

**LEGENDS OF GODS AND GHOSTS
(HAWAIIAN MYTHOLOGY).
COLLECTED AND TRANSLATED
FROM THE HAWAIIAN. [1915]**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649629367

Legends of Gods and Ghosts (Hawaiian Mythology). Collected and Translated from the Hawaiian. [1915] by W. D. Westervelt

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W. D. WESTERVELT

**LEGENDS OF GODS AND GHOSTS
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TO VIMU
ANROHJAO



KE-ALOHU-LANI

LEGENDS OF GODS AND GHOSTS

(HAWAIIAN MYTHOLOGY)

Collected and Translated from the Hawaiian

BY

W. D. WESTERVELT

AUTHOR OF "LEGENDS OF OLD HONOLULU" AND
"MAUI, A DEMI-GOD OF POLYNESIA"



UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA

BOSTON, U.S.A.
PRESS OF GEO. H. ELLIS CO.

LONDON
CONSTABLE & CO., LTD.
10 ORANGE ST., LEICESTER SQ., W.C.

1925

GR385
H3W33

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HONOLULU, H.T.

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PRONUNCIATION

Readers will have little difficulty in pronouncing names if they remember *two* rules:—

1. No syllable ends in a consonant, *e.g.*, Ho-no-lu-lu, not Hon-o-lulu.

2. Give vowels the German sound rather than the English, *e.g.*, "e" equals "a," and "i" equals "e," and "a" is sounded like "a" in "father."

INTRODUCTION

The legends of the Hawaiian Islands are as diverse as those of any country in the world. They are also entirely distinct in form and thought from the fairy-tales which excite the interest and wonder of the English and German children. The mythology of Hawaii follows the laws upon which all myths are constructed. The Islanders have developed some beautiful nature-myths. Certain phenomena have been observed and the imagination has fitted the story to the interesting object which has attracted attention.

Now the Rainbow Maiden of Manoa, a valley lying back of Honolulu, is the story of a princess whose continual death and resurrection were invented to harmonize with the formation of a series of exquisite rainbows which are born on the mountain-sides in the upper end of the valley and die when the mist clouds reach the plain into which the valley opens. Then there were the fish of the Hawaiian Islands which vie with the butterflies of South America in their multitudinous combinations of colors. These im-

imaginative people wondered how the fish were painted, so for a story a battle between two chiefs was either invented or taken as a basis. The chiefs fought on the mountain-sides until finally one was driven into the sea and compelled to make the deep waters his continual abiding-place. Here he found a unique and pleasant occupation in calling the various kinds of fish to his submarine home and then painting them in varied hues according to the dictates of his fancy. Thus we have a pure nature-myth developed from the love of the beautiful, one of the highest emotions dwelling in the hearts of the Hawaiians of the long ago.

So, again, Maui, a wonder-working hero like the Hercules of Grecian mythology, heard the birds sing, and noted their beautiful forms as they flitted from tree to tree and mingled their bright plumage with the leaves of the fragrant blossoms.

No other one of those who lived in the long ago could see what Maui saw. They heard the mysterious music, but the songsters were invisible. Many were the fancies concerning these strange creatures whom they could hear but could not see. Maui finally pitied his friends and made the birds visible. Ever since, man has been able to both hear the music and see the beauty of his forest neighbors.