

Marion Kelley, *Nā Mala o Kona, The Gardens of Kona: A History of Land Use in Kona, Hawai'i*. Honolulu: Department of Anthropology, Bernice P. Bishop Museum, 1983. Pp. xviii, 122, maps, illustrations, bibliography, appendixes. Paper \$8.00.

This monograph is a historical survey of the changing land use patterns of the Kona district from traditional times to the present. The general character of the extensive Kona field system observed at first contact must be seen as the "end result of possibly a thousand years or more of occupation and cultivation by Hawaiian horticulturalists." Though the water resources necessary for sustaining such large-scale agricultural activity were generally minimal, the "Kona system suggests some kind of centralized authority." Kelly suggests that important decisions regarding planting and harvesting strategies and corresponding population pressures required considerable coordination in order to maximize productivity and resource utilization. Though she falls short of following the "hydraulic" theory of social organization, Kelly believes that the values of Hawaiian society were "rooted in the efforts of the people to obtain a positive response to energy they devoted to sustenance."

Cash cropping as a major commercial activity began in the early 1840s with coffee. Cattle ranching followed, which increased the acreage of grassland and reduced the remaining forest lands. Exotic plant species then began to establish themselves in large numbers. The corresponding effect on the human population was to force the *kuleana* land owners to abandon their lands because of the high cost of reclaiming such land for more productive use. Consequently, many of them left for the port towns or entered into the labor force of larger land owners.

Recent urbanization of the North Kona area has been of three major types. Commercial property development consists largely of shopping centers, banks, and shops. Resort development, characterized by hotel and condominium construction, has occurred along oceanfront property. Residential subdivisions, on the other hand, are situated upland near major highways. Currently tourism and real estate are the largest commercial activities in North Kona. Indeed, the last twenty years of development have set the pace for the next twenty.

Kelly's work is useful and innovative. She uses interviews with Kona residents to supplement her documentary research, thus adding a new and more human dimension to the historical tableau. What emerges in the end is the domination of land use activities by a few landowners, in both traditional and modern times. While it is readily acknowledged that small farming operations are still dispersed throughout the district, approximately eleven landowners, public and private, still comprise the major estates in the area.

Generally, the Bishop Museum anthropological reports have been dominated by archaeological monographs. While such publications are important, they have been useful primarily to academics. In general this trend has meant that more has been learned about less. Kelly's work, with a handful of others, is a refreshing departure from the rarified and parochial jargon of archaeology.

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