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Kaho 'olawe: Na Leo o Kanaloa (Chants and stories of Kaho'olawe) (Review)

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☞ *Kaho'olawe: Nā Leo o Kanaloa* (Chants and stories of Kaho'olawe). 1995.

'Ai Pōhaku Press, PO Box 37095, Honolulu, HI 96837. Oversize, 116 pages, the book comes in both hardcover and softcover versions. Softcover price: \$32.95.

Foreword by Noa Emmett Aluli of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana; Introduction by Rowland B. Reeve.

Review by Georgia Lee

Kaho'olawe: Nā Leo o Kanaloa is essentially a picture book accompanied by Hawaiian *mele* (chants) and *mo'olelo* (legends) that are filled with allusions and *kaona* (hidden meanings). Throughout the book these are presented in both Hawaiian and English and comprise most of the text. The photographs, 38 in color and 39 black and white, are excellent.

Today Kaho'olawe Island is bare, windswept and desolate the result of years of over-exploitation. It was ravaged by herds of wild goats in early historic times, and then became a target for the US Military which did its best to blow it up. The island is still off limits for all but a few, so this book represents an opportunity to see its stark beauty through the lens of some talented photographers. In 1994, the federal government returned control of the island to the Hawaiian people; it is being held in trust by the State of Hawai'i while the job of clearing the island of unexploded ordinance continues. The island is to become a natural and cultural preserve, and likely will never be opened up to the general public.

I have been one of the fortunate few to visit Kaho'olawe as a member of an archaeological field project and allowed to join the 'Ohana campsite at Hakioāwa, a memorable and meaningful experience. With that in mind, I found *Kaho'olawe: Nā Leo o Kanaloa* to be a lovely ramble down memory lane. But this book is not for everyone; those who know and love Hawai'i and things Hawaiian will enjoy it. It is long on impressions and images but short on actual information and history. That is to be the subject of a second book, to be published as a companion volume. We await that with anticipation.

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