
The Kukui Grove of Lanikaula



***Malama ka huna
Malamalama.***

The hidden guards
Radiant.

The 16th century *kahuna* Lanikaula was considered the last to have had an encyclopaedic knowledge both of the things of life and the things of death. He was fearless in adhering to his visions. When through his trust he was done to death, his sons hid with a grove of *kukui* trees the place where they buried his body. But the grove has become a place of pilgrimage and sanctuary, and Kane uses its oily nuts as torches for his revels.

Based on *Molokai: A Site Survey*, by Catherine C. Summers, Bishop Museum, 1971, numbers 1, 4, 91, 88, 111, 30, 7, 8, 243, and the insights and oral traditions of those who kindly shared them.

Leaping Soul



*Lele i ka po
Ka po'e honi hala.*

They leap into the night
Those who smell the *hala*.

He travels up the little valley to the edge of the cliff. He is dizzy by the height, confused by the sounds and currents of air. The sea wind carries up to him from below the familiar sweet scents of the female *hala* fruit and the male *hala* flower. *Hala* means to pass away. He leaps, and the night breaks over him like a wave.

The Flying Sand



Ma'awe makani
'Oni'oni one.

The wind passes
The sand squirms.

In death, the Hawaiian becomes one of those with whom he has had contact all his life. His body carefully folded like an infant's and laid in the earth, he is drawn, like a weak gust of breath, down the path to the place where he will leap off to the land of the dead. As he travels, he leaves traces of sand.

The Vessel Women



*Haiki ke ala
Ha'ike 'ia la.*

Narrow the path
Made known.

Wandering vulnerable over a path unknown to him in life, the Hawaiian is helped by his ancestors, the prayers of his family, and the high gods. These stones funnel the landscape toward the place from which he will leap: the cleft in the mountain line prefigured by the slopes of the stones' upper surfaces. As he passes between the stones, they shear everything from him.



The Phallus of Nanahoa

*Lewa akea ke kane
Moe papa ka wahine.*

The male floats high
The female is foundation firm.

The universe begins with the mating of earth and sky and continues through the sexual fertility of all its elements. Certain areas of the earth—just as certain parts of our bodies—concentrate that fertility. To this rock, barren women would come to spend the night. Rain would gather in the depression at the peak of the rock and flow down its back forming the pool. The Hawaiian speaks of the woman “gazing at the incomparable beauty of the pool.” Prepared, the woman would then take her place on the rock. The maleness of the rock would exert on her that same power which had turned into female shapes the many rocks around it.

Navel Stone



Pohaku piko
Piko honua.

Navel stone
Earth navel.

The child's navel cord attaches him to his mother and family. He will be attached also to the place where the cord is deposited after his birth. If it is placed in the sea, he will live from the sea. If his cord is pounded firmly into the crevice of the proper stone, he will be forever a child of the land which nurtures him.

Dagger-Carved



'Ulu maika
Ulu akua.

Rolling disc
Godly grove.

The land is inhabited by humans and other persons. Down these slopes, stone discs were rolled for wagers. A chronic loser had lost all but his life. In the night, he was told to bet his bones. He obeyed and won. He sacrificed in thanks to his night helper, who came to him again with instructions. Overnight on the slope grew trees which were inhabited and poison. The images carved with skill and ritual from them became terrifying guardians of Moloka'i.

The Ovens to Cook the Rain



*Mo'a ka umu
O'o ka pule.*

The oven is hot
The prayer is ripe.

Living in a universe of powers, man has the power to worship, understand, and coordinate them. The orientation of this temple and its careful division into compartments suggest its use by experts to reckon seasons and moons for agriculture and ceremony. Ritual fires may have been lit in appropriate sections to stimulate with smoke the seasonal rains.