

Home Kāleinanānu He Aloha Moku o Keawe

A Maunakea 'o Kalani

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Haku mele: Unknown.

Date: c. 1881.

Sources: 1) Mary Kawena Pukui Collection as taught to Māpuana de Silva by Patience Namaka Bacon, June 12, 1985. 2) H.I.M. 71:29, Bishop Museum Archives. 3) HEN 3:248, Bishop Museum Archives. 4) Puakea Nogelmeier (ed.), *He Lei no 'Emalani*, 116.

Text below: Pukui Collection. Translation by Kawena Pukui. Hawaiian orthographic editing by Kīhei de Silva.

<p>A Maunakea 'o Kalani 'Ike maka iā Waiāu. Kēlā wai kamaha'o I ka piko o ke kuahiwi. Huli ho'i mai 'o Kalani I ke ala kāpekepeke Ui a'e nei 'Emalani E 'eleu mai 'oukou. He ihona loa ana ia A hiki i Wahinekea Ha'ina mai ka puana No 'Emalani nō he inoa</p>	<p>The Heavenly One is at Maunakea To visit Waiāu That wondrous water At the summit of the mountain The Heavenly One returns Along that slippery trail 'Emalani appealed to her companions Be quick We have a long way to go Before reaching Wahinekea This is the end of my song In honor of 'Emalani [1]</p>
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"A Maunakea 'o Kalani" is the last, in geographic sequence, of the eight mele that were composed for Queen Emma's 1881 expedition from Mānā to Maunakea and back. It is also the most unyielding, meaning-stingy mele of the lot. Its poets were consummate riddlers, haku mele who took great delight in understatement, indirection, and the withholding of detail.

When viewed in isolation – outside its eight-mele context and without benefit of the Lindsey family's oral history of Emma's trip [2] – "A Maunakea 'o Kalani" seems almost too thin, shallow, and porous to hold more than a crumb or two of meaning. More journal entry than poem, it simply records a few scattered impressions of Emma's visit and return: "The Queen was at Maunakea. She saw Waiāu, that remarkable pool at the mountain's peak. She turned to leave. The trail to Kemole was difficult. She said to her companions, 'Be lively; it's a long way down to Wahinekea.'" That's it. 'O ia wale. End of a far-from-satisfying mele.

When viewed, however, in the context of its seven companion-mele and in light of the Lindsey oral tradition, "A Maunakea 'o Kalani" takes on an entirely different character. It acquires unexpected depth and significance. It becomes a carefully-crafted gem of a riddle for which we have a very satisfying (if not entirely complete) answer.

We know from Irene Fergerstrom-Lindsey that Emma's expedition had a specific destination and purpose: Emma went to Waiāu for "physical and spiritual healing" [3]. We know from Mary Kalani Ka'apuni Phillips (another



Photo: Kīhei de Silva

Hālau Mōhala 'Ilima performs "A Maunakea 'o Kalani" at the 2006 Merrie Monarch Festival.

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Lindsey) that Emma didn't just look at the lake; she actually swam across it with the assistance of a Kawaihae relative named Waiaulima [4]. And we know from several of the other mele pi'i Maunakea that Emma and her companions regarded Waiau as sacred and regenerative: as "ka piko o Wākea . . . ka hena o nā kuahiwi" (the connecting point to Wākea the sky father . . . the mountains' mons pubis, fertile meeting point of heaven and earth) [5], as "ka wai kapu a Lilinoe" (the sanctified water of goddess-ancestress Lilinoe) [6], and as "ka piko lālāwai o nā mana'o" (the fertile center of thought and desire) [7].

As a consequence, our mele's initial, seemingly insipid description of Emma's sightseeing at Maunakea becomes a carefully veiled, almost begrudging reference to the culminating act of her pilgrimage.

A Maunakea 'o Kalani 'Ike maka iā Waiau Kēlā wai kamaha'o I ka piko o ke kuahiwi	The Queen was at Maunakea To see Lake Waiau That remarkable body of water At the peak of the mountain
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When we know the backstory and eight-mele context, we recognize that "'ike maka iā Waiau" means a good deal more than "[she] saw Lake Waiau." It means that Emma immersed herself in the healing water of Waiau. It means that she knew and experienced Waiau completely.

Once we're on the lookout for carefully embedded clues, we can also recognize that "wai kamaha'o i ka piko o ke kuahiwi" means considerably more than "remarkable body of water at the peak of the mountain." The phrase resonates, instead, with sacred, regenerative significance. *Piko* is not just "peak"; it is "umbilicus, navel, genital, center." *Kamaha'o* is not just "remarkable"; it is "wondrous, inexplicable, transforming." When Emma immersed herself in Waiau, she entered the piko wai kamaha'o of her ancestor-gods, the wondrous, liquid point of union from which all kānaka descend. She was reconnected; she was nourished; she was reborn. *Pēlā nō i ho'okamaha'o ai kēlā wai iā ia*. Thus did the water transform her.

Other mele in Emma's eight-chant Maunakea sequence refer to the rewards of Waiau in terms of physical energy, spiritual empowerment, voice, adomment, and thirst. In "E Ho'i ka Nani i Mānā," she is stirred to action by Lilinoe [8], and in "Kaulana ke Anu i Waiki'i," she is everywhere on the trail, in front and in back, tirelessly leading and inspiring [9]. In "Kō Leo ka Ma'alewa," she returns from Waiau with "ka 'oi a ka mana" (the foremost/best of spiritual essence), and her loving voice is described as a tether to which all her mountaineers were bound. [10] In "Kaulana ke Anu i Waiki'i" and "Eia ka Makana e Kalani," she is crowned in māmane blossoms [11] and mist [12]. And in "Kūwahine Hā Kou Inoa," her experience at Waiau leaves a craving that can only be satisfied by her return to the throne:

. . . ko'ū mai i ka pu'u Me he 'ai pa'akai ala Ka 'a'a i ka wai Kō hae kalaunu Ho'okau 'ia [13]	. . . moistening the throat Like salty food makes one yearn for water Your crown flag Let it be raised.
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This last passage best reveals the underlying political intent of all eight mele pi'i Maunakea. These mele suggest that the Queen's energetic return from Waiau to Mānā is a metaphor of empowerment on a much larger scale. Their poets are ultimately concerned with confirming Emma's right and capacity to rule Hawai'i. They suggest that Emma is unrivaled in mana, rank, and ancestral sanction: nature itself is moved to crown her. They suggest that she has the "front and back" energy of a leader, the love- and loyalty-inspiring voice of a leader, and the thirst for leadership that will carry her past the Maunakea expedition to the triumphant raising of her crown flag.

"Kūwahine Hā Kou Inoa" is, by far, the most obviously political of these mele. The other seven compositions promote Emma's return to the throne in subtle, highly figurative fashion. They don't tell; they hint. And, as might be expected, "A Maunakea 'o Kalani" is, by far, the most obdurate and oblique of its companions. Its hard-nosed politics are

couched in a laconic four-line description of the trail that lies ahead, in an equally terse four-line recounting of Emma's words at the top of this trail, and in a seemingly innocent two-line honorific.

Huli ho'i mai 'o Kalani	The Queen turned back
I ke ala kāpekepeke	To the broken trail
He ala nihinihi ia	It was a precarious trail
A hiki iā Kemole	All the way to Kemole
Ui a'e nei 'o Kalani	The Queen offered encouragement
E 'uleu mai 'oukou	"Be lively, all of you
He ihona loa ana ia	It will be a long descent
A hiki i Wahinekea [14]	To reach Wahinekea"
'Emalani nō he inoa	For Emma, indeed, is this name chant
Ke ali'i a'e kuahiwi [15].	The ali'i who entered the mountain

The four-line trail description, while entirely appropriate to the terrain that lies ahead, can also be read as an assessment of Emma's future. Sometimes her path will be broken and unstable (kāpekepeke), sometimes it will be narrow and precipitous (nihinihi), but careful footwork (nihi) and circumspect behavior (nihi) will ultimately take her to back to Kemole. In terms of simple geography, Kemole is a pu'u and gulch on the western slope of Maunakea at about the half-way point on Emma's journey from Waiau to Mānā. In terms of "A Maunakea 'o Kalani's" symbolic landscape, however, ke mole (the taproot, foundation, source) can be interpreted as having at least two meanings: 1) it is the bedrock of ancestry to which Emma has been reconnected at "ka piko o ke kuahiwi," and 2) it is the goal of stability to which Emma proposes to lead her nation.

According to Kawena Pukui, when one returns to the mole, "one returns to love and loyalty for kith and kin after the severing of relationships" [16]. Emma lost her son and husband in the early 1860s, she lost her bid to the throne in 1874, and she was, by 1880, in the process of losing considerable political ground to Kalākaua whose upcoming world tour threatened to make him "a far more confident and formidable force than he had been two years earlier" [17]. Our mele's careful assessment of the path to Kemole therefore speaks to Emma of her own losses, of the need for love and loyalty, and of the importance of restoring ancestral relationships in the extended family of her people and nation. What Emma learns at Maunakea's summit she must deliver to its base. Our mele says it won't be easy.

Emma's response to the task ahead is as understated as everything else in "A Maunakea 'o Kalani" – so much so that we can easily miss its import. She simply encourages her people to get moving, and she acknowledges the long ride ahead. The key words here are *ui* and *'uleu*. The first communicates her new-found energy and resolve: she "inspires, stirs, incites" her people to begin their journey. The second conveys a sense of strategy; their destination can only be reached through behavior that is *'uleu*: an enduring group effort characterized by "alertness, energy, liveliness, agility, and dexterity" [18].

There is also a powerful emotional content to Emma's words that can only be understood in the context of a series of mele composed a decade earlier for her expedition to the Kilohana Lookout of Mt. Wai'ale'ale, Kaua'i. Those mele describe the misery of a cold, wet night spent huddled in the mud of 'Aipō bog. The expedition was meant as a ho'olana [19] – a means of bringing Emma out of the long depression into which she had fallen after the deaths of both Kahaku-ohawai'i and Alexander Liholiho, her son and her husband. Much to her companions' surprise and joy, the "night of the cold skin" [20] marked a turning point in both the trip and Emma's battle with melancholy. It was she who rose to the occasion and gave comfort and cheer to her miserable companions. She was the one who led them, the next morning, to the glorious view at Kilohana. As a result, Emma's Kilohana mele are filled with references to her leo heahea and leo ui – to the warm, loving voice that stirred, inspired, and united them.

I ke anu o 'Aipō	In the cold of 'Aipō
Pū'ili i ke ahi lā	We embraced the fire
A i kapa o ia uka lā	As if it were a blanket of that upland

Ka leo ka mea aloha	Oh how we loved her voice
I ka heahea 'ana mai	As it called affectionately
"Ma hea mai 'oukou?"	"Where are all of you?"
Ma 'ane'i mai ka mehana."	There is warmth here with me" [21].

The riddler-poets of "A Maunakea 'o Kalani" have no intention of spelling this out. They simply provide us with an otherwise bland snippet of what Emma said at the top of the trail. They know this will set off a jolt of understanding and an upwelling of loyal affection in those for whom the mele is really intended. If we are Emma's people, "Ui a'e nei 'o Kalani / E 'uleu mai 'oukou" is more than enough. All the associated meanings and emotions are already waiting in the background, stored-up, ready to be triggered. If we are Emma's people, *ui* and *'uleu* tell us that our queen is rising, yet again, to the challenge. If we are not Emma's people, then 'o ka 'ala'ala o ka he'e ka mea lo'a. Then we get something of little worth.

"A Maunakea 'o Kalani" ends in similar double-edged fashion when it honors Emma with the chant-name Ke-ali'i-a'e-kuahiwi (The-mountain-traversing-ali'i). This sobriquet obviously commemorates her journey across Maunakea and serves to bring her apparently modest composition to an apparently straightforward conclusion. Less obvious is the ho'opāpā [22] finger that the name waggles in the faces of Kalākaua and his poets. The King returned from his tour of the world with a much bigger mele than Emma's – with "Iā 'Oe e ka Lā" – and with his own commemorative name: Ke-ali'i-ka'apuni-honua. His mele is full of references to the superiority of rank and knowledge that allow him to overstep the high, kapu places of the world, and his new name casts him in a heroic, cosmopolitan light: The-ali'i-who-circled-the-earth.

"A Maunakea 'o Kalani" responds to this typically Kalākauan hyperbole in obstinate, we-are-not-impressed fashion. It answers exaggeration with understatement, worldliness with insularity, enthusiasm with circumspection, the Himalayas with Maunakea, self-praise with humility, wave-skipping with a long, precarious trail. It responds, in its closing line, with a riddler's redefinition of the word *a'e* in Kalākaua's "Nāna i a'e i nā kapu o Kahiki" [23]. In the King's big mele, *a'e* is used to mean "tread upon, trample, trespass, deliberately break." It is a bold, almost arrogant word that expresses the extraordinary privileges of Kalākaua's rank: "He is the one who tramples with impunity on the kapu of foreign lands." But *a'e* can also mean "to get into by stepping up," and Emma's "A Maunakea 'o Kalani" is all about the consequences of her immersion in the sacred, healing water of Waiau – water that she "gets into by stepping up" the mountain. "A Maunakea 'o Kalani" tells us that there is no arrogance in Emma's *a'e*; immersion, in fact, leads immediately to the difficulties of leadership on a long and dangerous trail. Kalākaua is the ali'i who tramples on foreign sacredness; Emma is the ali'i who steps up into Hawaiian sacredness. His *a'e* brings notoriety, hers brings responsibility. She is, therefore, an ali'i-a'e of a completely different feather; she is Keali'ia'ekuahiwi.

We love this mele for its laconic voice and poker face. It is best explained, perhaps, by one of its own phrases: it is a mele "ala kāpekepeke," a poem whose path is broken, disjointed, and, therefore, not easily followed. It gives us a bit here and a bit there, and it leaves us to connect the dots with whatever knowledge we can muster. If we can connect enough dots, the path leads to a wealth of meaning and emotion. If we can't . . . well, we're left with a drab little name-chant for Emma.

The chant is especially protective of the Queen, it seems designed to bar the door against those who do not already know and love her. Another 1880s mele for Emma expresses the same closely guarded exclusivity in the following manner: "A he lani 'o iala no 'oukou / A he milimili ho'i na mākou" [24]. She is your royal one, and she is our milimili; she is yours to respect but ours to cherish. "A Maunakea 'o Kalani" was obviously composed by and for those loyalists who were intent on upholding this 'oukou/mākou distinction. For you is the literal, for us is the kaona.

We can understand why "A Maunakea 'o Kalani" survives today in the chant collection of Mary Kawena Pukui and in the hula repertoires of her daughters Pele Sukanuma and Patience Namaka Bacon. It is precisely the "milimili na mākou" kind of riddle that Emma's people would have cherished and shared with successive generations of their families. Kawena, of course, was a descendant of Emma's people. Her grandmother Po'ai was a court dancer who went traveling with Emma whenever the Queen called. Her uncle – hula master Joseph 'Īlālā'ole – lived with Emma

when he was a student at the Royal School in Honolulu, and Emma stayed at his grandfather's Kaimū home when she visited Puna and Ka'ū. Both Po'ai and 'Īlālā'ole were keepers of Emma's hula, as was Kawena in her own time.

Ka'upena Wong, who began studying under Kawena in the 50s, has confirmed for us the fact that his teacher's ancestors "were ardent follows of Emma," and he explains that "A Maunakea 'o Kalani" was a regular feature in Kawena's hula programs. It was her daughter Pele's number:

My pal and partner, Pele, performed it hula noho style. I don't remember if it was kālā'au or hula 'ili'ili. I do I remember her chanting and her swaying body – delicious! I was not taught the chant [by Kawena] but I chant it now from memory of Pele's chanting. There is something about the tune that haunts me and thrills me – I love it [25]!

We learned "A Maunakea 'o Kalani" from Pat Namaka Bacon – the first of Kawena's daughters – in 1985. At the time, Aunty Maka had a head cold, felt lousy, and was struggling to come up with the tune, so she asked us to help make a simple, substitute melody for her hula noho, hula 'ili'ili. As noted above, Ka'upena subsequently told us that he knew the tune but not the dance. Māpu called him, learned it over the phone, and put the two – Maka's hula and Pele's voice – back together again. Māpu has recently reviewed the re-untied mele with both Aunty Maka and Ka'upena, and she has received their permission to perform it at this competition.

Notes:

1. A second Pukui typescript of the mele was sent to us by Ka'upena Wong (personal communication, 7-29-98). The Hawaiian is just as we have it, but the translation is a little different:

The Queen was on Mauna Kea
 Where she saw Lake Waiau
 That wonderful body of water
 On the summit of the mountain
 The Queen turned to go
 Down the slippery trail
 Emma turned to say
 "Come on, let's make haste"
 It is a long hike to reach Wahine-
 kea
 This is the end of our praise
 For Emma, our Queen.

A note appended to this text explains that the mele "was composed in the early 1860s when Emma visited the mountains of Hawai'i." There is nothing in our research, however, that corroborates this date and much that contradicts it. The Lindsey family, in particular, is quite clear that Emma made this trip in the early 1880s – most likely in 1881.

2. William S. Lindsey was Emma's pailaka (pilot, guide) on the trip. When he returned, he told his family all about it, and his descendants, especially Mary Ka'apuni Phillips, have kept the story alive.

3. Interview with Kepā Maly, *Mauna Kea Science Reserve and Hale Pōhaku Complex Plan Update...*, 1999. Also cited on the Envirowatch website, envirowatch.org/MKOverview.htm, p. 9.

4. Interview with Larry Kimura in 1967. Bishop Museum Archives Audio Collection 192.2.2 a.

5. "Hau Kakahiaka Nui Kalani," in Puakea Nogelmeier, *He Lei no 'Emalani*, 112.

6. "E Ho'i ka Nani i Mānā," Nogelmeier, 116.

7. "Kūwahine Hā Kou Inoa," Nogelmeier, 180.
8. "Ho'olale mai ana Lilinoe" (Lilinoe incites-inspires her), Nogelmeier, 126.
9. "A i mua a i hope 'o Kalani" (The Royal One is in front, then in back), Nogelmeier, 120.
10. "Kō leo ka ma'alewa / I ka heahea 'ana mai" (Your voice is like the ma'alewa vine / When you call to us with warm affection), Nogelmeier, 108.
11. "Ua wehi 'oe i ka pua māmane" (You are adorned with māmane flowers), Nogelmeier, 120.
12. "E lei 'o Kalani i ka 'ohu" (The Royal One is wreathed in fog), Nogelmeier, 113.
13. Nogelmeier, 181.
14. We refer earlier to "A Maunakea 'o Kalani" as a riddle "for which we have a satisfying (if not entirely complete) answer." Wahinekea is the puzzle's missing piece. Although its context in the mele suggests a location at the end of the Waiiau to Mānā trail, we have not been able identify it as a proper noun of any sort.
15. The mele's original text appears in a single fourteen-line block. We have versified lines 5-14 above in order to facilitate the current discussion. The English translation here is our own.
16. Mary Kawena Pukui, *Ōlelo No'eau*, 1025.
17. George Kanahale, *Hawai'i's Remarkable Queen*, 347. Kanahale observes that Emma was increasingly concerned over her "inability to form a truly cohesive party to oppose the king." Kalākaua began his world tour in January 1881; Emma's 1881 trip to Maunakea can easily be interpreted as her response to what she called "his tour of pleasure & self-praise" (Emma, *Diary*, January 20, 1881). Kalākaua went around the world; Emma countered by going to the piko of the Hawaiian world.
18. The root word here is *'eleu*. *'U* is a verb pluralizer and suggests repetitive or frequent action by more than one person. *'Eleu* is used in the Pukui-Bacon text that we perform.
19. Literally, "to float away." Mary Kawena Pukui describes ho'olana – restorative travel – as a traditional remedy for extended, unresolved grief (*Nānā i ke Kumu*, I:142).
20. Emma to Fanny Kekelaokalani, her mother, 2-1-1871, Emma Collection, NA7, State Archives.
21. Mary Kawena Pukui, excerpted from the mele "A Kilohana 'o Kalani" in "Ancient Hulas of Kaua'i," 1936:42-45. My translation.
22. "A contest in wit (as riddling)...repartee, banter...to debate, argue," *Hawaiian Dictionary*, 316.
23. "Iā 'Oe e ka Lā e 'Alohi Nei," Mary Kawena Pukui (translator), *Nā Mele Welo*, 128-131. There is good reason to believe that the haku mele of the Kalākaua and Emma camps were engaged in an ongoing battle of poetic attack and counter-attack in which specific words and phrases were fired back and forth, each time with altered meanings and connotations. The long version of "Iā 'Oe e ka Lā," for example, contains a very specific response to Emma's "Lei Kipi," a chant directed at "ka lehelehe o ka loko 'ino" – the lips (words) of Kalākaua's cruel people. Kalākaua's chant turns these same words back on Emma claiming that he has silenced the "lehelehe 'eu'eu hana loko 'ino" – the rabid lips of her troublemakers. "A Maunakea 'o Kalani" seems intent on throwing a pair of words back at "Iā 'Oe e ka Lā": *a'e* (to enter into) in answer to *a'e* (to trample) as discussed above, and *'ike maka* (to know first hand, to experience, as in "'ike maka iā Waiiau") in response to *'ike* (to "merely" see, as in "'ike 'oe i ka nani a'o Himela").
24. "Kaleleonālani (Queen Emma's Song)," attributed to "Nu'uanu." Charles E. King, *King's Book of Hawaiian Melodies*, 1948:142.
25. Ka'upena Wong, personal communication, 7-29-1998 and 10-16-2001.

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