

## *Lei o Hilo Ka Ua Pē i ka Uahi*

The Lei of Hilo is the Rain Scented with Smoke

Ha'eha'e ku'u hi'ikua  
Pu'uohau ku'u hi'ialo  
A pō maila ja ao ē, pai a ka hulu kōnane

*I bear the sun of Ha'eha'e on my back.  
I caress the sun of Pu'uohau at my chest  
And when night alights, it is the feathery  
glow of moonlight that sustains me entirely!*

Ki'ina 'Ūpolu e ka 'ākau  
Hēkau ē ka hema iā Kalae  
Lele kawa me he lele wai pipi'o lua Hi'ilawe

*My right hand reaches for Ūpolu  
My left hand anchored at Kālae  
Jumping in feet first like the water fall,  
Hi'ilawe in profound arch*

Na ka hau o Maunakea ku'u ni'o  
Na ke ahi o Maunaloa ku'u mole  
Hualalai muli kuahiwi ē 'iewe nei  
Ka moana nui pāmamao o ka moku

*The snow of Maunakea sets my zenith  
The fire of Maunaloa establishes my nadir  
Hualalai conceiving in the womb the journeys  
upon further shores*

Inā kāua nauane, nauane  
Ke ala e 'imia nei i ka pono e kau ala

*Let's make a move and make a stir  
For the path seeking profound experiences  
avails itself*

Inā ho'i kāua nauane, nauane  
A pāpahi i ka hāliko 'apapane lei lehua

*Let's indeed make our move  
Until we are worthy of wearing the lei of scarlet  
lehua*

Lei o Hilo ka ua pē i ka uahi  
He ola, he ola, he Hāloa iwihilo ē,

*The lei of Hilo is that of rain drenched in  
volcanic promise  
A life, a life this is, a life breathing right through  
to the core!*

*Composed by Dr. Taupōuri Tangarō, September 2006*

*This mele places the learner within the cardinal center of potential using Hawai'i Island's sacred geography as a metaphor. In the Hawaiian language, the right hand is called 'ākau, which also means north; the left hand is termed hema, which is the south. Stepping into this orientation then positions the rising sun at the back of the person and the setting sun at the front, or face of the person. Maunakea is the head, and as Maunakea is sacred so is the head of the native person. Maunaloa is the womb from which all magma rises from the core of the earth; hence Maunaloa is the primal base, as Maunakea is the celestial reach. Hualalai muli kuahiwi (Hualalai is the youngest of mountains) speaks to profound germination. Lei o Hilo ka ua pē i ka uahi (Hilo's lei is that of rain scented with smoke) speaks to the crux of our life founded on water and fire!*