

Mo'ikeha

Mo'ikeha was an ali'i nui (high chief) from Moa'ulanuiakea, Tahiti, where he lived with his wife Kapo. They had a child named La'amaikahiki.¹

When 'Olopana and Lu'ukia arrived in Tahiti,² Mo'ikeha became infatuated with Lu'ukia and soon after took her as his lover. 'Olopana harbored no ill feeling toward Mo'ikeha; in fact, he approved of his friend's affair with his wife. 'Olopana was appointed the highest officer (kuhina nui) of the lands of Tahiti.

At about this time Mua lusted after Lu'ukia, but she discouraged his approaches, even though he pressed his suit with great vigor. When he saw that he was rejected while Mo'ikeha received Lu'ukia's favors, he decided to cause trouble between them and to persuade Lu'ukia to leave Mo'ikeha.

Mo'ikeha was very fond of athletic sports and often joined games such as pahe'e (sliding or skipping a wooden dart for distance) and 'olohu (rolling a stone wheel for distance). At the fields where games were held, people gathered to cheer the winners. Lu'ukia often heard the commotion and cheering. One day Mua happened to be with Lu'ukia when he heard the cheering and said:

"Lu'ukia, do you hear the cheering at the ali'i's games?"

Lu'ukia answered: "Yes, I hear the cheering."

"I don't think the cheering means well for you. No, Mo'ikeha is publicly defaming you."

Lu'ukia believed this lie and grew angry at Mo'ikeha. She decided not to make love with him anymore and ordered her attendants to bind up her private parts (wahi huna) with cord to prevent him from reaching them. Lu'ukia was corded from her waist down to mid-thighs, and the ends of the rope were then hidden in this lashing so it couldn't be undone. This lashing, called the "pa'u of Lu'ukia," is used to secure the covers of water-gourds and also to lash together the parts of single- and double-hulled canoes.

After Mo'ikeha had enjoyed himself in the games, he returned home and met Lu'ukia. Mo'ikeha suspected from Lu'ukia's face that something was wrong, so he began to wonder why she was unhappy.

That night, while preparing to sleep, Mo'ikeha was surprised to find Lu'ukia still wearing her pa'u (skirt), which had not been her habit when they were lovers. He didn't say anything, however. He bided his time, intending to find out in good time the reason for Lu'ukia's unusual behavior. On the fourth night Lu'ukia still wore the pa'u to sleep. The next night, Mo'ikeha unfastened the pa'u, and saw the lashing over her private parts.

"Why are you bound up like this?" Mo'ikeha asked.

Lu'ukia refused to speak to him. From evening until midnight Mo'ikeha urged her to tell him the reason for this lashing, but she remained silent. All through the rest of the night Mo'ikeha pondered over this recent change in Lu'ukia. He complained: "I don't understand you. Here we were living happily, and now you won't even speak to me. What have I done to make you bind yourself up like this?"

There was no answer.

"Very well then, since you no longer want me, I'll go to elsewhere."³

Mo'ikeha directed his foster-son Kamahualele to make ready a double-hulled canoe. "Let's go to Hawai'i," he said. "Here I'm tormented by my love for Lu'ukia; when the ridge-pole of my house Lanikeha disappears below the horizon, I'll no longer think of Tahiti."

Kamahualele directed the paddlers to get the double-hulled canoe ready. Mo'ikeha planned to take his sisters, Makapu'u and Makaaoa, his two younger brothers, Kumukahi and Ha'eha'e, his priest Mo'okini, and his prominent men (na kanaka koikoi) – navigators (ho'okele), favorite priests (kahuna punahele), and his lookouts (kiu nana), who would spy out land.

Early one morning at dawn, at the rise of the navigation star (ka hoku ho'okelewa'a; possibly Sirius), Mo'ikeha boarded his double-hulled canoe with his fellow voyagers (hoa holo), and left Tahiti.

From the morning of departure until sunrise when they first beheld Hilo all went well (holo pono). Kamahualele stood up and celebrated their arrival in Hawai'i with a mele:

Behold Hawai'i, an island, a man [a](#)
A man is Hawai'i
A man is Hawai'i
A child of Kahiki
A royal bud from Kapa'ahu [b](#)
From Moa'ulanuiakea Kanaloa
A descendant of Kahiko and Kapulanakehau
Born of Papa, [c](#)
The daughter of Kukalani'ehu and Kahakauakoko [d](#)
Sprouts of land in a line
Placed alike to the East, to the West
Arranged evenly in a line
Joined to, joined from Holani
Kaialea, the seer, circumnavigated the islands
Left Nukuhiwa behind; landed on Borabora
Kahiko is the source of land
He divided and separated the islands
Severed the fish-line of Kaha'i [e](#)
Cut by Ku-Kanaloa
Divided up was the lands, the islands
Cut by the sacred bamboo knife of Kanaloa
Of Haumea Manukahikele
Mo'ikeha is the chief who will live there
My chief shall dwell in Hawai'i
Life! Life! Set life free!
Long live the chief, the priest,
Long live the seer, the servant,
They shall dwell quietly in Hawai'i
The grandchildren will sing out on Kaua'i
Kaua'i, the island
Mo'ikeha, the chief.

[The Hawaiian text and notes to the chant follow:

Eia Hawai'i, he moku, he kanaka
He kanaka Hawai'i, e –
He kanaka Hawai'i
He kama na Kahiki
He pua ali'i mai Kapa'ahu
Mai Moa'ulanuiakea Kanaloa
He mo'opuna na Kahiko, laua o Kapulanakehau
Na papa i hanau

Na ke kamawahine a **Kukalani‘ehu**, laua me **Kahakauakoko**
 Na pulapula ‘**aina** i paekahi
 I nonoho like i ka Hikina, Komohana
 Pae like ka moku i **lalani**
 I hui aku, hui mai me Holani
 Puni ka moku o Kaialea ke kilo
 Naha Nu‘uhiwa, lele i Polapola
 O Kahiko ke kumu ‘**aina**
 Nana i mahele ka‘awale na moku
 Moku ke aho-lawai‘a a Kaha‘i
 I ‘okia e **Ku-Kanaloa**
 Pauku **na** ‘**aina**, **na** moku
 Moku i ka ‘ohe kapu a Kanaloa
 O Haumea Manukahikele
 O Mo‘ikeha ka lani nana e noho
 Noho ku‘u lani **ia** Hawai‘i – a –
 Ola! Ola! O Kalana-ola!
 Ola ke ali‘i, ke kahuna;
 Ola ke kilo, ke kauwa;
 Noho ia Hawai‘i a lulana;
 A kani mo‘opuna i Kaua‘i
 O Kaua‘i ka moku – a –
 O Mo‘ikeha ke ali‘i.

a. Kamahualele’s chant is from Fornander, Vol. IV, pp. 20-21.

b. In the story of Opuukahonua, a fisherman named Kapuheeuanui from Kapa‘ahu fished up coral rocks, which, after being blessed, named, and thrown back into the water, grew into islands and became chiefs. (“That is a man, a chief...”) Thus, were named and formed Hawai‘iloa, Mauiloa, O‘ahunuiala‘a, and the rest of the islands of Hawai‘i. (Fornander, Vol. IV, pp. 20-23; see also Makuakaumana’s chant concerning Hawai‘i in [Pa‘ao](#).)

c. According to some traditions, Kahiko (“Ancient”) was the first ancestor, and Kapulanakehau was his wife; Wakea was their son and Papa was his wife. They were born in Kahiki (Malo 4-5).

d. **Kukalani‘ehu** (k) and **Kahakauakoko** (w) are given as the parents of Papa in the Kumuhonua genealogy (Fornander, Vol. VI, 279); **Kukalani‘ehu** is descended from Hawai‘iloa, who, according to the account in Fornander, discovered and settled Hawai‘i; **Kahakauakoko** is “the sixth descendant” of Makali‘i, one of Hawai‘iloa’s navigator.

e. See the Tahitian story of Tafa‘i for the tradition of Tafa‘i’s fishing up the Tuamotus, discovering Hawai‘i and attempting to drag the islands of Hawai‘i closer to the islands of Tahiti-nui.]

After the canoe landed at Hilo, Kumukahi and Ha‘eha‘e were charmed by the ‘**aina** (land) and told Mo‘ikeha they wanted to remain there, so Mo‘ikeha let them off the canoe.

Soon after, Mo‘ikeha set sail from Hilo, passing along the north coast of Hawai‘i until he arrived at Kohala. Mo‘okini and Kaluawilinau wanted to reside at Kohala, so Mo‘ikeha put them ashore there. He sailed on to the east coast of Maui and landed at Hana. Honua‘ula wanted to reside there, so he was allowed to remain behind. Mo‘ikeha sailed on. When he was between Lana‘i and Moloka‘i, directly off of Kawela, Kamahualele spied a fishing canoe outside Kala‘au Point, so he steered Mo‘ikeha’s canoe there. Arriving at the fishing canoe, he found it belonged to Kakakauhanui, who came there regularly.

When Mo‘ikeha saw this large, well-built man, who appeared powerful and fearless, Mo‘ikeha befriended him.

Mo‘ikeha told him: “I’m going to leave you here, but when I find a place for us to live, I’ll send someone to bring you to me.”

Mo‘ikeha and his people continued on their journey. Arriving at O‘ahu, Mo‘ikeha’s sisters Makapu‘u and Makaaoa said: “We wish to reside here, where we can see the cloud drifts of Tahiti.”

So Makapu‘u and Makaaoa were allowed to remain on O‘ahu, thus leaving Mo‘ikeha, his foster-son Kamahualele, the two paddlers Kapahi and Moanaikaiaiwē, Kipunuiiakamau and his companion, and the two lookouts, Kaukukamunolea and his companion, to continue on the journey.⁴

Mo‘ikeha left O‘ahu and sailed to Kaua‘i, landing at Wailua. It was dark by the time they arrived, so they did not land, instead, mooring their canoe offshore. Early the next morning the people saw this double-hulled canoe floating offshore with the kapu sticks of a chief aboard. The canoe was brought ashore and the travellers got off. Meanwhile the locals were gathering in a crowd to go surf-riding at Ka-makaiwa. Among them were the two daughters of the ali‘i nui of Kaua‘i, Ho‘oipoikamalanai and Hināuu.

Mo‘ikeha and his companions saw the crowd and followed along to take part in the morning exercise. Mo‘ikeha was a handsome man with dark reddish hair and a tall, commanding figure.

When Ho‘oipoikamalanai and her sister saw Mo‘ikeha, they immediately fell in love with him, and they decided to take him for their husband. Mo‘ikeha in the meantime was also struck with the beauty and grace of the two sisters, and he, too, fell in love with them and decided to take one of them to be his wife. After enjoying the surf for a time, Ho‘oipoikamalanai and her sister returned home and told their father about the new arrival and said: “We wish to take that young chief as a husband for one of us.” The father approved.

Orders were issued that Mo‘ikeha be brought to the house of the two ali‘i women. Mo‘ikeha and his company were sent for and brought in the presence of the king. The love of these young people being mutual, Ho‘oipoikamalanai and Hināuu took Mo‘ikeha to be their husband. Mo‘ikeha became ali‘i nui of Kaua‘i after the death of his father-in-law.

Mo‘ikeha had five children with Ho‘oipoikamalanai and Hināuu, all boys. Ho‘oipoikamalanai’s children were Umalehu, Kaialea, Kila; Hināuu’s children were Kekaihawewe and Laukapalala. In the genealogy from which these names are taken, Mo‘ikeha’s descendants are given down to the reign of Manookalanipo, who became the ancestor of the chiefs of Kaua‘i and Ni‘ihau. But none of those who know anything about this genealogy can produce a direct line with any degree of accuracy.⁵

Mo‘ikeha worked to make his two wives and five children happy, giving his undivided attention to the bringing up of his boys. He thought no more of Lu‘ukia, but after a while, he began to feel a yearning desire to see his son La‘amaikahiki, his child by his first wife Kapo. So he called his five sons together and said to them: “I’m thinking of sending one of you boys to bring your elder brother to Hawai‘i.” His boys became greatly excited, each one shouting: “Let me go! Let me go!”

When Mo‘ikeha saw there would be much contention among his sons, he devised a test to determine who should be chosen to go to Tahiti.

He told his sons: “Let each of you bring a ti-leaf canoe and sail it across the river, one after another. The one whose canoe lands between my thighs shall be the one to go and bring your brother here.”

Then he took the boys to the river in the order of their birth. He proceeded to the opposite bank of the river and sat down at the edge of the water facing the wind. Meanwhile the boys proceeded to a point right across and upwind from their father. The oldest boy set his canoe down in the water and aimed it toward the desired point, but it missed the mark. The second boy set his canoe down in the water and it, too, missed the mark. The third and fourth boys also took their turns and they too failed to hit the mark. Then Kila, the youngest son, took his canoe and set it down in the water and it sailed directly to his father and passed between his thighs. When his brothers saw that their youngest brother had won, they became very angry and from then on they tried to devise some way of killing

him.

Some time after this, Kila's older brothers invited him to go and play at shooting arrows; but their parents knew that the boys had no love for their youngest brother, so their father did not allow Kila to join them. The older brothers pretended to be kind to Kila in every way possible, but their father still refused to allow him to go.

At last, when it was almost time for Kila to undertake his trip to Tahiti to bring La'amaikahiki to Hawai'i, Mo'ikeha gave Kila permission to join his older brothers: "My son, I'm not going to keep you away from your brothers any longer. The journey you are about to undertake may take you away from them forever, so you may accompany them from now until you leave. In the days following the kapu days of the temple, you shall sail for Tahiti."

Kila replied: "You must not permit me to accompany my brothers for I might get killed. I think you ought to provide them with a god so that they will fear the god and in that way they will be prevented from killing me. Then I think it will be safe for me to accompany my brothers."

Mo'ikeha saw the boy's good judgment in the matter. He called his sons together and told them that they must now have a god. The boys would not consent to this. At this Mo'ikeha approved of Kila's discretion and refused to allow the youngest to accompany his brothers on their excursions.⁶

Shortly after this Mo'ikeha proceeded to get everything ready for Kila's voyage to Tahiti. Then Mo'ikeha advised him as follows: "When you sail from here, go by way of O'ahu and call on your aunts; they are living on the windward side of O'ahu, facing Moloka'i. When you call on them, they will recognize you."

After these words of advice, Mo'ikeha picked out the men who were to accompany Kila on this voyage. Kamahualele, Mo'ikeha's foster-son, was appointed as his travelling companion (hoa hele). Kapahi and Moanaikaiaia were selected as the paddlers (hoewa'a). Kipunuiiakamau and his companion were selected as navigators (ho'okele) and steermen (kipu, lit. to hold back a canoe with a paddle). In case the canoe was in danger of running aground, Kamahualele would call out: "Kipunuiiakamau, hold on!" Then he and his companion would hold back water and the canoe would come to a stop. (Thus, these two men were named Kipunui-aiakamau.) Kaukukamunolea and his companion were selected as pilots (kiu, lit. "to scout or spy out").

When Kila was about ready to set sail, two Kaua'i people said they wanted to go with him – Hooholoku and his companion. And upon the expressed wish of Kamahualele, Kila took Kuaiwilu and Kauineno, making ten in this company, with Kila and Kamahualele the total was twelve.

When the men were ready, Mo'ikeha ordered the kahuna kilokilo (who studied the signs in the heavens) to see if his son's journey would be safe. After reading the signs they announced that the journey would be safe. The kahuna Wanahili was selected as the thirteenth crew member.

At the dawn of the day the kahuna had designated for departure, just at the rising of the navigation star (hoku-ho'okele-wa'a, possibly Sirius), Kila set sail for O'ahu. Arriving off the shore of windward O'ahu where his aunts were living, he hove to in his canoe and called out: "My greetings to you, Makapu'u and Makaaoa."

Makapu'u and Makaaoa replied, "Who are you?"

"I am Kila of the uplands, Kila of the lowlands, Kila-pa-Wahineikamalanai. I am the offspring of Mo'ikeha."

"Is Mo'ikeha still alive then?"

"He is still alive."

"What is he doing?"

"Dwelling in ease on Kaua'i, the sun rising and setting; the surf of Makaiwa breaking unevenly; the kukui

blossoms of Puna changing; the waters of Wailua spreading out. He will live and die on Kaua‘i.”

“What brings you here?”

“I am searching for a chief.”

“What chief?”

“La‘amaikahiki.”

Then Kila left O‘ahu and sailed for Kala‘au Point where Mo‘ikeha’s friend Kakakauhanui was living. Kila again called out as he did to his aunts. Kila visited all the people left by Mo‘ikeha, from O‘ahu to Hawai‘i, then proceeded to Tahiti.

The crew first landed at Moa‘ulanuiakea-iki where **Kupohihi** was living, a human rat [a member of the rat clan], one of Mo‘ikeha’s uncles.

They called at **Kupohihi**’s because they were out of food. Kila called out to his granduncle in the same manner as when he called on his aunts, and the crew was supplied with food.

Arriving in Tahiti, they saw Lanikeha, the royal house (hale ali‘i) of Mo‘ikeha. After staying there for a few days, they again set sail for Moa‘ulanuiakea-nui and landed on the beach. Kila and Kamahualele set out to call on Lu‘ukia. When Kila arrived at Lu‘ukia’s residence, he called out: “My greetings to you, Lu‘ukia.”

“Who are you?”

“I am Kila of the uplands, Kila of the lowlands, Kila-pa-Wahineikamalanai. I am the offspring of Mo‘ikeha.”

“Is Mo‘ikeha still alive then?”

“He is still alive.”

“What is he doing?”

“Dwelling in ease on Kaua‘i, the sun rising and setting; the surf of Makaiwa breaking unevenly; the kukui blossoms of Puna changing; the waters of Wailua spreading out. He will live and die on Kaua‘i.”

“What brings you here?”

“I am searching for a chief.”

“What chief?”

“La‘amaikahiki.”

“Your brother is hidden on the mountain of Kapa‘ahu; we haven’t seen him.”

After this conversation with Lu‘ukia, Kila retired to Lanikeha, Mo‘ikeha’s residence at Moa‘ulanuiakea. Later Kamahualele and Kila looked for La‘amaikahiki for many, many days, but couldn’t find him. He had been hidden. Finally, Kila gave up and rested.

On the day before the kapu nights, Kila told Kamahualele. “You had better get our double-hulled canoe ready for our return voyage. I’ve decided to give up the search. Let’s go back and tell Mo‘ikeha we couldn’t find La‘amaikahiki. Perhaps Mo‘ikeha will send someone else to continue the search.”

Kamahualele proceeded to carry out Kila’s orders, but he was not willing to give up the search. He thought it over

and went to find Kuhelepolani, an aged kahuna of 'Olopana. He brought her to Kila and said to him: "Let's delay our voyage home for a while to see if this old woman can find the chief for us. She is a kahuna to 'Olopana. Perhaps she can direct us to your brother's secret residence."

Kila was gladdened by the prospects of finding his brother, but he was a stranger to such matters and asked Kamahualele: "What is a kahuna? What can she do?" Kamahualele described the character and rites of the priestess. Then Kila insisted that the kahuna help him perform the rites that would allow him to see La'amaikahiki.

Since Kila was so anxious to find his brother, Kuhelepolani explained to him what he should do. "After tomorrow, you will find La'amaikahiki on the mountain of Kapa'ahu. When we hear the beating of the drum Hawea, the drum which belongs to your father, Mo'ikeha, you must place a human sacrifice on the altar at Lanikeha, your father's heiau; then you will be able to see your brother. The drumbeat is a signal for sacrifice during the kapu nights. Tomorrow night is the night of the strictest kapu (kapu loa), and it has always been so from your father's time."

On the evening of the following day, the drum of La'amaikahiki was heard. Hearing the drum, Kamahualele was ordered to find a person for the sacrifice and to place the corpse on the altar according to the instructions of the aged priestess. During this night, when the drum was heard, Kuhelepolani came to Kila and asked him: "Did you hear the drum? The time has come when you will see your brother. Follow me wherever I go."

All that night and the next day Kila followed the aged kahuna. At evening, when they arrived near the place where La'amaikahiki was living, Kuhelepolani told him: "Let us remain here until we hear the drum again. Then you will enter into the mua (the house where people worship within the temple). When we get to the door of the mua, go in and conceal yourself in one of the corners; remain in your hiding place until your brother enters the house. Then be watchful; the one who approaches and strikes the drum is La'amaikahiki; after the priests line up and begin the prayer service (ka'i ka 'aha), call out to him."

Kila and Kuhelepolani remained where they were until they heard the beating of the drum. That evening, after the sun had set, they approached the door of the mua and Kila went in and hid himself. When he entered the mua, Kuhelepolani rose and walked away, as it was the law (kanawai) that women were forbidden to join the priests at the kapu houses. Not very long after Kila had entered the mua, La'amaikahiki came in and went and stood before the drum, where he remained awaiting the arrival of the priests. Shortly thereafter the priests entered. One of them offered a blessing (pule), after which they prepared to begin the prayer service.

At this moment Kila came forth and called out: "My greetings to you, La'amaikahiki."

La'amaikahiki replied: "Who are you?"

"I am Kila of the uplands, Kila of the lowlands, Kila-pa-Wahineikamalanai. I am the offspring of Mo'ikeha."

"Is Mo'ikeha still alive then?"

"He is still alive."

"What is he doing?"

"Dwelling in ease on Kaua'i, the sun rising and setting; the surf of Makaiwa breaking unevenly; the kukui blossoms of Puna changing; the waters of Wailua spreading out. He will live and die on Kaua'i."

"What brings you here?"

"I've been sent by our father to come and take you to him as he is very anxious to see all his children together. I've been looking for you since my arrival here, but I was unable to find you; just as I was about to give up the search and return to Hawai'i, an old woman came to me and told me how to find you."

La'amaikahiki immediately prepared to accompany his brother to Hawai'i, as Mo'ikeha wished. La'amaikahiki

took his priests and his god Lonoikaoualii, and set sail for Hawai‘i with the men who had come with Kila. When they were approaching Kaua‘i, La‘amaikahiki began beating his drum. Mo‘ikeha heard his drum and ordered everything, the land as well as the house, to be made ready for the reception of the chief La‘amaikahiki. Upon the arrival of La‘amaikahiki and Kila, the high priest of Kaua‘i, Poloahilani took La‘amaikahiki and his god Lonoika‘ouali‘i (“Lono at the Chiefly Supremacy”) to the heiau. It is said that La‘amaikahiki was the first person to bring a god (akua) to Hawai‘i.

La‘amaikahiki lived on Kaua‘i for a time. Then he moved over to Kahiki-nui on Maui. This place was named for La‘amaikahiki’s homeland, in honor of him. As the place was too windy, however, La‘amaikahiki left for the west coast of the island of Kaho‘olawe, where he lived until he finally returned to Tahiti. Because La‘amaikahiki lived on Kah‘oolawe and set sail for home from that island, the ocean to the west of Kaho‘olawe is called Kealaikahiki, “The Road to Tahiti.”

After the death of Mo‘ikeha, his corpse was taken to the cliffs of Ha‘ena where it was deposited. Soon after this Kila assumed the chieftomship in place of Mo‘ikeha, according to the wishes of his late father, his mother and aunt, and his mother’s father.⁷

After La‘amaikahiki arrived back in Tahiti, he heard through Hawena that Mo‘ikeha had died; so he decided to return to Hawai‘i for the bones of his father. He set sail for Hawai‘i and first appeared off the Ka‘u coast. By evening of the same day his canoe was moored on the beach at Kailiki‘i.

In the evening the people of Ka‘u heard the beating of a drum (pahu) accompanied by the notes of a bamboo flute (‘ohe ka‘eke). The people were startled and rushed out to see where these sounds were coming from. Outside, they saw that the sounds came from aboard a double-hulled canoe and remarked: “It’s the canoe of the god Kupulupulu [a god of canoe builders].” When the people heard that it was the canoe of Kupulupulu, they prepared vegetable food and pig as offerings to the god. At dawn of the next day, the canoe and the people on it were seen, and the people ashore cried out: “You makers of the sounds, here are vegetable food and pig; they are offerings for the god.”

La‘amakahiki did not stay long at Kailiki‘i. He set sail again, going up the Kona coast. On this passage from Ka‘u to Kona, La‘amakahiki continued to beat the drum and play the flute, and he treated as a god by the Kona people, just as he was by the people of Ka‘u. It was on this visit that La‘amaikahiki introduced hula dancing, accompanied by the drum, to Hawai‘i.

After receiving vegetable food and pig from the Kona people, La‘amaikahiki continued on his journey to Kaua‘i where he met his brother Kila and arranged to take the bones of Mo‘ikeha to Tahiti. Soon after, the bones of Mo‘ikeha were brought from Ha‘ena. La‘amaikahiki stayed a long time on Kaua‘i teaching the people the art of dancing. From Kaua‘i La‘amaikahiki visited all the other islands of this group and thus the drum dance (hula ka‘eke) spread to the other islands.

After La‘amaikahiki returned to Kaua‘i from his tour of the other islands, he took his brother Kila and the bones of their father to Tahiti with him. The bones were to deposited in the mountain of Kapa‘ahu, Mo‘ikeha’s own inheritance. La‘amaikahiki and Kila also lived there until their death. Nothing more was heard about these two brothers.⁸

NOTES

This version of the Mo‘ikeha story is from Fornander, Vol. IV, pp. 112-128; the story of La‘amaikahiki is found on pp. 152-154 of the same volume. Other versions of the Mo‘ikeha-Kila-La‘amaikahiki story are found in Kamakau’s *Tales and Traditions* (105-110) and Kalakaua’s *Legends and Myths of Hawaii* (“The Triple Marriage of Laa-mai-kahiki,” 117-135).

1. For a discussion of the location of Mo‘ikeha’s homeland in Tahiti, see Rubellite Kawena Johnson’s “From the Gills of the Fish: The Tahitian Homeland of Hawaii’s Chief Mo‘ikeha.” Johnson points out that Fornander favored

the island of Ra'iatea as the homeland, while Teuira Henry favored the island of Tahiti-nui. Based on an analysis of Tahitian and Hawaiian place names, Johnson argues for Tahiti-nui as Mo'ikeha's homeland, though "not greater Tahiti-nui as [Henry] suggests...but its peninsula to the south" (51).

2. According to one tradition, 'Olopana and Lu'ukia left Waipi'o after a flood (Beckwith 353); See note 3 below: Kalakaua says 'Olopana migrated to Tahiti after a hurricane and flood devastated Waipi'o. A flood as a cause of a migration is found also in the Easter Island tradition of Hotu Matua; though the flood in that tradition seems to refer to the rising of the sea level (Barthel 10).

3. According to another tradition recorded by Kamakau, both Mo'ikeha and 'Olopana belonged to Tahiti. Mo'ikeha left Kahiki and came to Hawai'i because he had "opened the food-offering calabash of his older brother 'Olopana and had been caught undoing the chastity belt of 'Olopana's wife Lu'ukia, the 'aha, or sennit cord, binding called Lu'u-a-na-ko'a-i-ka-moana. He was severely criticized and so he went off to sea" (Kamakau 105).

In the Kalakaua version, both 'Olopana and Mo'ikeha belonged to Hawai'i. They were grandsons of Maweke, a native chief of the Nanaula line and ali'i nui of O'ahu. Maweke had three sons – the eldest, Mulieali'i, became ali'i nui of the western side of O'ahu; Kalehenui was given land in Ko'olau; Keaunui resided in 'Ewa. Mulieali'i had three sons – Kumuhonua, who became ali'i nui of O'ahu, and 'Olopana and Mo'ikeha, who were given small holdings. The two younger brothers were dissatisfied with their lots on O'ahu and settled in Waipi'o on the Big Island. 'Olopana married Lu'ukia, a granddaughter of Hikapaloa, ali'i of Kohala. Mo'ikeha did not marry while living in Waipi'o; he adopted a son, La'a, a son of Ahukai and a descendent of Paumakua, the famous voyaging chief of east O'ahu, who "visited all foreign lands then known to the Hawaiians" (119).

In the Kalakaua version, 'Olopana and Mo'ikeha left Hawai'i in five canoes after a hurricane and floods devastated Waipi'o. He and his brother sailed south and landed on Ra'iatea, where they took possession of the land. 'Olopana became the ruler and Mo'ikeha his chief adviser. Mo'ikeha's house and heiau were called Lanikeha ("heavenly resting place" – possibly a variant of Laniakea, the Hawaiian form of the name Ra'iatea?). Mo'ikeha left Ra'iatea to return to Hawai'i after his brother became jealous of his growing prosperity and popularity. A native ali'i named Mua, with ambitions of replacing Mo'ikeha as chief adviser, fueled 'Olopana's jealousy.

4. Some of the names of Mo'ikeha's crew have survived as place names on the islands where they settled: Kumukahi is the easternmost point of Hawai'i; Ha'eha'e is a land division near Kumukahi. Honua'ula is a district of south-central Maui; Makapu'u is the easternmost point of O'ahu.

Kamakau gives the following list of people let off the canoe as it sailed through the Hawaiian Islands from east to west: Moa'ula, who remained at Punalu'u, Hawai'i; Paha'a and Pana'ewa, who remained at Lahaina, Maui; La'amaomao, who remained at Haleolono, Kaulako'i, Moloka'i; Poka'i and Mo'eke, who remained at Wai'anae, O'ahu.

Kalakaua says that Mo'ikeha sailed from the harbor of Opoa on Ra'iatea. The double-hulled canoe was nearly a hundred feet long and the crew was over forty. It included the prophet, poet, and astrologer Kamahualele; the priest Mo'okini; and La'amaomao, the director of the winds.

After an apparently uneventful 2500 miles voyage, Mo'ikeha arrived at Ka'u, where a joyous crowd greeted the canoe and water and provisions were replenished. The canoe then proceeded to Cape Kumukahi and Kohala on Hawai'i, where it was welcomed by the ali'i nui Kaniuhi; then to Honua'ula on Maui. Mo'ikeha was warned by his priest and seer against going to 'Ewa to visit his father Mulieleali'i, so he sailed north around O'ahu, stopping only at Makapu'u and Makaaoa. He landed on Kaua'i, near Kapa'a.

5. Kamakau's Version of Mo'ikeha's Marriage: Mo'ikeha married one woman whose name was both Ho'oipoikamalanai and Hina-'au-lua. Mo'ikeha's three children were Ho'omali'i, named for the skin of 'Olopana; Haulani-nui-ai-akea for the eyes of 'Olopana; and Kila, for Lu'ukia, the wife of 'Olopana.

Kalakaua's Version of Mo'ikeha's Marriage: Mo'ikeha married Ho'oipo after winning the right to do so in a canoe race devised by Puna, the ali'i of Wailua and the father of Ho'oipo. Puna sent a servant with a palaoa (a carved and

consecrated whale-tooth) to the island of Ka'ula (SW of Kaua'i). Nine suitors raced to the island to be the first to bring the whale-tooth back. Mo'ikeha won the race by sailing to Ka'ula with the help of La'amaomao, his director of winds, who had a calabash that contained all the winds of Hawai'i, which he could call forth by chanting their names. In this version, Mo'ikeha had seven sons with Ho'oipo; the third was called Kila.

6. Neither Kamakau nor Kalakaua mention the rivalry of the brothers or the test of the ti-leaf canoes, which is the central incident in the Fornander version. A test involving toy canoes is a motif in Polynesian voyaging traditions. The story of Tafa'i includes a version of this test: the young voyaging hero Tafa'i made a twig canoe that beat the twig canoes of the other boys to shore.

7. The Fornander version of Mo'ikeha continues on with the story of Kila (Vol. IV, 128-152) before telling the story of La'amaikahiki's second visit to Hawai'i.

Kamakau's Version of Kila's Voyage to Tahiti: Mo'ikeha sent all three sons to Tahiti to bring La'a to Hawai'i. Mo'ikeha had designated La'a, the first born, as heir to his lands and titles. The youngest son Kila was placed in command of the canoe, the same one Mo'ikeha himself sailed from Kahiki to Kaua'i. "He first taught Kila the way to sail over the ocean and to study the stars...." After departure, the canoe was becalmed off Malae Point in Wai'anae and Kila and his two brothers met Poka'i and Mo'eke, two of Mo'ikeha crew members from the voyage to Hawai'i. When asked about his father, Kila replied: "He is enjoying surfing at the stream mouth, body surfing from morning to night on the waves of Ka'ohala in the sheltered calm of Waimahanalua – the openness of Kewa and its swaying kalukalu – the two hills that bear Puna like a child in arms – the diving place at Waiehu where the taro grows as big as 'ape – the curling of the waves at Makaiwa – his beautiful wife, my mother Ho'oipo-i-kamalanai. Mo'ikeha will die on Kaua'i; he will not return to Kahiki lest his feet be wet by the sea."

The canoe proceeded on to Moloka'i, Maui, and Hawai'i, then left from Kalae in Ka'u for Kahiki. In Kahiki, they found 'Olopana was the high chief and Lu'ukia the chiefess, La'a the heir to the kingdom 'Olopana persuaded Kila not to take La'a to Hawai'i. So Kila and his brothers returned to Hawai'i without La'a. After returning, Kila settled on Hawai'i, and became "a chiefly ancestor for the chiefs and commoners of Hawai'i and Maui." The oldest brother, Ho'okamali'i, settled in 'Ewa on O'ahu. Haulani-nui-ai-akea, the second oldest, settled on Kaua'i and became an ancestor of chiefs and commoners of Kaua'i. After 'Olopana's death, La'a sailed to Hawai'i on his own. (See note 6 for Kamakau's account of this voyage.)

Kalakaua's Version of Kila's Voyage to Tahiti: La'a was Mo'ikeha's adopted son; he was born in Hawai'i (not Tahiti as in Fornander's and Kamakau's versions), a descendant of the famous O'ahu voyaging chief Paumakua. La'a accompanied his foster-father Mo'ikeha and foster-uncle 'Olopana to Ra'iatea in the Society Islands after their home in Waipi'o Valley was devastated by a flood. La'a remained in Tahiti, not returning with Mo'ikeha to Hawai'i, because La'a had become the heir to 'Olopana, the ruler of Ra'iatea.

In his old age, Mo'ikeha longed to see La'a and ordered his men to repair his canoes. He also had a special gift made – a cloak of mamu feathers: "As but a single small yellow feather of the kind used in a royal mantle is found under each wing of the mamu, the task of securing the many thousands required was by no means a brief or easy service;... As the choicest feathers alone were used, the garment was one of the most brilliant and elaborate ever made on Kaua'i and represented the labor of a hundred persons for a year put Kila in charge of bringing La'a to Hawai'i."

Mo'ikeha put his third son Kila in charge of the voyage because of Kila's courage and skill as a navigator. Kila was delighted with the prospect of the voyage. He provisioned a fleet of double-hulled canoe in a few days with "dried fish, dried banana and plantains, coconuts, yams and potatoes and poi and paiai, fresh fruits and cooked fowls and pigs for early consumption. Large calabashes of fresh water were also provided, but frequent baths largely diminished the craving for that necessity... Sacrifices were offered, the auguries were pronounced favorable, and the fleet of double canoes set sail for the south." Kamahualele, the friend and astrologer of Mo'ikeha, went as navigator and counsellor to Kila. Three of Kila's brothers went along. After a smooth voyage, Kila found La'a in Tahiti and presented him with Mo'ikeha's gift, the feather cloak. 'Olopana objected to La'a going to Hawai'i until La'a promised to stay in Hawai'i only a short while, then return to Tahiti. La'a went to

Hawai'i, visited Mo'ikeha on Kaua'i, and married three women, returning to Ra'iatea after Mo'ikeha's death. (See note 6 for Kalakaua's account of this voyage.)

8. Kamakau's Version of La'amaikahiki's Visit to Hawai'i: After 'Olopana's death, La'a sailed to Hawai'i, with Ka'ika'i-kupolo, the kahuna (priest); Ku-ke-ao-mihamiha, the kilo (seer); Luhaukapawa, the kuhikuhipu'uone (diviner); Kupa, the ho'oheihei pahu (drummer); Ma'ula-miahea, the kaula (prophet), and forty paddlers. The canoe sighted Maui and Moloka'i first and continued on to O'ahu. There a man named Ha'ikamalama at Hanauma heard Kupa's drumming and rushed to Makapu'u to see where it was coming from. When he saw the canoe heading for Kane'ohe Bay, he rushed there. By the time La'a landed at a place which came to be called Na-one-a-La'a ("The sands of La'a") in Kane'ohe, Ha'ikamalama had learned Kupa's mele. He performed it by tapping his chest with his fingertips. He pretended he already knew about the drum so he could examine it and later make one himself.

La'a settled at Kualoa and married three ali'i – Hoaka-nui-kapua'i-helu, Waolena, and Mano. All three became pregnant on the same day and gave birth on the same day. La'a "became an ancestor for chiefs and commoners of O'ahu and also for Hawai'i and Kaua'i. His chiefly descendants are found in the mo'o ku'auhau of Nana'ulu, Puna-i-mua, and Hanala'a-nui."

Kalakaua's Version of La'amaikahiki's Visit to Hawai'i: Once in Hawai'i, La'a visited several places, including Waialua, O'ahu, where his family was from. He visited Mo'ikeha on Kaua'i, then moved to Kualoa on O'ahu and consented to marry three wives, so that the blood line of Paumakua could be carried on in its native land. The wives are the same three mentioned by Kamakau – Hoakanui, daughter of Lonokaeha of Kualoa; Waolena, daughter of a chief of Ka'alaea; and Mano, daughter of a chief of Kane'ohe "The names of the children were Ahukini-a-La'a, Kukona-a-La'a, and Lau'i-a-La'a, from whom in after-generations, the pride and glory of the governing families of O'ahu and Kaua'i trace their lineage. From Ahukini-a-La'a Queen Kapi'olani, wife of Kalakaua, is recorded in descent through a line of chiefs and kings of Kaua'i." After Mo'ikeha's death, La'a returned to Ra'iatea and voyaging between Hawai'i and the southern homeland ceased.

Kamakau's version of the Mo'ikeha tradition continues on with the story of Mo'ikeha's grandson Kaha'i-a-Ho'okamali'i, who sailed to Kahiki to go sightseeing, departing from Kalaeloa, O'ahu. He brought back ulu (breadfruit) from 'Upolu and planted it at Pu'uloa in 'Ewa, O'ahu.



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