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**Publication Date**

2023

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Experiments in Sovereignty:  
Cultivating 'Āina Momona at Waipā

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts  
in Anthropology

by

Amber Kela Chong

2023



## ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Experiments in Sovereignty:  
Cultivating ‘Āina Momona at Waipā

by

Amber Kela Chong

Master of Arts in Anthropology

University of California, Los Angeles, 2023

Professor Jessica Cattelino, Chair

More than a century of U.S. occupation of Hawai‘i has given rise to multifarious forms of resistance and a range of beliefs about the future of Hawaiian sovereignty. On the north shore of Kaua‘i, the tourism industry sustains a long legacy of colonial settlement. The rising numbers of tourists, vacation homes, and landowners from the U.S. continent represent a contemporary iteration of Indigenous dispossession. For 40 years, the Waipā Foundation has fended off real estate developers to maintain the ahupua‘a of Waipā as an outdoor classroom where youth from the region take part in cultivating ‘āina momona (abundant and fertile land). This thesis follows Waipā’s work to engage students in ‘āina stewardship, subsistence traditions, and nourishing communities across Kaua‘i. Whereas the dominative presence of the tourism industry limits the imaginability of a sovereign future, Waipā presents ways of imagining and experiencing sovereignty through its lessons on caring for land and people. Waipā’s sustained and evolving practices of relational caretaking illustrate Hawaiian sovereignty as a continual process of experimentation.

The thesis of Amber Kela Chong is approved.

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2023

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## **Introduction: What Makes Sovereignty Imaginable?**

N is the last of the boys to get out of the water.<sup>1</sup> He trudges out of the shore break, mask still on and snorkel dangling, lugging his buoy with the red and white dive flag, his fins, his speargun, and several brightly colored reef fish hanging from his rig line. The line is carefully threaded through their gills and eye sockets, and I ask him their names as he slides them off and tosses them into a cooler. The other boys cluster around to see the haul; weke, manini, and moano stare back at them with bulging, glazy eyes. Much to the boys' excitement, Kumu (teacher) P has finally decided to take her students spearfishing. The seven wetsuit-clad middle schoolers pack a van to capacity with all their dive gear. They spend the short drive to Hanalei Pier bickering over who among them is the best free diver after O boasted that he could dive down to 30 feet and stay at the bottom for 10 seconds.

“I can do 35! And 15 seconds,” E claims.

“Brah, no way! You're tripping,” R calls out. He turns around to peer over his seat at N. “I do 45 [feet]. How much can you do?”

N shrugs, “60.” From the driver's seat, Kumu P reminds the group that everyone needs to pair up with a dive buddy before we get in the water. At once, several voices call dibs on N. The moment that the van is parked, the boys hurtle out the door and charge toward the sea. Kumu P calls out a frantic warning not to point the spearguns at one another while the boys gear up in the sand, each showing a different level of familiarity and experience. She keeps an eye on O, who fixes a weight belt around his waist—his mom had texted her that morning asking her to make sure he only uses two pounds. C has forgotten his snorkel but begs her to let him go out anyways. She says fine, so long as he stays close to me or her as we paddle out alongside them on our surfboards.

It is a sublime summer day: sky cloudless, balmy air so still it feels like it's holding you, water so glassy that you can see the exact contours of the shelf where the reef drops into the channel and tell the species of the fish darting around below. The scene itself seems like it should dissipate all stress, but lifeguard duty means keeping track of seven heads and how long each of them spends underwater. There's a rhythm to this anxiety, which subsides each time they come up for air then again intensifies with every minute in between, or else surges whenever a boat glides into the channel and I rush to herd them out of its path. The quiet held by the middle of the bay is disturbed only by those moments of boat-dodging, and by the heads that sporadically pop out of the water with a triumphant cheer and a fish-adorned spear shaft. Only N surfaces silently, before submerging once more for minutes at a time. Fish pile up on the line strung around his buoy. The floating bounty trails behind him on the swim back to shore, slick scales shimmering in the midday sun.

“Look! Lobster!” He reappears nearby and shows me a large, wiggling Hawaiian spiny lobster. A few of the boys overhear and swim over to check it out. I watch N turn over its spiky blue and tawny body to inspect its underside for eggs—local regulations prohibit divers from taking females. No eggs, but he dives back down to return it to the reef. He emerges a moment later, and R right behind him. N spits out his snorkel. “Why'd you shoot it? It's not lobster season!” R retrieves his spear from the reef with a scowl and leaves its body behind. On the beach, Kumu P scolds him for the wasteful killing while N mumbles that you can't harvest lobsters from May through August. Lobster season is “only the months that have r in it.”

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This spearfishing trip was one of my many excursions with Kumu P and her students during my work with the Waipā Foundation. The foundation's summer youth program—often just called “Program”—operates out of the ahupua'a (wedge-shaped land division) of Waipā, located on the north shore of Kaua'i. Here, the foundation also cultivates lo'i kalo (wetland taro terraces), vegetable

gardens, agroforests, and an array of ecological restoration sites. Places like Waipā grow increasingly rare, as do the possibilities for land-based learning and ‘āina momona (fertile and abundant land) that Waipā offers. The tourism industry’s propagation of luxury vacation homes and other unfurling corporate development projects continue to transform the surrounding region into what Kumu P describes as an “adult Disneyland.” At Waipā, on the other hand, “[students] get to experience everything. It’s pretty much the only fully functioning ahupua‘a that has access to ocean and mountain resources...Some places only get taro, some places only get fish. Over here, you can get whatever you like.”

For her students, accessing ocean resources entails more than just catching fish. The importance of learning to spearfish, and of knowing and teaching one another what *not* to spear, reemerged when I spoke with Aunty W, N’s mother, a few weeks later. We sat on a beach in Hā‘ena, a few ahupua‘a west of Waipā, while N and his younger brother were out diving. As she explained her determined effort to recover the title to her family’s land, the conversation shifted into the topic of political sovereignty in Hawai‘i. “What do you teach your kids about sovereignty?” I asked.

I teach my kids that that is not America. We are not American...For them, I think their biggest lessons are learning how to live off the land. Take care of the land, and the land will take care of you...I teach them small lessons like: we only take what we need for our refrigerator. You take that life and give it respect. Never let something suffer. We never waste the life that we take. They know what size of fish and things to take that would make sense in their reproduction. They know the uhu—they don’t take the blue uhu’s. The different sizes of pāpio to ‘ōmilu to ulua, to not always take the biggest one...They learn seasons of the lobsters...Sometimes all those rules don’t apply; you have to take your own observations...If there isn’t that many, then maybe we don’t take at all...And that’s our food sovereignty. But as we get closer to our own sovereignty, and what that looks like to us, I think it’s been taken for so long that it’s almost unimaginable. We have to try to make it a possibility.

What makes sovereignty imaginable? What precludes its imaginability? These questions remained with me throughout the rest of my work and led to a trail of further inquiry. What is the relationship between the imaginability and the possibility of sovereignty? And what do these have to do with

lobsters and fish, subsistence practices, or ecological caretaking? Must one imagine their sovereignty *before* they can locate any possibility of becoming sovereign? Or, might creating resource abundance, and other material conditions of possibility for sovereignty, also be a process of rendering it imaginable?

Aunty W's assertion that "We are not American" resonates with that voiced by Haunani-Kay Trask in the now famous speech she gave on the hundred-year anniversary of the U.S. overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom. Trask (1993) tells her audience: "We will die as Hawaiians. We will never be Americans. I am here to explain what sovereignty is. Sovereignty, as many people say, is a feeling...No. Sovereignty is government...It is political power. It is politics." Activist and academic discourses of Hawaiian sovereignty are rife with paradoxes and geopolitical peculiarities born of ongoing settler colonial incursion and an equally durative refusal thereof. Predominant factions of Hawaiian sovereignty activism include kingdom nationalists seeking to restore the overthrown monarchy, as well as advocates for a Native Hawaiian governing entity (NHGE) within the U.S. federal system akin to domestic-dependent Indigenous nations. Yet, J. Kēhaulani Kauanui (2018) criticizes how the structural transformations that each of these movements pursue emulate the present occupying state's ideals of the Westphalian nation state, along with its tenets of territorial integrity and liberal rights. Scholars of sovereignty illustrate the limits of statist orientations, explicating the incongruity between citizen subjectivities produced by nation state's dictates of legal recognition and Indigenous peoples' "lived cultural process of citizenship formation in the context of a nation-in-being" (A. Simpson 2000, 115). Theorists in this field note the limitations of Foucauldian notions of sovereignty exercised through state regimes of biopower, and those of Taiaiake Alfred's (2002) framing of sovereignty as an intrinsically colonial construct incommensurate with Indigenous political relations (Moreton-Robinson 2015; Barker 2005). Some have problematized the conflation

of sovereignty with autonomous authority over territory and citizenry, finding the complex interdependencies of Indigenous polities and state entities more descriptive of the political realities of sovereignty, and of the violence of colonial governance (Cattelino 2023; Karuka 2019). Further work considers the alternative modes of recognition and reciprocal obligations to lands, waters, other-than-human beings, and ancestors through which Indigenous people conceptualize and enact nationhood outside the model of statehood (TallBear 2019; Moreton-Robinson 2015; Coulthard 2014). As this literature shows, Indigenous sovereignty diverges conceptually and structurally from the sovereignty of the nation state. Moreover, Indigenous peoples' deeply rooted, intricate, and dynamic modes of reciprocity with place and other life forms challenge attempts to give sovereignty a singular meaning.

In my own ethnographic research, the visions of alternative political futures that I encountered within a relatively small community shared the vastness of sovereignty orientations found in scholarship. Some imagine the creation of an independent nation state as a requisite for political power. Others see sovereign nation statehood as not only possible, but already existent in the illegally occupied Hawaiian Kingdom. To some, however, political sovereignty lies beyond possibility. As Uncle S, one of Waipā's founders, explained:

Hawai'i has always wrestled with political sovereignty, because we didn't choose to become a part of America. We were just *made* a part of America... You know, I don't think I think it is going to happen... I mean, if you look at how Hawai'i is so strategic, in so many ways, America would never allow us to have it. I don't think we can get our sovereignty back. It was taken from us and they're holding it. It's too valuable.

Still others seek non-statist possibilities for reclaiming political power from the occupying state, noting the challenges imagined along a pathway to nation statehood. D is one of the leaders of Waipā's 'āina stewardship team and the kumu of the youth program's 5th grade group. Within her

perspective, the complexities of potential nation statehood shift focus toward changing on-the-ground conditions, and freedom is framed instead as a feeling to be found in the present.

I don't think that having a sovereign Hawaiian nation is the end all be all...Just knowing how big the United States government is, and knowing how long our people have fought for sovereignty...and knowing that it would take so much to get there...And technically, because the Hawaiian Kingdom is still an active kingdom and we're a nation that's occupied, all land sale is null and void. So I can imagine that if Hawai'i was to be a sovereign nation in actuality again, that it would have a lot of land repatriation...I would be really interested to see what that would look like. And I also know that it would create a huge amount of conflict and resistance and fear and potential violence...The hope aspect, for me, is continuing to live as best as I can within the structures of this oppressive system, while still fighting to not have this be the lived reality, but not having my freedom be limited by the end goal.

Notably, none of the Indigenous residents whom I spoke to explained the (un)attainability of Hawaiian sovereignty in terms of the temporal span of U.S. occupation (i.e. "it's been gone for over a century; it's too late").<sup>2</sup> Nor did any of them subscribe to narratives of Hawai'i's geopolitical vulnerability and its inevitable domination by other nations. Both of these are popular in broader discourses of Hawaiian politics—particularly the latter, as Auntie W observes: "So much is said to us, like, 'if America didn't take [Hawai'i], China would have taken over. Japan would have taken over. *Then* where would you be?' I mean, the logic isn't right. Like, if I didn't steal your kid, someone else would steal your kid. That's not good logic." Unlike these commonplace understandings of Hawaiian sovereignty and stances on its infeasibility, indeed, whose "logic isn't right," the sovereignty orientations encompassed in this work are not premised solely on historically located events, claims, or hypotheticals. Rather, they are shaped and reshaped by affective experiences, embodied practices, and material conditions of the present. Perhaps sovereignty is not a feeling alone, yet its politics are "steeped in visceral convictions" (Kauanui 2018, 198). People *feel* varying degrees of imaginability and possibility.

Scholars and activists in Hawai‘i have found in the Hawaiian word *ea* (life, breath, sovereignty) a theory of political power that foregrounds allegiance to land over a governing body. *Ea* grounds citizenship and belonging in relations built through continual acts of caretaking and land stewardship: “Like breathing, *ea* cannot be achieved or possessed; it requires constant action day after day, generation after generation” (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua 2014, 4). In *ea*, sovereign nationhood is reconceptualized as an intergenerationally sustained practice of reciprocal belonging. It allows an alternative to the settler politics of recognition, whereby engagement with the elements of place determine “whether *the earth will recognize us*” (Fujikane 2021, 7). This illustration of political identity recalls Aunty W’s account of what it looks like to “get closer to our own sovereignty” and the interconnections she drew between food, practices of caring for lands and waters, and the work of teaching sovereignty. In light of her lessons on sovereignty, this work explores how those interconnections materialize at Waipā, as well as what they make both imaginable and possible.

### ***A Note on Methods***

“I’m not an educator. I weed-whack for a living,” Kumu D said to me several times throughout the summer. The affinity between those roles felt most evident on the day that she patiently taught me how to use a weed-whacker. I put this knowledge to use before every festival or wedding at Waipā, after the lawnmower had cleared the field for the tents, tables, and celebrants and left irregular patches along the edges for us to cut back. When reading back through my notes and transcripts, I find that manual labor, physical presence, and lessons on care are melded together everywhere. Care begins with the body’s presence, and in the relations to place felt in one’s *na‘au*. “What I learned from my grandmother, from my *kūpuna*,” Kumu D explained, “was the concept of *na‘au*, which is your gut intuition. It’s the way that your physical body feels when in place.” The

physical labor of caretaking emerges from being in relation to place, which she expressed as a corporeal experience of connection:

It's the wind. It's the elements. It's being present in your physical body knowing that your ancestors surround you, and that you can do a good deed and nobody needs to see it for it to be good...[It's] the goodness that you feel when you do that, and when your na'au is being connected to place... You can feel the wind, and you can be congratulated, in essence, by everything around you, for being present.

When I recall the practices of care that Kumu D led me through—cutting back overgrown grass, or bleaching the sickle blade before harvesting each banana bunch to prevent illness from moving between trees—physical presence often entailed continual action. The feeling of caretaking relations was found in repeated motions, to be picked up again the following week when the grass had grown back or new bananas had ripened. Moments of stillness further emphasized the constant motion of the landscape—the drifting wisps of cloud and refreshing sprinkles of summer rain, or the steady gush of the 'auwai. My understanding of care and relationality were formed through the movement of my own body, and of the elements surrounding it, and so my research methodology became an immensely physical process of learning.

Linda Tuhiwai Smith's seminal *Decolonizing Methodologies* charts a research agenda for Indigenous self-determination through oceanic metaphor and Maori epistemology, invoking tidal representations of “movement, change, process, life, inward and outward flows of ideas, reflections and actions” (1999, 116). Smith illustrates her research agenda as a diagram resemblant of a compass, locating *mobilization* as one of the cardinal directions in which to guide research methods and practices. As she qualifies, mobilization at various scales—the local, national, regional, and global—is a process rather than an end. It is a means of moving toward *self-determination*, the words inscribed at the center of the compass and the predominant goal of

the research agenda that it depicts. Throughout my own work, the mobilization of people was most visible on an even smaller scale: the corporeal. How might self-determination be found and felt through movement itself? What does the body know about sovereignty?

Day to day, much of my own learning happened on the move. The land and those I worked with shared their knowledge with me by teaching me to be present in places, to tune into sensory experiences, and to take part in caring for those places. My mornings usually began with a bike ride to water the mauka (upland) garden, then back down to the big field for Program. In its lessons on the physicality of care, Waipā also teaches that body and land meet at a wavering boundary. Each day of the youth program begins with morning oli (chants), through which students greet the land and ask for permission to enter. As Kumu D explained to her group of students: “When we die, our bodies go into the ground, and we become everything that you see around you now. This is the place of the ancestors. All places are. That’s why we oli.” My understanding of care and relationality were formed through experiences of the body, and of the elements and beings surrounding it. And so, this research became an immensely physical process of learning.

From morning until mid-afternoon, Program kept me in constant motion—especially my time with Kumu P’s group. Waipā’s five-week summer youth program enrolls around 80 Kindergarten through 8th grade students. The program principally serves Native Hawaiian youth and others with generational roots in the region.<sup>3</sup> Kindergarteners through 5th graders are grouped by grade level, and 6th-8th graders are split by gender identity into two groups. I spent most days with Kumu P’s 6th-8th grade boys, joining their various excursions and helping her to facilitate lessons and activities. Although the group’s focus over the summer aligned with my research interest in subsistence traditions, my role in the program was originally due to the fact

that, since the younger groups' kumu were each assigned high school-age alakai'i (leaders), this was where extra assistance was deemed most useful. During this time, educators, Waipā's staff and volunteers, parents, and other north shore residents shared their insights with me over the course of the 39 interviews I conducted. Many of these interviews folded physical presence and motion into verbal exchanges of knowledge. They took place around Waipā's grounds, on nearby beaches, and, in some cases, on the move as kūpuna took me to see the places in their stories. I quote many at length throughout this work, in the hopes of reflecting their knowledge rather than refracting it. Though not all of my interviews are directly referenced here, each of the perspectives generously offered to me has guided the direction and commitments of this project and has left me with the questions that steer my continuing research in the region.

Outside of the youth program, I wore many hats during my three months at Waipā, as do many who work in community organizing spaces. I camped on-site throughout the summer, and thus remained on-call to ensure that the soil of the lettuce beds was damp at all times. I learned to harvest kalo (taro) from the Waipā 'āina crew, and to make it into poi (cooked and pounded taro corms) from the kūpuna who gathered every Poi Day. I got to drive around in the Mule collecting bananas, soursop, sweet potatoes, and other produce from the teeming forests, orchards, and gardens to deliver to Aunty B in the kitchen, or to load into the community fridge. It is a privilege to have been trusted with these tasks, to have been granted the patience and guidance of all who instructed me, and to have been given the chance to be with this 'āina. A couple of kūpuna shared with me the proverb, "ma ka hana ka 'ike," through doing one learns, which encapsulates both the pedagogical approach of the youth program and the methodological approach of this research. The astounding capacities of the 'āina-land, or more precisely translated, that which feeds—are best learned by taking part in feeding, nourishing, and

caretaking. The physicality of learning through movement, embodiment, sensation, and *doing* distinguishes Waipā from other educational environments. R alternately described it as a difference between *kumu* and *teacher*, or between *Hawaiian stuff* and *school stuff*, as Kumu P attempted to gather the group so they could finish crafting the three-pronged spears used to catch prawns in the stream.

“When you become kumu, teachers–” she began.

“Kumu and teacher is different,” R interrupted.

“Why?” I asked, as Kumu P continued trying to rally everyone.

“Kumu teaches Hawaiian–the stuff we do here. And teacher does other school stuff,” he explained.

“You don’t do Hawaiian stuff at school?”

“No. Not at my school. Not anymore.”

“Did you used to?” R responded with a shrug then returned to the other boys and the decidedly more interesting task of spear-making, reiterating that Program is a place for hands-on projects, catching prawns, and the other modes of experiential learning that Waipā makes possible.

It is with some irony then, that this work, which so extremely represents “school stuff,” hopes to reflect the ways of knowing that were inscribed in and built through the boys’ perpetual motion, their active presence, and their commitment to learning by doing. Like the broader levels of mobilization found in Smith’s illustration, the corporeal yields the potential to move toward new scales of self-determination. As well, it presents another way of understanding *movements* for Indigenous sovereignty. Through and beyond social research, the body’s methods of observing and knowing places allow for acts of loving and protecting those places. The continual

praxis of love and protection, Aunty W says, is also one of taking back land and moving toward sovereignty. It is one that must be learned, which is why Waipā matters for youth, for ‘āina, and for their interdependent futures.

[Waipā] teaches our own children to love and respect the land, and their kuleana—their part in protecting. Taking our kids back to the land and teaching them about places—huaka‘i—is so important, because if they love it, I believe they will protect it. But if you don’t know it...you don’t have that love for it...For our parents, the rat race of just trying to make money and provide was part of that system to be able to take what people have. But I think that the kids are now taking them back...They *know* these places, these places they love. So now, when they come to bomb and destroy...my kids are growing up with a love and a connection to this place, so that they’ll be able to rise up and say ‘no, because we love it.’ When you love something, you protect it like you love and protect your children.

Native people are not the only ones who hold this kuleana, or who carry the responsibility to love and protect these places. Waipā teaches many others to do so, including its non-Native Program students. With a few exceptions, the people I interviewed identified as Native Hawaiian, as did many of the people I worked with in Program and throughout my other responsibilities at Waipā. Some were lineal descendants of places on Kaua‘i, some were of other islands, and some had roots spread across the islands. Of the exceptions was V, the 3rd graders’ kumu, who described herself and her family as “generational settlers” from Japan. I asked about her term—how many generations make a generational settler? To her, it didn’t refer to an exact number but to a family history that traced back to “plantation days”—that is, one that traced back to ancestors who worked in Hawai‘i’s plantations. “But definitely pre-overthrow,” she added. I borrow her term to identify myself as a Chinese and Japanese generational settler on O‘ahu, where six prior generations from my father’s side have lived. The earlier generations worked in the sugar plantations, like the other several hundred thousand Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, Puerto Rican, Okinawan, and Portuguese migrants brought to Hawai‘i by the industry’s indentured labor system.

In different ways and to different extents, many of their descendants today feel the impacts of tourism and development discussed throughout the following sections. Many of us are intimately aware of the colonial power that these signal. At the same time, for many of us, the historical consolidation of that power has directly led to enfranchisement and socioeconomic advantage. Like Trask tells us, this leaves “settlers of color” and other non-Native people with “the question that needs to be answered every day...the one posed in the old union song, ‘which side are you on?’” (2000, 21). Her question presents the choice of confronting the violences of settler occupation, and, as Candace Fujikane writes, thus opens up “a world in which we can choose to identify with the lāhui [Hawaiian Nation]” (2021, 13). And yet, generational settlers’ ancestral ties to Hawai‘i are of a different form than Indigenous peoples’ genealogical roots here. The descendants of these lands thus experience the threat and the fallout of dispossession, desecration, and disconnection in ways that settlers—generational or otherwise—do not, and in ways that we may not fully fathom. It’s one thing to have had family here since plantation days, Kumu V said, “but you have families who are ancestrally tied here through *countless* generations...That’s something that even me as a generational settler will never be able to understand.”

This work is not an effort to take stock of the many dimensions of loss effected by contemporary colonial settlement on the north shore. Nor is it illustrative of all the dimensions of Native Hawaiians’ resistance, of Hawaiian sovereignty as it exists now, or of the sovereignty that is to come. I offer no attempt of my own to define “sovereignty,” present or future, nor a pathway between the two. In Trask’s words: “Simply put, ‘Native’ sovereignty is impossible when non-Natives determine the process” (10). Although “Experiments in Sovereignty” very much asks about sovereignty and the forms in which it is felt, envisioned, and found, I dwell

more so upon the relational obligations that bring to life certain worlds of abundance, nourishment, and care, with the hope of bringing other political worlds closer in sight. This work is, too, an obligation to the lands I grew up on, to the lands where my research now takes place, and to those who have cared for these lands, indeed, for countless generations.

### ***Outline of the Sections***

In the first section, “‘What Wasn’t Taught to Me’: A Timeline of Dispossession,” I follow the historical emergence of private property in Hawai‘i to pinpoint how these processes constrained Kanaka Maoli communities’ access to lands, waters, and resources. This review of literature sketches out the ahupua‘a and property systems of land tenure and describes the mechanisms and scale of Indigenous peoples’ historical dispossession. I then shift focus toward the contemporary processes of dispossession and loss of access induced by Hawai‘i’s tourism industry. I bring accounts from residents of Kauai‘i’s north shore to depict the experiences produced by tourism in this locale, which has been inundated by ultra-wealthy vacation homeowners—particularly since the Covid-19 pandemic. As I show through these perspectives, the tourism industry’s escalating scale of development and dispossession drastically alter the physical and social landscape in ways that circumscribe the imaginability of alternative political and economic conditions. Lastly, I give a very brief overview of Hawai‘i’s public education system with attention to the ways in which state education policy, too, delimits Indigenous land access. Within this more expansive context of constrained educational self-determination, I discuss the purpose and value that north shore residents see in Waipā as a community-based education program, as well as in the ‘āina-based learning model it provides.

The second section, “Land Police v. Hunters v. Pigs,” dives into *State v. Palama* (2015). In this case, the Hawai‘i Intermediate Court of Appeals designated feral pig hunting as a traditional

practice of Native Hawaiians, thereby granting Kānaka Maoli the right to access undeveloped properties for hunting purposes. Through this momentous ruling that recognized Indigenous peoples’ “traditional and customary” rights enshrined in the State Constitution, I examine the implications of the access rights framework installed through propertization. As I argue, the law produces restrictions on both the concept and exercise of access even when it extends access rights. I delve into the construction of “tradition” within legal discourse by analyzing the court’s criteria for authenticating Indigenous traditional practices, so as to call attention to the colonial logics and tropes of “ancient Hawaiians” that shape the legality of access and reinforce the state’s authority over Hawaiian lands and people. I draw upon other theories of access as an ability and as a reciprocal relationship with place to highlight the relationalities and processes that exceed the conceptual boundaries of access rights, and that such boundaries are reconfigured to contain. I consider representations of the feral pig—a prominent figure among Hawai‘i’s invasive species—to discuss the rhetoric of natural resource conservation through which the state rationalizes its control over interspecies relationalities. This section stands apart from the others methodologically, with its grounding in court documents from *Palama* and its train of precedents, as well as geographically, through the case’s focus on west Kaua‘i. Nonetheless, by investigating how the rigid definitions of tradition and access are developed within the state’s structure of legal rights, the section considers the conditions that court victories may make possible for Kānaka Maoli, and at the same time explores the limitations of “the reliance on ‘rights’ as the cipher for analyzing Indigenous sovereignty” (Moreton-Robinson 2015, 127). Thus, it works to understand how the law imagines land access and Indigenous traditions in ways that restrict possible practices thereof.

The third section, “Providah: Pig Hunting and Other Lessons on Abundance,” returns to Waipā, where Kumu P’s group hunts feral pigs in the back of the valley. I trace how the dual

practices of subsistence and land stewardship encompassed in pig hunting offer a different understanding of Indigenous tradition. I also take account of the historical relationship between people and pigs in Hawai‘i and consider the implications for conceptualizations of access premised upon the interconnections between land, humans, and other-than-human beings. I look to the youth program’s lessons on ecological caretaking inherited in its teaching of subsistence practices and argue throughout this section that they together comprise a tradition of cultivating abundance, one that remains critical to contending with the economic pressures and widespread dispossession that make living in the region increasingly unfeasible.

To understand the connection between the erosion of Indigenous land access and that of abundance, I reiterate the logics and processes that facilitate dispossession—this time, to explicate their ramifications for Hawai‘i’s food system. In particular, I draw out the relationship between property relations and the projection and production of scarcity in order to locate the historical factors of the islands’ near-total reliance on imported goods. Climate disasters and global emergencies like the Covid-19 pandemic augment the widespread feelings and experiences of precarity among Hawai‘i residents, yet I analyze the more fundamental ideological structures and aspects of political economy that generate the circumstances for this precarity. I then discuss Waipā’s past and present mission of cultivating abundance in the land, or ‘āina momona, weaving together the stories, insights, and pedagogies that sustain traditions of land stewardship. I offer an account of Waipā’s history, the struggle of local farmers on the north shore to prevent residential development in the ahupua‘a, and the non-proprietary relationality that remains at the center of how kūpuna and other educators honor their obligations as stewards. Despite the impermanence of their legal access to land due to lack of ownership, they describe a permanence that instead lies in these

obligations, in the intergenerational transmission of caretaking traditions, and in a perpetual process of belonging.

In the fourth and final section, “Not Pissing Around,” I illustrate the stakes of these lessons on abundance and belonging. As I discuss in the prior section, Hawai‘i’s incorporation into the world’s wealthiest nation has ironically produced food insecurity at a structural level. For many, food is increasingly unaffordable, and, in the event of climate disaster, altogether unavailable. I recount the storm that hit the north shore in 2018, which broke U.S. rainfall records and left behind massive floods. The floods revealed, on one hand, the import of residents’ practices of subsistence and caretaking, and on the other, the burden placed on them by the region’s large tourist population. The resilience engendered through their abilities and relations resists the narratives of inevitable loss that mark portrayals of both apocalyptic climate change and tourism industry development. I conclude by describing the abundance that Waipā sustains outside of these times of emergency. Its food justice project creates vital relational networks by bringing multiple generations together to produce and distribute an enormous amount of poi each week. In doing so, it also nourishes communities on an immense scale. I end by reflecting on the labor of nourishment, and on the political worlds that food sovereignty and the creation of abundance might bring into being.

Understanding Indigenous sovereignty beyond statecraft demands attention to what *more* Indigenous movements for sovereignty pursue beyond a reassemblage of existing political architectures, with the knowledge that some of the futures sought after are not yet imaginable. Sovereignty is experimentation. I asked Aunty S, the Waipā Foundation’s Executive Director: “What does sovereignty look like as a set of living conditions?”

I don’t know. I think that’s what we’re trying to discover here. To me, this is our physical movement in that direction. I don’t have that energy, time, or brainpower to invest in things that you never know if they’re gonna happen or not. But this is what we can do: this is taking a piece of Hawaiian land and creating what we think should be created here. And preserving

our values, and living them, and sharing them, and having eventually a living community. How do you create that? This is, in a sense, creating that model. But it's all experimentation. All along the way is experimentation, you know? We can talk about it all day long, but somebody's got to experiment with it. And that's what Waipā is...It's just a big living experiment."

## 1. “What Wasn’t Taught to Me”: A Timeline of Dispossession

The work of reclaiming land entails a reclamation of its history. Of the lessons she shares with her children about sovereignty, Auntie W says: “I teach them what wasn’t taught to me. We were not given our history. So I feel like they’re that much farther ahead, by knowing...what the illegal overthrow was, and how we continue to fight to take back what’s ours.” The history of land tenure systems in Hawai‘i is complex and critically shaped by colonial expropriation, as is the current system. This section offers a broad historical overview of Hawai‘i’s political economy and its impacts on the conversion of land tenure systems through propertization. Indigenous Studies literature on the production of property presents foundational understandings for the study of contemporary expropriation and the modes of dispossession largely driven by tourism in Hawai‘i. I tie into this scholarship residents’ perspectives on the tourism industry and development on Kaua‘i to illustrate the particular dimensions of dispossession on the north shore, as well as the experiences and living conditions that dispossession produces for Kānaka Maoli. In recent decades, this region has seen a proliferation of vacation homes, the construction and sale of which have driven up property taxes and made housing increasingly unaffordable. The prevalence and impacts of these residential developments have been exacerbated since the Covid-19 pandemic, a pattern that residents attribute to the new popularity of remote telework in high-earning occupational sectors. The logic of possession operative throughout this timeline is central to the following section, which examines Indigenous peoples’ legal rights to land and resource access.

To conclude this section, I focus on another dimension of Auntie W’s premise. *What* was (or still isn’t) taught about Hawaiian history is one problem. Another is *how* this history remains untaught, and more extensively, the marginality and eschewment of Indigenous knowledge

within Hawaiian education. Hawai‘i’s public school system is the only one in the U.S. in which Indigenous students are the largest demographic, representing over a quarter of enrollment (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua 2013). Without diving too deeply into state and federal policy, I note some of the major constraints on Hawaiian self-determination in schools and their dispossessive implications. In conjunction with the private property regime, the settler state’s education policy regime further limits Indigenous access to land within and through Hawai‘i’s public school system. Normative education models thus serve an integral function within processes of dispossession. In light of this, I end by highlighting the significance of Waipā’s community-based program within Hawai‘i’s educational landscape, as well as the pedagogical possibilities that this land holds.

### *The Ahupua‘a*

Many noted throughout my research that maintaining Waipā as an “intact” or “fully functional” ahupua‘a is vital to preserving land access and to teaching practices of ecological stewardship. Prior to the institution of private property, Hawai‘i’s land tenure system divided each moku (island) into moku (districts, also called moku o loko, or ‘islands within’), and each moku into ahupua‘a (Kauanui 2018). The wedge-shaped ahupua‘a were demarcated by boundaries that generally followed the ridgelines of valleys, such that each ahupua‘a stretched from mauka to makai (mountains to sea). As Fujikane describes, these divisions also reflected knowledge of the ecological continuities that allowed for resource abundance in the ahupua‘a:

The clouds water the mountaintops with rains that travel down in streams; then the Kanaka-built ‘auwai [irrigation canals] carry some of the stream water to lo‘i kalo (terraced taro pondfields) and then return the water from the lo‘i to the stream, now enriched with the nutrients from the lo‘i kalo. These enriched waters travel down to the muliwai (estuaries), where the mixing of fresh and saltwaters provides nurseries for the pua (baby fish) cultivated in the fishponds that open into the seas. Water vapor from

ocean waters and aero- sol particulates from wave action against the coastlines then seed new clouds to recharge the hydrological cycle (2021, 20).

Further, systems of political rule and land tenure were historically co-constituted. The ruling ali'i (high chiefs) of the islands appointed konohiki (local-level chiefs) to oversee each ahupua'a. Konohiki served as supervisors "for both physical and spiritual tasks to ensure the prosperity and abundance of an ahupua'a" (Vaughan 2018, 58). Their role involved establishing fishing and harvesting regulations, distributing resources, collecting offerings, and instituting collective work projects. As well, konohiki drew upon the knowledge of maka'āinana (common people, eyes of the land), looking to farmers and fishers' expertise of various areas and resources to inform their rulings.

The translation of maka'āinana, eyes of the land, reflects the profound knowledge that 'ohana (families) living within each ahupua'a developed over generations of cultivating the same land. Davianna Pōmaika'i McGregor (2007) notes that their roots in the land often dug deeper than those of ali'i, who could be overthrown or lose their lands through war, and konohiki, who could be replaced when a new ali'i came to power. The intimate knowledge maka'āinana had of their homeland was therefore critical to maintaining a level of abundance. Through this shared knowledge and relational structure, the ahupua'a system evolved over centuries according to common subsistence practices so as to ensure access to each resource zone:

The 'ohana was afforded access to all the resources within the ahupua'a necessary for survival—vines, timber, thatch, and medicinal plants from forested mountain areas; sloping land for sweet potatoes and crops that require higher altitudes; low-lying lands irrigated by stream waters for taro and fresh water; and shoreline, reef, and ocean areas for fish, limpids, crustaceans, and seaweed, the principal sources of protein for Hawaiians (26).

This structure of land use was retained after the Hawaiian Kingdom was formed in 1810 by Kamehameha I, the first mō'ī (Crown), through a succession of battles to unify the archipelago

under his rule.<sup>4</sup> The ahupua‘a system remained primary through the arrival of Europeans in 1778 and American missionaries in 1820, until the introduction of property law in 1848.

### ***The Māhele***

The Māhele, often translated as *divide*, instituted a system of private property ownership throughout the Hawaiian Kingdom. The sweeping process of enclosure was initiated in 1848 with the partition of lands among the mō‘ī , ali‘i , and konohiki . The mō‘ī, Kamehameha III, then divided his 2.5 million acres allocation into Crown and Government lands (Kelly 1980). The 1.5 million acres of Government lands could be claimed by maka‘āinana under the Kuleana Act of 1850, which allowed them to apply for fee-simple title to land that they cultivated or lived on. Settlers as well were granted the ability to purchase land in fee simple, following the Resident Alien Act of 1850. This transition in land tenure was inaugurated by King Kamehameha III as well as by the American Calvinist missionaries that comprised the vast majority of settlers during that period. The stability of land possession codified by the Resident Alien Act served the economic interests of the missionary establishment, which operated the plantations, shipping lines, and other businesses encompassed in Hawai‘i’s growing sugar industry (Kame‘eleihiwa 1992).

Despite its intent of securing their land claims in perpetuity, the Kuleana Act granted maka‘āinana title to less than one percent of Hawaiian lands, though they comprised over 99% of Hawai‘i’s population (Kelly 1980).<sup>5</sup> However, more recent historical research demonstrates how maka‘āinana regained lands throughout the late 19th century, noting cases of ali‘i redistributing their lands among maka‘āinana (Beamer & Tong 2016). In other cases, maka‘āinana purchased lands independently or else formed hui (assemblages, unities) in order to obtain crown and

government lands through royal patent grants, to create co-tenancies, and to reestablish communal land use (Vaughan 2018; Andrade 2008; Linnekin 1983). In contrast, the roughly 200 claims registered by settlers and their further land purchases thereafter consolidated property ownership among this demographic. A century later, 78.6% of privately held land in Hawai‘i was controlled by eighteen landowners, each with over 20,000 acres (Kelly 1980). These major landowners included a consortium of five sugar planters and businesses known as the “Big Five” and, although the plantation economy was overtaken in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century by foreign competition entering into increasingly global markets, those maintain control of vast swaths of Hawai‘i’s lands today (Suryanata & Lowry 2016).

Construed as a manifestation and facilitator of colonial incursion from one perspective, and, from another, an effort to preserve Kanaka Maoli families’ access their ancestral homelands through perfect title, the Māhele remains a matter of historical debate. Some historians have defined the Māhele as the imposition of a Western legal framework of private property that dismembered Indigenous peoples’ access to lands once held in common, in conjunction with networks of social and ecological relations embedded within superseded land tenure patterns (Osorio 2002). Others contend that, rather than a Western imposition, the Māhele marked the establishment of a “hybrid land ownership system” that adopted select European legal conventions while codifying other forms of Indigenous customary land usage (Beamer & Tong 2016). Through this amalgamation, Kamehameha III sought to preserve his peoples’ land access in perpetuity and defend the Kingdom’s political independence against Western encroachment. The latter perspective frames the Māhele “as merely an institution of an emerging and modernizing nation-state” (Kauanui 2018, 95). It contests the portrayal of property as a purely

colonial institution yet nevertheless defers to colonial logics in casting the commodification of land via propertization as both normative and inevitable.

Property ownership supplanted not only the forms of interconnectivity upheld by the ahupua‘a system, but those expressed within Hawai‘i’s cosmology: “[Land titles] blatantly ignored the idea of the *‘āina* as the elder sibling to the Hawaiian people conveyed in the Kumulipo [origin chant, lit. beginning in deep darkness]” (Andrade 2008, 79). Relations to land were reformulated according to the possessive logic of colonialism, defined by Aileen Moreton-Robinson as a rationale for settlement marked by “an excessive desire to invest in reproducing and reaffirming the nation-state’s ownership, control, and domination” (2015, xii). Within the legal structure of the nation-state, possession of land is codified through property title so as to nullify pre-existing Indigenous land claims built upon nonproprietary relations. Like the enactments of Western land tenure on the continental U.S. that effected widespread Indigenous dispossession, land privatization in Hawai‘i constituted “not only the forcible *transfer of* property but *transformation into* property” (Nichols 2018, 5).

The Hawai‘i case is uncommon, however, in that the Māhele was instituted—at least formally—by the Hawaiian Kingdom government and reigning monarch. On the timeline of colonial occupation, the 1848 Māhele was then followed by American settlers’ legislative measures to entrench their political control, and, in 1893, the overthrow of the monarchy staged by a U.S. navy-backed settler militia.<sup>6</sup> The 19th century upheaval in Hawai‘i’s land tenure and broader juridico-political system thus stands in contradistinction to the range of other contexts in which the transition to a private property system *succeeded* the negation or violent subordination of Indigenous political sovereignty by colonial forces (Preza 2010). The lands reserved by Kamehameha III at the advent of the Māhele were adjoined as the Hawaiian Kingdom Crown

and Government Lands and claimed by the U.S federal government when it annexed Hawai‘i in 1898. 1.2 million acres of these lands, or approximately 29% of Hawai‘i’s land area, were transferred to the state government after Hawai‘i’s induction as the 50th U.S. state in 1959 (Kauanui 2018).

### ***“Billionaire Playground”***

Visitor arrivals in Hawai‘i rose exponentially after statehood, increasing more than six-fold within a decade (HTA 2021). Particularly as the plantation industry fell into decline, major property holders turned to land speculation and development to capitalize on the growing number of tourists. Last year, Hawai‘i’s tourism industry—shorthand for the economic sectors like accommodation, retail, food service, and transportation that account for visitor expenditures—generated \$19.3 billion, or about 20% of the state’s GDP (DBEDT 2023b). In addition, a significant portion of Hawai‘i’s civilian labor force is channeled toward meeting the needs and wants of tourists. Tourism employs approximately 37% of workers, and a range of other occupations indirectly rely on it for employment (DBEDT 2021). The industry is hinged as well upon the imaginative labor through which many first behold the islands: the transnationally circulated fantasies of white beaches and turquoise waters, or of famously hospitable Hawaiian people and their “aloha spirit.” Tourism, as Hōkūlani Aikau and Vernadette Vicuña Gonzalez contend, is another chapter in a long history of “bad guests” and “overstaying, ill-behaved, and overreaching ‘visitors’” (2019, 9). By inducing mass desire for paradise, the tourism industry carries on an American legacy of invasion as it incites unremitting experiences of displacement and dispossession for Kānaka Maoli and other residents with generational roots in Hawai‘i. In a process that Trask has called “the grotesque commercialization of everything Hawaiian,” lands

are expropriated, waters are redirected, public policy is reformulated, and sacred cultural practices are profitably mimicked (1991a, 23). Hawai‘i’s infrastructural and economic systems are continually retuned to cater to the evolving demands of the tourism industry.

Both the paradise imaginary induced by the tourism industry and the complex relations of dependency imposed by its structuration of the labor market have naturalized a conceptualization of tourists as an innate and indispensable feature of the Hawaiian Islands. Published in 1991, Trask’s prescient condemnation of the corporately controlled, vertically and horizontally integrated tourism industry links its expansion to impending water crises, exorbitant housing costs, ecological endangerment, houselessness, heightened income inequality, and a dwindling land base for Indigenous people. She writes: “Five million Americans will vacation in my homeland this year *and* the next, and so on into the foreseeable capitalist future” (23). In 2019, 10.2 million visitors traveled to Hawai‘i (HTA 2021). While this unprecedented figure substantiates Trask’s depiction of tourist inundation as an inescapable feature of capitalist modernity, I would add that, as a sign and symptom of the industry’s unrelenting growth, it buttresses perceptions of capitalism as the *only* foreseeable future. The rising economic and environmental repercussions that Trask identified 30 years ago reshape Hawai‘i’s demographics and landscape so radically that they also work to delimit the capacity to imagine Hawai‘i *otherwise*.

What would life in Hawai‘i be like without tourism? Having grown up on O‘ahu, such a life felt impossible for me to envision until 2020. That year, too, the visitor count of 2.7 million broke records, showing the steepest annual decline in Hawai‘i’s history by a vast margin. Hawai‘i’s geographic isolation made the Governor’s statewide travel restrictions feasible and effective, and Kaua‘i’s mayor enacted even stricter lockdown regulations that limited interisland

travel. To be sure, the networks of reliance installed by tourism run deep and wide. While working on Kaua‘i, I heard numerous stories of layoffs and furloughs across the service sector. My own family makes gelato for hotels and restaurants on O‘ahu and experienced the economic ramifications of the industry’s near-vanishment while straining to keep the business afloat. The stakes of the state’s demand for visitors were made terrifyingly evident. Nevertheless, while living in Honolulu in 2020, I observed what was often called “the pandemic’s silver lining.” The lockdown abruptly opened a window into “how things could be.” Uncle J, a pig hunter from Kaua‘i, conveyed the rare experience of hearing birdsongs uninterrupted by the constant roar of choppers in the absence of daily sightseeing helicopter tours that drown out the forest soundscape. Like the Kaua‘i residents who wistfully shared their silver lining memories, I had witnessed beaches speckled with just a handful of local families, roadways free of rental car traffic, and the usually overcrowded tourist attractions made desolate.

As lockdown restrictions were relaxed, then altogether removed, tourism once again swept across Kaua‘i. Statewide reports have lauded the 91.5% recovery of pre-pandemic visitor counts. As of 2022, there are an average 29,658 visitors on Kaua‘i every day, amounting to 40% of Kaua‘i’s resident population (DBEDT 2023a). The tourists are back, and some of them won’t leave. The industry’s proclivity for Indigenous dispossession isn’t news to any of the north shore’s residents. Now, however, they are faced with a burgeoning offshoot of the industry that converts visitors into new landowners. In recent years, the accelerating transformation of the locale has produced what Aunty W calls a “billionaire playground”: “It’s gotten a hundred times worse. We used to complain about the millionaires who buy homes here and then rent them out for vacation rentals. But now we have billionaires who buy multiple houses just to sit empty.”

When I arrived on Kaua‘i in the summer of 2022, Z, a member of the Waipā staff, picked me up from the airport. “The floodgates have opened,” he said, eyeing the hordes of tourists swarming around the baggage carousels. As we drove along the northern coast, we passed sprawling properties enclosed by privacy-protecting barriers of tropical foliage, and Z pointed out the airstrip used by the privately chartered planes of vacation homeowners. This region is dotted with estates bought and sold by well-known figures like Julia Roberts, Ben Stiller, Will Smith, and “the Red Hot Chili Peppers guy [who] built his house on burials.” We passed Mark Zuckerberg’s estate in Moloa‘a. Zuckerberg’s growing property holdings currently amount to roughly 1,500 acres and have made him Kaua‘i’s most infamous vacation homeowner, as have the quiet title lawsuits he filed against Native Hawaiian landholders.<sup>7</sup> As a couple of north shore residents noted, however, Zuckerberg’s notoriety leads many to forget the dozens of other billionaires and the larger group of ultra-wealthy landholders moving into the region. Nearly everyone I spoke with about tourism discussed how, as lockdown measures were lifted and Hawai‘i “opened back up to the world,” they witnessed a new demographic of tourists who purchase houses instead of hotel rooms. They pointed out sweeping changes in the structure of labor brought on by the pandemic, citing widespread shifts to remote telework within high-earning economic sectors as a catalyst for the flood of “tech guys” and other newcomers. As many explained: If you can work from anywhere, why wouldn’t you want to move to Hawai‘i? Though these land purchases may seem as exceptional as the wealth that enables them, they effect experiences of dispossession that are not at all exceptional in the region.

Like other historically agricultural locales across Hawai‘i, much of Kaua‘i has been subject to intensifying rural gentrification since the 1990’s, when second homes gained prominence as a global trend. Buttressed by tax incentives and zoning law loopholes, vacation

home construction has become a central node of the tourism industry (Suryanata & Lowry 2016). To the frustration of many residents, these houses often sit empty when their owners are away, due in part to Kaua‘i’s stringent regulations on vacation rentals.<sup>8</sup> As homes are constructed and resold for escalating prices, residents see rental rates and property prices skyrocket, and homeowners see climbing property taxes. The median price of a single-family home on Kaua‘i reached \$1.47 million at the end of 2022 (DBEDT 2022). In the north shore moku of Halele‘a, property listings have ranged from \$1.98 to \$70 million, and properties along the coast regularly sell for over \$5 million (Vaughan 2018). Over the last decade, more than one thousand properties in this region have been purchased by residents of the U.S. continent, who accounted for 56.9% of all sales (DBEDT 2022). Indeed, the floodgates are wide open. The influx of people arriving on the north shore with both a desire for the verdant land and the capital to *own* it continues to narrow the housing options available to residents. This precludes many from returning to their communities, and, as Auntie W describes, continues to push others out.

Every time we see a license plate that says California, or Texas, or wherever they’re from, you’re just like, wow. Not another one. Yes, everybody wants to live here. But every person that lives here is one more family that gets pushed from here...With all my connections, like being born and raised here, generations from here, being so connected and loved by our community, I even can’t find a place to live. Since [2018]...I’ve moved at least 12 times, because we just don’t have a stable place to live. And that’s our push to go back to our family’s land. To find land...For us, it’s fight or flight. We either stand up and fight—fight for our kids—or we fly and leave. And so many people have left.

Along with rising rents and homeownership costs, limited options for education and work contribute to the challenge of affording housing. Without many forms of employment outside of development and tourism—or more specifically, construction and entry-wage service industry positions—economic opportunities are slim for youth who remain on the north shore. There is no four-year college or university on Kaua‘i and, for youth who pursue higher education elsewhere,

the dearth of economic opportunities makes it difficult to return to the region. One college student had come home for the summer to work as an intern at Waipā. As we spoke about growing up within constantly changing landscapes, he noted the areas being cleared for golf courses and the worsening highway traffic. But, he said, “I think the biggest thing is being brought up with a mentality where we’re subservient to the tourists, like we need to conform to their needs because they form the backbone of our economy.”

Given this economic dependency on tourism and the ways in which it becomes internalized, the possibilities for work, community, and belonging that Waipā creates grow more and more critical to residents fight to stay—particularly among Native Hawaiian residents, for whom community and belonging are built through relations with these lands. “We’re all here because we’re escaping the visitor industry,” Aunty S explained. The Waipā Foundation itself is the result of a major land battle in the 1980’s, in which a collective of local farmers prevented the ahupua‘a from being engulfed by the tourism industry and fought to preserve it as a community learning center. Today, it continues these efforts to preserve a place for students and other community members beyond the domain of tourism. “If we didn’t have Waipā here, I don’t even think I’d want to be here in this community anymore...If we didn’t have this as our space, and it was all like Hanalei, would we want to be here anymore?”

The contrariety of this space is hypervisible. Kumu often take their groups hiking up Makaihuwa‘a, one of the peaks on Waipā’s eastern ridge. From the top, you can see the whole horseshoe of Hanalei bay. To the west, the ahupua‘a of Waikoko and Waipā are covered by a patchwork of lo‘i kalo, gardens, open fields, and forest sprinkled with the foundation’s buildings, greenhouses, and other structures. On a weekday, you might catch a glimpse of students rehearsing oli (chants) and mele (songs) in the grass, tugging kalo out of the mud, or throwing

fishing nets from the beach. Toward the center of the horseshoe, the emerald colored Wai‘oli stream weaves leisurely through ironwood thickets and flows out into the bay. The houses of Hanalei town begin on the other side of the stream, perched up on stilts to keep everyone out of the frequent floodwaters. The modern, multi-story vacation homes that line the beachfront are encircled by sprawling lawns and lava rock walls. A couple blocks from the sea, the main drag is lined by clothing stores, art galleries, and gourmet restaurants all catering to the tourists who rotate through those vacation homes, along with the grocery market, liquor store, and other longtime staples that have managed to stay standing. On the inland side of that busy stretch are the clusters of smaller homes where most of the 400 or so local residents live, the elementary school with its circle of bright red roofs, and the Hanalei Poi Company lo‘i that stretch all the way back to the base of the mountains. Seeing Hanalei from above gives a sense of transformation unfolding in live time, as though the aesthetic of paradisaical luxury that marks the houses and storefronts of the tourist world is sweeping inland from the ocean.

Looking out to the further edge of the bay leaves little room to imagine what Hanalei might become if this transformation carries on. Built into the seaside cliffs of the eastern point are the resorts of Princeville. By day, the white sand is smattered with colorful beach umbrellas and pinkish pale people, who stir every now and then to dip in the turquoise ocean or the enormous swimming pool built right next to it. By night, that side of the bay holds just the sailboats and catamarans, discernible only as pricks of light bobbing gently with the languorous waves. When evening sinks in, the tourists are guided by the warm glow of hundreds of tiki torches to the array of hotel bars and restaurants that await them. They are the populace—however temporary—of Princeville, a place more reminiscent of an “adult Disneyland” than a town. Like a theme park, Princeville looks like it was invented all at once. In a sense, it was.

Once the site of a sugar plantation, then cattle ranch, Princeville's first resort opened in the 1970's as Kaua'i was pulled into Hawai'i's tourism-centric economy. Developers quickly fashioned Princeville into its present form: a pristinely manicured golf course woven around a collection of resorts, condominium complexes, vacation homes, and timeshare villas that are too white, too elaborate, too suburban-looking to really emulate the Hawaiian plantation-style architecture they're said to be designed after. To stand atop Makaihuwa'a on the west side of the bay and look across the water to Hanalei, then Princeville, is to see different stages of a future that Waipā could one day inhabit.

### *“How We Were Not Taught”*

In Kumu P's words: “The only way Hawaiians get the land back is if they get educated about it.” Colonial dispossession, whether driven by plantations or tourists, is intimately linked to Hawai'i's school system. The alienation of Indigenous lands does not occur through the initial act of expropriation alone: it must be pedagogically reinforced. Following the Kingdom's overthrow, U.S. sugar oligarchs established a provisional government whose legislation brought about the closure of all Hawaiian-language schools, the sudden unemployment of the majority of Kanaka Maoli educators, and the rising prominence of colonial education models derived from the Christian missions (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua 2014). In addition, the settler government enacted an effective statewide ban on Hawaiian language usage, while church edicts prohibited hula, Indigenous healing practices, and other cultural forms (Silva 2004).

The period of cultural and political resurgence of the lāhui (Hawaiian Nation) in the late 20th century laid the foundation for the Hawaiian charter schools established in the early 2000's. Although Hawaiian charter schools stand outside of those designed by the state categorically and

in purpose, Noelani Goodyear Ka'ōpua demonstrates how state education policies continue to impact the public school network en masse, placing financial, curricular, and practical limits on what schools teach and how they teach it.<sup>9</sup> Legislative implements of standardized schooling like the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) “entrench particular definitions about what counts as knowledge, student success, and acceptable qualifications for teachers” (2013, 89). Subsequent policies that emulate NCLB’s key attribute of high-stakes test-based accountability, or that compel a prioritization of so-called core subjects, leave minimal space for Indigenous epistemologies, cosmologies, histories, and present realities to be expressed within pedagogical frameworks. Like R expressed, “school stuff” fails to make space for “Hawaiian stuff.” Just as the tourism industry’s control over the region’s economic and physical landscape makes it difficult to imagine a future *not* dominated by tourism, the state controls the presence of Indigenous knowledge and worldviews in the classroom in ways that limit what possible worlds become viewable to students.

This concerted, continuous effort to rein in Indigenous pedagogies is indicative of their capacity to jeopardize state authority, both in and beyond schools. Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (2017) characterizes the mobilization of relational knowledge that reconnects communities with their ancestral lands as a refusal of the separation historically imposed through forced displacement, treaties, and genocide. As in L. Simpson’s framing of “land as pedagogy,” land forms the foundation of other Indigenous scholars and educators’ range of interventions into colonial schooling paradigms (Styres 2018; Grande 2015). Embodied aspects of teaching and learning encountered through physical connectedness to land reflects a Native Hawaiian epistemology, wherein “intelligence is linked to a mind that literally means ‘viscera’ (*na‘au*) and figuratively means feelings/emotions” (Meyer 1998, 22). For

Hawaiian education, Goodyear-Ka'ōpua locates in the ethic of aloha 'āina (love of land, love of that which feeds) a pedagogical praxis that weaves together a multitude of land-centered literacies:

Land-centered literacies include the ways Kanaka 'Oiwi developed practices of reading the stars and other celestial bodies and events; offering chants in our own human language and then observing and finding meaning in the responses of winds, rains, birds, waves, or stones; and writing ourselves into the landscape by drawing water through irrigation ditches to lo'i kalo and then back to streams (34).

Land is the epistemological basis of what she calls “sovereign pedagogies,” or those which sustain and grow Hawaiian worlds by unsettling the colonial politics of knowledge. Autonomy in school administration, curricula, funding allocation, and policy cannot alone amount to self-determined Indigenous education. As she argues, “cultural and language-based education will never be enough without autonomous control of land and the rebuild-ing of Indigenous systems that have allowed our peoples to thrive on those lands over centuries” (245).

Beyond a scenic escape from the tourism industry, Waipā affords students a learning environment markedly different from the spaces where they spend most of the school year. Like other decentralized community-based education models, the summer youth program certainly contends with its own funding and time limitations. That said, it brings students into direct contact with land in the form of a 1,600 acre outdoor classroom that stretches from the mountain peaks out to the Pacific Ocean. The program also takes them on various huaka'i (journeys, excursions) to other places on Kaua'i. Educators, students, families, and members of Waipā's surrounding communities widely remark upon this educational rarity. Some of Waipā's kumu work, or have worked, in Hawai'i's public or private schools, and all of them attended those schools. Many pointed out stark differences in how Hawai'i is discussed across these contexts,

or, more noticeably, differences in the extent to which Hawai'i is discussed. Of Hawai'i Department of Education curricula, Kumu D told me:

Most of the subject matter has nothing to do with Hawai'i or any place these students have actually been. Many of my students, I would like to bet, have never been to Gettysburg. Many of my students, I would like to bet, have never been to Boston, or even would even have a concept of the importance of tea to a world economy. To be able to give them stories based on a historical time period that might deal with fishing or kalo, they understand more inherently the importance of that as a sustenance...To say, 'you know, these people had certain practices for fishing,' or, 'you know, they built a lighthouse on top of the hill so that they can see from the ocean, because they have to go far out into the ocean to fish.' A lot of my students understand that because they *live* that.

When I spoke to Kumu P about her experience teaching school curricula about Hawai'i, I asked her what those curricula were missing. She said, "the truth."

Among the community members who helped with Waipā's youth program and poi production were educators deeply involved in the Hawaiian Charter School movement. In contrast to Hawaiian sovereignty, NCLB proved to be the *least* disagreed upon topic I encountered. "That legislation forced me to go back to school and get a Masters! I've been teaching for eight years in the public schools!" exclaimed Uncle H. Recounting his and other educators' establishment of a charter school on Kaua'i, he explained:

Most of us believed that we were actually revolutionaries setting up the new school system for the new nation...How do we take the Hawaiian cultural paradigm and learn to teach *how we were not taught*?...Native education is more *doing*, but how do you translate those dichotomies into a charter school that's funded by a state agency?

Uncle C made a sound halfway between a bitter grumble and an exasperated sigh when asked how education policy has affected the O'ahu charter school he founded.

"No Child Left Behind..." he trailed off and left it at that. He had traveled from Hakipu'u to teach the students a hula for the Hō'ike performance at the end of Program, to harvest bamboo from the back of the valley, and to carve a pū'ohe (bamboo wind instrument) for every student.

As they finished learning the accompanying mele (song) one afternoon and began practicing with their new pū, he told the group:

I maika‘i ke kalo i ka ‘ohā. The taro is known by its offspring. You are our offspring. We will be known by what you do...I think you guys gonna make your own country here on Kaua‘i...The resources, the land, that’s your kuleana. That’s your responsibility. If you take care of this land, it will take care of you.

As a kupuna whose own work as an educator and land protector is referenced in Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua’s, it makes sense that his lesson is imbued with her notion of *genealogical accountability*. She frames the intergenerational obligations that tie students and teachers to ancestry, community, place, and one another as a mode of assessment. It is one that stands in opposition to the test-based or other standardized metrics mandated by state policy, whereby schools’ and students’ academic success are only discernible through their individual performances. Like Aunty W, Uncle C issues a reminder that students’ knowledge of caretaking is reflected in the land and in the care that it returns. Land is the ultimate learning assessment.

The historical production of private property and the trajectory of contemporary development on Kaua‘i’s north shore outlined in this section each serve as important historical and geographic background for the remaining sections. The processes of land dispossession that have eroded or constrained Hawai‘i’s sovereignty also set the limits of what alternative living conditions can be imagined. They corroborate the belief stated earlier that Indigenous peoples’ lands are too valuable for their sovereignty to be restored. Still, during the lockdown period, residents not only saw, but *lived in*, some dimensions of a different Hawai‘i. Waipā allows many to continue to do so, even as tourism and vacation home sales overwhelm the locale. For Program students in particular, Waipā offers a space in which engagement with land and Hawaiian epistemologies is not an extracurricular activity or lesson supplement. Rather, it fills their summer weekdays. The interlaced, macro-level structures of land tenure and education

described above are useful for understanding the role of Waipā and its youth program, and for the later sections of this work that delve into Program lessons. Within these dominant structures, one finds thriving spaces like Waipā where people envision and cultivate alternative conditions for learning and living.

## 2. Land Police v. Hunters v. Pigs

“They made my nephew throw away the pig...These cowboys, they’re like the land police. And they can rat on you, or call the state on you,” Kumu P told me as we worked together in the Waipā kitchen one afternoon.

“So, it just rots there?” I asked incredulously, imagining the sheer amount of meat wasted.

“Yeah, throw ‘em away!” she said. “Because he was there hunting illegally. Some people got tension with my family from before. Some of my family members are known to be outlaw hunters.” I had asked Kumu P about her family’s history in Hanapēpē, an ahupua‘a on the west side of Kaua‘i. Her narrative began at her family’s salt beds on the coast, then traveled up mauka as she recalled generations of tension with the Robinson family, whose plantations and ranching operations have made them the third largest private landowner in Hawai‘i. About a decade ago, the Robinson family’s security personnel—whom Kumu P calls the “Robinson cowboys”—apprehended her nephew while he was hunting feral pigs, leading the state to press criminal charges against him. His fight to have those charges dismissed inaugurated a four-year legal battle, ultimately leading to the first court ruling that established feral pig hunting as a traditional practice and customary right of Kānaka Maoli under the Hawai‘i State Constitution.

At its surface, *State v. Palama* (2015) addresses the questions of whether pig hunting constitutes a traditional Indigenous practice, and whether it thereby merits constitutional protection and secures as legal rights the land and resource access that the practice necessitates. However, as I looked through court documents for some of the details of the case, my mind remained on our conversation of what became of the pig. “[He was] hunting and gathering,” Kumu P said. “Why do you need to be policed to catch something that’s eating up the land?” Her

more pragmatic question brought forth what I saw as the case's more critical underlying issues. What interest does the state have in pursuing criminal convictions in order to regulate feral pig hunting? What interest does it have in inhibiting the removal of a species known to cause substantial environmental damage, or in limiting Kanaka Maoli hunters' longstanding practice of subsistence? In looking past popular construals of the State Constitution's protection of Indigenous peoples' traditional practices and land access, what do "tradition" and "access" actually amount to in law? How do the legal definitions of the terms restrict Indigenous traditions and access on the ground?

As observed in contexts on the U.S. continent, Indigenous polities' adaptations to macroeconomic shifts have effected a bureaucratization of culture accompanied by "normative and practical questions about where culture is located and who should have the power to convey and regulate it" (Cattellino 2008, 66). Transformed political and economic conditions have opened up new avenues for cultural transmission while simultaneously subjecting its various constitutive processes of social reproduction to heavy mediation by governments or other institutional actors. From one point of view, Hawai'i's state government enables select forms of cultural transmission by permitting the land access required for designated traditional practices, as is mandated by the Hawai'i Revised Statutes and the State Constitution:

The State reaffirms and shall protect all rights, customarily and traditionally exercised for subsistence, cultural and religious purposes and possessed by ahupua'a tenants who are descendants of native Hawaiians who inhabited the Hawaiian Islands prior to 1778, subject to the right of the State to regulate such rights (Haw. Const. art. XII, § 7).

From another perspective, these statutes are composed to restrict tradition and access mutually. Through their interpretation by the Judiciary and their enforcement by government agencies like the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), the state dictates the literal grounds for Kanaka Maoli communities' social reproduction.

I begin this section with an overview of *State v. Palama*'s proceedings in Hawai'i's circuit court (2012) and Intermediate Court of Appeals (2015) to highlight how legal discourse draws upon colonial imaginaries of Indigenous culture and its temporality when investigating the traditionality of pig hunting, and thus, its legality. As background, I note the principal legal precedents that the case invokes to show where the courts' metrics of traditionality are drawn from. Though this engages previous litigation only cursorily, and primarily to contextualize the logics central to *State v. Palama*, the other cases mentioned nonetheless indicate that such logics circulate far beyond this one. They also represent an immensely consequential genealogy of Kanaka Maoli people's legal battles for access to their lands and waters. I argue that, while ultimately affirming pig hunting as a "traditional and customary native Hawaiian practice," *Palama* also generates and enforces the definitional boundaries of tradition as it mobilizes particular connotations of the word in the production of legal terminology. The court's authentication of traditionality draws upon imagined attributes and practices of "ancient Hawaiian society" while highlighting their contradistinction to modern technologies and institutions. The resultant construal of tradition undergirding this ruling, vested with notions of antiquity and stagnancy, is thus codified and deployed as a dominant mechanism for regulating how Indigenous culture is—and can be—practiced.

I then turn attention toward how "access" is discerned in the *Palama* ruling and in prominent legal precedents. Incongruent notions of access as a right and access as a reciprocal mode of relationality are derivative of the different systems of land tenure outlined in the first section. In granting Kānaka Maoli the access rights produced through historical propertization, the ruling situates the interconnectivity of people and place within a framework of rights. As

well, it places legal limitations on the acts of caretaking and stewardship responsibilities through which people access place outside of that framework.

Finally, I return to Kumu P's question: why regulate pig hunting? Thinking with Jonathan Goldberg-Hiller and Noenoe Silva's concept of the "ecological state," I examine how the restriction of Indigenous practices of subsistence and ecological stewardship enabled by the legal constructs of tradition and access reinforce the legitimacy of settler governance over Hawaiian lands and their encompassed ecologies. I trace how the state's political authority operates across human and other-than-human worlds and draws upon rhetorics of environmental conservation and invasive species management to rationalize its control over interspecies relationships.

As I demonstrate throughout this section, even in exemplary cases like *Palama* in which the law appears to be on the side of Kānaka Maoli, it nevertheless remains underpinned by colonial logics that buttress the state's ability to regulate the practices and relationships that connect people to their homelands. At the same time, I point to the spaces of possibility that perforate this case and extend past the state's legal system. The broader ramifications of the ruling can be observed in DLNR's reduced enforcement of access regulations on public lands for Kanaka Maoli hunters, as well as on undeveloped private lands needed for other traditional practices protected by the State Constitution (Kūpa'a et al. 2021). "Long story short, when my nephew went to court, it all got dismissed. The state stopped making trouble," Kumu P explained.

It's good motivation for others to go and do the same thing...If you know you got land out there, go find 'em, do research, fight the state...But it took something like the pig hunting thing to prompt my nephew to do it. They make him throw down the pig. Okay, you fakas, we do have land over here! So he go find, and then they can go hunt whenever they like without nobody bothering them anymore up Hanapēpē valley.

As she observed, both the state and private landowners often wield the power of law to police Indigenous ways of life. Yet their efforts can expose the mutability of law, the instability of its power, and the openings through which Indigenous lands and resources might be reclaimed. With this in mind, my analysis here grapples with the larger question: what political horizons can be reached through avenues paved by the state, and what others come into view through movements that push beyond legal routes? Rather than attempting a definitive answer, I take the discourse of feral pig hunting as an opportunity to examine several of the limits on self-determination that Kānaka Maoli encounter within a structure of governance that, for over a century, has depended on their dispossession as a condition for its existence. In taking account of how such limits materialize in this particular court case, this section also provides a foil for those to come, which shift focus from the constructs of tradition and access that dominate legal discourse to those which emerge in lived experiences on the land.

### ***State v. Palama***

In 2011, the State of Hawai‘i filed criminal charges against Kui Palama for simple trespass and prohibited hunting on private lands after he had entered onto private property to hunt pigs. Palama resided in Hanapēpē and cultivated kalo (taro) on his kuleana land in the lowlands of the valley.<sup>10</sup> He had been hunting in the mauka region upstream from his lo‘i kalo (wetland taro terraces), on lands owned by Gay & Robinson Inc, which court documents refer to alternately as the Robinson Family property.<sup>11</sup> As Palama and other witnesses testified, he and multiple generations of his relatives had often gone into the Robinson Family property to hunt pigs or to inspect the quality and water levels of the stream that fed their lo‘i. Palama’s Motion to Dismiss stated that his pig hunting was a traditional Hawaiian practice and therefore an exercise

of traditional rights protected under article XII, section 7 of the Hawai‘i State Constitution.<sup>12</sup> As such, it grants access to private lands, as established by the Hawai‘i Supreme Court in *State v. Hanapi* (1998): “Constitutionally protected native Hawaiian rights, reasonably exercised, qualify as a privilege for purposes of enforcing criminal trespass statutes.”

Like in many other Hawai‘i court cases surrounding this article, for constitutional privilege to be affirmed, the practice through which defendants exercise their traditional rights is subject to two levels of evaluation at minimum: the *Hanapi test* and the *balancing test*, as the Judiciary has termed them. Under the Hanapi test, the defendant must meet the burden of evidence to satisfy three legal criteria: (1) that they are Native Hawaiian, (2) that the claimed right is “a customary or traditional native Hawaiian practice as codified—but not necessarily enumerated—in article XII, section 7,” and (3) that the right was exercised on undeveloped property.<sup>13</sup> *State v. Pratt* (2012) then affixed the requirement of the balancing test, in which the court essentially weighs the state’s interest in regulating a tradition against the defendant’s interest in practicing it. To administer the balancing test, “the court must consider the totality of the circumstances.” In the circuit court, the balancing test’s findings were as concise as this instruction. After determining that Palama had fulfilled each of the Hanapi clauses, the court concluded that “there was nothing unreasonable about the way Defendant hunted pig” and dismissed the charges. I focus my analysis of the circuit court trial’s key arguments on the Hanapi test’s second clause, then shift this focus to debates over the balance test brought forth in the state’s appeal.<sup>14</sup> These two measures most directly illustrate the legal construct of tradition, as well as how it interfaces with property law to produce the limits of state and private landowner authority.

### ***“Traditional” Pig Hunting***

*To establish the existence of a traditional or customary native Hawaiian practice, we hold that there must be an adequate foundation in the record connecting the claimed right to a firmly rooted traditional or customary native Hawaiian practice (State v. Hanapi 1998).*

The authentication of pig hunting as a tradition in *Palama* was firstly dependent upon its antiquity as discerned through the criterion inaugurated by *State by Kobayashi v. Zimring* (1977), which designated November 25, 1892 as “the date by which ancient Hawaiian usage must have been established in practice.”<sup>15</sup> It was secondly dependent upon the continuity of the practice within the defendant’s own lineage, on the case’s subject property, and among Kānaka Maoli—envisioned here as one populace. Both of these dimensions had to be substantiated by a group kama‘āina and expert witnesses, which included other Hanapēpē residents, pig hunters, Indigenous genealogical researchers, and renowned Hawaiian Studies scholar Jonathan Kamakawiwo‘ole Osorio.<sup>16</sup> Testimonies jointly evidenced pig hunting’s historical precedent on a hyperlocal scale (in Hanapēpē, on the Robinson family’s land, among Palama’s relatives and ancestors) and, as Osorio’s expert testimony affirmed, on the nebulous scale that the court termed “ancient Hawaiian society.”

The state appealed the circuit court’s ruling and submitted to the Intermediate Court of Appeals amicus curiae briefs from the Robinson Family and the state Attorney General. The Robinson Family contended that the ruling “promoted lawlessness,” though the included exhibits were virtually all dismissed with the note that each required “further factual development.” As such, the appeals case principally addressed the Attorney General’s argument that, under the prior ruling, pig hunting would “endanger the public.” The Attorney General’s amicus brief disputed the circuit court’s application of the balancing test, alleging that “the circuit court failed to adequately consider the State’s interest in public safety, in particular that hunting is a

dangerous activity that the state regulates.” The appeal was thus hinged upon the contention that extending constitutional privileges to pig hunting could hypothetically increase safety risk, which “becomes much greater if the native Hawaiian custom or tradition were more broadly defined to include pig hunting with firearms.” The Attorney General also warned that the decision would subsequently jeopardize the state’s capacity to regulate other hunting practices on public lands. The Court of Appeals addressed this matter of public safety by emphasizing specific circumstances and practical aspects of hunting conduct: “We reiterate that Palama used dogs and a knife, not a gun, that there is no evidence in the record that he hunted in an unsafe manner.” In fact, the Memorandum of Opinion mentions repeatedly that Palama’s two pigs had been killed with a knife and that he had not carried any guns. It also notes the Robinson Family property’s lack of fencing, signage, or other visible indications of private land, as well as the absence of other people in the vicinity. Finally, the ruling cites the state’s own admission that feral pigs are destructive to local landscapes and agriculture in conjunction with expert testimony on pig hunting as a traditional means of both subsistence and resource management. It underscores Osorio’s statement before the circuit court that hunting feral pigs historically served as a method of reducing invasive species populations as well as preventing the pigs’ ransacking of lo‘i kalo and ‘uala (sweet potato) patches, and that Palama had been hunting in an area upstream of his lo‘i kalo.

The court invoked these details as primary rationales in its assessment of hunting’s public safety risk, juxtaposing the image of a firearm with that of a knife, the act of trespassing by circumventing fences with historical Indigenous methods of agriculture and species management. As the Hanapi test effectively mandated, the practice of pig hunting as a whole must reflect precise forms of spatial and temporal continuity to be legally authenticated as

traditional—in this case, through evidence of the practice’s historical precedent in the exact locale and among the defendant’s ancestors. The subsequent execution of the balancing test exhibits how the techniques and equipment utilized in a practice, too, must appeal to the notions of continuity and antiquity that qualify the practice as traditional. Firearms signal a degree of modernity that undermines the claim of traditionality, whereas knives and hunting dogs can apparently be enfolded within tradition’s tacit temporal boundaries. Alongside these technical details of the alleged offense, the broader purpose of pig hunting in maintaining local subsistence practices, agricultural sites, or ecological conditions was framed as a direct linkage to the past, thereby affirming the fidelity of its present practice to an “exercise of ancient Hawaiian usage.”

In situating these images along an imagined border between traditional and non-traditional, with guns and property fence lines opposite knives and lo‘i kalo, the case represents a traditional practice through conventions that divorce Indigenous culture from modernity. It reinforces a bifurcation that underpins other state statutes, such as the stipulation that resources be obtained only for personal use and not to sell for profit (Haw. Rev. Stat. §7-1). The legal construct of tradition found here reanimates common portrayals of Indigenous practices as culturally stagnant, rendering the actual practices vulnerable to expulsion from the bounds of traditionality with any introduction of new methods, tools, or perceived shifts in economic or environmental imperatives. Drawing parallels to the figure of the vanishing Native, which depicts Indigenous obsolescence so as to lay the groundwork for claims of settler belonging, Iokepa Casumbal-Salazar describes how the trope of “ancient Hawaiians” services temporal Indigenous containment “by confining their legitimacy to the past where it can affect neither contemporary land use decisions nor the myths of Native inferiority on which settler governance is based” (2017, 21). Although it is difficult to determine whether scenarios involving a hunting

rifle or a bypassed barbed wire fence would have amounted to another verdict, it is nevertheless worth noting that the Court of Appeals concurred with the circuit court's finding that "there was nothing unreasonable about the way Palama hunted pig in this case" merely on the basis that that state "failed to present any evidence to the circuit court regarding the dangers posed by pig hunting generally, let alone the manner in which Palama hunted." The judges explicitly highlight this total lack of evidence alone when later specifying a marked contradistinction between this appeal and previous cases involving the balancing test, wherein the Hawai'i Supreme Court concluded that state interest in regulating activities otherwise protected by the Hanapi defense prevailed over defendants' interests.

The legal status of tradition implants pig hunting within a web of both constitutional privileges and circumscriptive provisos. The ruling to recognize hunting as such also codified the court's rubrics of ancientness, thereby declaring the limits of "tradition" and the extent to which the concept can be employed to preserve land access. It sets another precedent for assimilating into the scheme of customary rights only practices that adhere to tropes of stagnant, ancient, and innocuous Indigenous cultural practices, while accordingly reinscribing those archetypal qualities in legal representations of Indigeneity. This limited form of recognition is consistent with state policies and performances of multiculturalism, in which "tropes such as race reform, racial progress, racial integration, ending racism, bringing in excluded voices, and living in a postracial society have become the touchstones for racial projects that recalibrate state apparatuses, expand the reach of normative power, and implant norms during the performative constitution of human subjectivities" (Melamed 2011, 11). In settler colonial contexts, particularly, the ethic of multiculturalism renews racial hierarchy under the premise of ending it, taxonomizing populations within a "grid of intelligibility" that defines a narrow set of

Indigenous rights as well as the legitimate subjects of such rights. The state thus facilitates Indigenous peoples' participation within political structures as they approximate to its norms of citizen subjectivity in order to have their rights recognized (Hale 2005, 13). Hence, Kānaka Maoli and their legal protections become legible to the state only when "relegated to the 'dark ages' of tradition" and "fetishized as an archaeological remnant within multicultural society" (Casumbal-Salazar 2017, 2). This imagined realm of tradition simultaneously functions to neutralize or dismiss dissent. It casts Indigenous land protectors and activists who demand more than the state's minimal offering of rights, or who oppose its methods of expropriation and resource extraction, as "mere vestiges of a quickly fading and increasingly irrelevant past" (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua 2017, 184).

Calling attention to how the state's modes of recognizing Indigenous people, traditions, and animals each operate as mechanisms of selective assimilation, Goldberg-Hiller and Silva ask: "Why do both sovereign and juridical attempts to assert state power over the lives of wild animals and the scientific attempts to regulate the environment through the husbanding of 'natural' processes partly exclude or deny and partly glorify the indigenous subject and indigenous values?" (2011, 434). Cases like *Palama* cast light on the state's criteria for glorification and an underlying multicultural logic. The rubrics encompassed by the Hanapi test invoke commonplace tropes of Indigenous culture to facilitate the selective incorporation of governable traditions into the sphere of legality. The case also demonstrates the criteria for exclusion and state's concomitant capacity to evacuate other traditions from that sphere. When adjudicating the validity of customary rights in Hawai'i, the Judiciary reconciles the state's interests, including its purported concern over public safety or resource management, with the interests of Kānaka Maoli. Legal mechanisms like the balancing test effectively contain the

extent and exercise of customary rights by either prohibiting or recognizing traditional practices—the two possible outcomes of these court battles. This vetting of Indigenous cultural practices demarcates normative construals of Indigenous tradition and subjectivity, which dictate the conditions of state recognition and allow the state to balance two of its own interests: the legitimation of its political authority over Indigenous lands and people on one side, and its benevolent endorsement of Indigenous rights on another.

The challenge of relying on constitutional protections, as attained through this mode of recognition, to defend land, resources, and access to those entities ultimately reflects an overarching paradox inherent to the legal space of the settler state: “In participating in forums controlled by the state and under the plenary power of the United States, a tacit concession is made, however complex and nuanced that decision may be. This fundamental bind is that to participate in the laws of the state is to recognize its authority over us” (Casumbal-Salazar 2017, 25). This “fundamental bind” constrains alternative possibilities for conceptualizing, practicing, and preserving traditions and the cultural forms they embody. In composing a set of requisite qualities for the legal recognition of traditional practices, the state operationalizes its authority to outlaw those aspects of Indigenous culture which cannot be contained. *State v. Palama* might read as a display of the state government’s internal checks and balances operating successfully, wherein the Judiciary sets the limits of the state’s legislative scope. However, espousing the imaginary of Indigenous tradition produced through this legal discourse attests to the primary legitimacy of the state’s legal regime and reasserts its power to construct and reconstruct the limits of its legislation. This is the power to which Kānaka Maoli must constantly appeal in the labor of sustaining tradition, access, and themselves. And, as the judges presiding over *Palama*

expressly made note of when observing the “stark contrast” between Palama’s defense and those brought forth in prior legal battles over lands and waters, such appeals are not often granted.

### ***Land “Access”***

*The reasonable exercise of ancient Hawaiian usage is entitled to protection under article XII, section 7...Traditional and customary rights are properly examined against the law of property as it has developed in this state. Thus, the regulatory power provided in article XII, section 7 does not justify summary extinguishment of such rights by the State merely because they are deemed inconsistent with generally understood elements of the western doctrine of “property.” (Public Access Shoreline Hawai‘i v. Hawai‘i City Planning Commission 1995)*

Hawai‘i’s Intermediate Court of Appeals concurred with the prior determination that the state’s criminal prosecution “amounts to a blanket prohibition or extinguishment of Defendant’s protected practice of hunting pig.” The circuit court’s Conclusions of Law reiterated the Hawai‘i Supreme Court verdict from *Public Access Shoreline Hawai‘i v. Hawai‘i City Planning Commission* (1995) and appended to the citation of the *PASH* ruling: “Extinguishing traditional rights based simply upon the possible inconsistency of purported native rights with our system of land tenure must fail; the Court’s obligation to preserve and enforce such traditional rights is part of the Hawaii State Constitution.” Termed “the western doctrine of ‘property’” in *PASH* and “our system of land tenure” in *Palama*, proprietary rights—and the geographic boundaries they enforce—were made incrementally more porous by each case. Underlying the limited yet celebrated gaps in property and contingencies of rights, importantly, was the courts’ statement of the dissimilitude of property law and the system of “traditional and customary rights” that it has supplanted—though of course, not fully so. More specifically, within the legal discourse of pig hunting, the two systems of rights are deemed incommensurate, or mutually exclusive, such that

honoring the rights of private landowners in full would “summarily extinguish” the access rights of Kanaka Maoli pig hunters. Thus, the former “must fail.”

The discussion above reviewed *Palama*’s primary dispute over whether pig hunting is traditional, according to preordained legal criteria, and showed how the court circumvented consideration of what *else* “tradition” might signify. The case secondly privileged the question of whether the authorization or the denial of Kanaka Maoli pig hunters’ access to private lands ultimately amounted to a more serious violation of rights, while eschewing the question of how access operates beyond systems of private ownership and legal rights. The semantics of access matter in law and in ecology. The property and access rights addressed in this case gained legitimacy through the 1848 Māhele, which reshaped land, water, and resource access both pragmatically and conceptually. As outlined in the first section of this work, propertization overturned the governance systems and conservation practices inherited in the prior ahupua‘a system, under which notions of access had encompassed stewardship responsibilities shared by the maka‘āinana and konohiki of each ahupua‘a. The legal regime installed through this process resignified and individualized peoples’ relations to land and resources, generating a cleavage between access rights and collective stewardship responsibilities.

In the rare case of the Judiciary delimiting landowner rights, Indigenous peoples’ “access and gathering rights necessary for subsistence and cultural purposes” are recognized as a distinct form of legal rights secured through evidence of traditionality rather than property title (Haw. Const. art. XII, § 7). More commonly, the law reinscribes access as a privilege of proprietorship. Whereas *Palama* demonstrates how representations of traditionality can be mobilized to secure legal protections for Indigenous access rights, *State v. Hanapi* conversely exemplifies their use in precluding such protections. In the case that established the current criteria of tradition, the

Hanapi test, the defendant argued that the “restoration and healing of lands” constituted a traditional practice of Kānaka Maoli. The court in *Hanapi* determined that the evidence of “responsibility and sense of obligation to the land...assumed, rather than established, the existence of a protected customary right,” finding that Indigenous peoples’ stewardship obligation does not provide “adequate foundation” to justify their access to private property. The ruling reveals how the legal construct of tradition works as a mechanism to circumscribe the extent to which access—as a right *and* responsibility—can be enacted outside of proprietary relations. Without the fixity and specificity of pig hunting, as discerned by the court, the practices of restoration and healing could not be sufficiently evidenced as traditional in the legal sense. And yet, those practices are integral to land access under the *traditional* ahupua‘a system of land tenure. “The Hawaiian responsibility to care for land, to make it flourish, called *malama ‘āina* or *aloha ‘āina*,” Trask (1991b, 165) argues, persists as a cultural value despite propertization and other structural transformations that have altered prior ways of life. Though the stewardship obligations argued by the defense were ruled inadequate as grounds for access rights, they nonetheless pose an altogether different understanding of access.

Outside the domain of legal discourse, the conditions, meanings, and exercises of access resist containment within the categories of rights that organize legal discourse. Ribot and Peluso’s “theory of access” posits access as the processes and relationships that form a mutable “ability to benefit from resources.” Property is just one set of relationships that determines degrees of access, located within an “array of institutions, social and political-economic relations, and discursive strategies that shape benefit flows” (2003, 157). Diver et al. (2019) challenge the anthropocentric view of nature that frames access as a mode of resource extraction, theorizing access instead as a set of reciprocal relations. Lands, waters, humans, and other-than-

human beings form systems of interdependency sustained by multi-directional flows of benefits, as well as mutual responsibilities and practices of care.

Pragmatically speaking, resources cannot be accessed through legal rights alone. Like property ownership, court victories offer only partial means of access. They secure access nominally, or as a right vested with the power to both enable and deter its material realization. Ways of accessing place express the dynamism of relations, practices, and places themselves. As such, they escape the definitions and regulatory mechanisms presented by legal terminology. Even in the court cases outlined above, which locate access solely and squarely within the state's structure of rights, definitional boundaries prove wobbly. To conclude, I want to return momentarily to the courts' renderings of "Western" and "traditional" land tenure systems and the conclusive remarks on their contrariety. These allude to the systems' semantic disparities in order to evince their structural ones. The possessive in "*our* system of land tenure" and the placement of quotations in "western doctrine of *property*" imply the persistent plurality of meanings held in land and access, and more expansively perhaps, the destabilized terrain of governance in Hawai'i. They gesture toward the "ruptures, exceptions, and limits" that Casumbal-Salazar locates in the state's exercises of power over Indigenous lands and people, thereby rendering its authoritative claims "less convincing with each iteration." As he asserts, such ruptures must be pried at and exploited: "In these fissures there is a potential to transform those structures of dominance that control our mobility, thought, speech, bodies, and ability to determine the fate of our lands and waters. In these openings are windows to imagine other possible futures than those we are living" (2017, 15). In some sense, *Palama's* Conclusions of Law, in the minute details, signal an admission by the Judiciary that the hegemony of its own law, and of property itself, is not absolute. Despite the multicultural state's various methods of

incorporation, containment cannot be total. Even as a mark of colonial domination, the state's legal apparatus reveals the incomplete nature of such domination and the existence of residual and emerging social formations (Williams 1977). Just as article XXII, section 7 leaves fissures in property law to be pried open in cases like *Palama*, fissures in "property" have been carved out since the Māhele by those who defend their relations and obligations to land according to another understanding of access. As they continue to do so, those fissures will be pried further open.

### *The Ecological State of Hawai'i*

Though it is predominantly seen as a mandate to uphold Indigenous rights, article XII, section 7 of the State Constitution also implicitly mandates that Indigenous tradition and access be governed dually. Indigenous access rights prevail over property rights only when the exercise of access rights takes the form of a traditional practice—in this case, when Kanaka Maoli pig hunters' land access poses no threat to perceptions of public safety, when it is palatable as a performance of colonially imagined Indigenous culture, and when it serves the ecological function of invasive species eradication. Here, I concentrate on this last qualification of ecological benefit because it calls for analysis of the linkages between private property and invasive species. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, the courts did not account for how "elements of the western doctrine of 'property'" have in fact given rise to many of those species' proliferation (Kūpa'a et al. 2021). As well, the state's discourses of conservation warrant inquiry into the disparate ways in which humans relate to pigs, and to more extensive ecologies.

The legal equivalency drawn between "ancient Hawaiian usage" and "traditional and customary rights" reifies the state's temporal containment of Indigeneity. The corollary association between modernity, scientific progress, and the rights held and granted by the state

permeates land struggles elsewhere in Hawai‘i, such as the contested case hearings over attempts to construct the Thirty-Meter Telescope on Mauna Kea, wherein “the co-constitution of Western sciences and imperialism is laid bare” (Casumbal-Salazar 2017, 2). This association is especially rife in legal discourses of conservation, in which a rhetoric of modern science lends authority to what Goldberg-Hiller and Silva term the “ecological state.” As they describe, “the ecological state attempts to bury responsibility for the settler state’s own destruction of land and animal habitat in scientific management.” Simultaneously, it reanimates the settler states’ historical efforts to contain or erase Indigenous presence upon the land by rationalizing these efforts as an environmentally imperative “maintenance of natural life forces” (2011, 433). Through its array of conservation laws, the ecological state of Hawai‘i attempts to manage pigs and hunters alike. Its regulatory regime is enforced predominantly by DLNR and has entailed the establishment of bounded public hunting areas on lands owned or leased by the state, policies over bag limits and hunting seasons, and the construction of ungulate fencing in upland forests (Hess et al. 2019). As the balancing test in *Palama* points toward, pig hunting and its supposed “danger” are permitted in large part because of the ecological danger that feral pigs represent.

In this case, the practice of pig hunting is in accord with state ideals of conservation management and invasive species control. Feral pigs (*Sus scrofa*) are found on all the major Hawaiian Islands except Lana‘i. The species is widely regarded as an environmental menace as they cause soil erosion, trample and uproot vegetation, and spread other recently introduced species populations. However, pigs also hold cultural value as figures in Hawai‘i’s cosmology and history, as well as sources of food and symbols of self-sufficiency for hunting communities. Long before they gained notoriety as Hawai‘i’s quintessential invasive species, pigs were raised as domestic stock and have been embedded in Hawaiian food systems for almost a thousand

years, albeit in different roles. As such, pig hunting has become socially understood as a traditional Indigenous practice in Hawai‘i, in addition to its legal designation as such (Kūpa‘a et al. 2021).

Goldberg-Hiller and Silva’s account of interspecies relations in Hawai‘i underlines how pig hunting’s alignment with environmentalism has offered a new pathway to access cultural sites, and, to some extent, previously unreachable militarized lands. They then turn attention toward National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) scientists’ removal of a Hawaiian monk seal pup from a community of caretakers on Moloka‘i and the state’s sole allowance of “scientifically mediated interaction” between humans and monk seals. Bringing Moloka‘i protests against the intervention into conversation with pig hunting’s symbolic load of self-sufficiency and cosmological connection, they argue that “without a recognized legal claim to territory, inhabitable and sovereign space is nonetheless constructed around animals and their place among a people” (442). Their discussion also brings forth a generative comparison in which we see the state’s dichotomous treatment of the two animals, and of the relations they share with Indigenous people. Within the ecological state’s dictates of animal legibility, one species is represented as rampantly invasive. The other is represented as Native, invaluable, and, to use NOAA’s characterization, one of the world’s most endangered marine mammals.

Literature elsewhere has pointed out settler states’ ironic, selective, and politically constructive applications of *colonization* and *invasion* as descriptors of animal and vegetal worlds (Bousfield 2020, Subramanian 2001). Through discourses and methods of managing biodiversity, institutions and individuals construct categories of beings. They create categories of being as well, in defining themselves according to relationships forged or renounced with other species. Invasive species eradication and Native species protection are affective projects

(Cattelino 2017). When taken up within a wider project of colonial nation-building, the affective belonging that circulates through these ways of relating to other beings substantiates foundational narratives of settler nativism. The State of Hawai‘i distances itself from the category of invasive by eliminating other so-called invasives, while expressing its own Native-ness to land “by gathering native species and caring for them as their own, as their national patrimony” (134). The policies that legitimate such acts do not only sharpen species categories or structure affective relationality; they also control the physicality of interspecies engagement by deterring or enabling possible forms of contact. Whereas state-sanctioned conservation interventions often, if not always, seek to limit or prohibit interactions with endangered Native species like the monk seal, it is precisely the threatening invasiveness of species like the feral pig that merits the state’s permission of human engagement.

The ecological state claims repute as the protector of Indigenous access rights and traditions, while also justifying its restriction of traditional practices’ capacity to enable access as protective of nature. Posited as scientific methods of environmental conservation, such restriction reifies the settler colonial logic of elimination within conservation policy, negating histories and injurious environmental ramifications of Indigenous dispossession as it conflates human absence with resource abundance (Whyte 2017). Yet even when ostensibly justified as a means of conserving nature (or settler imaginaries thereof), Indigenous elimination remains an incomplete endeavor. Settler origin narratives that evacuate Indigenous peoples from histories of the Hawaiian Islands remain troubled by the accounts preserved or rediscovered by the islands’ descendants (Kikiloi 2019). Such contestations of settler states’ claimed origins pose a reminder of the precariousness of their present-day purview over territory and citizenry (A. Simpson 2014). Additionally, liberal governance over worlds beyond the human rests upon distinctions

drawn between beings, between species categories, between biological life and landforms, yet Indigenous people hold knowledge of their homelands that renders these distinctions “visible, debatable, fraught, and anxious” (Povinelli 2016, 23). To this end, as *State v. Palama* exhibits, the law of the settler state must be recurrently tweaked, its terminology redefined, to effectively retain authority over Indigenous people and their practices of caring for land. The management of Indigenous lives thus joins the management of other-than-human species within a regulatory regime designed to evince settler belonging. As Goldberg-Hiller and Silva explain:

Like the law whose origins are obscured and rendered insignificant as a premise of sovereign security, ecological management understands the natural environment as self-regulating in a manner that effaces human history—the history of imperial destruction of former uses of the land, the coevolution of humans and other species, and the persistent indigenous voices asserting, sometimes on the basis of customary rights, their entitlement to manage natural resources. Nonetheless, the belief—however romantic and projected this may be—that the ecological state is the indigenous ideal and symbolizes a human overcoming in its rejection of violence against native peoples, animals, and the environment cannot obscure this indigenous reminder (434).

That romantic, projected belief in the ecological state’s capacity to supplant Indigenous modes of land stewardship advances contemporary dispossession while impeding forms of ecological caretaking based upon traditions that do not merit the state’s recognition or protection. As well, for pig hunting and other practices that the state *does* recognize as traditional, and that *do* earn its constitutional protections, the practices’ constitutive elements of relational caretaking are nevertheless circumscribed by this mode of recognition. Examining this projection of the ecological state and the logics that qualify settler governance as exceptionally “scientific” lastly reveals how, guided by state frameworks of recognition, broader public imaginaries have “not only comprehended, but *apprehended*” other-than-human species in ways that cleave them from ecologies of interrelation—just as they do human subjects (A. Simpson 2014; 178). This is to say that, when reinforcing a severance of stewardship responsibilities from the legal rights of land

and resource access, the state does not merely disregard ecological stewardship. Nor does it cleanly place it within the domain of individual landowner rights. After all, the occupying settler state claims ultimate landownership over Hawai‘i, and, correspondingly, claims paramount stewardship authority. Although cases like *Palama* put pressure on state authority, they have not yet dislodged these mutual claims.

My intention here is not to debate existing conservation policies targeting endangered or invasive species, nor the policies’ efficacy in restoring biodiversity. Nor is it to contest the damaging ecological influence of feral pig populations. Rather, I look to pig hunting—in Indigenous resource management scholarship and in practice on Kaua‘i—for alternatives to the state’s notion of tradition, its metrics of ecological health, and, finally, its sovereign claim. Pig hunting and other subsistence practices bring into focus the far more complex, non-dichotomous relations between Kānaka Maoli, ‘āina, and the other species who inhabit the ‘āina. How might the traditionality of a practice be articulated outside of these state-devised definitional constraints? What other meanings does tradition hold for those who look beyond the state’s legal regime for forms of access or recognition? Just as Kānaka Maoli preserve access in ways that articulate its meanings beyond the scope of legal rights, so too does their work of preserving tradition. Within the continual effort to secure access, practicing traditions according to other conceptualizations of the term constitutes an exercise of one’s customary rights legitimated not by the laws of the settler state, but by obligations to another nation, or to another form of nationhood. As Indigenous people sustain traditions of ecological caretaking and continue to fulfill these obligations, ‘āina itself expresses the “Indigenous reminder” that Kanaka Maoli communities’ customary rights encompass their stewardship of Hawai‘i’s lands. It also reminds us of their durative sovereignty.

### **3. Providah: Pig Hunting and Other Lessons on Abundance**

“We go hunt every day!” Kumu P jokes, commenting on the boys’ rare quietness as we hike together up one of the slopes in the back of Waipā. We have long since left behind any semblance of a trail—or at least one perceivable to anyone besides Uncle J, who guides us along each ridge and around every curve in the stream with a familiarity formed over decades of hunting pigs here. The boys, followed by me and Kumu P, trail behind him in a single-file line. At times, we are flanked by his pack of seven hunting dogs, each outfitted with GPS collars. At other times, the dogs disappear down paths that stretch far across the valley.

“Stop and listen,” Uncle J calls from the front of the line. When the crunchy footsteps peter out, we tune into each breeze that swooshes through strawberry guava and mango tree branches, tinged with the gingery perfume of the oozing red ‘awapuhi bulbs that poke out of the earth. Birdsongs chime from somewhere up in the canopy, and ever so often, a forceful gust rattles through the thick stalks of the bamboo groves. He starts walking again and we continue after him, surrounded by an orbit of dogs who zip in and out of the bushes. The sound of movement changes with the terrain. On the forested hills, the boys and dogs are audible as the crinkle of leaves beneath a foot, the pucker of mud as it’s lifted, the rustle of limbs weaving through chin-high tangles of ferns. The stream is never beyond earshot; it utters its proximity through its resonance, its contour in the way it dribbles, sloshes, or gushes into the soundscape. We climb in and out of gulches, where feet slap puddles, squeak over wet rocks, plop into stagnant pools, or swish through soft currents. The water is always clouded with mud swirled up by those in front of me. At times, the only sign of the stream’s depth is the full-body splash of a misgauged step up ahead.

J pauses us partway up a ridge, again leaving only the flows of wind and water, the panting of dogs nearby and the occasional bark of one in the distance. Kumu P walks over to R and points at his camo-print hat, which reads *PROVIDAH* across the front, with the *O* in the shape of Kaua‘i. He told me he got it from a pig hunting tournament. He carries his hunting knife in a fanny pack and wears a neon orange hunting shirt, as do the other few boys who have grown up hunting pigs.

“Whatchu provide?” Kumu P asks.

“Food!” he blurts, then runs off to join the boys peering over Uncle J’s shoulder at his handheld GPS. The screen shows seven dots moving on the topographic map along a wide trajectory. They listen with J for some trace of a pig in the far-off barking, some sign that the dogs have caught its scent trail.

“The dogs got one!” Uncle J says, then shifts our course back downhill toward a ravine. The boys stay close behind him and soon break into an energized dash. There is an eruption of frenzied rustling and splashes as they claw through the brush and wade through waist-deep water, squeezing under fallen logs and scrambling over boulders.

When we stop again and gather around Uncle J, most of the GPS dots have become question marks. Someone asks, as I also wondered, whether that meant the dogs had gotten lost, or whether the pig had gotten away. As he explains, it sometimes means that the dogs found something worth chasing out of range. Soon after, barks explode from far behind us and we follow it once more. The pace seems to pick up with each sporadic burst of barking, which intensifies as the rest of the pack closes in on their own chase somewhere ahead. The barks emanate from shifting directions and indiscernible distances—for me, at least. Uncle J does not falter in his swift, sometimes sharp turns. Even with the topographic map on the GPS, it seems

difficult to translate a pathway on the screen into movement on the ground. The vegetation gets dense, and in the thickets where the slender, closely woven strawberry guava trees have taken root, even impassable. It's hard to see what lies ahead or move in a straight line for more than a few yards.

Well before I see any dogs or pigs, I see a pink tint in the stream water below me. It thickens into red as I get within sight of the hulking, dark, hairy lump resting in a shallow pool. A couple of dogs lie at the edge of the water and gnaw on a torn off ear.

"You missed it!" someone calls as I reach the scene with Kumu P and a couple others from the back of the line. The boys who had gotten there in time speak over each other to give the details. The pack had cornered the boar into the crevice in the boulders, they say, and then it lunged at E, right before O and R each stabbed it with their knives.

"Behind the shoulder, into the heart," R says proudly. As Uncle J sharpens his knife, he directs the boys to drag the boar onto one of the boulders, then flip it over and splay out its legs so that he can clean it. He slices vertically from bottom to top and reaches expertly into the incision to pull out its heart, which he tosses to one of the dogs sitting nearby, who watches him expectantly. Then, like pulling a banana out of its peel, he yanks the skein of guts from the body in one armful. While he hauls it away into the trees, O instructs A to hold the boar from the other side and help him drain the blood. The whole group works together to tie each of its back legs to trees and hoist it up. With the boar's body outstretched in the air, snout and cloven hooves dangling a foot from the ground, Uncle J cuts along the neck until its head thuds against the dirt. He begins to slice off the strips of back meat as O sits at his feet, carving away at the lips to collect the long, yellow tusks.

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As I found while accompanying Kumu P’s group on their hunting expedition, and through ethnographic work more generally, land is engaged through practices like pig hunting in ways that far surpass the law’s interpretation of access. Lived experiences of access take place through corporeal interaction with the surrounding environment and its life forms. Moreover, the history of pig hunting and its present practice illustrate that, true to Trask’s claim, “what constitutes ‘tradition’ to a people is ever-changing. Culture is not static, nor is it frozen in objectified moments in time” (1991b, 165). In this section, I explore interconnection of land stewardship and subsistence within pig hunting and the different understandings of tradition and access that this practice reveals. I historicize hunting in Hawai‘i and the co-evolutionary relationship of people and pigs to highlight aspects of traditionality beyond those recognized by the court in *Palama*. I then extend my analytical scope to consider the imposed relations of economic dependency that organize Hawai‘i’s food system. In doing so, I chart how scarcity is imagined and produced within this system so as to underscore the import of subsistence traditions and of practices of ecological stewardship that sustain resource abundance.

I return to Waipā to detail its history of struggle against corporate development, as well as its work to preserve land access as the current wave of development inundates the north shore. Across this timeline, the state of abundance fostered at Waipā is an expression of the reciprocal caretaking of place and people. In particular, it reflects a non-proprietary relationship and an experience of mutual belonging that endures against the pressures of dispossession. As the discussion shifts from feral pigs to Hawai‘i’s precarious import dependency to the ‘āina momona found at Waipā, it traces colonial occupation’s ongoing effort to empty Hawaiian lands of their people and resources alongside the forms of resistance embedded in the lesson: “Take care of the land, and the land will take care of you.”

## *Of Pigs and People*

Indigenous cosmologies and deep-rooted ecological relations, Goldberg-Hiller and Silva have explicated, interlace animal and human lives such that they come to share the same political worlds. Sometimes they meet along new pathways of interconnection, driven by colonial governance of their bodies and movement. And, as Blanchette (2020) illustrates in his work on late-industrial agribusiness in America, animals entrenched in human food systems become inscribed with additional layers of signification; in their biology we find embodied histories of their human relations. As we stood over the boar's body, R asked if I was afraid of blood, which was smeared on the rocks under the sternum where he had stabbed it and now coursing through the water around us. I think I was mostly surprised by how long its eyelashes were. The boar's eyes were closed, its wrinkly gray snout dipped into the water, the pink contents of its head exposed through the gaping hole where its ear had been. Its barrel-sized, wiry-haired body rested on its side with one front leg bent and raised above the other as if mid-trot. Not long after, it had been carved up into a garbage bag full of brick-colored meat, pocketed tusks, and a heart in a hunting dog's muzzle.

The boar seemed almost unidentifiable as a relative of the hogs on Blanchette's factory farm. It is hard as well to draw correspondence between their places of death or the labor that renders them food. In some sense, we might understand the "carnal remaking" of the factory pig, from domestic stock to its hyper-industrial extreme, as one aimed at eliminating any semblance of wildness through the intense standardization of its physiology, habitat, and life. A porcine teleology, too, is encapsulated in *feral*, which names the transformation from domestic to wild. Ferality marks a dissolution of relation to humans, as body and behavior evolve past the point of recognition or familiarity. And yet, far from the absence of historical interconnection connoted in

discourses of invasive or alien species, the genealogy of the feral pig inheres at every point a record of entanglement with human worlds. The familiarity, intimacy, and corporeal knowledge seen in the boar's partitioning makes clear that, to Uncle J and the boys who have been raised hunting, it is not at all alien.

In conversation with Jack Halberstam and his writing on the wild of the colonial imagination, Audra Simpson comments that, as learned from hunters in particular, “for many Indigenous people, [animals] organize relations to family, to water...they are themselves repositories of knowledge. They can seem not so wild” (SOF 2021). Though pig hunting in Hawai‘i arose in the 19th century, archaeological research traces pigs’ presence on the islands back almost a millennium to when domestic pigs arrived on Polynesian voyaging canoes (Pearson et al. 1971). Europeans’ appearance in 1778 was followed by the introduction of livestock species like the European pig, whose crossbreeding with the Polynesian pig physically enlarged the species and increased its reproductive capacity. Later introduced species of fruiting trees propagated through the islands’ forested regions, expanding food sources and the carrying capacity of those environments for pigs who escaped domestication (Hess et al. 2019).

However, ecological and historical research on pigs seldom attends to the linkage between pig populations and land tenure in its attempts to explain why pigs in Hawai‘i are now predominantly feral. Conservation biologists Kūpa‘a et al. (2021) note that existing literature negates pigs’ sociocultural value and often relies on colonial archival materials that exclude Indigenous knowledge and interspecies relations. Using 19th and 20th century Hawaiian language newspaper archives, their study draws on Indigenous knowledge from the last 250 years to explicate pig’s and human’s relational transition from animal-husbandry to hunter-prey. They frame the relationship between Kānaka Maoli and pigs as one of biocultural co-evolution,

wherein the two interconnectedly experience the impacts of macro-level environmental and social transformation. Accounts of both wild pigs and pig hunting emerged around in the mid to late 19th century following structural shifts in Hawai‘i’s land tenure. Land privatization after 1848 diminished access to fishing, hunting, and gathering sites alongside the overall availability of resources, as the consolidation of stewardship among settlers catalyzed declines in the biodiversity of terrestrial and marine ecosystems. Pig hunting, the authors specify, served as an increasingly critical response to food insecurity following the depletion of nearshore fisheries and the destruction of Hawaiian aquaculture systems. New methods, such as the use of hunting dogs, further increased its prevalence as a subsistence practice.

Pigs, of course, are indifferent to human territoriality. Then as now, they traversed property boundaries, sometimes with hunters in tow. Kūpa‘a et al. cite archival accounts of landowners imposing hunting restrictions or prohibitions on their properties, noting how their regulations compounded with the prior introduction of new fruit-bearing plant species in enabling the rapid growth of pig populations. The authors contend that, faced with the rising pervasiveness of feral pigs, hunting in regions that remained accessible became a conservation method marked by “the philosophies and ethics of IRM [Indigenous Resource Management] in Hawai‘i, which value native biodiversity and the integrity of native-dominated landscapes” (448). Their research both substantiates and opposes the court’s specification of pig hunting as an Indigenous tradition. It confirms the authenticity of the tradition in the legal sense, demonstrating its existence prior to the court’s 1892 cutoff date and its longstanding role in subsistence and ecological conservation methods. At the same time, it refutes the imagined, stagnant forms of “ancient Hawaiian usage” imbued in the notion of traditionality that dominates this legal discourse. In locating the practice’s historical contingency upon changing socio-

ecological conditions, it illustrates pig hunting as a *fundamentally adaptive* traditional practice, or one developed within a dynamic co-evolutionary relationship between pigs and humans.

Pig hunting also opens an entryway for understanding the juncture between its dual functions of self-sufficiency and conservation: when feeding their human relations, pig hunters engage with a vast fabric of ecological caretaking relations. Otherwise put, this interweaving of stewardship and subsistence reifies Diver et al.'s (2019) theory of access as reciprocal relations with the environment. In pig hunting, we find that the effort to obtain one resource is concomitant with the effort to let others flourish; we see the *giving* and the *getting* that make up access. The previous section analyzes how the ecological state severs those two dimensions of access, such that stewardship predominantly becomes the right of the state while physical access to land and the procurement of resources become the right of landowners—and, under a limited set of circumstances, the right of Indigenous practitioners of recognized cultural traditions. Yet the traditional practice of pig hunting is one that construes access beyond the domain of legal rights. Historicized within the unfolding implications of mass land privatization, pig hunting can alternately be viewed as a way of preserving a traditional sense of access as a mode of interrelation formed through the caretaking obligations that allow for sustenance. When reconceived as such, perhaps access *is* the traditional practice. Pig hunting, then, may be traditional by virtue of continuing a more expansive tradition of access, or by serving as a method of sustaining the interdependency that constitutes access while adapting to a competing notion of the term.

*Gathering from Mauka to Makai*

Kumu P knows how hard it can be to rally the group's excitement for "school stuff," or reading and writing-heavy activities that keep them out of the ocean, the forests up mauka, or the swimming hole in the Waipā stream. Kumu P honors their wish for most of the summer, filling the five weeks of Program with excursions: two to Hanalei Pier to go spearfishing in the bay, two to go hunting in the back of Waipā valley, and two to her family's salt beds in Hanapēpē, where they make and harvest sea salt. In between these excursions, the boys spear prawns in the swimming hole, cast lines and throw nets from the beach, or sail Waipā's wa'a (canoe) along the coast. They also spend the days cooking and eating their catches. They pan-fry fish on a camp stove, roast prawns over a fire on the beach, and experiment with some of the meat from their hunting trip with Uncle J. We braise it to make tacos and, with the help of the local pizza connoisseur Uncle L, fire some boar-meat pizzas.

We are nearing the end of Program, and with it, Hō'ike, the final event where families and community members gather to celebrate and hear what the students have learned over the summer. Along with displays of photos and different projects, students share the oli (chants) that they practice together each morning, as well as skits, hula, mele, or presentations from each group. For the Hō'ike performance, Kumu P wants her group to present the knowledge and practices developed over the course of their excursions. Having the boys write their presentation script verges into "school stuff," however, so Kumu P merges script-drafting with another creative project. She brings a slab of milo wood for everyone in the group, along with her dremel and a jar of coconut oil.

"Petroglyphs is what the Hawaiians did back then to tell a story. You gonna remember. It's all about legacy," she says, holding up the example piece she had made to show them her carving of a hunter holding a spear. "No have guns back then, I'm tryna keep it old school." She

points to the pig beside the hunter, then the fish, then the rectangular salt beds, giving the Hawaiian terms for each of the practices they represented: “Alualu pua‘a. Lawai‘a. Hahapa‘akai.” She asks the group to imagine what each practice used to look like by drawing them with the iconography of petroglyphs, first sketched on paper, then etched in wood. Their journals show human figures surrounded by mountains, ocean waves, salt beds, tusked boars, and schools of fish. As they wait for a turn with the dremel to transfer their illustrations onto the milo wood, Kumu P and I get them brainstorming for their Ho‘ike script by bridging the woodcarving project with a journal reflection. The boys sit on picnic benches around the large whiteboard we’ve placed on the table.

“Our thing is gathering, from mauka to makai (mountains to sea),” Kumu P begins.

“Gathering what?”

“Food!” the group says in unison.

“What kinds of gathering have we done?” I ask. As they call out *fishing*, *hunting*, and *salt beds*, I write the three at the top of the board with the Hawaiian terms below.

“How did people used to do these?” For the second prompt, some of them grab a marker and write their answers on the board. They add words like *net*, *pole*, and *wa‘a* underneath *fishing*, *spear* and *knife* under *hunting*, and *basket*, *smooth stone*, and *waikū* (saltwater well) under *salt beds*.

“How do we do it now?” Some of the boys call out their responses while others add them to the board. Words like *speargun*, *wetsuit*, or *GPS* are interspersed with many repetitions of previous answers, like *knife*, *net*, or *waikū*.

Through petroglyph iconography laden with, in Kumu P’s words, Hawaiian story and legacy, the boys depict traditions as practices of the present. Along with the group’s discussion

that day, their reflections trace the aspects of each practice that have changed (they now gear up with wetsuits and spearguns when diving and use a GPS to hunt pigs) as well as some that have not (they still hunt with a knife and draw saltwater from the same waikū that Kumu P’s family has for generations). They illustrate themselves within a legacy wherein the continuity of tradition is not premised upon perfect fidelity between past and present activities. Nor does it rely on an essentialization of “ancient” Indigeneity that renders that fidelity a metric of authenticity. Rather, their drawings and writing tell of evolving methods and link historical memory to the current practices with which they sustain connections to place.

Afterward, each of them chooses the practice that they want to present, forming three groups and giving themselves the names Salt, Hunting Pig, and Undawatah Huntahs. To synthesize the information to include in the Hō’ike presentation, we give them a few more questions to discuss together and respond to in their journals: *What did you gather? Where did you gather it? What tools do you use? How do you use them? How do you cook or use what you gathered?* Kumu P brings the group back together when they finish journaling, pointing to the whiteboard as she reads off some of the terms: “Pua’a for pig, i’a for fish, pa’akai for salt. We using what?”

“Resources,” a handful of boys respond.

“Are we going to Foodland? Nah!” she says. “You kālua [smoke in an imu, or underground oven] the pig, not buy. We did it all by ourselves. So you don’t gotta go to the store. Get *this* much poke for twenty dollars. It’s fricken insane, the fish,” she gestures to show a tiny amount of fish. Some of them nod, all too familiar with the rising prices of poke and other foods in the area. She continues, “[N], you go fishing, you go diving. How much money you

save? It's old school method, nobody think like that no more. Our whole thing is gathering. And resource management!"

Earlier that day, and during other lulls between Program activities, N would regularly take a throw net down to the beach or to the brackish inlet down the shore. He would often draw the net back from the water with a silvery moi wriggling in it, telling the other boys gathered nearby, "not legal size," before gently disentangling the fish and tossing it back in. To conclude their discussion, Kumu P reminds the group:

When you go, you gotta make sure you know why you going, why you doing it...[N], you good. You catch for eat. Not catch for sport. Not catch for blood, for pride, for ego. Nowadays, we live in an unbalanced world, not being resourceful, not being caring, not connected. You trade. My dad used to trade one bucket of salt for limu kohu, but hard to get nowadays.

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Kumu P's final thought underscored the consequences we encounter in an unbalanced world. Limu kohu is a prized species of seaweed that has grown increasingly rare. On the north shore of Kaua'i, in particular, Kānaka Maoli and others with generational ties to the region followed long-established codes to protect resources like limu, and out of respect for the human communities and marine life who rely on limu as a rich source of nutrients. Along with harvest restrictions and rotations, Mehana Blaich Vaughan (2018) details how these codes include releasing seaweed spores back onto the reef, harvesting from above the base to allow regeneration, "weeding" more aggressive algae, and reserving the most accessible reef for kūpuna to harvest from. Her work illustrates how many residents still honor these codes. But the region's unprecedented demographic changes have led to overharvesting, the waning prevalence

of caretaking traditions, and thus, a decline in limu kohu. As Kumu P told us, not being resourceful, caring, or connected has left a mark on the reefs.

As she moved the topic of discussion from averting trips to Foodland (the supermarket four miles east) to her dad trading salt, I thought about our last trip to Hanapēpē. The boys had raked the salt from the beds, gently rinsed it in bamboo baskets, and poured it into 5-gallon buckets. They had to pair up to haul each of the five full buckets back to the van. Amazed by the quantity, O asked, “[Kumu P,] are you gonna sell this?”

“Nah!” She looked incredulous, but didn’t say anything more then. When I asked about it later, she explained that her father and other relatives who had taught her to tend the salt beds never sold their salt, and that was reason enough. When Hō’ike came around, she gave each of the boys and their families gallon ziplocs full of salt. She gave a bag to me, “cause you always cooking,” and another to take back to my family on O’ahu. The sheer amount of salt pushed my luggage over the airline’s weight limit and I had to carry it aboard the plane with me.

### ***Manufactured Hunger***

“Pig hunting keeps Kanaka Hawai’i connected to the ‘āina and offers a noncapitalist path to subsistence” (2011, 441). Goldberg-Hiller and Silva’s assertion makes it tempting to think that a non-capitalist path to subsistence might widen into a non-capitalist path toward sovereignty. Alongside Kumu P’s lessons on mitigating the predicament of Foodland’s rising prices, their statement gives rise to the question of where and when methods of feeding oneself, or of remaining connected to ‘āina, become methods of disentanglement from capitalist worlds. The multitudinous forms of subsistence enfolded in food sovereignty can interface with capitalism in complex ways. So too can they eschew it, in the vein of non-capitalism, or resist and refuse it, in

that of anticapitalism. Indeed, the final section discusses how the staggering profitability of a cheesecake recipe works in service of Waipā's food sovereignty efforts. More broadly, self-determination over agricultural production has in many contexts fed into self-determination in political life through gains in economic capital. The intricacies that engagement with capitalist markets lends to food sovereignty movements far exceeds the scope of this work and is taken up elsewhere (Tilzey 2020; Grey & Patel 2015; Jansen 2015). Nevertheless, the entwined traditions of subsistence and ecological caretaking through which those I work with come to understand their relations to 'āina do prove antithetical to at least one dimension of capitalism: scarcity.

“Capital depends on growth through the manufacturing of hunger,” Fujikane writes. “Thus, capitalist modes of production manufacture the perception of scarcity to produce markets... While capitalist economies proffer empty promises of imaginary plenitude, ancestral abundance feeds for generations” (2021, 4). In this process of manufacturing hunger, the existence of scarcity must be imagined *before* it can be produced by capitalist industry on the ground.<sup>17</sup> The foretelling of absence is necessary to its creation, and the projection of hunger makes pervasive the experiences of it. Manufacturing hunger thus carves space for another relational network marked by material need and dependency—or rather, a new market. Fujikane's analysis resonates with a breadth of Indigenous Studies scholarship on the legal fiction of *terra nullius* (empty land, or land belonging to no one) and settler imaginaries of land's human absence, which remain central to contemporary dispossession. Fantasies of *terra nullius*, Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2015) notes, predate capitalism and circulate well beyond the scope of settler states' legal regimes. Yet they form the basis for capitalist industrial expansion, which relies upon an ongoing process of land expropriation.

Colonial possession is perpetually renewed and extended even after propertization. Following the Māhele and the Kuleana Act, the newly installed property law regime opened up further avenues for possession. Among the small fraction of maka‘āinana who had successfully registered land claims, “lands were frequently lost to fraud, adverse possession, tax sales, and undervalued sales to speculators” (Kauanui 2018, 88). As Robert Nichols argues, Indigenous people are often granted a “truncated form of property” that presents them with only the right to sell their lands, such that “[property] is fully realized only in its negation. Indigenous propertied interests are only rendered cognizable in a retrospective moment, viewed backward and refracted through the process of generating a distinct form of ‘structurally negated’ property right in land” (2018, 15). Propertization thus enables the creation of *terra nullius* by issuing Indigenous peoples the legal right to their lands in order to empty those lands thereafter.

*Terra nullius* might be understood, then, as an adaptive tradition of coloniality that morphs across temporal and geographic contexts to legitimize and extend settler occupation. In her examination of capitalist development in Hawai‘i, Fujikane observes its reiteration through what she terms the *colonial mathematics of subdivision*, by which “cartographies of capital commodify and diminish the vitality of land by drawing boundary lines around successively smaller, isolated pieces of land that capital proclaims are no longer ‘culturally significant’ or ‘agriculturally feasible,’ often portraying abundant lands as wastelands incapable of sustaining life” (5). Colonial subdivision carves wahi pana (storied places) out from Indigenous cartographies of historical interconnection to other lands and people. Because capitalist expansion relies on the negation of *existing* plentitude, its mechanism of subdivision works to displace Indigenous people in addition to the histories, place names, and cosmologies that speak to land’s former or current abundance. Subdivision seeks to splice and remap land in such a way

that memories of abundance dissolve. Its “evisceration of land” mobilizes scenes of absence imagined of the past in order to produce them now. Thus, in the process of colonial subdivision, fantasies of *terra nullius* operate across temporalities to actively obfuscate ancestral abundance—the resource abundance cultivated and left to Indigenous peoples by their ancestors, as well as the ancestral knowledge and modes of relation with which abundance might be restored. colonial occupation, nor that deoccupation is a requisite for flourishing. Fujikane proposes the restoration of abundance as a way of translating non-statist forms of *ea* into present experiences that are not dependent upon the dismantling of states or the state’s return of Indigenous peoples’ lands. Nor do I mean to say that resource scarcity is produced purely by capitalist development and occupation. As Kauanui argues, deoccupation does not itself end extractivism or the exploitation of land. Rather, the restoration of land “entails taking seriously the meaning of ‘āina—that which feeds, a living entity, our relative” (2018, 112).

The vitality of land is certainly not contingent upon Hawai‘i’s political status alone but, be that as it may, past and present capitalist development under U.S. occupation has drastically limited the ‘āina’s ability *be* that which feeds. Waves of industrial development in Hawai‘i over the past century have pushed the islands to an extreme state of import-reliance. The Hawai‘i market produced through the manufacture of hunger is perhaps most bluntly illustrated by an aphorism I often heard growing up on O‘ahu in an age of increasingly prevalent climate disaster: if the ships stop coming, we will run out of food in a matter of days. Far from rumor, this daunting statement has been circulated and substantiated by Hawai‘i’s principal news channels and many journalists. Media coverage of the “broken food system” surged throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, amidst supply chain disruptions and the emptying of grocery store shelves. Though the precise number of days is not often stated, or perhaps known by most, the County of

Honolulu reported in 2022 that commercial warehouses contain food supplies to support the population for approximately five days—and Honolulu is by far the most populous and commercially developed county.<sup>18</sup> The pandemic left residents hyper-aware of the stakes of living in the most geographically isolated archipelago in the world with a near-total dependency on imported foods. The specter of scarcity is symbolized in numbers that have become common knowledge: imports account for an estimated 80-90% of the islands' total supply.<sup>19</sup> The state currently recommends that households maintain their own 14-day supply, given that, under normal circumstances, it takes five to eight days for ships to make the 2,345-mile trip from the nearest port of call in Oakland (Miles 2020).

The current “ship-to-table system” was historically constructed through land privatization and a coefficient process of American industrialization (Hobart 2016). This occurred initially through corporatized agriculture, then through rural gentrification and other tourism-related development. The process of propertization recounted in the first section left vast acreage to be claimed by the white missionaries who dominated the plantation industry, thereby allowing the colossal expansion of sugar and pineapple plantations. By the beginning of World War II, Hawai‘i’s plantation industry was one of the largest in the world. Sugar and pineapple plantations altogether comprised 250,000 acres, or 95% of all cropland, and employed one in three workers. These plantations produced 4% of the world’s commercial sugar supply and 60% of the pineapple supply, nearly all of which was exported to the U.S. continent (Hitch 1992). In addition, planters began importing greater quantities of food to be purchased from plantation stores by indentured laborers, further solidifying the linkage between Hawai‘i’s dependency on exports for profit and imports for local consumption.

An array of factors has kept agricultural production low since the end of the plantation economy, such that locally grown food constitutes 11.6% of Hawai‘i’s current supply (Loke & Leung 2013). Plantations’ commandeering of aquifers and arable lands precluded farming livelihoods for generations of Kānaka Maoli and other residents whose knowledge of food production once sustained the entire archipelago. Further, the intensive system of monocropping has largely left former plantation lands parched, exhausted of nutrients, and seemingly primed for “renewal” by residential development and the tourism industry. Despite agricultural policy interventions, urbanization and suburbanization overtook prime agricultural lands between 1960 and 1980, particularly on O‘ahu where roughly 70% of Hawai‘i’s population resides. Rural gentrification followed from 1990 onward as corporate developers made use of a provision in land use laws that permitted agricultural lands to be rezoned “as long as the development included some farming component” (Suryanata & Lowry 2016).

From the decline of the plantation economy to the present, food security has remained marginal to the interests of corporate development. The progression demonstrates how the colonial tradition of *terra nullius* operates cyclically, imagining land as empty in order to empty it, then portraying it as beyond the possibility of regeneration so as to fill the imagined void with colonial industry of a different shape. Bringing Voyles’ notion of “wastelanding” into the realm of corporate development in Hawai‘i, Fujikane portrays how developers cast inexpensive lands as ‘wastelands’ without the capacity to foster life, and thus, as spaces prime for speculative urban rezoning and industrial facilities. Given the trajectory of development on Kaua‘i’s north shore and its dovetailing with the interests of the ecological state, I would fold into this concept the wastelanding wreaked by rural gentrification.

“Scarcity mentality. The main thing that pops to mind is scarcity mentality,” Kumu D said, when I asked her about the beliefs she’s seen emerge as new landowners arrive on the north shore. Her elaboration is indicative of how “scarcity mentality” is visible not just among the hordes of people who flock to grocery stores after each hurricane warning, or in the more general sense of precarity induced by Hawai‘i’s severe import dependency. It is also the core of conservation principles held by the ecological state and the private landowners who espouse its grounding philosophies.

There’s an idea that is practiced by private property owners as well as people who are conservationists, that kind of goes along the lines of: if you limit access or restrict access to land for people, that the land will thrive, or that the land will be fine. And I think that that’s a very different perspective, when you view land as a resource [and] as something that’s flat that people walk on. Because people being in relationship to place creates more abundance within resources.

By positing human absence as a precondition for resources to thrive, wastelanding concretizes *terra nullius* in Hawai‘i’s rural areas. The process characterizes land as ecologically vulnerable, and therefore as needing to be saved and stewarded through state-sanctioned conservation management. Such conservation approaches adopt the state’s teleology of colonial modernity and work to override the deep-rooted caretaking practices that constitute Indigenous people’s stewardship of their lands. Under the premise of development as a method of producing resource abundance, and of land stewardship as an authority of property owners and developers, the construction of vacation homes and other residential projects emulates the state’s postulation of Indigenous elimination *as* conservation policy. Like the ecological state, this mode of development relies upon claims of land protection to conceal its own hand in ecological degradation and the manufacturing of scarcity.

As Kumu D shared, popular histories of these lands, and of Hawai‘i generally, confine Indigenous knowledge to merely “a glimpse, as if Hawaiian people of old lived in one specific way, with a specific finality.” Temporal containment and historical negation pervade the current development trend that she and many others observe in the region, where ultra-wealthy new landowners construct sprawling estates surrounded by open acreage.

In that system of land ownership, we don’t view people as a resource. We don’t view people as having some kind of task, or responsibility, or kuleana to a place. And we also don’t value the skills, lived experience, and knowledge base that those people have...I think that’s really what we’re experiencing in this changing tide of Hawai‘i. You know the saying: No Hawaiians, no aloha. So if there aren’t Kānaka Maoli, if there aren’t people here to carry on this legacy of aloha, of caring for one another...to be able to share abundance, and beauty, and love through survival, to help each other survive, what does our Hawai‘i look like?

Private property owners’ expropriation of land and concurrent appropriation of stewardship over it works to displace Indigenous residents, while also erasing their relations, narratives, knowledge, and caretaking practices composed through belonging with and to their lands. These active processes are acutely pertinent in rural regions where those aspects of Indigenous stewardship are robustly engaged, and where they form the basis of Indigenous resistance to encroaching development and contemporary colonial incursion.

Such locales often become sites of cultural kīpuka, or the communities that McGregor likens to the kīpuka found in Hawai‘i’s lava flows. When volcanic activity smothers rainforests, it also leaves behind kīpuka—the patches of Native trees, ferns, and mosses whose seeds and spores allow forests to grow anew atop the lava. McGregor draws parallels between these kīpuka and the rural Hawaiian communities whose relations to their lands have endured mass propertization. They, too, serve as “strongholds for the perpetuation of Hawaiian culture,” offering possibilities of resurgence through “not only their ability to resist and withstand

destructive forces of change, but also their ability to regenerate life on the barren lava that surrounds them” (2007, 7). The surrounding flows of “barren lava” have shifted in form, corresponding to the colonial forces that remold Hawai‘i’s social landscape and political economy. As Uncle H remembered, Kaua‘i saw the succession between the plantation and tourism industries about a decade after most of the other Hawaiian islands. Residents’ work to preserve practices of ecological stewardship and subsistence over the course of those shifts has become the basis of their efforts to contend with the sense of scarcity induced by the current import-dependent food system. He analogizes Kaua‘i to a tugboat precariously tethered onto the “barge” of the continental U.S.:

Many have a realization that our economy hangs on a very thin thread over here. And my phrase for it is, *when the cable breaks*—the cable between the tugboat and the barge. The barge brings 80% of our material goods here. 80% of our food comes on the barge. There’s gonna be a lot of hungry people if that’s what’s happening. And so Kaua‘i, having always been the separate island, the furthest away, was always more self-sufficient and independent than others. And because we stayed rural for so long, until the 70s, people here still remember the practices.

### ***The Mission of Momona-ness***

Abundance, Kumu D explains, is the mission of the Waipā Foundation where she and others carry on the knowledge, relations, and labor of cultivating ‘āina momona (fertile and abundant lands).

The mission of the Foundation is to steward the land, take care of the land, take care of the resources, and infuse morals and values that our kūpuna used to achieve productivity, resource management, and *momona-ness*—a state of abundance through correct management, and the implication of certain techniques to take care of the ahupua‘a as a model. Being able to teach that to youth is a part of the perpetuity of that idea, of that ‘ike.

The caretaking that creates ‘āina momona draws upon felt relations to place as well as the recognition of vast knowledge developed by kūpuna. Sustaining the state and sensations of abundance requires that both be inherited by a younger generation, and entails a mode of cultural transmission that is often intensely physical. As Kumu P told her group of boys, “our whole thing is gathering, from mauka to makai” and “resource management!” The purpose of their learning at Program, and through their presence at Waipā, the reefs in Hanalei bay, and the coast of Hanapēpē, is the two-fold practice of subsistence and caretaking. They both gather and create resources. “Know why you going, why you doing it,” she reminded them. It is not for sport, blood, pride, or ego. It is to eat, to be resourceful, caring, and connected.

When I looked over the boys journals to weave their writing into a script for the Hō‘ike presentation, I saw the Hunting Pigs group’s list of tools and ways to use those tools:

*Dog: It helps find the pig*

*Knife: You kill the pig with it*

*Garmin [GPS]: You look where the dogs are so you don’t lose um*

*Us: We walk*

For me, the list vividly conjured the image of them walking—sometimes sprinting, splashing, or scrambling—after Uncle J, who, GPS in hand, chases after the dogs, who chase after the pig, who leads us all through miles of forest. The group of Undawatah Huntahs had written, *masks: so you can see the fish*, and a list of the species they had caught: *manini*, *moano*, *pāpio*, and *weke*.

Along with the *waikū*, *buckets*, and *special rake* for scraping the salt beds, the Salt group had listed *hands*. They detailed how they had used their hands to first collect the dark red Hanapēpē clay from nearby and lay it across the beds, then to burnish it with a round stone. After baking under the searing westside sun, that smooth layer of clay prevents the saltwater poured from the waikū from seeping out. The clay remained in the salt we harvested and ate, giving the crystals a rose-pink tint and earthy note that marks their origins in Hanapēpē.

The boys' hands, movements, and sensory experiences are integrated into the methods of each practice and are understood in connection to its other components: the features of a place, the technologies and gear, and the other species present. They are themselves vital parts of the practices, and of the continuity of the tradition— the traditions of pig hunting, fishing, and making sea salt, as well as the tradition of cultivating abundance by carrying on the knowledge of how to do so. Across these practices, the labor of obtaining resources converges with that of cultivating and preserving them. Their corporeal engagements with each place and physical ways of relating to its elements reveal a breadth of embodied knowledge inherited from Kumu P, from the hunters and fishers in their communities, and from their lands and waters: the knowledge of what to take and how to take it (feral pigs and how to hunt them), the knowledge of how to create a resource (sea salt), and the knowledge of what *not* to take (lobsters out of season and undersized moi, notably left off the list of species caught).

As Fujikane argues, “abundance is both the objective and the limit of capital: the crisis for capital is that abundance raises the possibility of a just redistribution of resources” (2021, 4). At Waipā, abundance is not only possible. It is here, now, alive on the land and in the water. It is falling from the fruit trees, sprouting from the lo‘i mud, and passed from one family to another by the gallon. It is present at each meal and hike up mauka, experienceable in every sensory capacity. And it is made so through the mutual caretaking of the land, people, and other beings in this work. In particular, this abundance was made by kūpuna. It is through the labor of both ancestors and elders that the ‘auwai continues to feed the lo‘i, or that the lo‘i continues to feed people across Kaua‘i. It is also through their struggle.

“There’s a *reason* we got started,” Uncle S told me. Uncle S is one of the residents and farmers from the north shore whose effort to prevent residential development in Waipā spanned

several years. Kumu often allude to this history when reminding their students that the ahupua‘a could have ended up like Princeville, the sprawling resort and timeshare complex on the other side of the bay. Students invoke it as well, Kumu D noted, sometimes scolding each other by saying, “You should be grateful! This place coulda been a golf course,” or, “You wanna be like that? You’re a tourist. And you’re gonna turn this place into a golf course!” The region’s ever-increasing examples of what Waipā might have become collectively highlight the remarkable lack of development. I sat with Uncle S in the hale imu, one of the few structures on the grounds. We were soon joined by his daughter S—the executive director of the foundation—and the two shared with me some of the details of the Waipā’s history.

Waipā is one of the two ahupua‘a on Kaua‘i still held by a single landowner. Along with the ahupua‘a of Lumaha‘i to the west, Waipā’s 1,600 acres are held in trust by Kamehameha Schools Bishop Estate (KSBE), the largest private landowner in Hawai‘i and operator of a private school network for students of Hawaiian ancestry.<sup>20</sup> Previously, Waipā had been leased to the Robinson Family as ranchland. The Robinson lease ended in 1980, which, Uncle S recounts, was right when real estate was starting to boom in the region.

They were going to develop this into agricultural farm lots, which in Kaua‘i has turned into subdivision. They say ag lots, but then they do CRP’s (Conservation Reserve Programs) and stuff, and next thing you know, it’s just a subdivision.<sup>21</sup>

Within context of rural gentrification, Fujikane’s theorization of subdivision is often found in the installment of aptly named subdivisions. In this process, homebuyers join developers as agents of a systematic method of emptying by dispossessing prior residents and caretakers indirectly—or directly, in some of the island’s recent high-profile cases.<sup>22</sup> The masquerading of residential subdivisions as preserved agricultural landscapes—sometimes called “gentleman farms”—

commodifies land under the sign of abundance, thus extending another “empty promise of imaginary plenitude.”

“What do they say? More than 50% of ownership is occupation. That has always been our approach,” Auntie S said of the several years spent going back and forth with KSBE. Earlier in the summer I had been working in the garden with a longtime volunteer at Waipā, and mentioned that I was reading oral histories of Kamehameha Schools for another project. The next day, she lent me her copy of *Wayfinding through the Storm*, a textbook-sized volume compiling oral histories about KSBE and its trustees with the words *...absolute power corrupts absolutely* emblazoned across the back cover. Suffice to say that Uncle S and the other members of the Hawaiian Farmers of Hanalei, Inc.—formed after KSBE’s refusal to negotiate with a nonprofit organization—fought an uphill battle. Even before the lease was issued, however, they began visiting the land to conduct elevation studies and restore the neglected ‘auwai and the areas scarred by erosion from the prior cattle ranching and deforestation. Uncle S gestured to the field around where we are sitting.

The land here was just all flooded. We restored the drains....We had done a lot of studies. The land was physically in bad shape. It was just a big swamp. And this was all overgrown...It was just trashed. The land was saturated, flooded, not usable, no roads, nothing. So that’s the condition we found it in, and we just started cleaning.

He and the Hawaiian Farmers of Hanalei began planting tropical flowers to sell to florists, then, as they restored the ‘auwai and lo‘i, they started to grow kalo. Years into the work, KSBE issued the lease, and has continued to extend it since. Auntie S added that in the early years, when funding was sparse and lease renewal unpredictable, there was no question of whether their relationship to the land or role as caretakers would survive.

Traditionally, our people didn’t own the land. You didn’t *have* to own the land. You take care of the land. We took care, and that is how you show that it’s yours. We’re caretakers

of it. And that's what we've *always* been, and you learn it, you know it, you know everything around it.

Visits from KSBE's land agents and trustees serve as a reminder of this. She recalled the countless tours she has given them over the years, remarking that, "They don't even know their own land, because we're the people that are here on the land, that are working it, that know how to take care of it. And it's been like that all along."

While working to revitalize the area, however, Uncle S observed that the real estate development he had fended off at Waipā was ensuing virtually everywhere else, and rapidly. "We wanted to do this project for the kids, for future generations that were to come...because we saw what was happening with real estate," he said. As a growing number of gates, fences, and construction zones surfaced in the region, he and the Hawaiian Farmers of Hanalei recognized the need for an outdoor classroom. He had wanted to form a nonprofit from the start, he remembered, "and I kept saying this to [S], and then she was the one who made it happen in '94." They slowly transitioned into the Waipā Foundation and established the youth program. The program is core to the foundation's stewardship role and allows the tradition of caring for land without asserting exclusive possession over it to be put into practice. Aunty S shared that part of the work of stewardship is opening the land so that others may learn to care for it.

We have the space *to share*, not to hold our arms around it and be like, 'don't come in the driveway, this is *our* place.' No, this is our place *so that* we can share...So, that's what I think stewardship means to us...We're growing it for *everybody*, or for the people that will take care of it.

Few "intact" ahupua'a like Waipā remain across Hawai'i, and, as such, there are few educational environments where principles and practices of stewardship built upon the ahupua'a model can be learned through direct engagement with the entirety of the ahupua'a. Here, students like Kumu P's can be found gathering and cultivating resources, from mauka to makai.

The land speculation and loss of affordable housing that Uncle S observed in the 1980's real estate market has intensified, however. Ongoing dispossession induced by the steep rise in foreign land ownership is framed by Vaughan as another iteration of the losses Kanaka Maoli families underwent after the Māhele and U.S. occupation. Vaughan, a University of Hawai'i professor of natural resource management and one of the architects of the youth program, described the ahupua'a of Waipā as a community kīpuka. Building upon McGregor's imagery, she expresses how spaces like Waipā "are more than refugia, islands of what the landscape once was" (2018, 123). In its work to bring together and nourish communities, Waipā offers a space where people learn to connect to land through caretaking traditions, to enfold other-than-human relatives into their notions of community, and to sustain ancestral knowledge that might otherwise be lost.

Today, the Waipā Foundation hosts the summer youth program, which serves about 80 students, along with additional school visits, youth internships, community events and workdays, and festivals. It hosts an array of ongoing research projects and shares Waipā's lands and waters with hydrologists, Native species conservationists, and the occasional Anthropology graduate student. Vaughan emphasizes that it also one of the area's primary employers of local youth. As noted in the first section, most are otherwise employed within the service sector, and primarily within the tourism industry. M, one of Waipā's interns, worked on his days off for a tour operator that takes clients on four-wheeler excursions across its massive undeveloped property. The primary distinction between his two jobs, he explained, was the way people saw the land that they were on:

[The property manager is] constantly looking at the land, at which new trails can be built, which part of the land can be developed for farming, which part can be developed for new hotels. So the land is seen in the tourism industry as a resource to create money...Over there, the land is seen as like a resource to be exploited. It feels like over

here, it's kuleana. It's not like we're working on the land here because it will benefit us—even though there's such a large intersection between the community and the land—we're working on the land because we respect the land as its own entity...It's our responsibility over the land, to practice stewardship over it.

Uncle S related the learned practices of stewardship to the continuance of nonproprietary relations with land, which stand in contrast to those held by the new class of landowners flooding into the region.

People who live here, we're not buyers and sellers. We don't want to be, because for the Hawaiians, the land was never a commodity, it was a resource. So we just take care of the resource. We still view it that way, you know...And we're not interested in selling it! But we're affected by the inflation...because now the billionaires are here. Not just the millionaires—the billionaires! These guys, money is nothing! 'How much you want for this property?' It's meaningless to them, they can put out so much money...So they're buying up. And if we don't control it, this is going to price us all out.

Faced with stark, accelerating shifts in the surrounding social and physical landscape, some at Waipā discussed the ambiguous future of the ahupua'a and voiced, as Aunty S had, the sense of risk that arises when the lease is up for renewal or when funding sources appear to waver.

Nonetheless, the prospect of impermanence does not erode felt obligations or caretaking relations. When I ask Kumu D what she hopes her students' care for Waipā will look like in the future. She answers not with any of the physical acts of ecological caretaking and agricultural work that I saw students taking part in each day, but instead, their continued process of belonging.

I want them to feel like this is their place...It's a place where we don't own anything. We don't own this place, but we *belong* to this place. And we don't need to own it to feel like we can take care of it, that the place can take care of us, that it can be a place where we come to gather and to ho'okānaka, to be in a process of becoming Hawaiian and becoming ma'a—connected to this place. That's what I hope for them moving forward in the shuffle of this community, of the class background that's able to live here.

In contrast to conceptions of belonging as a status to be obtained through proprietorship, the belonging felt here is instead an ongoing process that people engage in as they continue to take

care. M admitted that he would probably “make *way* more money” in the tourism industry. But his role at Waipā “[is] not like a job.” In reflecting on the mentorship of Z, who led the internship program, M connected the perpetual nature of the work done at Waipā to a broader feeling of possibility.

We’ll go on a hike and I’ll see [Z] picking up invasive seeds. And in the back of my mind, I’m thinking like, why is he picking these up? More are just gonna come, what’s the purpose? But then I realized, it’s beyond that... You just do the best you can, and it’s so authentically in his heart, it’s inspired me to see the land similarly. Even if it’s not objectively going to change the world or anything, I think if a lot more people feel that way, and we’re touched in that way all together, we can make a difference.

#### 4. “Not Pissing Around”

Kumu P’s boys camp at Waipā overnight in the week leading up to Ho‘ike. They help to dig the imu (underground oven), then load it with the meat from the boar they hunted and one of pigs raised at Waipā. They bury it all under lava rocks, banana tree stalks, and ti leaves, and leave it to smoke overnight. Kumu and their groups prepare other recipes in massive quantities using produce grown at Waipā, to be accompanied by the extra-large amount of poi made that week. The bustle of harvesting and cooking resonates with Aunty S’s claim that “part of food sovereignty is producing your food, not pissing around with a few little bags here and there of kalo.” When the night of Hō‘ike arrives, the foundation’s grounds have been transformed by the giant party tents strung with lights and floral arrangements collected from the surrounding forest. Families and community members sit crowded together at tables around the stage that’s been set up for the event, all intently watching student performances of oli, reenactments of mo‘olelo, and hula. We get to the oldest groups and the boys take their position on the stage. I take mine, crouched behind it with the projector.

“We’re Kumu [P’s] group of 6th-8th grade boys, Da Providahs,” G introduces the group with the name they’d come up with, inspired by R’s hat. The Salt group guides the audience through the steps of preparing and harvesting sea salt, all depicted in the photos of the group’s trips to Hanapēpē. They explain how they packed the clay of the beds so that they would hold water from the waikū, how they waited until the beds dried and returned to rake up the crust of salt, and how the minerals in the clay and brine shrimp in the waikū give the salt its unique, subtle sweetness. Next, the Undawatah Huntahs talk about their different methods of fishing as the slides show them toting spearguns, poles, spears, throw nets, and coolers full of fish. They

share the names of the species they'd caught, and a long list of all the different ways they'd cooked the fish. Finally, the Hunting Pig group recounts their hunting trips.

“When the dogs get the pig, we hike over to the pig and use a knife to kill it,” R tells the audience.

“Then we skin it, debone it, and cut the meat into strips,” O adds. The slides depict R and a circle of hunting dogs surrounding a pig, then O skinning it and removing its tusks. We come to the final slide, with photos of the boys digging the imu and standing over the steaming mound of ti leaves after it had been lit.

“This is an important practice to keep because it teaches us how to be self-sufficient and how to preserve the resources around us,” G concludes. He then addresses the audience to add, “The kālua pig you are eating tonight we caught up mauka here at Waipā, and it's seasoned with pa'akai from the saltbeds at Hanapēpē.”

After the performance, plates are loaded up with kālua pig, poi, and the enormous spread of other food shared by the land and the families in attendance. Parents passing by Kumu P tell her how excited they are for their sons to be in her group next summer. Certainly, the boys' presentation was captivating and shared the liveliness of their excursions that summer. Yet, as longtime residents of the region, parents no doubt recognize the value of the knowledge the boys had demonstrated as well. I think back to the group's final presentation rehearsal the night before. Uncle H had been sitting nearby and offered himself as their practice audience. He listened intently until they reached the end, then told them: “Across the entire U.S., no other kids are learning this stuff. But you're gonna need it when the cable breaks. You know what that means?”

“No TV?” someone suggested.

“No,” he said. “When the barge doesn’t come—”

“When you go store, and there’s no food on da shelf,” Kumu P chimed in.

“—you’ll feed yourselves.”

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This final section explores what the work of creating and sharing abundance makes possible, as well as what it makes survivable. When I reflect upon Uncle H’s apt metaphor of “when the cable breaks,” the significance of *when* is striking. There is no *if*, or question of *whether* the cable will break. Not only is future breakage inevitable; the cable has already been broken—if only momentarily, and then repaired, but with no semblance of reparation in regard to the economic dependency and colonial dominion that the cable itself symbolizes. Indeed, the Covid-19 pandemic was only the most recent reminder of the unstable conditions of livability in Hawai‘i. Each climate catastrophe that rattles any of the commercial systems housed within the supply chain induces a state of emergency. Yet, in these moments of crisis, the jeopardized food system signals only the extremes of colonial power. Between such events, that power is less visible but nevertheless ever present in the settler state’s ability to leave the islands without the most basic of necessities.

### ***When the Cable Broke***

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) arrived on the north shore several weeks after the “rain bomb,” as residents often called the legendary storm that hit Kaua‘i on April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The storm broke U.S. records with the most rainfall ever recorded in a 24-hour period. I take the following details from my own exchanges with residents, from media coverage, and from the interview-based study of community revival efforts conducted by Harangody et al. (2022) in the wake of the storm. The storm struck hardest on the north shore, where rivers flash

flooded, uprooted trees, and hurled them into homes and roads. Rising waters reached 6 feet in the town of Hanalei and consumed houses, some of which were cleared off hillsides altogether. Floodwaters gushed downhill into the ocean, where higher sea levels and surf sent the water crashing back onto the shore. In addition to the flooding, the 12 landslides along the region's only highway impeded vehicles attempting to move to higher ground. Residents fled their homes on surfboards, kayaks, and boogie boards. On boats and jet skis, they braved the high surf to find those still stranded and shuttle them to safety.<sup>23</sup> There were power outages, broken water mainlines, and at least 24 hours without cell service. Once the storm had passed and the floodwaters stood stagnant, there was staph, MRSA, and toxic mold. It was not until May 8th—more than three weeks after the floods began—that former President Donald Trump declared Kaua'i a Federal Disaster Area and approved federal funding for infrastructural repair, and not until June 27th that Individual Disaster Assistance was approved. Even then, Kaua'i residents who filed claims were largely met with bureaucratic red tape and ultimately received far less than the value of assets lost or damaged in the storm—and some were merely offered loans. Following the flood, Kaua'i County's allocation of federal and state recovery funds prioritized the repair of roads that would restore tourists' access to the north shore and designated a far smaller portion of financial relief to rebuilding residents' homes or other critical infrastructure.

The cable broke, and then was left broken for weeks. Residents described the prioritization of tourists during rescue measures, relief funding allocation, and infrastructural recovery, all of which spoke to the privileged position of both tourists and the tourism industry. The labor of north shore residents to ensure tourists' health and safety, too generated their radically disparate experience of the rain bomb. Although national news coverage reported on the Red Cross's search and rescue operations as well as the U.S. Army and National Guard's

evacuation efforts immediately after the storm, some residents recounted how tourists were among the first to be airlifted. Tourist evacuations from the north shore alone cost the county over \$2 million (Harangody et al. 2022). Kumu D recounted how vacationers' panic over the loss of running water and electricity added to the pressures faced by residents who were all well accustomed to those conditions: "It was challenging for the residents...to effectively deal with the crisis that was on hand, and also be the support system for folks who were not from that community."

Moreover, tourists' proclivity for accommodations on or near the ocean means that rentals and vacation homes are often located in low-lying areas, which are especially vulnerable to weather emergencies or tsunamis and lack adequate infrastructure for evacuation. When I sat with Aunty W on the beach in Ha'ēna, she gestured to the beachfront neighborhood around us and recalled that, "during the flood, the entire village here was almost empty. I'd say at least 80-90% empty. And it really just showed you that all of this is vacation rentals." As for the tourists stranded in Ha'ēna after the storm: "They were a burden. When they're stuck on this side [of the island], we don't have resources. We have all these people...they're on vacation, they don't have a freezer, they don't have a restaurant to go to, the grocery store to go to." The food and other resources available at the time were disparately apportioned to tourists, thus adding the distribution of material provisions to the labor demanded of residents. Once the burden was lifted, Aunty W said, the community that remained on the north shore became a reminder of the very meaning of *community*.

*We know what our resources are. So we go hunt a pig, go for fish, eat out of our freezer...When the community was left, those left stepped in to help move dirt, and "oh, my freezer's got food." And we get together, and we make pa'ina, and we take care of each other. But it really just showed that our community was no longer community when so much of it became the rich man's playground.*

Several of the rain bomb stories that I heard mentioned Aunty W and the recovery efforts she led in the aftermath of the 2018 flood. Harangody et al. (2021) underscore a sense of collective resilience attributed to residents' decades of experience with severe weather events and resultant crises. Their study attributes the fact that there was no loss of life in large part to local organizers like her. With delivery routes obstructed by waters and landslides, the north shore communities developed their own supply chain to transport food and emergency supplies by boat. Well before anyone received assistance through the Red Cross or FEMA, they created a database to track the needs of 500 local families and assign tasks across a volunteer network that distributed medical necessities, meals, and other resources, and later, helped to reconstruct and clean homes.

Residents' abilities to navigate the lack of power, water, and food, to protect and care for one another, and to rebuild their lives together all demonstrate a collective resilience built through generations of contending with conditions of crisis. In the geographic context of Kaua'i, experiences of scarcity and climate disaster are deeply intertwined—and the north shore, perhaps even more so. The island is another step beyond the major ports of Honolulu in the supply chain, and shipments can only be delivered to the north shore via a two-lane highway frequently struck by landslides. Since the mid-20th century, Kaua'i has endured two tsunamis and seven hurricanes, along with annual wet seasons that bring increasingly heavy rainfall. Resident accounts and NOAA analyses underscored that rain bomb as an exceptional meteorological event. Both demonstrate the general expectation that the frequency and extremity of flooding and sea level rise will only exacerbate.

The horizon of dystopian futurity signaled by pervasive scarcity in the food system resonates with apocalyptic narratives of climate change that forecast the earth's increasingly hazardous landscapes and impending inability to sustain life. Nevertheless, just as residents'

ability to cultivate abundance resists dominant portrayals of resource scarcity, so too does it counter those of unlivable places. Their knowledge and practices of restoring ‘āina momona enact “a refusal to succumb to capital’s logic that we have passed an apocalyptic threshold of no return” (Fujikane 2021, 4). Such abilities constitute a response not only to contained emergency events, but to over a century of state and corporate power reshaping the agricultural and economic landscape through mass dispossession. Outside these states of emergency, groceries are more expensive than anywhere else in the nation. Inflated prices reflect the costs incurred as food moves along global supply chains, and, Hi‘ilei Hobart explains, through the “infrastructures of cold” embedded within those supply chains. Refrigerated container ships and storage facilities require enormous amounts of energy to keep perishable goods fresh in Hawai‘i, where the cost of energy, too, is the highest in the nation. As Hobart observes: “A sense of precarity thereby pervades how Hawai‘i residents understand their food system both in terms of supply (worrying that they will run out of food if the ships don’t arrive) and in terms of cost (worrying about affordability)” (2022, 15). In other words, it doesn’t take a major climate disaster to render food inaccessible, as economic inaccessibility is already built into the food system.

North shore residents’ mobilization calls into question what degree of exceptionality the event actually represented, as their actions speak to a profound level of familiarity with the circumstances introduced by this emergency. Emergency, in this sense, is a structure and not an event (Wolfe 2006). Past experience with power outages and water stoppages, which frequently occur on the north shore, allowed residents to navigate circumstances perilous to others. So too did their caretaking commitments, survival skills, and generational subsistence knowledge. Their actions during the flood and in its aftermath lend further dimension to what it means to belong to a place, and as Kumu D said, to be in a process of “becoming ma‘a—connected to this place.” The

next time the cable breaks, or rather, when the tugboat is finally free to chart its own course, they will know how to feed themselves.

### *Poi Justice*

Kumu P's boys also learn to feed others, as they smoke the pig themselves in the imu and help to unearth it, shred the meat, and ready it for the Hō'ike festivities. All of the students in the summer program, in fact, feed others on an impressive scale. On a given Tuesday, there are dozens of people in the lo'i harvesting kalo to contribute to the 800 pounds of poi that Waipā distributes each week on average. I joined Kumu K's group of 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade girls one morning as they put their tabis on and head to the lo'i. The 4<sup>th</sup> grade group met us along the way. Kumu K asked if anyone knows the story of Hāloa from the Kumulipo. Those who did know filled in the gaps as she told them of how Wākea (the sky) and Ho'ohokulani (the stars and the heavens) gave birth to a stillborn child, and how kalo emerged from the ground where they had buried him. The two had a second son, Hāloa, the first human. He became the protector and caretaker of the firstborn, Haloanakalaukapilili, the first kalo plant. Kumu K said to her group:

This is our origin story...From Hāloa came all Kānaka—he's our ancestor. And Haloanakalaukapilili was born first, and all the kalo came from him. So kalo is our eldest brother. The moral of the story is, our older brother, the kalo plant, is always gonna take care of us, if we take care. If you know how to grow kalo, you're never gonna go hungry in your life. If we get no Matson containers, we gonna still eat!

We arrived at the lo'i, where the kindergarten group was already in the mud, weaving through the rows of kalo stalks and pulling up weeds. They searched the stalks for neon pink clumps of eggs laid by apple snails, which love to munch on the kalo corm. When they found the eggs, they smushed them into goop in their little hands. A few lo'i over, the interns from the high school and college-age Limahana program were all pulling up kalo alongside the Waipā 'āina crew.

They chopped off the huli to replant, selected the greenest leaves for laulau, and filled giant sacks with the corms.

“Today we’re gonna huki [harvest, pull],” Kumu K said. “But we can’t just take, we gotta give.” Her group and the fourth graders joined the kindergarteners. Kumu K reminded everyone to watch where they place their feet. “Don’t step on your older brother!” she called. When that lo‘i was free of weeds and snail eggs, everyone headed for the other lo‘i to help harvest.

That day, the full range of Waipā’s programs was in view. The staff and interns showed the students how to hold the kalo at the base and yank it out of the mud. The programs are designed to flow into one another with the hopes that students will return as Limahana interns, and one day, as staff members on the ‘āina crew. As I had heard Kumu D and Aunty S both tell students throughout the summer, “Come back and take my job!” In Hawai‘i’s cosmology, kalo reifies genealogical connection to land and teaches intergenerational caretaking. The structure of Waipā’s programs reflect this, as does its food justice project. Each Thursday, or Poi Day, the interns and staff join kūpuna in preparing the tubs of steamed kalo for the poi mill. By noon, Waipā’s poi van is loaded with bags of poi to be delivered across Kaua‘i and sent to Ni‘ihau. It is sold at cost for \$5 per pound, or at the kupuna-rate of “alright, pay whatever, Aunty,” to borrow Aunty S’s words.

This model incurs substantial annual profit losses for the foundation. This loss, however, is offset by Waipā’s cheesecake sales. The team spent the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown perfecting a poi cheesecake recipe, which now nets roughly \$100,000 annually. Slices of cheesecake are sold through the foundation’s honor-system fridge. I often worked from my computer in the kitchen at night, and the cheesecake was so popular that visitors frequently knocked on the door—sometimes close to midnight—to alert me that we were out of cheesecake.

They often asked when the fridge would be restocked, if there was a hidden stash somewhere, or whether I could bake one for them then and there. To this, I always responded, “I’m sorry, I don’t have clearance for the secret recipe.” Whenever Auntie B, Waipā’s talented chef, went to see family on O‘ahu, a sign was taped to a traffic cone in the driveway that read *NO CHEESECAKE TODAY*. There was talk of hiring someone to help her cook and bake, but as many noted, the cheesecake NDA would have to be drafted first.

The celebrated Waipā poi cheesecake does more than bring a stream of visitors and revenue to the foundation. Auntie S explained that it also allows the food justice project to continue distributing poi at a low cost. This has grown more challenging due to the sharp increase in the market price of kalo, which is tied to recent marketing trends around Hawaiian foods and tourists’ cultural experiences focused on culinary tradition. Auntie S sees this largely as a good thing in that it affords a livelihood to kalo farmers, many of whom have had to make farming a side job over the last several decades. The growing popularity of kalo is particularly impactful for Kaua‘i’s north shore, where 80% of Hawai‘i’s kalo is grown.<sup>24</sup> Given that Waipā’s food justice work entails a commitment to paying the other farmers that the organization sources from above market price, the primary drawback is the difficulty of maintaining the project’s goal: “For people to get it cheap, or to get it.” As Uncle S said, “Poi is the connection to the community.” The food justice project that Waipā has built around poi, like the youth program, is about nourishing communities relationally. Poi day brings generations together at the lo‘i, then brings even more together to talk story while peeling kalo. In the afternoon, community hubs spring up along the van’s delivery route as people from around the island come to see one another as much as they do to get their poi.

The food justice project is also about nourishing communities materially. Like the youth program, Auntie S tells me, Waipā's large-scale poi distribution is a legacy of the Hawaiian Farmers of Hanalei. Their labor to restore the land and the 'auwai, their reconstruction of the lo'i in a rice terrace-style for greater agricultural production, and their knowledge of kalo farming and making poi have heightened the capacity of the land and community at Waipā to create abundance for one another. In their struggle to maintain Waipā as a site of 'āina-based education, they left behind a space for others to carry on their work and seek out further horizons. As M saw it, the possibility of flourishing, revitalized worlds can only be found through *doing* that work.

Most everything I learned here, I learned by doing it. You meld theory and practice into one, because the theory is the practice here. If we're going to actually try to feed our community, create food sovereignty for us, restore our streams, restore the ecosystem, you're never going to be able to do that by just thinking about how to do it.

What would it look like to create sovereignty, in food, for one's community, or otherwise? As Auntie S answered earlier, that's what Waipā is trying to discover, and "all along the way is experimentation." If another of the legacies left by kūpuna is that Waipā's ancestrally endowed abundance has made sovereignty that much more visceral, or that much more nourishing, one wonders what sovereignty will look and feel like for the students who sustain this 'āina momona, or those who heed Auntie S's insistence that they come back and take her job. For now, the students and educators at Waipā indeed "create what they think should be created there": 800 pounds of poi every week, lessons on belonging and stewardship, legendary cheesecake, another generation of Providahs. They create degrees of sovereignty as embodied experiences and "physical movements in that direction," even if the possibility of another political future remains unknowable or not yet imaginable. These experiments in sovereignty have fostered a state of abundance that the food justice project now shares across Kauai'i and beyond. As Auntie S said:

It feeds significant amounts of people...There are people out there advocating for political sovereignty. That fight is gonna go on *forever*...If you have land, and you feed yourself, that is food sovereignty, right?...We're creating a certain level of sovereignty, even though we don't have political sovereignty. We have the kind of sovereignty that we have.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Because some of the people featured in this work have Hawaiian names, it is not appropriate for me to create English pseudonyms, nor to make up other Hawaiian names. For the purposes of consistency and privacy, I refer to people by an initial. Regarding Hawaiian language usage more broadly, many of the Hawaiian terms used here and in my research context hold a multitude of meanings, or layers of meanings. I offer the translations given to me by the people I work with, as well as translations learned from other scholars writing about Hawai‘i. That said, any imprecise, incomplete, or incorrect translations come from my own lack of proficiency in the language. Like many of those other writers, I do not italicize Hawaiian words except within citations where the authors have done so. I use the terms Kanaka Maoli (or the plural, Kānaka Maoli), Native, Hawaiian, Native Hawaiian, or Indigenous when referring to people descended from the islands of Hawai‘i, as all of these were used by people to describe themselves and one another. As for the English language, I try to reflect the terminology used by those who gave their knowledge to this work. I mainly use the word sovereignty (rather than words like independence, autonomy, or ea found in other literature on Hawai‘i’s political landscape) because they do.

<sup>2</sup> During this research, I did not ask non-Indigenous residents for their views on Hawaiian sovereignty. Unsolicited perspectives were nonetheless offered, including one that highlighted the preferable conditions of an NHGE: “You know, back when the sovereignty stuff was full force, the federal government offered to do what they did with the Native Americans. And imagine if they had done it, they could have had reservations!” As another person offered: “They could have had casinos.” These perspectives reflect broader discourses that see in domestic-dependent status, as Kauanui summarizes, “a really good deal, a ‘realistic compromise,’ and ‘certainly better than nothing’”(197). Tellingly, perhaps, none of the Indigenous residents I worked with indicated any desire for an NHGE.

<sup>3</sup> In recent years, the youth program has reached its enrollment capacity. Admissions also prioritize at-risk youth by asking families to identify the number of items from a list of risk factors (i.e. single parent or low-income household) that apply to their circumstances, without requiring applicants to specify the exact items.

<sup>4</sup> Prior to the creation of the monarchy, Kamehameha I had been the ali‘i of Hawai‘i island. After his conquest of Maui, Lāna‘i, Molokai, and O‘ahu, Kaua‘i and Ni‘ihau joined the Kingdom voluntarily.

<sup>5</sup> Though the Board of Commissioners’ denied many of their claims, few maka‘āinana filed claims in the first place. Firstly, lands shared by families, such as pastures and upland gathering regions used in common, could not be claimed by individuals (Linnekin 1983). Moreover, many ahupua‘a were further divided into ‘ili ‘āina (strips of land) assigned to families. Some were ‘ili pa‘a (complete). Others were ‘ili lele (separated, leaping), which allowed families to harvest necessary resources from various regions of the ahupua‘a (Minerbi 1999). Maka‘āinana were permitted to register for only the *intact* tracts that they lived on and cultivated. Secondly, claimants had to pay land survey and commutation fees in order to file claims. The regulations and deadlines for doing so were primarily communicated by newspapers and churches, which, in addition to the fees themselves, presented a barrier to accessing information (Silva 2004). Thirdly, the Euro-American missionaries’ growing political influence allowed them to remold normative masculine subjectivities and codify the linkage between masculinity and control of property. Marriage became another mode of propertization and, after a revision of kingdom law in 1845, married women’s civic status was combined with that of their husbands (Kauanui 2018).

30% of the adult male population received titles, which, as Kelly notes, “means that 70 percent of the adult male population, along with their wives and children, were rendered landless” (1980, 66). Beyond these explanations, scholars attribute a range of other factors to the extremely low number of awards granted to *maka‘āinana*.

<sup>6</sup> One of the most notable of these legislative measures was the 1887 Bayonet Constitution, so named after a committee of U.S. settlers forced Kalākaua, the monarch at that time, to sign it into action at gunpoint. The act stripped the monarch of executive powers and established land proprietorship as a condition for citizens’ enfranchisement, thereby expanding the implications of propertization across the structure of legal rights in total.

<sup>7</sup> Vaughan (2018) offers a detailed analysis of Zuckerberg’s property acquisitions. More broadly, she expounds the targeting of *kuleana* lands and other forms of legal manipulation used by resort developers and aspiring landowners.

<sup>8</sup> The legality of vacation rentals in Hawai‘i constitutes its own complex dimension of the contemporary property regime. Short-Term Rentals (STRs), or Transient Vacation Units, fall within the legislative purview of each county. As well, there are separate sets of policies within the various zones established by county ordinances, which include “resort zones,” “apartment zones,” “vacation destination areas,” and other designations. Generally speaking, STRs include accommodations outside of hotels, such as single-family homes and apartments or condominiums, that are rented over short periods. Some ordinances include homestays or bed and breakfasts in this category, or else regulate preexisting STRs differently according to their grandfather clauses. There is also significant regional variation in what qualifies as “short-term.” That time frame is regularly revised by counties and disputed among STR owners and proponents, affordable housing advocates, opponents of visitor industry expansion, hospitality unions, and hotel operators—some of whom forge unexpected alliances. Further, such revisions and disputes often directly respond to structural shifts in the visitor industry (such as the popularity of online rental platforms like Airbnb), as well as global crises (such as the safety concerns during the Covid-19 pandemic, which led to Honolulu County’s temporary ban on all STRs). As such, STRs are defined, permitted, regulated, and taxed differently across counties, across their distinct zones, and across time. For example: since 1986, Honolulu has restricted the renting of properties for less than 30 days, outside of a handful of small “resort zones.” Regulations are now in flux, after a new ordinance that extended the minimum to 90 days was blocked by a judge in 2022 (Yerton 2022a). As another example, Kaua‘i County only permits STRs in a handful of small “Vacation Destination Areas,” though hundreds of STRs operating prior to its 2008 ordinance were grandfathered in as legal rentals outside of these zones. Finally, there are numerous illegally operating STRs, which have led Honolulu to recently pass an ordinance imposing fines of \$10,000 per rental day (Yerton 2022b). And, as north shore residents pointed out to me, there are many vacation homeowners who have the financial ability to *not* rent their properties, and who are largely unaffected by these regulations.

<sup>9</sup> There is much to be said about the colonial politics of knowledge across Hawai‘i’s private schools as well. Many of these, like the one I attended, were established by missionaries as a segregationist strategy for educating their own, which then became an assimilationist strategy for imparting the moral codes and normative subjectivities of Christianity to Indigenous youth. There is also Kamehameha Schools (KS), whose multiple campuses enroll only Native Hawaiian students and whose admissions are extremely selective. KS is discussed further in the third section.

<sup>10</sup> In this legal context, kuleana lands are those awarded through the Kuleana Act of 1850. However, Vaughan (2018) explains that ali'i granted kuleana lands to families prior to propertization, and that families were identified as caretakers rather than owners. Kuleana is alternately translated as both responsibility and right. The term "encompasses distinct responsibilities to the specific places that nourish our lives and families and the right to *mālama*, or care for, these places" (2018, 48).

<sup>11</sup> In fact, Hanapēpē and the westward ahupua'a of Makaweli are virtually all Robinson Family property, as is the entirety of the island of Ni'ihau further west.

<sup>12</sup> The defense also invoked the Hawai'i Revised Statutes §1-1 and §7-1. The former dictates that the common law of the state applies "except as otherwise expressly...fixed by Hawaiian judicial precedent, or established by Hawaiian usage." The latter dictates that tenants retain the rights to take timber, water, or other resources from the land on which they live, so long as such resources are for their own private use.

<sup>13</sup> In this case, Kanaka Maoli identity is determined through guidelines set by *Public Access Shoreline Hawai'i v. Hawai'i City Planning Commission* (1995), and qualified as: "Descendants of native Hawaiians who inhabited the islands prior to 1778, regardless of blood quantum."

<sup>14</sup> In regard to the two other Hanapi clauses: the Points of Error submitted in the state's appeal contested the circuit court's determination that Palama's kama'āina testimonies and genealogical charts proved his Native Hawaiian ancestry in accordance with Hanapi's first clause. The Court of Appeals, however, deemed these "substantial evidence" and confirmed the circuit court's findings. The state did not dispute that Palama had met the third clause by hunting on undeveloped land. The threshold of "undevelopment" was therefore not at issue in this case, though it has been taken up in others. The State Constitution contains no stipulation that Indigenous peoples' access rights apply only to undeveloped lands. Despite this, in *Kalipi v. Hawaiian Trust Co., Ltd.* (1982), the Hawai'i Supreme Court qualified that:

...if this limitation were not imposed, there would be nothing to prevent residents from going anywhere within the ahupuaa, including fully developed property, to gather the enumerated items. In the context of our current culture this result would so conflict with understandings of property, and potentially lead to such disruption, that we could not consider it anything short of absurd and therefore other than that which was intended by the statute's framers.

<sup>15</sup> In the state's appeal, the Robinson Family's amicus curiae brief primarily sought to contest the traditionality of pig hunting by disputing Palama's fulfillment of the Hanapi test's second clause. It requested judicial notice of Hawaiian Kingdom law, including a statute from the Laws of her Majesty Lili'uokalani entitled "To Prevent Hunting and Shooting on Private Grounds." Noting that the statute was enacted on December 28, 1892, the Court of Appeals determined that it "fell outside of the applicable time frame" by approximately one month.

<sup>16</sup> As the court specified, "A kama'āina witness is a person familiar from childhood with any locality."

<sup>17</sup> To be sure, both scarcity and hunger can exist in other-than-capitalist economic systems. Osorio notes that the onset of resource scarcity preceded propertization and plantation capitalism in Hawai'i. The introduction of smallpox and other European disease led to an estimated population decline of 83.8% from the time of European contact in 1778 to 1840 (Swanson 2020). Though the ahupua'a system was still in effect, it relied on the labor of maka'āinana to yield agricultural abundance. As Osorio details, "The labor-intensive subsistence economy and extensive cultivation of mauka (upland) areas had been the basis for, and also a sign of, a healthy

and prosperous civilization. The system was especially vulnerable to rapid depopulation, which inexorably led to the abandonment of thriving lo‘i (taro patches) and homesteads as the labor needed to maintain them continued to diminish” (2002, 47).

<sup>18</sup> A number of reports surfaced in response to the Covid-19 pandemic with various hypotheses on the number of days that on-island food supplies could sustain the population. These give slightly different time spans and account for different sets of factors. The five-day estimate presented here is provided by the City and County of Honolulu’s Department of Emergency Management (DEM) on their website among other instructions for creating a Family Emergency Plan. DEM also estimates that, in the event of a major hurricane, it could take up to 14 days for normal air operations to resume and 19 days or more to re-open the Port of Honolulu—the only port in Hawai‘i with the infrastructure to receive large vessels. Cargo must be transferred to smaller barges before it can be delivered to any of the other islands. Other reports note that, in addition to Hawai‘i’s 1.4 million residents, supplies would need to be distributed among some fraction of the 10 million or so tourists who visit each year (Miles 2020). The final section of this work highlights the issues that the presence of tourists causes during climate emergencies.

<sup>19</sup> Researchers present a range of estimates on import ratios as well. Recent reports give figures of 90% or more (Honolulu C&C 2021, Miles 2020). However, Loke and Leung (2013) analyze the different calculations used to produce these figures, one of which gives the Import Dependency Ratio (IDR) or the share of imports in relation to domestic food utilization. They find that Hawai‘i in fact has an overall IDR of 102.5%, which indicates that some foods are imported into the islands and later re-exported to other markets. Their Modified Import Dependency Ratio (MIDR) indicates the 88.4% of food available for consumption in Hawai‘i is imported.

<sup>20</sup> KSBE is also the third largest landowner in Hawai‘i, after the State of Hawai‘i and the U.S. government.

<sup>21</sup> The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) offers federal payments from the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to farmers and private landowners with “environmentally sensitive land” who volunteer to take their land out of agricultural production. “Environmental sensitivity,” and thus, eligibility for CRP enrollment, is determined according to the FSA’s weighted average erosion index.

<sup>22</sup> See Vaughan’s (2018) account of quiet title actions on the north shore.

<sup>23</sup> Residents’ rescue efforts were not limited to people in the community, as shown by the footage of jet ski-mounted paniolo (cowboys) lassoing bison that had been carried by floodwaters all the way to the reefs.

<sup>24</sup> This figure was provided by Waipā staff. The Department of Agriculture census and other estimates range significantly, though all indicate Kaua‘i main kalo producer among the islands.

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