



The Seven Dawns of the Aumakua: The Ancestral Spirit Tradition of Hawaii

Moke Kupihea

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An extensive examination of Hawaiian spiritual tradition and its emphasis on ancestral spirits by a descendant of an ancient lineage of Hawaiian priests

- Describes the time-honored intergenerational bond between a people and a land that embodies the heart of indigenous spirituality
- A powerful and authentic portrait of a culture on the cusp of extinction

In Hawaiian spiritual tradition, the sacred bond formed between the land and its people is perpetuated in every new generation by the voices of the ancestors who pass on this inheritance. Just as elders are the intermediaries between these voices and the younger generations, the *na aumakua*, or ancestral spirits, are the intermediaries between the living and the sacred land they inhabit.

In *The Seven Dawns of the Aumakua* Moke Kupihea takes the reader on his journey from childhood to young manhood as he experiences what remains of the spirit of his ancestors and learns the importance of remembering. The descent of the aumakua and its spiritual link through the eyes, sound, voice, touch, people, and breath constitute its seven dawns--the means by which the author is reawakened to his native tradition.

The author's desire to know this tradition leads him as a young boy to seek out his *kupuna*--his elders, the old men of the mountains--and learn from them the stories to be found in each feature of the landscape. These men and the people he meets as he grows older became his *kahu*--his ancestral guardians--who teach him to understand that the world of ancestral voices still speaks, if only in a whisper. Learning how to hear these voices is the key for returning Hawaii to its proud spiritual path and learning to live mindfully and soulfully with the land and with all who have come before us.

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