

Tani a Kahana

A *tani* is a funeral song, slow and solemn. In traditional society, it was composed to commemorate something about the life of the deceased. This one is taken from Reuben Tenai early in my stay. The translations most likely are his, although my notes suggest that I checked it later. This is a funeral dirge for a younger brother who died. His older brother sings about how he always wanted to go out in the canoe and be in front of the other canoes. The song describes the deceased younger brother's desire to go in the canoe as soon as possible and as fast as possible, and how the canoe moves further and further from the island until it disappears out of sight. (This is a different Kahana from the one who told the *tala* about Telauponana and Telauponini, https://research.library.kutztown.edu/sikaiana_oralstories/3/ although he could have been named in honor of this one). The Sikaiana found this to be a moving song, and so did I.

Eni naenae ai ko nau taina nei
Tired myself. My brother

E Hahano mai (a te taua vaka e kimua)—not sung
Wake me, our canoe must be out in front

Eni Himoe koe nau te taina nei e hahano mai
I am sleepy, my brother wake me

A te taua vaka eki mua
Our canoe should be in front

E taua vaka mahi ko taua hoe ko ki taua ena tahi
Our strength with our paddle is our way to equal (catch up)

E muli vaka mate kauaka nei, ioula, ioule aluualuu)
We are behind the other canoes, quick, quick

E muli vaka mai taihale nei ioula olue
We are behind at the shore line, quick, quick

E muli vaka ina saohana nei ioula, olue
We are behind at the entrance to the passage, quick, quick

E muli vaka i na ohana new ioula, ilue
We are behind at the passage, quick, quick

E muli vaka i kuna tua nei, ioula, ilue
We are behind at the ocean, quick, quick

A te henua ku lilo
We are where the island disappears from site

A te henua hea ku sula
We are where other islands appear