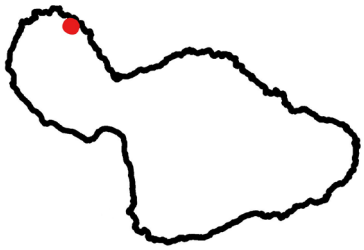
Hanohano Kahakuloa

Student Reader

To enter the village of Kahakuloa on the north side of Maui, one quickly realizes this is not a tourist destination. Arriving at the last curve means you slowed down many miles before, sometimes holding your breath and maybe gripping the seat, maybe even reversing to let the oncoming vehicle pass on the narrow road with no guard rails.

Let your breath out slowly and breathe in ancient Hawaiʻi. Listen for the ancestors, feel the soft air, imagine who came before. Breathe silently, wait for the moʻolelo to reveal its story. Can you see life in the old days, the people working, playing? Can you imagine what the ahupuaʻa looked like? Can you see the loʻi kalo growing everywhere?

Legend has it that Hina, the goddess of the moon, gave birth to her son Maui (this island). It was a difficult birth and Puʻu Koaʻe is the afterbirth of that hard birthing. Do you see Kahekili, the moʻi of Maui, diving off Puʻu Koaʻe wearing his feather cape, arms outstretched, gliding toward the water 200 feet below? Can you imagine the puhi (eel) kidnapping the little sister of a young boy and taking her to his cave located underwater below Puʻu Koaʻe, causing the brother to frantically beg each sea creature to help him rescue her? Only one sea creature was brave enough to help. Some of those sea creatures even go upstream in Kahakuloa River.



Join us in this moʻolelo huakaʻi to explore the clues of the past to see how they can be our guides today.

(Puʻu Koaʻe moʻolelo as told to George Kahumoku by his mentor Aunty Irmgard Farden Aluli.)

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