Director of the Ethnological Museums, Dresden, Leipzig and Herrnhut, unpublished typescript of speech given on 23 October 2017 at the handover ceremony; in the possession of the author.

Dr Marion Ackerman, Director-General of the Dresden State Art Collections, unpublished typescript of speech given on 23 October 2017 at the handover ceremony; in the possession of the author.

Dr Eva-Maria Stange, State Minister of Science and Arts of Free State of Saxony, unpublished typescript of speech given on 23 October 2017 at the handover ceremony; in the possession of the author.

Defined as ‘[a]ncient game resembling checkers, played with pebbles placed in even lines on a stone or wood board called papa kōnane’ (Pukui and Elbert 2003). See also The Art of Kōnane and mastering diplomacy, A message from Kamana’opono M. Crabbe, PhD. Ka Pouhana, Chief Executive Officer, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, 31 July 2014: ‘Kōnane strategies and other ali‘i standards can help guide us in meeting our most important and urgent challenge: rebuilding our Hawaiian nation. In thoroughly considering our current opportunities and challenges, my thoughts have turned to a strategy-training game of our kūpuna: kōnane. In playing kōnane, the concept is not to “eat” as many of your opponent’s ‘ili’ili as possible. Instead the goal is to continually find moves on the board and remain in play. Our ali‘i spent much time engaged in this game not only for fun but to train themselves for their roles as leaders. It prepared them to succeed in the art of political diplomacy – the art of nurturing opportunities and carefully selecting when and if to use them as the “game” unfolds’.

For more information on the strategic game of kōnane, see endnote 30.

This chapter is dedicated to the memory of Wilma Healani Holi (14 September 1948 to 16 January 2018), a founder of Hui Mālama who inspired this author for years with her kindness and tenacity to care for the ancestors.

References


