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‘We’d rather eat rocks’: Contesting the Thirty Meter Telescope in a Struggle over Science and Sovereignty in Hawai‘i

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The Hōkūle‘a is a double-hulled Polynesian voyaging vessel modeled after the traditional wa‘a boats sailed by Polynesians when they made their initial migrations across the Pacific (c. 300 AD).¹ The Hōkūle‘a completed her first successful voyage in 1976, led from Hawai‘i to Tahiti by the Satawalese master navigator, Mau Piailug.² Thanks to Mau, Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) onboard regained the ability to use the stars to track their path across the sea, a knowledge lost by Kānaka in the fifteenth century and further repressed through years of American federal legislation outlawing Kanaka tradition and practice.³ The once forgotten tradition continues today in annual voyages, occasionally as far as Tahiti, with the Hōkūle‘a as “an icon for the renewal of Indigenous Oceanic pride and faith in ancestral knowledges. For [Kānaka], the [Hōkūle‘a’s] success was an in-your-face redemption against dominant narratives framing Hawaiians as incapable and inconsequential.”⁴ In the summer of 2014, the same day I arrived for my fieldwork on the Big Island of Hawai‘i, the ship departed from Radio Bay in Hilo on a journey much longer than even the trips to Tahiti. This three-year voyage went above and beyond the call of redemption; instead, it was an assertion that Kanaka ways of knowing have just as much credence in the world as Western perspectives do.

The navigators onboard practiced a long tradition of Kanaka epistemology, taking on the role of kilo, the observer.⁵ The kilo observes the stars in order to read them as a complex piece of the interconnected world. The kilo inhabits what Kanaka Maoli scholar Katrina-Ann R. Kapā‘anaokalāokeola Nākoa Oliveira describes as “sense ability,” a play on words indicating that Kānaka construct their worldview through embodied practice. They take in the skies, land, water, and heavens with all five senses

and let that shape their understanding of the world.⁶ Though celestial navigation plays but one role in the holistic practice of *kilo*, *Kānaka* have been historicized, primarily by Western scientists, as ancient astronomers. This category suggests a colonizing telos for *Kanaka* epistemologies and ontologies, in which *Kānaka* remain stuck in the past, and the expansiveness of their practice is reduced and retrofitted in the service of a colonial narrative. Most concerning, this reduction implies that the ancient art of voyaging ends with the advent of Western astronomy.

Astronomy has long been a contentious issue in Hawai'i. On the Big Island, the State of Hawai'i decided to lease out public land on the sacred summit of Mauna Kea in 1968 to the University of Hawai'i. This decision catalyzed a chain of telescope-building projects that sacrificed public consultation and proper governmental oversight for hurried construction. By 2010, there were already thirteen telescopes at the summit of Mauna Kea, though even this count is considering multi-unit facilities such as Keck to be a single observatory.⁷ At the time of my writing this, the university is also pushing to renew its master lease at the summit under the State of Hawai'i for sixty-five more years, at the rate of a dollar per year. In Hawai'i, there is a commonly used phrase, "from mauka to makai," or, from mountain to sea. Though it refers to the ways in which, prior to imperial occupation, land in the Hawaiian Islands was demarcated for cultivation and residence, it is also indicative of a sense of place that connects the land and the water. Western astronomers have perversely invoked this notion of interconnectedness to mark *Kanaka* navigational techniques as premodern astronomy, while telescope-building projects on the "mauka" side are the future of astronomy. The *Hōkūle'a* is reduced to an epistemic metaphor, rather than a political connection articulating a sovereignty that stretches from mauka to makai. Western astronomy opportunistically appropriates or discards *Kanaka* knowledges, while never fully acknowledging or integrating them ontologically, in order to advance settler claims to the land.

It is important here to note that navigators of the *Hōkūle'a* have not always aligned themselves with anti-telescope activism. The *Hōkūle'a* is certainly a contested symbol for settlers, but it also occupies a complex position for *Kānaka Maoli*. Key leaders of the *Hōkūle'a* have expressed their support for the newest proposed telescope development on Mauna Kea's summit, the Thirty Meter Telescope. These leaders have also pressured crew members who have posted on social media in support of anti-telescope activism into removing such posts. Crew members' vocal dissent has historical precedent, as the 1976 *Hōkūle'a* voyage coincided with *Kanaka* protests to end American military weapons testing on the island of Kaho'olawe. When the *Hōkūle'a* was asked to make a stop at Kaho'olawe as a demonstration of solidarity with the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement, the navigators refused, concerned that they would lose funding and, resultingly, the vessel they had quite literally just procured.⁸ While it is easy to assume this set of contradictions emerges from settler colonial ideologies alone, the reality is far more complex. The navigators onboard the *Hōkūle'a* occupied a variety of positions in the constellation of Hawaiian state politics, and while their

charge is crucial to Kanaka cultural revitalization, their financial support remains tenuous; and their politics often run counter to those of sovereignty proponents. The Hōkūleʻa, in addition to being flattened into an epistemic metaphor, has been appropriated and deployed by a variety of state actors across the settler colonial apparatus towards liberal multiculturalist narratives that dilute its radical potentiality as a potent symbol of Indigenous sovereignty.

The struggle at Mauna Kea's summit is connected to a longer history of disputed land claims between Kānaka and settlers. Mauna Kea's leased public lands are also actually a part of the Crown lands that King Kamehameha III placed under monarchical protection from settler privatization. The 1893 illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom by members of a Protestant planter class, and the subsequent forced annexation that followed in 1898, transferred control of the government and Crown lands under monarchical protection over to the US government.⁹ Despite the absence of any formal treaty of annexation, the illegally occupied Kingdom of Hawai'i became a US state in 1959, and the federal government transferred control of 1.2 million acres of these now combined lands over to the Hawai'i State Government. Now, the Crown lands are held in trust by the State of Hawai'i as public lands and list five public beneficiaries, one of which are Kānaka Maoli.¹⁰ However, the Crown lands at the summit of Mauna Kea, also under state control by way of the Department of Land and Natural Resources, but on a long-term lease to the University of Hawai'i, have been the site of more than a dozen telescope-building projects. Resultingly, the summit has been a site of recurring fierce contestation over Native land claims.¹¹

Most recently, tensions have arisen between corporate and university institutions wishing to build yet another telescope on top of Mauna Kea and Indigenous activists protesting this development on the grounds of Hawaiian land claims and environmental safety. The struggle also involves oppositional notions of reverence, as Mauna Kea is considered the most sacred summit for Kānaka. Mauna Kea is both the highest peak in the islands (and in the world, when its base is measured from the sea floor) as well as the highest piko, or the navel connecting Kānaka to past, present, and future generations as well as the realm of the akua (gods).¹² Indigenous activists and their allies are contesting the planned construction of this Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT), a massive structure spanning five acres and eighteen stories, on top of their most sacred summit. In this essay, I contribute to emerging scholarship surrounding the construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope and its contestation.¹³ I locate Mauna Kea as a contemporary site of ongoing struggle between sustained settler colonialism and resistance to it, a struggle that has come to a head through the selective appropriation and delegitimization of Kanaka knowledges. Moreover, I argue that the resulting protests against the TMT by Kānaka reassert the mutually constituted nature of science, the sacred, and sovereignty under a Kanaka worldview.

The Kanaka activists, who call themselves the *protectors* of Mauna Kea—rather than protestors—oppose the TMT on the grounds that Mauna Kea is sacred, for many a declaration that Hawai'i is an illegally occupied sovereign nation and for others a

reminder that Hawaiian land is continually subject to settler desecration. In its ideological constructions under broader settler colonial discourse, science is a category of knowledge production entirely removed from the sacred, and it is aligned with Western notions of rationality and logic. For Kānaka, the sacred and science are a part of the same ontology. In the Kumulipo, the Hawaiian creation chant, Mauna Kea is the first child of Papa (earth mother) and Wākea (sky father), who then also give birth to the taro plant as well as kāne and wahine, or man and woman. This means that the landscape and its plant life are not merely subjects of reverence for Kānaka, but an integral part of their ancestral genealogy. Kanaka claims to land are not claims to property, but to culture, lifeways, and lineage. Their connection to the 'āina is as its children, or kama'āina, while Mauna Kea and taro are in many ways, seen as big brothers.¹⁴ The relationships the protectors have to the mauna are bound up in notions of kinship, claims to sovereignty, and the validity of Kanaka ontologies.

Settlers who represent the TMT, such as astronomers on the island and corporations involved in funding the TMT, have positioned the protectors as being against scientific discovery.¹⁵ I argue that this is a strategy of sovereignty denial rooted in undermining Kanaka ontologies and epistemologies. Settlers call Kānaka anti-science in this particular instant, while elsewhere incorporating Kanaka histories of voyaging into a settler narrative, in order to reduce Kanaka ontologies to mere epistemic metaphor and exclude Kanaka worldviews from carrying an intellectual equivalence to Western knowledge production. This flexibility of settler relation to Kanaka ways of knowing is mobilized through a framework of liberal multiculturalism that denies Kānaka Indigeneity that falls outside the rubric of the settler state or explicitly challenges the state's very foundations. Because Kānaka protesting the telescope deviate from settler expectations of Indigeneity, Kanaka claims that Mauna Kea is sacred and that building the TMT is an act of desecration are recast by settler institutions as a kind of anti-scientific primitivism. Kanaka knowledge and claims to sovereignty are already so tightly bound together through genealogical understandings of land ownership that in undermining one or the other, settlers effectively deny both.

The Kanaka fight against the TMT is a fight that asserts the legitimacy of Indigenous knowledge in order to secure a Kanaka right to land that is being illegally occupied. Settlers articulate how to manage Kanaka land and on what terms, effectively producing Mauna Kea as a space in which sovereignty is both juridically and discursively denied. Under liberal multicultural frameworks of recognition, settler state actors deploy rhetoric that delegitimizes the validity and authenticity of Kanaka ontologies and epistemologies in order to deny Kanaka claims to Mauna Kea as sovereign Indigenous territory. In turn, Kānaka assert their right to land through the iteration of mele ko'ihonua (cosmogonic genealogies) that connect them to the land as family. They also connect contemporary activism surrounding the TMT to their memory of the 1970s sovereignty movements, demonstrating the historical continuity of Kanaka anti-occupation activism. I establish this continuity of Indigenous knowledge production and activism in order to destabilize attempts to position Kānaka as anti-science,

instead refocusing the protests against the TMT as legitimate claims to reinstating Hawaiian sovereignty. In my theoretical framing, I demonstrate the ways in which the settler state opportunistically incorporates and discards Kanaka ontologies as “myths” and “ancient history.” I contest this colonizing narrative by analyzing participant observation and interviews I did with Kānaka at or near the sacred summit of Mauna Kea in the summers of 2014 and 2015.

While these interviews capture just a snapshot of the early years of what is now a globally reaching Mauna Kea movement, I believe that they provide valuable insight into how Kānaka involved in the initial occupation of the summit were theorizing an Indigenous future, one that has begun to unfold in our immediate present. Echoing Kanaka scholar Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, I consider the protectors to have been building an Indigenous futurity in present settler colonial conditions.¹⁶ Through my ethnographic work, I assert that Kanaka intellectual and genealogical claims to Mauna Kea are part of a longer struggle for Hawaiian sovereignty and a politics of resurgence that challenges the need for settler validation of Kanaka ontologies. Since I conducted these interviews, kupuna (elder) and community leader Moanike'ala Akaka has passed away. I was lucky enough to sit with Moani as she reflected on Mauna Kea as the piko of a lifetime of Indigenous movement building. Through this essay, I honor her life as a lived example of the continuation of Kanaka sovereignty struggles from the 1970s onward.

The False Dichotomization of Science and Sovereignty in Hawai'i

A principally oral tradition, Kanaka cosmology relies on mele ko'ihonua to detail “the formation of 'āina (the land), the first living organisms, and the birth of the akua (gods) and the people.”¹⁷ The Kanaka relationship to land is fundamentally tied to kinship structures. Yet this familial connection was deeply altered by colonial encounters. In 1848, due to increasing external pressures from colonizing forces, the islands of Hawai'i were subjected to the Māhele.¹⁸ Literally meaning “The Split,” this event destroyed communal management of a collective commons and introduced privatized and individually owned land through systems of enclosure.¹⁹ When the Māhele occurred, in efforts to prevent seizure of the Hawaiian lands by foreigners, King Kamehameha III allocated one-third of the land to the Crown, one-third to be ruled by the island chiefs, and one-third to the general population. Kanaka Maoli scholar Noenoe K. Silva points to a Kanaka worldview built out of relationships to the 'āina, a form of knowledge production in and of itself that was attacked simultaneously with settler partitioning of the land.²⁰ In an article with Jonathan Goldberg-Heller, Silva also examines settler disruptions of Kanaka relationships with nonhuman animals through the mechanism of disavowing place-based knowledges.²¹ Oliveira builds on Silva's work, locating the severity of the Māhele by emphasizing the incredible psychological, emotional, and physical losses Kānaka may suffer if their roots to the 'āina are severed.²² She also argues for the continued relevance of place-based knowledges as

“performance cartographies” that allow Kānaka to “reference their constructed places, legitimize their existence, and reinforce their legacies.”²³ Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua’s work further underscores the relationship between sovereignty and knowledge production by linking the Hōkūle‘a and other projects of cultural knowledge revitalization to the broader sovereignty movement and emphasizing the important connections between knowledge production, the land, and the water.²⁴

The historical and contemporary actions of the Hawaiian settler state demonstrate what Patrick Wolfe has theorized as the “logic of elimination.”²⁵ This logic serves to destroy and dispossess Kānaka Maoli with the intention of replacing them with a society built in the vision of settlers, one containing its own settler institutions. In their attempts to transform Hawai‘i into a settler society, non-Indigenous people have delegitimized Kanaka claims to land not just through literal dispossession, but also by creating a complex construction of what it means to be “Native Hawaiian.” This state-fabricated identity is measured by blood quantum, restricted by specific modes of authenticity, and performed within the confines of state-mandated recognition.²⁶ As Mohawk scholar Audra Simpson has argued, political recognition, while perhaps “the least corporeally violent way of managing Indians and their difference,” still offers inclusion only if the cultural difference does not prove too challenging to the terms of settler colonialism.²⁷ The politics of recognition marshals in a liberal multiculturalism that continues to reproduce the violences of colonialist, racist, and patriarchal state power that Kanaka demands for recognition have historically attempted to transcend.²⁸

While recognition predating the rise of liberal multiculturalism involves the colonized subject’s desire to identify with their colonizer, a rise in “multicultural domination seems to work, in contrast, by inspiring subaltern and minority subjects to identify with the impossible object of an authentic self-identity.”²⁹ Such is the case in the state of Hawai‘i: US imperial forces have moved away from strategies of overt dominance and coercion towards a politics of recognition in which Indigeneity is performed and categorized. Unless the Indigenous subject is propping up various state agendas, such as appealing to narratives of diversity or being exploited for the state’s economic gain through institutions such as tourism, the state stands to gain little from mutual recognition. Indigenous tradition is “stripped of every last trace of bad settlement history,” and instead is used to “[purify] and [redeem] the ideal image” of the liberal multicultural state.³⁰ Kanaka tradition is only useful insofar as it promotes tourism to the Hawaiian Islands, which Kanaka Maoli scholar and activist Haunani-Kay Trask identifies as a process through which the state legitimizes its own continued occupation of Hawai‘i by gendering the islands as passive, feminine, and open for colonization.³¹ Many non-Indigenous people in Hawai‘i view tradition as fixed to a point in time, with contemporary cultural remains existing discretely in the bodies, desires, and practices of Indigenous peoples.³² Tradition is something non-Indigenous people are willing to see ephemerally performed and conveniently disappeared, but not something Kānaka can organize around to influence policy, changes in rights, or access to land.

Moreover, this form of selective recognition has been normalized as one for which Kānaka should be grateful. State violences are made to appear accidental now that coercion is removed from the equation. Instead, “the real hopes and optimisms invested in a particular form of national association—liberal multiculturalism—divert social energy from other political and social forms and imaginaries,” quite literally occluding possibilities for non-colonialist alternatives to the current state of affairs.³³ Kānaka composing oppositional imaginaries to the multicultural fantasy continuously face state-constructed barriers to the realization of their alternative visions. Of this, the struggle over Mauna Kea proves to be an example par excellence.

The State of Hawai‘i does not recognize Kanaka epistemologies; doing so would both directly threaten Western ideologies and put settler state institutions, such as the tourism industry and the telescope economy, at stake. These accumulated tensions and colonial refusal of Kanaka multiplicity result in a false dichotomy between traditional Hawaiian knowledges and Western science. Accordingly, the state and mainstream discourse frame Kanaka protests atop Mauna Kea not as anti-occupation or anti-desecration, but as anti-science. Settler institutions continue to police which knowledges are considered legitimate under the frameworks of liberal multiculturalism, reifying the settler state’s distinctions of authentic Indigeneity in Hawai‘i and ultimately, denying Kanaka Maoli claims to sovereignty.

Talking Story: A Note on Method

For this article, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork on and around Mauna Kea in the summers of 2014 and 2015. I spoke with more than sixty community members, government employees, scientists, and academics. I resided primarily in Hilo, Hawai‘i while conducting this fieldwork, a short drive from the summit of Mauna Kea, though I did make a few trips to Honolulu for site-specific conversations and access to particular archives.

As a non-Indigenous person doing research with an Indigenous group, I looked toward Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s *Decolonizing Methodologies*, which broadly explores the intersections between imperialism and research. Though primarily a text outlining the ways Indigenous people can conduct Indigenous research, *Decolonizing Methodologies* both explains the trauma associated with research on Indigenous people as well as provides methodological solutions for avoiding replication of this very trauma in modern research initiatives. I went into this ethnographic work knowing that I could not trample over the mana (power) of others, acting instead in humbleness and not looking to flaunt what I already knew.³⁴

Methodologically, this care manifests in my approach to field research. For my ethnographic work, I built trust by continuously showing up—having a “seen face,” as Smith describes, in the community for various events, gatherings, protests, and meetings. My interviews took the shape of talk story interviews, place-based narratives that “contribute to a collective story in which every indigenous person has a place.”³⁵ While

talking story is, formally translated, Hawaiian pidgin for chatting or catching up with a friend or relative, the term has been used methodologically as a process of informal interview and the act of storytelling to preserve ideas and mo'olelo (history) for future generations.³⁶ Through talking story, I heard people's stories about cosmology and the history of the island as well as personal stories of existence and active resistance under US empire. I move away from strictly damage-based research to not merely show how Kanaka peoples are marginalized, but also the ways they are actively standing up for their land and themselves. It is research that celebrates what Anishinaabe scholar Gerald Vizenor calls survivance, the combination of survival and resistance that "accentuates the degree to which indigenous peoples and communities have retained cultural and spiritual values and authenticity in resisting colonialism."³⁷ It is in the spirit of survivance that I choose to call the activists and squatters atop Mauna Kea by their self-articulated designation, "Kū Kia'i Mauna," the protectors of the mountain.

Mo'olelo from the Mauna

The interviews I conducted demonstrate a wide variety of Kanaka relationships to the politics surrounding the TMT. I have included just a handful that express the continuity of Kanaka activism, the complexity of interpersonal relationships at Mauna Kea's summit, and conflicts that have arisen between the state and the protectors. As I've mentioned, the protests of the TMT sit in a much longer genealogy of Indigenous sovereignty action, including a 1970s revitalization of Indigenous politics following a near century of state-led cultural and political suppression. In 1976, the same year that the Hōkūle'a first set sail for Tahiti, a boat holding nine Kānaka made its first landing on Kaho'olawe, a Hawaiian island being used by the US military for live fire testing.³⁸ Such was the beginning of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana (PKO), a ragtag but determined "family" that eventually joined forces with others to form the contemporary Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement. I had the privilege of learning more about the PKO from Moanike'ala Akaka, a longtime community activist who recently passed away. Moani remembered sitting on her roof on Moloka'i and watching US Navy ships detonate tons of TNT on Kaho'olawe. She explained that PKO formed in response to a climate in which it had long been "illegal to be Hawaiian."³⁹ A century earlier, the US government had removed 'ōlelo Hawai'i as a language of instruction or governance and had discouraged Hawaiian cultural practice, and only in the 1970s could Moani and those in her community formalize Hawaiian language education and cultural practice. Eventually in 1990, after years of the PKO legally challenging the Hawaii State Government, lobbying nationally, encouraging mass mobilization, and engaging in direct actions such as intrepid occupations of Kaho'olawe during scheduled naval exercises, the US military ended their live-fire exercises under the command of President Bush, Senior.⁴⁰

PKO and its progenies began to diffuse in the 1980s, with protests for sovereignty and calls to action scattered throughout the final decades of the twentieth century. However, in October of 2014, once the threat of the construction of the TMT loomed over the summit of Mauna Kea, the sovereignty movement once more became front-page news. In this period, the organizing base could easily have faltered, and the momentum behind the movement to protect the Hawaiian Islands could have dissipated. But the opposite occurred. Over the previous half-century, Hawaiians have been revitalizing their culture, their language, and their communities through the support of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), a semi-autonomous department of the state that was created in 1978.⁴¹ While Hawaiian attitudes toward OHA are ambivalent in the present, the department had given Hawaiians the tools to grow an organizing base and to maintain a rootedness and obligation to place, to *‘āina*. Moani, a former trustee of OHA, was cheekily grateful for OHA and the unintended collectivity it helped foment, explaining that “[w]e’re a product of what [they’ve] done and now we’re taking over the mountain.”⁴²

The Thirty Meter Telescope may have entered headlines in 2016, but community activists have protested it since 2010. Moreover, the planned TMT would be the latest in more than a dozen astronomical observatories built on Mauna Kea’s summit since the state of Hawai‘i gained control of the land in 1898. The TMT would be visible from many points on the Big Island, for at eighteen stories high, it would be the tallest building on the Big Island, “imposing itself on over eight acres of undisturbed *‘āina*.”⁴³ It would impact the fragile ecosystems on Mauna Kea by producing around two hundred cubic feet of solid waste from the invasive construction process plus an increase in vehicular traffic. There is no indication that environmental restoration would or could take place following the lease’s expiration in 2033, at which time TMT investors could just as easily opt for a lease renewal without any additional environmental assessments. Renowned cultural historian and resource specialist Kepa Maly conducted a comprehensive cultural assessment of the proposed construction of the TMT and reached the conclusion that the building of such a massive telescope would be irrevocably harmful to the cultural and spiritual value of the summit, given its importance in Kanaka genealogies.⁴⁴ The partners on the TMT ignored this report and went forward with a groundbreaking ceremony. Since then, however, further construction has been deterred by protests and physical blockades erected by the protectors on the summit.

The corporate funding behind the TMT adds another dimension, with several domestic universities and international partners signed on to help pay for its construction. Moani recalled seeing the investors from Japan and India on the mauna, yelling out to them: “Don’t you have a sacred mountain, too? Think of Fuji, think of the Himalayas. Would you build this telescope there?” She told me she didn’t feel as if they paid her any heed, funneling in their money despite what she felt should have been a shared understanding of the sacredness of certain places. She remembered telling a Sikh investor, “I know you’re a religious man. Can’t you understand, this is our religion?”

What you're doing is desecrating that." At the time, she was participating in a sit in, blocking the road with her arms linked on either side to two other women. "He just walked right by me," she admitted, "didn't even look down."⁴⁵ Japanese investors in particular have a linked history with the militarization of the Hawaiian Islands and the Pacific Basin, which, combined with increased economic penetration and commodification of Hawaiian culture by Japanese investors and tourists, has led to a contentious, neocolonial relationship between Japan and Hawai'i.⁴⁶

With regards to university endorsement of the project, protectors have been angered by the rhetoric and framing of their actions by these institutions. In April of 2015, a professor at UC Berkeley sent out a petition in favor of the telescope to many of his colleagues, one of whom replied by calling the activists a "horde of native Hawaiians."⁴⁷ Later that year, a science writer for the New York Times called native activism a "turn back toward the dark ages."⁴⁸ This language is incredibly racist and colonial, implying that Kanaka activism is not rooted in an intentional politics, but instead, an irrational anger.⁴⁹

Even as this palpable tension continued to build, Moani admitted that "they weren't paying any attention to us until we got arrested," referring to the eleven protectors, including herself, that were detained in the first wave of arrests in April and June 2015.⁵⁰ Eventually, twenty additional protectors—primarily young people—were arrested for violating the state's new emergency rules against camping on Mauna Kea. Following the arrests, Hawai'i state governor David Ige postponed the building of the TMT, and only a dozen or so protectors occupied the summit in this period of uncertainty.

When I visited the camp over the course of several days in the summer of 2015, it was these dozen or so activists who had been continuously occupying the summit for more than one hundred days. They had built a tarp-covered structure and a hāle (house) on the small hill directly across from the US National Park Services Visitor's Center (see *Figure 1*). A sign leaning against the tarp-covered structure said "Kū Kia'i Mauna." This sign announcing that the activists were the "protectors of the mountain" was a call to protect the mauna in the face of new development and continued desecration. Other signs encouraged curious visitors to come inside the structure for more information about who the protectors were and what their mission was (see *Figure 2*). People who entered inside to learn more come from all over the Big Island, neighboring islands, and the world. The brochures detailed the ways in which the US military and transnational corporations wreaked havoc on the mauna, in particular the planned construction of a Thirty Meter Telescope on the summit. They called for an end to US occupation of Hawai'i and for the restoration of the Hawaiian Kingdom. Later in the day, so many visitors were curious that the protectors promptly ran out of their informational brochures.

The dozen protectors I met on the summit were volunteers who chose to continuously occupy the mauna in between larger protest demonstrations that drew in community activists from all over the Big Island and neighboring islands. Their faces

looked tired from earlier that morning: Many of them had been served papers around six a.m. threatening detainment by the Department of Land and Natural Resources. “If you look at those rules, it’s very clear that they’re targeting us specifically,” Lā K. Ea, one of the eleven original arrestees, pointed out, using the dim light of his phone to show me the sheet of new rules that outlaw camping on the summit, among what I surmised to be other arbitrary restrictions.⁵¹ He referred to the state’s actions as “settler paternalism,” a condescension that comes “on the heels of one hundred and twenty-two years of denationalization and cultural appropriation.”⁵²

In Lā’s eyes, the state has long been infantilizing the Hawaiïan people, throwing gestures of partial recognition their way with an intent to placate. This strategy serves to mark the protectors as illegitimate, both in their claims to land as well as their understanding (and subsequent criticism) of the science behind the telescope. Lā told me that he felt a *kuleana* (responsibility) to be political and that his multiple arrests since June allowed him to draw attention to the cause. Fresh out of college, he quit his job as a substitute teacher to be on the mountain championing his cause.



Figure 1. Hāle at the summit of Mauna Kea. July 2015. Photo credit: Aanchal Saraf. All rights reserved.



Figure 2. The tarp of the protectors. July 2015. Photo credit: Aanchal Saraf. All rights reserved.

Hi'i, another protector, was the youngest one there, knowing she had to go back to school in Maui come September. But she was filled with a similar kuleana. She told me of earlier in the year, when protectors had blocked the road to the TMT with stones. “There’s this song that was written during the sovereignty movement, about Hawaiians rather starving than giving in. We’d rather eat rocks. So all those pohakus (stones) in the road? They say ‘fuck your money, we eat rocks, you go home.’”⁵³ She was referring to “Kaulana nā pau,” a song many Kānaka know extremely well, whose lyrics are a direct refusal of the state’s paternalistic attitudes towards Kanaka subjectivity. The allure of assimilation is instead disrupted by the radical alternative of quite literally eating the ‘āina. Hi’i’s evocation of the song is a sedimentation of Kanaka right to land as a central axis from which sovereignty claims are articulated.

When the protectors built a blockade with their bodies and the pohakus in the spring of 2015, police officers responded by arresting the protectors en masse, effectively placing the protest within other settler state interpretations of what Dene scholar Glen Sean Coulthard has identified as “the typical Native blockade”: “Militant, threatening, disruptive, violent.”⁵⁴ While Coulthard’s work is specific to a First Nations context that is critical of the settler state of Canada, I argue that his political theory can be applied to the struggle at Mauna Kea. The Mauna Kea blockade can and should be

read as a form of direct action that is temporarily blocking the state's access to Indigenous territory. What was seen as militant and threatening was in fact an act of nonviolent resistance and a momentary reoccupation of Kanaka land. The blockade established a reclamation site that disrupts, if not entirely blocks, settler access to Kanaka land for sustained periods of time.⁵⁵ It is not only a physical impediment to the continued exploitation of Indigenous land and resources by settlers, but also a message to state powers that alternatives to the established colonial relationship can and do exist. It is a simultaneous claim to land and to self-determined Kanaka subjectivity. Many of those involved in constructing the blockade were justifiably angry at what they perceived to be continued violations by the settler state. Yet by arresting protesters and delineating arbitrary rules against mountaintop occupation, settlers effectively placed the state's abuses of settler colonialism in the past and painted Kanaka emotional responses as irrational, reactionary, and backward.⁵⁶ Very aware of this depiction, which adds insult to injury, Kānaka assert that settler colonialism is still very much alive and well.⁵⁷ Theirs is an emotion rooted in the recognition of injustice, a moral feeling rather than a free-floating anger.⁵⁸

Later that day, I sat in the sun with Lā and Hi'i, a bottle of 'awa from Kauai making the rounds between the three of us. Hi'i spoke of the pain she felt growing up: "We're used as token Hawaiians. The average day in the life of a Hawaiian person is getting your culture sold back to you. You shouldn't feel entitled to being greeted by hula dances and a lei."⁵⁹ Her words indict multiple parties—the state, tourists, even me as an outsider to this community—for the ways in which we are in a position of power to use "Hawaiian culture" for our convenience and personal profitability. This imagining of Kānaka as hula-dancing, lazy, and easy-going allows the state and corporations to benefit from the profits of those treating the islands as holiday destinations. The culture of Kānaka and their important ties to the 'āina are invisibilized and distorted to appease the island fantasies of potential investors and consumers.⁶⁰ Rather than Kānaka being seen as the very substance of what it means to be autochthonously Hawaiian, they are relegated to an exotic "ornamental," a commodity to be purchased by tourists.⁶¹

The function of the liberal multicultural settler state facilitates the commodification of Hawaiian culture as a particular mode of colonization masqueraded as consent. Consent in this case is the appearance that Kānaka are dictating the terms of their subjectification, but in fact they are reacting to the terms of their subjugation. The state produces a colonized subject with inherent thoughts, desires, and behavior that not only delineate what is authentically Indigenous but also allow for punishment if there is any lack of compliance.⁶² Colonized subjects are expected to accept their "sold-back culture" as "a conciliatory form of settler-state recognition," a concern Hi'i voiced in her signification of hulas and leis as symbols of this commodifying process.⁶³ But Hi'i's acknowledgment of the institutions of power shaping her culture indicates a collective redirection of the movement away from concession and towards a politics

of resurgence that is premised on direct action (the pohaku blockade), self-actualization (Hī'i's and others' refusal of their sold-back culture), and the revitalization of cultural practices (which can be mapped in the wake of the 1970s sovereignty moment). All of these aspects can be found in the revived march against the construction of the TMT. The protectors refuse to identify with the nonreciprocal forms of recognition granted to them by the settler state and are instead rising up to redefine the very notions of Kānaka Indigeneity and cultural practice.

No moment made this fight against nonreciprocal recognition clearer than the day I joined the protectors on the summit in a morning of kiteflying. That morning, my fourth or fifth visit with them, other community members brought up some 'ono (delicious) fried rice and a beautiful kite emblazoned with the image of a pueo (owl). My friend, Pueo, took a liking to his namesake, and rushed down the hill with string in tow. The kite soared above us in the glittering sun, and we all laughed as it suddenly veered downward toward the tarp before Pueo deftly redirected it back up. An officer arrived from the Department of Land and Natural Resources as we were engaged in this cloud dance. He had a stack of papers in his hand. He quickly served many of the protectors, indicating that they are breaking state laws by occupying this land on the summit. Pueo defiantly told the DLNR officer that the state was violating their rights as Kānaka Maoli. The officer remarked that it seemed they weren't praying or being "cultural," but rather, simply wasting time flying kites. The irony in his statement was palpable, as kiteflying appears in a number of mo'olelo (stories), including the legends of Maui. When the officer finally left, Pueo looked frustrated. "Telling a Hawaiian something is wrong is limiting their practice," he said, referring to the ways in which the state decides to be punitive when Kānaka stray from its definition of Indigeneity.⁶⁴ The moment illuminates the deeply asymmetric power relation between Kānaka and state.

The state is no longer explicitly coercive in ways that automatically manifest as physical violence, as it has adapted its strategies since the 1970s movements to reflect the liberal multicultural turn. It chose instead to modify its structure into what seem to be conciliatory discourses and institutional practices that emphasize Kānaka recognition and accommodation.⁶⁵ Yet in moments of failed recognition, the state illuminates the myriad ways in which its relationship with Indigenous peoples remains colonial despite supposed modifications. The state still determines the terms of humanity and authenticity for Kānaka, and this has profound structural consequences. Pueo's moment of frustration was born out of the nonrecognition by the DLNR officer of Pueo's inherent Indigeneity, as it does not match the ways in which the state has constructed Indigeneity. It is likely a failed recognition Pueo has experienced time and time again, in which his kiteflying became a proxy for the state to tell him he is not visible, not consequential, not enough.

Moments of nonrecognition "or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning one in a false, distorted and reduced mode of being," the very limitation of cultural practice of which Pueo spoke.⁶⁶ Misrecognition also allows settlers to continue to position Kānaka as subordinates within the settler state, all the

while continuing to benefit from the position of appearing to be culturally diverse.⁶⁷ The goal of the state is to hope that Kānaka accept its accommodations and do not attempt to create their own terms and conditions for recognition.

Partial recognition also allows the state to seem as if it has addressed its past through symbolic acts of redress while in actuality they are “further entrenching in law and practice the real bases of its control.”⁶⁸ Resolutions such as the US apology for the overthrow of the Hawaiian kingdom become performative acts about collective overcoming of the legacy of past abuse, not the abusive colonial structure itself.⁶⁹ The structure continues to perpetuate itself with little consequence, slyly adapting to occlude the ways in which it has transformed to be hegemonic and still remains fundamentally colonial.

Refuting partial recognition through the complexity of his personhood, Pueo expanded on his ideas of what cultural practice looks like, what survival looks like. It is doing morning pule (prayer) to thank nā akua (the gods) for what they have given to Mauna Kea and its protectors. It is also flying kites on a sunny day, taking note of the wind, and being patient observers of its sudden crescendos and dips. It is rejecting a difference-blind liberalism and involves communities of colonized peoples “rejecting assimilation and instead affirming the worth of their own identity-related differences.”⁷⁰ Mālama (to care for) and aloha are central concepts here, and to mālama and aloha this ‘āina, each other, and even the DLNR officer seems to be a central idea of the protectors on and off the summit.

“They say we’re anti-science. What we really are is anti-occupation,” Jojo, another protector, remarked to me on one of my final days visiting the protectors. “This is the thirteenth telescope up there, they keep telling us they’ll stop and yet they don’t.”⁷¹ Jojo was referring to the numerous telescopes already dotting the summit, many of which are now defunct or under limited operation but have yet to be subject to decommissioning (see *Figure 3*). He claimed his own respect for the land, in addition to the potential environmental harm the TMT could create, is what truly led him in the movement. For Jojo and other protectors, mālama ‘āina operates as a political discourse. Hawaiian cosmology tells us that Kānaka Maoli are kama‘āina, the children of the land. The land is their mother, and the sky their father. This land has been broken up, privatized, and sold or leased to a multitude of corporations and private landowners, including the military. To mālama fragmented land is near impossible, as Kānaka Maoli can no longer take care of it in a holistic and community-based manner.

The continued occupation and fragmentation of land has been one of the predominant strategies of control by the state. Settler colonialism is destroying Kanaka stakeholderhood and Kānaka themselves in order to replace both with a society built in the future vision of the settler state. But the processes of settler occupation are more insidious now, no longer requiring violent dispossession of Kanaka communities and their resources. Instead, the state frames itself within a narrative of development, progress, and sustainability that actually alludes to the economic sustainability of capital accumulation. The longer a project is exploiting a community’s land, resources, and

labor for the sake of capital accumulation, the more “sustainable” the project.⁷² It is in this manner that projects such as the TMT may be granted environmentally regulatory permits that guarantee sustainable construction, even as the telescope actively threatens the deep cultural commitments to the land it is slated to be built on. The TMT becomes a signifier for progress and innovation, and Kanaka refusal of its colonial imposition gets quickly twisted into a denial of better, brighter futures, even if such futures do not even include Kānaka in them.



Figure 3. Telescopes at the summit. July 2015. Photo credit: Aanchal Saraf. All rights reserved.

Makawalu: Hōkūle‘a’s Return

These stories from the summit illustrate the deep complexities of state nonrecognition towards Kānaka and its enmeshment with discourses of science and sovereignty, and Kanaka response and resistance to these axes of delegitimization. The TMT can be regarded as a flashpoint in a much longer historical relationship between the state and Kānaka Maoli: it serves to illuminate how devaluation of Kanaka knowledges is directly tied to the ability to disregard Kanaka claims to land. Kanaka claims to sovereignty must simultaneously be claims to ontological and epistemological validity, and the protectors know this.

Recent developments in the struggle over the mauna reflect this understood double bind. In October 2018, following a period of uncertainty as the TMT contested case hearings wound their way through appellate courts, the Hawai‘i Supreme Court affirmed the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR)’s approval of the University of Hawai‘i’s permit to allow the TMT corporation to proceed with building. The hashtag

#SeeYouOnTheMauna, circulating rapidly in the days following the Hawai'i Supreme Court's decision, has been a call from protectors that discursively enacts community, anticipating mass mobilization. It is also a form of decolonial looking, seeing on the mauna a future that was catalyzing five years ago, and indeed, forty years ago. The protectors have also constructed additional blockades such as the "Aloha Checkpoint," equal parts barrier, meeting point, center of learning, and soup kitchen.⁷³ The state has deemed such structures "unauthorized" and shamefully dismantled them in the cover of darkness, threatened by this Indigenous authorization of community and legal claims to land. The community of Kānaka and settler allies has even taken to court, testifying against the BLNR and the University of Hawai'i, and has pushed for numerous appeals to the court decision, utilizing both Hawaiian Kingdom law and settler state law in its defense of the mauna. Indeed, it is in moments of simultaneous claim that Kānaka most directly trouble the state and send it scrambling to reconfigure. The unprecedented 2014 voyage of the Hōkūle'a, described in my opening vignette, marks such a moment.

When the Hōkūle'a successfully completed her three-year long circumnavigation of the globe in the summer of 2017, tens of thousands gathered in Ala Moana Beach Park on O'ahu to welcome her. Exclusively using Polynesian navigation methods, the crew had visited over two dozen countries and covered nearly fifty thousand nautical miles of ocean.⁷⁴ The navigators were already prepared to sail from Hawai'i to Tahiti, as previous voyages had proven possible, but this journey demonstrated their comprehensive knowledge of the Pacific and its neighboring oceans as well. The global trek was a testament to the power and legitimacy of Kanaka knowledges, guided by mele ko'ihonua that safely led the ship and her crew home. Navigators on the ship looked to the stars, knowing this same observational ability had been honed by their ancestors.

This role as kilo works in tandem with the concept of makawalu, or "having eight eyes," validating a seeing of the world through Kanaka eyes.⁷⁵ I learned of this concept from a Kanaka scientist named Cheyenne. Cheyenne is an employee of the state, and he has been introducing Kanaka concepts such as makawalu and mālama 'āina to the conservation agencies and watershed partnerships with whom he works. The practice of makawalu embodies the dynamism of Hawaiian worldviews, recognizing the "continual creation of multiple foundations."⁷⁶ The kilo must practice makawalu and consider at least eight ways of thinking that extend beyond where they started but are rooted in the materiality of the original observation. In this way, makawalu allows for change over time and space without disavowing the foundational cycles of Kanaka world-making. This place-based, contextualized Indigenous knowledge is what has guided generations of Kānaka, positioning this intimate relationship between Hawaiians and their geography as kama'āina. Kanaka knowledges also push on the idea of a worldview in which multiple perspectives are in abundance without being inherently contradictory.

The protectors on Mauna Kea recognize a similar strength to their own claims, refuting the naturalized cooptation of Kanaka voyaging knowledges into a Western astronomy narrative of progress. Instead, they theorize a different kind of futurity, an Indigenous future that upholds the continuous and deeply contextual importance of Kanaka place-based knowledges, knowledges that can be seen as science in their own right. Their claims to Mauna Kea are thus, explicitly, claims to sovereignty over land and water that is unlawfully occupied, not an affront to science.



Figure 4. Ahu (shrine) at the summit. July 2015. Photo credit: Aanchal Saraf. All rights reserved.

These are the assertions the protectors hold with great concern, assertions that continue to motivate the protectors as the battle against the TMT continues. Kānaka have taken to the courts and to the ‘āina to reframe what it means to have a voice against the state and singular, colonial paradigms of existence. For Indigenous nations to live, the settler state must weaken, and we too must “actively participate in the construction of Indigenous alternatives to it.”⁷⁷ We are witnessing that alternative construction in the present moment. Pae mai la ka wa‘a i ka ‘āina (The wa‘a has come ashore), and we are here to welcome her.

Notes

¹ Wa‘a is often mistranslated as “canoe.” It refers to a specific kind of distinctly Polynesian voyaging vessel, and rather than conflate it with the technology of an entirely separate Indigenous community by comparing it to a canoe, I use it here, untranslated.

² I have not italicized Hawaiian words in the text “in keeping with the recent movement to resist making the native tongue appear foreign in writing produced in and about a native land and people.” See Katrina-Ann R. Kapā‘anaokalāokeola Nākoa Oliveira, *Ancestral Places: Understanding Kanaka Geographies* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2014), xvii. It is a choice in line with broader practices of decolonized writing. I use the terms Kānaka Maoli and Kānaka to refer to native Hawaiian people, as instructed by Noelani Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua in the introduction to her edited collection *A Nation Rising: Hawaiian Movements for Life, Land, and Sovereignty*, to denote “the autochthonous people of the Hawaiian archipelago—the original people who emerged from this place.” This is in a similar practice to Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua herself, who notes that “the reemergence of ancestral ways of describing ourselves also disrupts the racialized, US legal definition of “native Hawaiian,” which uses blood quantum measurements that do not emerge from Hawaiian culture.” See Noelani Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, “Introduction,” in *A Nation Rising: Hawaiian Movements for Life, Land, and Sovereignty*, ed. Noelani Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, Ikaika Hussey, and Erin Kahunawaika’ala Wright (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 2. Lastly, I define Hawaiian words when they first appear in this article. My parenthetical definitions are approximations, and clarification of translations is given where it seems appropriate. For example, ‘āina can simultaneously mean “land” and “that which feeds,” and while both of these definitions can occur simultaneously, it is up to my discretion which definition I am referring to in any particular use of the word. My decision to include some Hawaiian words and not others reflects on the limits of my own knowledge. I continue to learn more ‘ōlelo and engage with Kanaka ontologies on their own terms.

³ *Papa Mau: the Wayfinder*, video, directed by ‘Ōiwi TV, PBS Hawai‘i, 2012.

⁴ Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, “Introduction,” 12.

⁵ Ku‘ulei Keakealani and Hannah Springer, “Perpetuating Traditional Conservation Through Blending Cultural Practice and Modern Science” (lecture, Honolulu, July 15, 2014) Navigating Change in the Pacific Islands: 22nd Annual Hawai‘i Conservation Conference, Hawai‘i Convention Center.

⁶ Katrina-Ann R. Kapā‘anaokalāokeola Nākoa Oliveira, *Ancestral Places: Understanding Kanaka Geographies* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2014), 94.

⁷ Iokepa Casumbal-Salazar, “A Fictive Kinship: Making ‘Modernity,’ ‘Ancient Hawaiians,’ and the Telescopes on Mauna Kea,” *Native American and Indigenous Studies* 4, no. 2 (2017): 7.

⁸ Matt Yamashita, “Mai Ka Piko Mai, A Ho‘i: Return to Kanaloa,” YouTube, video file, March 8, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5fJZHYzcaoA>.

⁹ J. Kēhaulani Kauanui, *Hawaiian Blood: Colonialism and the Politics of Sovereignty and Indigeneity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 28.

¹⁰ In 1848, in efforts to prevent seizure of the Hawaiian lands by foreigners, King Kamehameha III allocated one-third of the monarchy's land to the crown, one-third to the island chiefs, and one-third to the general population. This moment in Hawaiian history was known as the Māhele (to divide). While the first two-thirds were not explicitly intended for immediate use by maka'āinana (non-royal Native Hawaiians), Kamehameha did indicate that he was establishing monarchal protection for the land lest his people need it later on. Moreover, for the first two-thirds of land allocations, maka'āinana could continue to live on chief or Crown lands if they could prove genealogical links to their places of residence. For the latter third, maka'āinana could use the Kuleana Act of 1850 to acquire title to land. While kuleana means responsibility in 'ōlelo Hawai'i, the term was co-opted to designate parcels of land that maka'āinana could individually cultivate. However, many did not opt for land title claims due to a lack of knowledge or capital to acquire surveys, and as a result, most of the land held under kuleana parcels was sold or leased to foreigners. The Indigenous populations, both maka'āinana and ali'i (royal) then relied primarily on chief or Crown land that they had proven genealogical ties to and could thus theoretically live on in perpetuity. Even this reliance on genealogical claims in itself was limited, and many Kānaka Maoli lost massive land holdings due to the Māhele. See Kamanamaikalani Beamer, *No Mākou Ka Mana: Liberating the Nation* (Honolulu: Kamehameha Schools Press, 2014).

¹¹ The crown lands have long been a site of struggle for contemporary Kanaka land claims, which has led to numerous federal articulations of claim to lands under this designation. In 2009, the US Supreme Court unanimously ruled for a congressional resolution apologizing for the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian kingdom, but determined that this did not strip the United States or the state of Hawai'i of their property rights to the crown lands. This decision was unanimous, from one of the most divided courts in history. The seduction of the imperialist framework here transcended party lines. See *Hawaii et al. vs. Office of Hawaiian Affairs et al.*, US Supreme Court, March 31, 2009, 2–3.

¹² Emalani Case, "I ka Piko, To the Summit: Resistance from the Mountain to the Sea," *The Journal of Pacific History* 54, no. 2 (2019): 168; Leon No'eu Peralto, "Hānau ka Mauna, the piko of our ea," in *A Nation Rising*, ed. Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, Hussey, and Wright, 233.

¹³ See Iokepa Salazar, *First Light: Indigenous Struggle and Astronomy on Mauna a Wākea* (forthcoming); Leandra Swanner, "Instruments of Science or Conquest? Neocolonialism and Modern American Astronomy," *Historical Studies in the Natural Sciences* 47, no. 3 (2017): 293–319.

¹⁴ Oliveira, *Ancestral Places*, 1.

¹⁵ For public writing that addresses the constructed tensions between science and Mauna Kea, see David Maile, “Science, Time, and Mauna a Wākea: The Thirty-Meter Telescope’s Capitalist-Colonialist Violence, Part 1 and Part 2,” *The Red Nation*, May 13 and 20, 2015.

¹⁶ See J. Noelani Goodyear-Ka’ōpua, “Protectors of the Future, Not Protestors of the Past: Indigenous Pacific Activism and Mauna a Wākea,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 116, no. 1 (2017): 184–94.

¹⁷ Oliveira, *Ancestral Places*, 1.

¹⁸ There is a split between Kānaka scholars on referring to the Māhele as “Great” or not, due to beliefs of continued major divisions of land by the colonial powers before and after this date.

¹⁹ K Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires: Peha Lā E Pono Ai?* (Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1992), 3.

²⁰ See Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004).

²¹ Jonathan Goldberg-Hiller and Noenoe K. Silva, “Sharks and Pigs: Animating Hawaiian Sovereignty against the Anthropological Machine,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 110, no. 2 (2011): 429–45.

²² Oliveira, *Ancestral Places*, 40.

²³ Oliveira, *Ancestral Places*, 65.

²⁴ See Goodyear-Ka’ōpua, “Introduction.”

²⁵ Patrick Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 2 (2006): 387.

²⁶ See Kauanui, *Hawaiian Blood*.

²⁷ Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 20.

²⁸ Glen Sean Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 3.

²⁹ Elizabeth Povinelli, *The Cunning of Recognition: Indigenous Alterities and the Making of Australian Multiculturalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 6.

³⁰ Povinelli, *The Cunning of Recognition*, 54.

³¹ Haunani-Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai’i* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), 137.

³² Povinelli, *The Cunning of Recognition*, 48.

³³ Povinelli, *The Cunning of Recognition*, 7.

³⁴ Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London: Zed Books, 2012), 124.

³⁵ Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, 145.

³⁶ Oliveira, *Ancestral Places*, 1.

³⁷ Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, 146.

³⁸ Jonathan Kamakawiwo'ole Osorio, "Hawaiian Souls: The Movement to Stop the U.S. Military Bombing of Kaho'olawe," in *A Nation Rising*, ed. Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, Hussey, and Wright, 137.

³⁹ Moanike'ala Akaka, personal interview, July 5, 2015. Protectors' names appear throughout the article as per their own identification. For this reason, some have their first and family names listed, while others are only referred to by their first names.

⁴⁰ Kyle Kajihiro, "The Militarizing of Hawai'i: Occupation, Accommodation, and Resistance," in *Asian Settler Colonialism: From Local Governance to the Habits of Everyday Life in Hawai'i*, ed. Candace Fujikane and Jonathan Y. Okamura (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 179.

⁴¹ While originally, OHA trustees were intended to be elected by Kanaka vote, the SCOTUS case *Rice v. Cayetano* in 2000 ruled that the state could not restrict the vote to persons of Native Hawaiian descent. As a result, any registered voter in Hawai'i can both vote in the election and be eligible for candidacy (Kauanui, *Hawaiian Blood*, 179).

⁴² Akaka, personal interview.

⁴³ Peralto, "Hānau ka Mauna," 239.

⁴⁴ Kepa Maly, "Mauna Kea, ka piko kaulana o ka 'āina (Mauna Kea, the famous summit of the land)," *Ulukau*, 2005.

⁴⁵ Akaka, personal interview.

⁴⁶ Trask, *From a Native Daughter*, 58.

⁴⁷ Molly Solomon, "How The Debate Over TMT Prompted a Problematic Email," *Hawaii Public Radio*, May 15, 2015, <https://www.hawaiipublicradio.org/post/how-debate-over-tmt-prompted-problematic-email#stream/o>.

- ⁴⁸ George Johnson, "Seeking Stars, Finding Creationism," *The New York Times*, October 20, 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/21/science/seeking-stars-finding-creationism.html>.
- ⁴⁹ Sarah Kaplan, "How a Hawaiian mountaintop became a battleground between native activists and astronomers," *The Washington Post*, June 30, 2015.
- ⁵⁰ Akaka, personal interview.
- ⁵¹ Lā K. Ea, personal interview, July 24, 2015.
- ⁵² Ea, interview.
- ⁵³ Hi'i, personal interview, July 27, 2015.
- ⁵⁴ David Corrigan, "Several Arrested in Mauna Kea TMT Blockade," *Big Island Video News*, April 2, 2015; Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 166.
- ⁵⁵ Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 166.
- ⁵⁶ Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 22.
- ⁵⁷ Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 128.
- ⁵⁸ Rawls qtd. in Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 110.
- ⁵⁹ Hi'i, personal interview, July 24, 2015.
- ⁶⁰ Carlos Andrade, "Hawaiian Geography or a Geography of Hawai'i?" in *i ulu i ka 'āina*, ed. Jonathan Osorio (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2013), 17.
- ⁶¹ Trask, *From a Native Daughter*, 17.
- ⁶² Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 16.
- ⁶³ Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 24.
- ⁶⁴ Pueo, personal interview, July 27, 2015.
- ⁶⁵ Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 6.
- ⁶⁶ Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 30.
- ⁶⁷ Day quoted in Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 35.
- ⁶⁸ Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 155.
- ⁶⁹ Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 109.
- ⁷⁰ Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 131.
- ⁷¹ Jojo Hendo, personal interview, July 28, 2015.

⁷² Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 77.

⁷³ Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, “Protectors of the Future.”

⁷⁴ “Tradition, elation marks Hokulea’s triumphant homecoming,” *Hawaii News Now*, July 18, 2017.

⁷⁵ Cheyenne Perry, personal interview, June 12, 2014.

⁷⁶ Pualani Kanaka'ole Kanahahele, “Kūkulu Ke Ea A Kanaloa: The Culture Plan for Kanaloa Kaho'olawe,” Edith Kanaka'ole Foundation, https://www.kahoolawe.hawaii.gov/downloads/CULTURAL_PLAN.pdf: 33.

⁷⁷ Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 173.

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