FORUM

AUTHORS' RESPONSE

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Reading the responses by Manulani Aluli Meyer, Ty P. Kāwika Tengan, and Chad Kalepa Babayan moved and inspired us. It is rare to have three well-respected members of any community respond to one's ideas, let alone to do so with wisdom, productive critique, and generosity of spirit. We thank them all from the bottom of our grateful hearts, and we are grateful as well to the editors of *Pacific Studies* for their visionary leadership in organizing this forum of ideas.

The ultimate goal of our paper is to find a methodology for resolving conflicts, using the physical form of the double-hulled canoe as a metaphorical method. However, the canoe as metaphor is a means to an end, a way of thinking through (see also Tengan's response), and responding to the challenges of the times we live in without losing sight of who we are and where we have come from. Toward this end, the three respondents have given us metaphorical winds (food for thought), encouraging us to respond with "relational flexibility" to reach a conclusion that we believe is the most compelling.

We preface our response herein with the knowledge that the mountain of Kilauea on the island of Hawai'i has been erupting since May 3, 2018 (more than two months now, at the time of writing), has destroyed more than 700 homes, and could continue for months to years. The sustained flow of magma

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from the summit of the mountain Kilauea is a reminder of our possible demise in the face of environmental forces beyond our control, such as hurricanes, droughts, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and even climate change. Humans might make plans, but mother earth has the last say, underscoring the belief held by many indigenous cultures (before the privatization and commodification of land) that "people belong to the land, the land does not belong to people."

Humans are supposed to be good stewards of the land. In this context, Meyer refers to the philosophical practice of Aloha Aina (love of land), a notion that is also elaborated upon politically and legally in Tengan's response. Both of these papers recognize the importance of preserving the land for future generations. However, for humans to survive, land has to be transformed in some way or other to build houses, and trees need to be cut down to build canoes so that humans can set sail to discover and populate new lands. This has been the human condition since time immemorial.

At the same time, humans across the ages and places have often aspired to live in balance with the environment, with some societies more successful than others. An awareness of the interconnectedness and vitality of all "things" and "beings," including plants, animals, trees, rocks, and mountains, thus widely informed (and continues to inform) a variety of forms of the human existence. In ancient Oceania, for example, chants and incantations that asked for forgiveness preceded the felling of trees for canoe building. The reason here is the belief that trees, like the land, have a life force of their own. As such, they could "see" and "feel," and they could also "bite" (kill or destroy) if they are not treated with respect.

Given the enormous environmental challenges caused by capitalist expansion and its side effects, which seem to suffocate such ancient yet continuing beliefs and practices (see response by Meyer), it is easy to conflate the proposed building of a Thirty Meter Telescope on Mauna Kea with capitalism's impulse to accumulate wealth, if not directly, then in covert ways. Another easy conflation is thinking that it is impossible to build such a large telescope on Mauna Kea and not destroy the sanctity of the mountain. But suppose that, what is driving the building of a Thirty Meter Telescope, is a sincere effort to discover the mysteries of our universe that are yet unknown to us, in much the same way that the building of large double-hulled canoes of old was a sincere effort to sail beyond the reef and discover new lands unknown to our ancestors

In addition, suppose that it is possible to build a Thirty Meter Telescope for the reasons outlined in Babayan's response and NOT destroy the sanctity of the mountain. This could arguably be achieved through rigorous supervision and oversight of the management of the mountain, in ways that are far superior to present practice. We firmly believe that proper management of the mountain is key to a successful resolution to the present impasse. Just because this has not been the case in the past (see response by Tengan) does not mean it cannot be done. Were

this to happen, could we love the land and love scientific exploration at the same time? Is it possible that both could coexist or even be released and merged from their current entrenchment as "false-dualities" (see response by Meyer)?

The late Paul Coleman, the first native Hawaiian to earn a doctorate in astrophysics, certainly had a love of the land as well as a love of scientific exploration (also see response by Babayan, who identifies himself as a "science literacy advocate" and asks us to "agree that all spaces are sacred to Hawaiians"). Before he passed away this year, Coleman spoke often and passionately about the importance of astronomy to Hawaiʻi and to Hawaiians. He even led members of the Hawaiian community to the observatories on Mauna Kea and Haleakalā, another contested mountain (see response by Tengan). He also established an endowed University of Hawaiʻi scholarship in his honor that will ensure that scientific exploration to find answers to some of humankind's most pressing concerns will continue (see response by Babayan).

Tengan's reference to the importance of sennit cordage that binds and holds the various parts of the canoe together ties in well with our view that relational flexibility is important in resolving colliding cosmologies. A cosmological collision, after all, lies at the heart of the Mauna Kea "controversy" (which might be less or differently controversial as one thinks, according to Meyer and Babayan). Yet, does this controversy really have to get and remain entrapped in the entrenched thinking through false-dualities (to borrow Meyer's term again) such as "culture versus science," " culture versus nature," "sacred versus secular" or "humans versus mountain"?

In a presentation at the Ludwig–Maximilians–University Munich, Germany, in late 2016, Bruno Latour (French philosopher, anthropologist, and sociologist), laid out the trajectory "from the anthropocene to the new climatic regime." He argued that humanity needs to think about the Earth as a living system, assuming center stage rather than being relegated to the background as "Nature." To achieve this, Latour argued, knowledge needs to be harvested from across the disciplines. When probed about a concrete pathway, he referred to the cosmologies once collected and stored in archival and museum collections, in the name of anthropology, to salvage a past doomed to disappear. This treasure trove, Latour suggested, should be revisited to reimagine humanity's multiple potential futures.

It is easy to dismiss Latour as a Western scientist outside the Pacific and his reference to anthropology and museum collections of our past as irrelevant to this discussion. However, Meyer's views are similar to his. "Indigeneity is now vital for our world," Meyer writes. Tengan adds that to recover what we can learn from the past, "new models of Indigenous anthropological praxis" have a significant role to play and will allow us to better understand the relationships between humans, the world, things, bones, and mountains. Is it possible that

supporting an indigenously inflected science could get us closer to finding an alternative home for humanity, should we discover that mother earth can no longer sustain us indefinitely (see response by Babayan)?

Returning to the notion of relational flexibility, we conclude by stressing once again that relationships among humans as well as relationships between humans and the environment strengthen and nurture our interdependence with each other. When there's a collision of values or perspectives, a certain flexibility is necessary to find common ground, which hopefully will lead to a solution to our most pressing problems. This could be achieved by harnessing the value of differing perspectives to move humanity forward. Difficult as it is, we must "see enemies with new eyes."

New eyes require us to see beyond what we can see and touch, as well as deep within us. On a clear day on the summit of Mauna Kea, looking out toward the rolling hills turned golden by the rays of a setting sun, we may feel "a chicken skin moment," a bodily manifestation of a "knowing" that we are experiencing the sacred, invisible but real, and now palpable, on our skin. This happened when one of the authors of this essay, Vilsoni Hereniko, and a small film crew went to Mauna Kea to listen to the mountain and to hear and see what it might suggest, visually, to accompany the poem "Let the Mountain Speak" that's at the core of our original paper.

As Hereniko's small crew waited at the base of one of the telescopes after the sun had set, they heard an eerie sound that reminded them of an oli or chant. They turned to see where the sound was coming from and realized that a large telescope was opening to face the infinite sky. In the dark, with the stars illuminated like beacons calling humans unto themselves, they felt a powerful sensation that gave them another chicken skin moment, accompanied by this realization: scientific exploration is also sacred.

This realization urges us to rethink our original model of the two hulls of the canoe, with one being sacred and the other secular. Using our relational flexibility model to harness the power inherent in the three different responses to our original paper (the equivalent of responding to winds to harness their power) as well as the views of Latour and personal experiences of listening to Mauna Kea, we have come to the conclusion that because both the mountain and scientific exploration are sacred, both hulls of our canoe must be sacred.

This conclusion speaks directly to the initial impetus that prompted us to write the original paper: the need to engage with differing, even conflicting, perspectives. This productive engagement encourages us to leave the lagoon where our double-hulled canoe has been moored and to yield to the wisdom and courage of ancient voyagers ("innovators, all the way back" Tengan reminds us), who sailed beyond the reefs that protected their tiny islands to discover new lands—unknown and unseen—but waiting for them.