

# Contents

FOREWORD by Sandra Ingerman xi

INTRODUCTION i

1 First Encounters 13

2 Makua's Office 33

3 The Bowl of Light 47

4 The Nature of the Self 53

5 The Dreamer 83

6 Makua's Teachings 91

7 The Spiritual Warrior Society 99

8 The Life Roles 113

9 Initiations 133

10 Levels of Reality 153

11 Speaking Woman 167

12 The Ancestral Grand Plan 191

13 The Last Meeting 201

14 Departure 211

15 On Becoming Gods 221

EPILOGUE 241

POSTSCRIPT by Jill Kuykendall 245

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 247

NOTES 249

GLOSSARY 253

RECOMMENDED READING 267

ABOUT THE AUTHOR 271

## Introduction

THIS BOOK IS ABOUT AN unusual and enduring friendship between two male elders. One is among the last authentically initiated native Hawaiian *kahuna* wisdom keepers, a shaman and mystic who became a revered spiritual teacher in his elderhood. He is a warrior descended from a long lineage of chiefs. The other is an American anthropologist born in New York and trained from birth to become a scientist. I am this anthropologist, and we were an unlikely pair given the complexities of the traditional Polynesian *kapu* system of laws governing various aspects of behavior.

The Hawaiian word *kahuna* is a term that implies “mastery,” and more specifically “self-mastery.” The term describes those members of the learned classes of old Polynesia (*tofunga* in Proto-Polynesian) who carried a great wisdom tradition that is thousands of years old and that was much like that of the pre-Christian mystery schools of the Egyptians, the Druids, the Gnostics, and the classical Greeks. In old Hawai‘i, where the flow of primal energies created unparalleled natural beauty, one of the world’s most highly advanced spiritual cultures developed. These Polynesian metaphysical insights still remain largely unknown in the West.

The holders of this ancient wisdom tradition, the *kahuna*, who could be male or female, were taught this mystical knowledge from childhood using a method in which the apprentice underwent many years of arduous training. The wisdom was handed down orally within families who carried particular areas of this knowledge as their *kuleana*—which in Hawaiian means their rights and responsibilities as well as their rightful property, their jurisdiction, and their estate.

In old Hawai'i, there were many different kinds of kahuna—each type with its own specialty area. Kahuna mystics who could directly experience the hidden realms of the spirit world often served as high priests, shamans, and ceremonialists, becoming acknowledged as *kahuna nui* or *kahuna po'o*. And there were also healing kahuna *la'au lapa'au*, who were designated as such because of their great wisdom and high accomplishment as healers and medicine people. In the negative polarity, some kahuna in the past became sorcerers who used rituals, curses, and even prayer to extend harm and suffering toward their intended victims.

As Hawaiian culture and traditional kahuna wisdom were ruthlessly suppressed by Christian missionary activity in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the word *kahuna* became loosely associated with the sorcerer, while the skillful healers and wisdom keepers were largely forgotten. And yet the wisdom traditions of the Hawaiians continued to be quietly preserved and maintained within family lineages, and they still exist today, although the rush toward modern Western culture continues to take its toll.

In recent times, in a world bled of meaning and mystery by our preoccupation with the glitter of our new gadgets, interest in traditional Hawaiian spiritual wisdom has resurged, although there remains little agreement among contemporary Hawaiians of Polynesian ancestry about the meaning of the word *kahuna*. Some have claimed that there are no true kahuna left, while others suggest that any spiritual teacher or leader, whether called priest, shaman, kahuna, *kumu*, *kahu*, or *kupuna*, must live up to the name in substance, for it was always the community who bestowed the title upon the practitioner based upon the practitioner's abilities, which were always directed toward service in their communities.

Accordingly, my trail crossing with the kahuna who is the subject of this book was unexpected to say the least, even unprecedented, and yet the teachings shared in our conversations exceeded my wildest expectations and immeasurably enhanced my life as a scholar and seeker of sacred knowledge.

The Hawaiian word *kapu* (*tapu* in Tahitian and the source of the English word “taboo”) can mean “holy” and “sacred,” “forbidden,” “consecrated,” or “restricted.” It can also imply a sacred

directive, especially if carried by a sacred individual. In regard to the wisdom keepers of old Polynesia, the kahuna wisdom tradition was considered kapu. The sacred spiritual knowledge of the Polynesians was traditionally a hidden knowledge, rarely shared by their kahuna with outsiders as it was (and is) restricted by kapu.

The same restrictions hold true for many aspects of a kahuna elder's lifeway. Because of kapu, kahuna lead their lives differently from more ordinary folk; their path is a narrow one constrained by sacred directives passed down through time from their ancestors.

So allow me to begin by saying something about the two of us—a few words that will convey a sense of our very different cultural origins and levels of upbringing.

### THE KAHUNA

On September 27, 1938, a full-blooded Hawaiian boy was born to Mabel Meipala Pa'aluhi and her husband, Hale Kealohalani Makua, at a place called Pukalehua on the western slope of the great volcano Mauna Loa, high above the coastal community of Ho'okena in the South Kona District of Hawai'i Island. Through his mother's lineage, this boy was a seventh-generation direct descendant of the famous high chief and king Kamehameha Nui—a family line through which he was also a direct descendant of Kamehameha's ancestors High Chief Umi and High Chief Liloa. Through his father's lineage, the boy was a seventh-generation direct descendant of Kamehameha's cousin, the beloved High Chief Keoua Ku'ahu'ula of the district of Ka'u, also on Hawai'i Island. In Polynesia, one's ancestry is everything—it defines people, their social rank, and the personal as well as ancestral power that they carry. So by virtue of this exceptional genealogy, the boy was born a chief and given the name of his father, Hale Kealohalani Makua. A tree was planted above his buried umbilicus at the place of his birth.

Harry Makua, as this is what he was called when he was being raised by his grandparents on the Big Island of Hawai'i before moving to O'ahu to live with his parents, was drawn toward the military from the beginning. He served with the United States Marine Corps and eventually achieved the rank of gunnery

sergeant. Harry Makua was a warrior directly involved in major military conflicts from Beirut in the 1950s to the Vietnam War in the 1970s, where he was severely wounded during his last tour of duty. Upon his father's passing, Harry assumed his father's name, Hale. Because he was kahuna on both sides of his family, he eventually served as the kahu, the honored keeper of an extraordinary body of indigenous Polynesian wisdom.

Hale Makua (pronounced Ha-lay Ma-koo-ah) was a holy man, a kahuna mystic, and a wisdom keeper who was highly regarded throughout the oceanic world of Polynesia and beyond. Makua, as he was generally known, was the council elder, the *Hono 'Ele Makua* of the Hawaiian Spiritual Warrior Society, *Na 'Ao Koa o Pu'ukohola Heiau*, a role in which he presided over many rituals and ceremonies of note. For example, Makua was pivotal in fostering and developing this society in preparation for a seminal event that he helped to create in August 1991 at King Kamehameha's sacred temple (*heiau*) at Pu'ukohola (the Mound of the Whale) near Kawaihae in the South Kohala District on Hawai'i Island.

This event, called *Ho'oku'ikahi* (which means "to stand together as one"), was a conscious ceremony of reunification that brought the descendants of High Chief Kamehameha and High Chief Keoua together once again after two hundred years of separation. Since both of these men were his ancestors, Makua served as one of the *kahuna pule* (masters of chant/prayer), and he officiated at the sacred *'awa* ceremony (the Polynesian sacred drink of communion with the ancestors) that was attended by many indigenous elders from other nations across the oceanic world.

In his responsibility as a kahuna, Makua served as the spiritual adviser for the oceanic voyaging canoe *Makali'i* (named for the constellation of stars known as the Pleiades), as well as for many other cultural groups, including the *haku* (captains) and *ho'okele* (navigators) of other canoes. Further, in the 1980s in Raiatea, Tahiti, he played a pivotal role in the lifting of a seven-hundred-year-old kapu of silence between the many and varied island nations at Taputapuatea, an event that created an opening for deeper connection and enhanced communication between the peoples of the Pacific.

Hale Makua became a revered spiritual teacher in his elder years, and yet due to his genuine humility, he kept a low profile in his native Hawai'i. Makua traveled extensively to speak with many of the Native American nations—and on several occasions he went to Africa to participate as an elder in conferences of the many and diverse indigenous speakers of the world. As an indigenous elder, he was continually invited to many cross-cultural gatherings and international conferences across the years, including the United Nations in New York, where he sat on stage with His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Makua was a member of the International Elders Council in service to humanity and global peace, a council that is still active through the World Indigenous Science Network, of which Makua was one of the founders. Accordingly, he was well known throughout the indigenous world.

The essence of his *mana'o* and his *'ike*, his knowledge and spiritual power, originated from his ancestors, and his teachings emanated from a depth of vision that cultivated each person's individual connections with the inner worlds. In this sense, his shared wisdom reactivated universal attributes found in all people everywhere, through each person's experience and expression of *aloha*—love.

On March 27, 2004, Hale Makua died in an automobile accident near the town of Pahoa in the Puna District on Hawai'i Island. He was sixty-five years old, and his passing barely received mention in the press.

#### THE ANTHROPOLOGIST

I was born in New York City on August 20, 1941, at Harkness Pavilion Hospital on the Upper West Side of Manhattan Island. I was given the name Henry Barnard Wesselman III after my father (the second) and my paternal grandfather (the first), thus carrying on the name of my great-grandfather's friend, the educator Henry Barnard. I have no idea what happened to my umbilicus.

My father was a New York attorney, a member of the Harvard Club and the Metropolitan Club, as well as a member of the board of directors at P. Ballantine & Sons in Newark, New Jersey. While attending Harvard, my father took up fencing and rapidly

advanced to become an East Coast champion. Later he became a member of the American fencing team at the Olympic Games in Berlin in 1936.

My mother, Alice Wade Sholes, known by her nickname Sherry, was a homemaker from a well-known family in Cleveland, Ohio, who would eventually divorce my father, move to California in 1956, change her name to Sarira, and become an artist. On both sides of my family, my ancestors reside in the company of the ruling families of Europe and Britain.

In my early professional life, I studied zoology at the University of Colorado at Boulder, and upon receiving my bachelor's degree in 1964, I moved to Nigeria, where I served in the U.S. Peace Corps and lived among peoples of the Yoruba tribe. There in western Nigeria, I worked as a science teacher in two colleges from 1964 to 1966, and it was there that I first became interested in indigenous spiritual wisdom. I returned to the United States to get a master's degree in zoology at the University of Colorado in 1969, and then I went on to achieve a doctorate in anthropology from the University of California at Berkeley in 1982. My dissertation research was based on my work with an international expedition to southwestern Ethiopia where I was involved in the paleo-environmental reconstruction of early-man sites between two and three million years old through my excavation, recovery, and analysis of microvertebrate fossils. I continue to do this research today.

In addition to being a teacher at the university and college level in many august institutions across the years, I have thus spent much of my life working with an international group of scientists and doing expeditionary fieldwork out in the eroded, ancient landforms of eastern Africa's Great Rift Valley, in search of fossils that have yielded answers to the mystery of human origins. This has allowed me to do research in the laboratories and collections of some of the world's great universities and museums. It has also enabled me to spend substantial parts of my life living with tribal peoples in remote regions rarely visited by outsiders. It was through these experiences that I first encountered traditional shamans.

## OUR FRIENDSHIP

The fact that this Hawaiian elder chose to share much of his knowledge with an anthropologist is unusual to say the least. My exposure to and interest in shamanic cultures was part of the dynamic that allowed a curious bond to develop between me and Makua upon our first meeting. My years spent living with traditional peoples had instilled in me an understanding and acceptance of Makua's indigenously—and Makua was able to sense this familiarity in me. I believe it was this that enabled us to get beyond much of the cultural stuff that creates separation and to form a bridge between us at the soul level—a bridge to which both of us had access.

But there was also another area of common focus that we shared, one that enhanced the bond between us enormously. Because of my work with human prehistory, I, like Makua, was deeply involved with the ancestral field.

When I first met Makua in 1996, I perceived him as a rare and unique man filled with a bounty of esoteric knowledge and kahuna philosophy, enhanced by his great good humor, which he was willing to share with outsiders. As will be revealed in this book, kahuna thought begins with the search for self-realization—with the quest to discover who we are as well as where we are in our journey as souls traveling across time. Possibly thousands of years old, kahuna thought preserves an understanding of human psychology regarding the nature and functioning of the conscious and subconscious aspects of the self that was not equaled in the Western world until the 1960s through the work of Milton Erikson, MD, a renowned psychiatrist.

Right from the start, Makua and I appreciated each other for who and what we were, and as the shifting circumstances of our lives repeatedly brought us together over the years that followed, sometimes for a few hours, sometimes for a few days, we took great delight in each other's company until we came to love each other dearly.

We spent most of the week together just before his passing, and it was in those final hours on the last night of his life that he gave me a gift of immeasurable value—a glimpse into the vast extent of his knowledge of the past, the depth of which was truly staggering.



Over the time that has elapsed since his transition, a time of great loss and great sorrow for those of us who knew him, an impulse has grown steadily within me to write something about my relationship with this unusual man. It's a feeling that comes unexpectedly, much like a directive that arrives with a sense of permission.

At such moments, it is as though the heart connection that was established between us during his life becomes active. His presence becomes palpable, and his thoughts appear in my mind, thus creating a stream of consciousness that closely resembles the talks we had in life. This experience is always accompanied by feelings of tranquility, much like a meditation, and yet it is considerably more than that. I have come to understand, as well as accept, that I seem to have an ongoing and active connection with Makua's spirit—one to which I have access during my dreaming while asleep, as well as during my directed meditations while very much awake.

Accordingly, I begin this narrative with that sense of permission that stems directly from Makua, for on the last night of his life, he and I had an extraordinary conversation that will be explored toward the end of this book. I had asked him for many years to write a book with me, and he had always politely refused—until that last night. Perhaps he foresaw the approach of his own death, but this is part of the story that shall be revealed.

Yet let me affirm here at the start that I had not only his permission to write about him and his teaching, but also his encouragement to do so. We had a plan—one that was being outlined between us and my wife, Jill Kuykendall, on the afternoon of that last day of his life, hopefully one that has been merely sidetracked by his unexpected passing.

Allow me to observe that Makua was not my "teacher" in a formal sense, nor was I his "student." I was already a spiritual teacher when we first met, and so was he. In all humility, we were colleagues—peers as well as age-mates who were deeply involved in our own explorations of the Great Mystery and who openly and joyously shared our discoveries, enabling us to learn from each other. Let me also affirm that this is not a book *about* Hale Makua, for it would be presumptuous for me to assume that level of responsibility. In this regard, I have not included details of Makua's

personal life, nor information about the people with whom he was in relationship. Rather, this is an account of an unusual friendship that developed between two visionaries—a Hawaiian spiritual elder and an American anthropologist who had been drawn into the shamanic worlds of mystery and magic—a relationship that was experienced through an ongoing series of conversations and shared experiences over a period of eight years.

During this time, both Makua and I changed considerably. At the beginning of our friendship, Makua discouraged me from mentioning him by name in my writings, and he would rarely speak on the telephone. Toward the end of his life, our friendship fully established, he had given me permission to use his name as well as that of one of his ancestors in a published book, and he took great delight in having and using his own cell phone.

As I sit with this awareness, let me affirm also that those aspects of Makua's traditional wisdom that are constrained by kapu will not be written here. It was clear to me at the beginning of our friendship that some of the esoteric knowledge of which he was the kahu, the honored caretaker, could only be carried in the oral tradition, on the breath, and could only be passed to others at the right place and time. Makua was aware that I understood this, and this became part of the bond of trust that grew between us across those years.

I am also aware that there are some levels of his knowledge that can be shared, some of his thoughts and insights that are not restricted by traditional kapu. Accordingly, this book includes some of the core teachings and spiritual insights that he offered freely from his great heart to everyone willing to listen, with the intention of contributing to the greater good and to the spiritual growth of his listeners. These teachings revolve around topics such as the kahuna perspective that each one of us possesses not one, but three quite separate souls during life, and that how those three function and come together is essential in understanding the nature of our self. In this regard, I have included a special emphasis on Makua's ideas about the nature of our immortal Oversoul or Higher Self that he called *Aumakua*.

Included in our discussions are his thoughts about the ancestral mysteries, the life roles through which we move during our

embodied existences, and the four bowls of learning from which we all must drink during our time here on Earth. Our conversation about the different levels of reality and how they reflect the different evolutionary levels of our personal soul development is quite unique, as is our extraordinary discussion about the Infinite Source and its role in the formation of the universes as well as ourselves—a talk that occurred on the side of a sacred mountain.

Toward the book's end, something of great significance to all human beings everywhere will be explored from Makua's kahuna perspective: the Ancestral Grand Plan. This is an impulse that was set into motion by the ancestors long ago, a plan that may help us to deal with the challenges we are facing today, a plan that includes guidelines through which each of us may ascend toward the luminous horizon of our individual and collective destiny as souls traveling across eternity. Also, at the end of this book I have included a final conversation that took place between us—a discussion about how we are all in the process of becoming gods, revealing a deeper level of our collective and individual responsibility.

In creating the fabric of the narrative, I have taken the writer's liberty of expressing what was shared between us in colloquial English, upgrading Makua's frequent lapses into pidgin and colorful yet incorrect grammar and syntax, in order to create an ongoing flow of meaning for people who live in the modern, Westernized world. In addition, our conversations often took place in stages, picking up again where they had left off many months before. Accordingly, I have chosen to organize this book around specific topics or events rather than trying to follow a linear chronology of our meetings as they happened. The great challenge for the writer of spiritual knowledge based in direct experience is to get it down and to get it right. Whether or not I will succeed remains to be seen, but with Makua's blessing and encouragement, I have no recourse but to try.

The book that follows thus offers a privileged and intimate view into the mind of a native Hawaiian kahuna who had very few peers. It is drawn from the memories of our times together, and it is therefore a tapestry woven by our spiritual insights and discoveries as well as our thoughts and feelings about those revelations.