

Piailug's greatest lesson is that we are a single people

By Chad Kalepa Baybayan



STAR-ADVERTISER /
MARCH 2006

Pius "Mau" Piailug of Micronesia reconnected native Hawaiians with their maritime past and counseled the younger generation to build upon that knowledge.

The effort to recognize the immense contribution of the late master navigator and mariner, Pius "Mau" Piailug, to the re-emergence of oceanic wayfinding through non-instrument navigation, although well-intentioned, misses the mark ("Piailug was giant in voyaging rebirth," Off The News, July 14: see also:

http://pvs.kcc.hawaii.edu/index/founder_and_teachers/mau.html). (1)

For anyone who had the privilege to know Mau, and for the fortunate few who had the opportunity to study under him, it is clear why your commentary is off-base: "What's so ironic is that Hawaii could have lost the connection to its indigenous maritime past without the gift of a master navigator who was not even native Hawaiian." (2)

Mau Piailug, in his teaching opportunities among the many voyaging organizations here and throughout the Pacific, never identified himself or his students as being different or belonging to the labels that are imposed by the many experts who feel the need to define people by geographical boundaries. (3)

For the pupils he generously shared his time with, Mau viewed and treated us as an oceanic ohana, defined not by an ocean that separated us, but rather an ocean that joined us around common traditions and a passion for an island lifestyle. (4)

While best known for his navigational ability to wayfind, and an even greater skill as the consummate mariner, Mau was also a teacher dedicated to sharing unselfishly. (5)

His lessons revolved around the central social theme that knowledge had no value

unless you pass it on, and that navigation/wayfinding gained its value not simply from one's abilities as a master seafarer, but in the ability of the practitioner to transfer that skill into becoming a leader and steward within his or her community. (6)

I paraphrase some thoughts shared with the voyaging community from Mau's nephew, Thomas Raffipiy, when he last visited with Mau: (7)

"On a cool summer evening in 2005 on Satawal, as Mau and I visited on the beach of Nemaenong (one of our family villages), watching the sun set in the west, Uncle Mau shared this charge with me: (7a)

'I have laid the stick that connects people together. Now it is up to you, your generation and the generations to come, to build upon that stick a bridge that will ensure the free sharing of information and teaching between the two peoples until the day we become united again as a single people, as we were once before; before men separated us with their imaginary political boundaries of today's Polynesia and Micronesia.'" (7b)

Addressing the many men and women who have directly benefited from Mau Piailug's unselfish sharing, generous spirit and eloquent and thought-provoking counsel, I ask that they keep his memory alive as an example of the difference that one incredible individual can make to the betterment of society and communities that value a life of friendship. (8)

Honor him by recognizing the common human kinship that makes us all a global ohana, a standard that Mau strived to live his life by. (9)



STAR-ADVERTISER / 1999

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Modern History of Hawaii
Kailua High School
Social Studies Requirement
2015-2016
Mr. Wilson
October 16

INSTRUCTIONS: After writing the class heading, answer each question in a complete sentence. Do not begin a sentence with an indefinite pronoun (he, she, it, they). Use the following formats for your citations:

Author. "Article Title." Source. Date, Year.

Author. Year. "Article Title." Source. Date.

1. What is the reason that Chad Baybayon wrote his commentary? (1)
2. Explain what the author is telling us about Mau Piailug in paragraph 3? (2)
3. In what way did Mau Piailug define the ocean? (4)
4. Identify Mau's characteristic as a teacher. (5)
5. At what point does knowledge become valuable? (6)
6. Paraphrase what Mau told his nephew, Thomas Raffipiy. (7b)
7. Write out the way that Mau is an example for all of us? (8)
8. In what way can we honor Mau? (9)
9. Locate Satawal by underlining or circling its name on the map of the Federated States of Micronesia. Please write: See map. as an answer for number 9.
10. Copy and complete the following sentence: Part of the Federated States of Micronesia are the _____ Islands. The Caroline _____ are divided into four groups: _____, Chuuk, _____, and Kosrae. Satawal is the _____ most island in the _____ group.

11. Write out which of the five following themes (from AP World) relate to the article and explain why the themes apply to the article:

1. Interaction between humans and the environment

- Demography and disease
- Migration
- Patterns of settlement
- Technology

2. Development and interaction of cultures

- Religions
- Belief systems, philosophies, and ideologies
- Science and technology
- The arts and architecture

3. State-building, expansion, and conflict

- Political structures and forms of governance
- Empires
- Nations and nationalism
- Revolts and revolutions
- Regional, trans-regional, and global structures and organizations

4. Creation, expansion and interaction of economic systems

- Agricultural and pastoral production
- Trade and commerce
- Labor systems
- Industrialization
- Capitalism and socialism

5. Development and transformation of social structures

- Gender roles and relations
- Family and kinship
- Racial and ethnic constructions

12. Based on your understanding of the article, write three questions about the topic of the article.

13. Based on your understanding of the article, write three inferences about the topic of the article.

14. Copy each word from the reading glossary, its part of speech; its definition; and then write the word in a complete sentence that demonstrates its meaning.

Reading Glossary for “Pailug's greatest lesson is that we are a single people.”
Review the following words before reading the article:

1. immense: adjective: extremely large or great
2. mariner: noun: a sailor
3. navigator: noun: a person who directs the course of a ship or aircraft
4. wayfinding: noun: the art of navigating using stars, wind, waves, and ocean animals
5. non-instrument: adjective: the act of navigating without a compass, chart, or map
6. commentary: noun: the expression of opinions or explanations about an event or situation
7. ironic: adjective: using irony: happening in the opposite way to what is expected, and causing amusement because of this. Example: *It was ironic that now that everybody had plenty of money for food, they couldn't obtain it because everything was rationed.*
8. indigenous: adjective: originating or occurring naturally in a particular place; native
9. geographical: adjective: of or relating to geography
10. geography: noun: the study of the physical features of the earth and its atmosphere, and of human activity as it affects distribution of populations, resources, land use, and industries
11. consummate: adjective: showing a high degree of skill; complete or perfect
12. steward: noun: a person whose responsibility it is to take care of something



13. Satawal: noun: a solitary coral island in the Caroline Islands in the Federated States of Micronesia, the easternmost island in the Yap island group. Satawal is 2 km long northeast-southwest, and up to 800 m wide. The area is 1.3 km².
(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satawal>)

14. ensure: verb: make certain that something shall occur or be the case; make certain of obtaining or providing something
15. global: adjective: of or relating to the whole world; of or relating to the entire earth as a planet