

in Gaelic and English

# Cothrom

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***Cànan Hawai'i – a' dol às ùr  
bho ghinealach gu ginealach***

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# M' Aisling Hawaiianach 's mar a thàinig i gu bith

*Amy Mahealani Jones gives a personal account of the triumphs and tribulations of the struggle for the revitalization of the Hawaiian language*

Aloha. Is mise Amy Mahealani Jones. Thogadh mi ann an Utah. Thàinig mo shinnsirean à Alba, Èirinn, a' Chuimrigh, Sasainn agus an Danmhairg. Ghluais mi a Hawai'i nuair a bha mi 19 agus tha mi air fuireach an seo bhon uair sin ach a-mhàin gun robh mi ann an Utah is Arizona airson dà bhliadhna.

Goirid às dèidh dhomh gluasad a Hawai'i, chaidh mi an sàs ann an iomairt choimhearsnachd Hawaiianach. Bha an cultar agus cànan Hawaiianach ann an suidheachadh cugallach grunn bhliadhnaichean às dèidh gun do rinneadh stàite dhith ann an 1959. Bha an cànan Hawaiianach aig glè bheag de dhaoine ris an do thachair mi agus bha mi brònach mu dheidhinn.

Beagan bhliadhnaichean às dèidh dhomh gluasad à Honolulu, am prìomh bhaile, gu ruige Hilo air an Eilean Mhòr, fhuair mi a-mach gun robh mi an dùil leanabh. Nuair a bha mi trom bha aisling agam gum biodh mo phàiste air a thoirt a-steach le teaghlach Hawaiianach gus am faighinn fhìn an cothrom a dhol a dh'obair, agus gun robh Hawaiianais aig an teaghlach sin. Coltach ri mòran dhaoine air feadh an t-saoghail, tha Hawaiianaich a' creidsinn gun tig aislingean mar theachdaireachdan bho shaoghal nan spioradan. B' ann mar sin a bha an aisling sin dhomh, agus dh'fhuirich i nam chuimhne. Nuair a bha an gille agam, 'Oiwi, agus mi fhìn air an tràigh latha a bha seo, thòisich srainnsear air còmhraidh leinn, a' cantainn gum biodh ro-sgoil ùr a' tòiseachadh an ceann ùine ghoirid ann an Hilo, agus gum biodh i a' ruith tro mheadhan na Hawaiianais a-mhàin. Shaoil mi cuideachd gum b' e seo teachdaireachd bho shaoghal nan spioradan, no ciamar a thigeadh fear nach b' aithne dhomh a shuidhe cuide rium air tràigh fhalamh agus innse dhomh an dearbh rud a dh'aisling mi dà bhliadhna roimhe? Thug e dhomh ainm a' bhoireannaich a bha os cionn a' ghnòthaich agus leig sinn soraith le chèile.

Chuir mi fios don bhoireannach sin, air a bheil Kauanoë Kamana. Tha i fhèin agus an duine aice, Pila Wilson, nam proifeasairean ann an Oilthigh Hawai'i ann an Hilo, agus bha iad am measg na thòisich prògram ath-bheothachaidh na Hawaiianais. Mu bhliadhna gu leth às dèidh sin, thòisich i air coinneamhan a ghairm airson phàrantan gus coinneachadh agus bruidhinn mun sgoil. Thug na pàrantan sùil air làraichean sgoile agus ghabh iad pàirt ann an cuid de na co-dhùnaidhean. Bhathar a' taghadh nan sgoilearan gu ìre air na bh' aca de thaic a thaobh a' chànain anns an dachaigh. Cha robh Hawaiianais agam aig an àm agus bha mi dhen bheachd gum biodh an gille agam aig bonn na liosta. A-rithist, rinn an spiorad cobhair orm. Bha 15 de luchd-tagraidh agus 15 àiteachan ann agus fhuair e a-steach don sgoil. Bha mi cho sona ris an rìgh!

Bhathar ag iarraidh air teaghlachan an fheadhainn anns an ro-sgoil no Punana Leo (Nead Cànan) co-dhiù aon duine anns an teaghlach a bhith ag ionnsachadh Hawaiianais, agus b' fheudar don a h-uile teaghlach ochd uairean a thide a thoirt seachad gach mìos ann a bhith ag obair anns an sgoil dòigh air choreigin - mar obair a-muigh, a' dèanamh biadh, obair oifis

Aloha. My name is Amy Mahealani Jones. I grew up in Utah. My ancestors came from Scotland, Ireland, Wales, England and Denmark. I moved to Hawai'i when I was 19 and have lived here since except for a couple of years I spent in Utah and Arizona.

Soon after I moved to Hawai'i I became involved in a Hawaiian grassroots political movement. Hawaiian culture and language were in a perilous position just a few short years after becoming a state in 1959. Very few people I met spoke any Hawaiian language and this made me sad.

Several years later after moving from Honolulu, the capital city, to Hilo on the Big Island I learned I was pregnant. During my pregnancy I had a dream that my child would be taken in by a Hawaiian family so I could go to work, and this family spoke Hawaiian. Like many people around the world, Hawaiians believe that dreams

are messages from spirit. This dream had that quality for me, and it stayed with me. When my 2 year old son 'Oiwi and I were at the beach one day, a stranger struck up a conversation mentioning that a new preschool would be starting soon in Hilo, one which would be conducted solely in Hawaiian. I thought this was also a message from spirit, otherwise why would a man I did not know sit next to me on a deserted beach and tell me what my dream had revealed to me two years earlier? He gave me the name of the woman who was in charge, and we parted.

I called this woman, whose name is Kauanoë Kamana. She and her husband Pila Wilson are professors at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, and were two of the

founding visionaries of the Hawaiian language revitalization program. About 1 ½ years later she began to call meetings for interested parents to meet and discuss the school. The parents looked at school sites and participated in some of the decisions. Students were to be chosen in part because of existing language support in the home. I did not yet speak any Hawaiian, and thought my son would be placed at the bottom of the list. Again, spirit stepped in. There were 15 applicants and 15 positions to fill, and he was admitted to the school. I was overjoyed!

The families of the preschool, Punana Leo (Language Nest), were required to have at least one member of the family actively learn Hawaiian, and all families had to contribute eight hours a month towards upkeep of the school in some way, such as yard work, making snacks,



*Mi fhìn agus an gille agam 'Oiwi air raon làbha faisg air Hilo. 'S ann timcheall an ama sin a thachair mi ris an t-srainnsear air an tràigh*

no, dhaibhsan aig an robh beagan Hawaiianais, le bhith a' toirt taic do thidsearan anns an t-seòmar-theagaisg. Chuir na teaghlaiichean "tùsail" mòran ùine seachad ann a bhith a' dèanamh cinnteach gum maireadh, agus gun soirbhicheadh leis, an sgoil. Am measg nan gnìomhan a bu mhotha a bh' againn, bha sinn a' gearradh is a' steigeadh fhaclan Hawaiianais ann an leabhraichean Beurla oir cha robh stuth clò-bhuailte eile ann. Dh'ionnsaich cuid de na pàrantan Hawaiianais gu math agus tha iad a-nise nan tidsearan anns a' phrògram bhogaidh.

Nuair a chuireadh às don mhonarcachd Hawaiianaich agus nuair a chaidh na h-eileanan a ghabhail thairis leis na Stàitean Aonaichte anns na 1890an, chaidh casg a chur air Hawaiianais anns na sgoiltean. B' e sin an lagh fhathast nuair a bha a' chiad chlas againn deiseil airson an ro-sgoil fhàgail is a dhol a-steach a khindergarten. Rinn dithis de na proifeasairean coiteachadh ann an seanadh na stàite airson an lagh atharrachadh. Dh'aontaich luchd-poilitigs inbhe a thoirt do Hawaiianais a rinn i co-ionann ris a' Bheurla mar chànan stàite oifigeil. Choitich tidsearan is pàrantan Roinn Foghlaim na stàite a h-uile bliadhna gus bliadhna a bharrachd a chur ri "foglam bogaidh" mar a thugadh air. Lean an spàirn seo gus an do cheadaich an stàit foghlam bogaidh a dhol air adhart don 12<sup>m</sup> bliadhna, nuair a thig foghlam poblach gu crìch.

Mar phàrant, bha mi nam phàirt de sgioba a dh'iarr air Roinn an Fhoghlaim am bogadh a leudachadh bliadhna air bhliadhna, agus a bha a' beachdachadh air cuin a b' fheàrr a bheirte a-steach a' Bheurla anns na sgoiltean. Bha an Roinn dhen bheachd gum biodh a' chlann a' fulang às aonais na Beurla, agus bha iad ag iarraidh oirnn a tòiseachadh anns an treas bliadhna, nuair a bhiodh a' chlann ochd bliadhna a dh'aois. Bha na tùsairean air coinneachadh ri Fred Genesee, ranns-aichear à Montreal, a rinn obair air oileanaich dhà-chànanach agus ioma-chàn-

anach (Mohawk, Fraingis is Beurla). Dhearbh esan, nuair a bha sgilean gràmair stèidhichte anns a' chànan dualchasach, gun gabhadh an cur an sàs anns a' mhòr-chànan gun duilgheadas. Nam biodh dàrna cànan air a toirt a-steach ro thràth, bhiodh i a' cur a' chànan eile tuathal. Mhol e gun tòisicheamaid air a' Bheurla anns a' chòigeamh bliadhna. Aig a' cheann thall ghéill an Roinn agus leig iad leinn dàil a chur air oideachadh ann am Beurla chun na còigeamh bliadhna.

Aig an aon àm 's a thòisich am prògram ann an Hilo, thòisich sgoil eile ann an Honolulu. Tha iartas air feadh na stàite air foghlam tro mheadhan na Hawaiianais a thoirt do dh'eileanan eile cuideachd. Thug sinn na sgoilearan còmhla aig amannan gus am faicheadh iad gun robh barrachd luchd-labhairt Hawaiianais ann nan àireamh bheag air an robh iad eòlach ann an Hilo. Thug sinn teaghlaiichean a champachadh agus chaidh sinn gach bliadhna gu pàirc tràghad air an eilean againn fhèin, far am biomaid a' cluich còmhla mar theaghlach mòr.

Gu tric bhiomaid a' cruinneachadh aig an sgoil air an deireadh-sheachdain oir bha fios againn gum biodh feum aig a' chloinn air Hawaiianais taobh a-muigh an t-seòmair-theagaisg, agus fhuair sinn spionnadh bhon chàirdeas a dh'èirich eadarainn. Bha a' chlann a'

doing office work, or for those who did speak some Hawaiian, helping teachers in the classroom. The "founding" families spent a lot of time together making sure the school would survive and thrive. One of our main tasks was to cut and paste Hawaiian words into English language books for the children because there were no other printed resources. A number of the parents learned Hawaiian well and are now teachers in the immersion program.

When the Hawaiian monarchy was overthrown and the territory annexed by the US in the 1890s, the Hawaiian language was outlawed in the schools. This was still the case when our lead class was ready to leave preschool and enter kindergarten. Two of the professors lobbied at our state legislature to repeal the law. They convinced legislators to make Hawaiian equal in stature to English as an official state language. Teachers and parents lobbied the state Department of Education every year to fight for another year of Hawaiian language "immersion education", as it became known. This struggle took place until the state allowed immersion to extend to 12<sup>th</sup> grade, the end of public education.



**Ceathrar dhen chloinn a bha anns a' chiad Phunana Leo, agus iad a-nise nan inbhich. 'S e 'Oiwi an dàrna neach on taobh chli. 'S i am boireannach air an taobh dheas Kauanoë Kamana, acadamaigeach à Oilthigh Hawai'i a chuir a' chiad ro-sgoil air chois**

*Dealbh: 'Aha Punana Leo*

(Mohawk, French and English). He showed that once grammar skills in the heritage language were established, they could be transferred into the dominant language without difficulty. If a second language were to be introduced too early, grammar in both languages would suffer due to confusion in their young minds. He recommended we begin English in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Eventually the DOE relented and allowed us to delay English instruction until the 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

When the program began in Hilo, another school started in Honolulu. Demand throughout the state has helped to bring immersion to other islands as well. We brought the students together periodically so that they would see that the world of Hawaiian speakers was larger than the small number of students they knew in Hilo. We had family camping trips and we took annual trips to a beach park on our own island, where we could all play as a big family.

Weekend family gatherings at the school were common, because we knew the children needed the Hawaiian language outside of the classroom, and the camaraderie we found with each other cemented our commitment. The children

As a parent, I was part of the team tasked with convincing the Department of Education to extend immersion year by year, and to determine when to introduce the study of English in the schools. The DOE felt the children would be disadvantaged without English, and wanted us to begin English instruction in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, when the students were eight years old. The founders had met Fred Genesee, a researcher from Montreal who did research among bi- and tri-lingual students

faireachdainn a' ghaol a bh' ann bho na teaghlaichean air fad agus tha iad fhathast a' cumail suas len co-aoisean bliadhnaichean às dèidh gun do dh'fhàg iad an sgoil. Tha mòran de na sgoilearan a fhuair foghlam bogaidh air a dhol a-steach a theagasg sa leithid iad fhèin.

Bha mi dhen bheachd o chionn fhada nach b' urrainn tomhas ceart a dhèanamh air "soirbheachas" ar "deuchainne" ann an ath-bheòthachadh Hawaiianais gus am biodh ar clann fhèin nam pàrantan, agus gus am faiceamaid an robh iad fhèin a' cumail a' chànain rin cuid cloinne. Tha a' chiad fheadhainn a thàinig tron àrd-sgoil a-nise a' tòiseachadh an teaghlaichean fhèin agus, dhen fheadhainn air a bheil mise eòlach, tha iad uile a' bruidhinn Hawaiianais rin cuid cloinne. Tha fèin-aithne dhaingeann aig an fheadhainn òga seo air sàilleamh an dà-chànanais - rud nach eil aig an fheadhainn aig a bheil Beurla a-mhàin. Tha tuisge aca air an luach a tha an cois tar-chur na fèin-aithne seo don chloinn aca agus tha iad a' dearbhadh sin leis a' ghnìomh.

Bha an gille agam am measg nan sgoilearan dha nach robh cùisean furasta, agus iad anns a' chiad chlas. Mar sin chuir e crìoch air àrd-sgoil taobh a-muigh an t-siostaim bhogaidh. Fhad 's a bha e ann an colaiste, thàinig tuisge dha air an aisling a bh' againn fhèin mar phàrantan tùsail, agus roghnaich e cànanachas a dhèanamh, agus e a' sgrùdadh Hawaiianais fhèin. Tha e a-nise faisg air a bhith a' cur crìoch air PhD ann an Oxford. Fhuair inntinn leasachadh le bhith fileanta ann an dà chànan, agus leis gun robh sealladh aige air an t-saoghal tro dhà chultar.

Nuair a thòisich sinn na Punana Leo, bha timcheall air 800 neach-labhairt dùthchasach de Hawaiianais air fhàgail, a' chuid as motha aca à eilean beag (Ni'ihau) far a bheil i aig a h-uile duine. Tha a-nise 8000 neach-labhairt, agus mòran a bharrachd ga h-ionnsachadh ann an àrd-sgoiltean is colaistean air feadh na stàite. Tha airgead airson na ro-sgoile a' tighinn bho thabhartasan feadarail agus oideachadh air a phàigheadh le pàrantan. Tha buidhnean stàite agus daoine fa leth a' toirt airgead seachad a chuidicheas ann a bhith a' cumail nan sgoiltean fosgailte, agus bidh teaghlaichean a' cumail thachartasan airson airgead a thogail air feadh na bliadhna.

Aig an oilthigh, a bharrachd air prògram fo-cheum ann an Eòlas Hawaiianach, tha prògram againn airson tidsearan a thrèanadh, dà phrògram mhaighstireil, agus PhD ann an Cànan Dùthchasach agus Ath-bheòthachadh Cultair. Tha Colaiste na Hawaiianais a' foillseachadh stòiridhean Hawaiianais airson na sgoile agus a' rianachadh làraichean-lìn air a bheil faclairan Hawaiianais agus goireasan eile. Tha i cuideachd air seirbheis puist-dealain Hawaiianais a chruthachadh, a bharrachd air goireas deasga. Tha dùthchasaich Ameireagaidh a Tuath agus eile a' coimhead air Hilo mar mhodal airson ath-bheòthachadh soirbheachail de mhion-chànan.

Dè dh'ionnsaich mi bho bhliadhnaichean de bhith nam phàrant tùsail ann am prògram bogaidh na Hawaiianais? Fhuair mi a-mach aig amannan gum faod na thachras ann an dha-rìribh dhol air thoiseach air na bh' againn mar aislingean pearsanta. Tha mi a' creidsinn gu bheil e nas cudromaiche a bhith a' leantainn na tha an dàn dhomh, seach a bhith a' dol leis a' mhòr-shluagh. Bha mo phàrantan dhen bheachd gun robh mi a' cur bacadh air a' ghille agam agus bhrosnaich iad mi gus a chur a dh'ionnsaigh foghlam tro mheadhan na Beurla. Bhiodh iad moiteil às a-nise!

felt loved by all the families and are still close to their classmates years after they have graduated. Many of the immersion students have themselves become teachers in immersion.

I have long thought that the success of our "experiment" in Hawaiian language revitalization would not be known until our children became parents, and to see if they choose to speak Hawaiian to their children. The first graduates from high school are now starting families, and of those I know all are using Hawaiian with their children. These young people have a secure sense of self built from fluency in both language and culture that their peers who speak only English do not possess. They realize the value in passing on this cultural identity to their own children and demonstrate this with their actions.

My son was one of the students who had a hard time being in the lead class, and so he completed high school outside of immersion. While in college he realized the vision we as founding parents had, and decided to take up linguistics with Hawaiian as his language of study. He is now nearing completion of his doctorate at Oxford. His intellect was enhanced through having native fluency in two languages and possessing world views in both cultures.

When we began the Punana Leo, there were an estimated 800 native speakers of Hawaiian, most of them from a small island (Ni'ihau) where everybody

*Dealbh: 'Aha Punana Leo*

speaks it. There are now over 8000 speakers, and many more studying in high schools and colleges across the state. Funding for the preschool comes from federal grants and tuition paid by families. State agencies and private individuals contribute to help keep the schools open, and families also hold fundraisers throughout the year.

At the University, in addition to a bachelor's program in Hawaiian Studies, we have a teacher training program, two masters programs, and a PhD in Indigenous Language and Culture Revitalization. The Hawaiian Language College publishes Hawaiian stories for classroom use and manages web sites containing Hawaiian dictionaries and other resources. It has also created a Hawaiian language email service and desktop client. North American tribal people and others look to Hilo as a role model for successful language revitalization.

What have I learned from my years as a founding parent in the Hawaiian immersion program? I have found that sometimes reality can surpass our individual dreams. I believe that listening to my heart is more important than following the crowd. My parents felt I was holding my son back from his potential, and encouraged me to put him into mainstream English medium education. They would certainly be proud of him now!



**Clann a tha a' faighinn an cuid foghlaim tro mheadhan na Hawaiianais ag obair ann an leas còmhla ri seann duine aig a bheil an cànan**



**'S e an gnìomh a dhearbhas an dòchas: còignear a bha nan sgoilearan ann am Punana Leo ('s e 'Oiwì an dàrna fear on taobh dheas). Tha am fear air an làimh chli agus am boireannach anns a' mheadhan a-nise nam pàrantan, agus tha iad le chèile a' bruidhinn Hawaiianais rin cuid cloinne**

**Dealbh: 'Aha Punana Leo**

Dh'ionnsaich mi gum faod mòran dhaoine, agus iad ag obair còmhla, eachdraidh atharrachadh agus cultar a ghleidheadh, a dh'aindeoin na tha nan aghaidh no toil na stàite. Tha fios agam gun robh e an dàn dhomh a bhith a' cumail Hawaiianais beò agus tha mi air leth fortanach gun robh mi an sàs anns an iomairt seo. 'S e an obair as cudromaiche a rinn mi. Cò chreideadh sin airson caileag à Utah?!

'S e *Ma ka 'olelo ke ola, ma ka 'olelo ka make* abairt a th' air eadar-theangachadh mar "Ann an cànan tha beatha, ann an cànan tha bàs". 'S e cànan slighe a dh'ionnsaigh tuigse air mar a bha na sinnsirean beò agus mar a thuig iad fhèin an saoghal. Ma chailleas sinn an cànan, caillidh sinn an sealladh a bh' aca air dualchas nan Hawaiianach, a' toirt a-steach a' chàirdeis eadar daoine, agus a' chàirdeis eadar daoine is nàdar, agus daoine is gnothaichean spioradail. Chan e sin sealladh dhen t-saoghal a bu chòir dhuinn a bhith a' call.

Tha mi a' sgrìobhadh thugaibh airson ur brosnachadh gus a' Ghàidhlig a thoirt seachad do ur cuid cloinne fhèin. Obraichibh còmhla le ur n-aislingean airson faighinn seachad air na cnapan-starra a tha san rathad. Is treasa ur n-aislingean na cumhachdan an taoibh a-muigh, agus tha ur cànan is cultar airidh air a bhith beò! Tha mi a' cur mo thaic thugaibh bhon dùthaich agam fhèin thar a' chuain. Gum bi ur cànan is cultar, a tha aig cridhe tìr is sluagh na h-Alba, a' soirbheachadh is a' fàs.

I have learned that many people working together can change history and preserve a culture, despite the odds or the will of the state. I know that I was destined to play a role in keeping the Hawaiian language alive, and feel lucky to have been a part of this movement. It is the most important work I have done. Who would have imagined that for a girl from Utah?!

*Ma ka 'olelo ke ola, ma ka 'olelo ka make* is a saying which translates as "In language lies life, in language lies death". Language is the path towards understanding how the ancestors lived and thought about the world. If we lose the language, we lose their insight into the Hawaiian way of life, including man's relationship to others, to the natural world and to the spiritual world. It is not a world view we can afford to lose.

My purpose in writing to you is to encourage you to continue to pass on the Scots Gaelic language to your children. Share your dreams and come together to overcome whatever obstacles are there. You and your visions are mightier than outside forces, and your language and culture deserve to survive! I lend my support from across the seas for your success and indeed a flourishing of the language and culture that form the essence of the land and people of Scotland.

**If you'd like more information on the history and development of the Hawaiian language, go to [www.archaeolink.com/linguistics\\_hawaiian\\_language](http://www.archaeolink.com/linguistics_hawaiian_language). The author can be contacted on [amyj@hawaii.edu](mailto:amyj@hawaii.edu)**