

Title: An Ocean Above and Below Us: Sharing Pacific Indigenous Wisdom (Virtual)

Speakers: Brittany Kamai

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Abstract:

The Indigenous peoples from the Pacific Ocean are the People of the Sea. Over generations, our ancestors pioneered ways to intentionally travel across thousands of miles of open ocean using only the information nature provides. No external instruments were needed for guidance; rather the navigator became the most sophisticated instrument needed by tuning into the stars, winds, waves, birds and marine life.

In this presentation, I will share these stories along with principles that govern living and operating on traditional voyaging vessels. These values established for the canoes translated directly into the balance is attained between Pacific Indigenous peoples and their island nations. As we envision the future of our planet and look to weave together Indigenous wisdom with western science, we must learn to listen to what is offered by the people of the largest continent on the planet, the Pacific Ocean.



An Ocean Above and Below Us: Sharing Pacific Indigenous Wisdom

Brittany Kamai, Ph.D.

**University of Hawai'i, West O'ahu
Mana Moana Institute**



Indigenous practices

Gratitude for our hosts

Permission seeking, honoring & grounding

Gratitude for our time together

Brittany Kamai, PhD

I want to express my sincere gratitude
to the **First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples**
of the land Perimeter Institute & Waterloo University

The traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg,
and Haudenosaunee peoples

I would like to acknowledge the **winds, waters,
land, trees and animals who shape the
experience** you all have each day you are on that part
of our planet

Brittany Kamai, PhD

Kanaka Māoli

The first peoples of the islands of Hawai‘i

Wai‘anae, O‘ahu

Brittany Kamai, PhD

7

Indigenous practices

Gratitude for our hosts

Permission seeking, honoring & grounding

Gratitude for our time together

Brittany Kamai, PhD

E hō mai

Grant us knowledge from above

The things of knowledge hidden in song

Grant us

Grant us

Grant us

Composed by Edith Kanāka'ole

Brittany Kamai, PhD

E hō mai

E hō mai ka 'ike mai luna mai ē

'O nā mea huna no 'eau o nā mele ē

E hō mai

E hō mai

E hō mai e x 3

Composed by Edith Kanāka'ole

Brittany Kama'i, PhD





**“We are not separated by land,
We are connected by water”**

- Brian Keaulana, Hawaiian Waterman

Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO
Image Landsat/ Copernicus
Image IBCAO

The Canoe



Taiwan



Philippines



Carolinian



Fijian



Māori



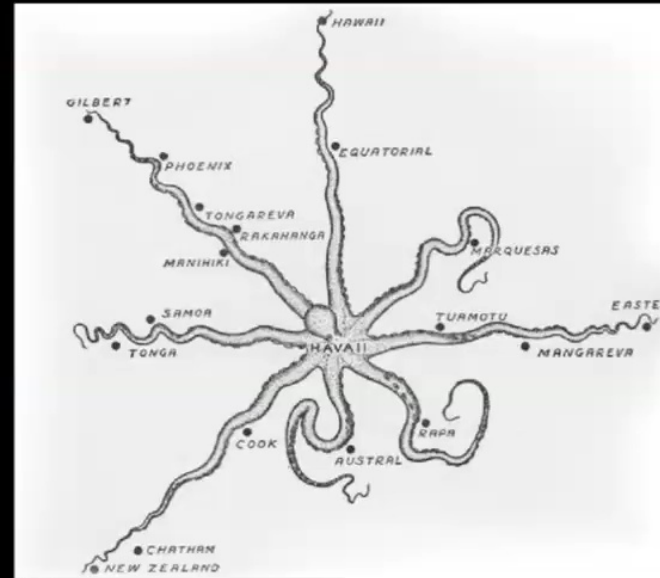
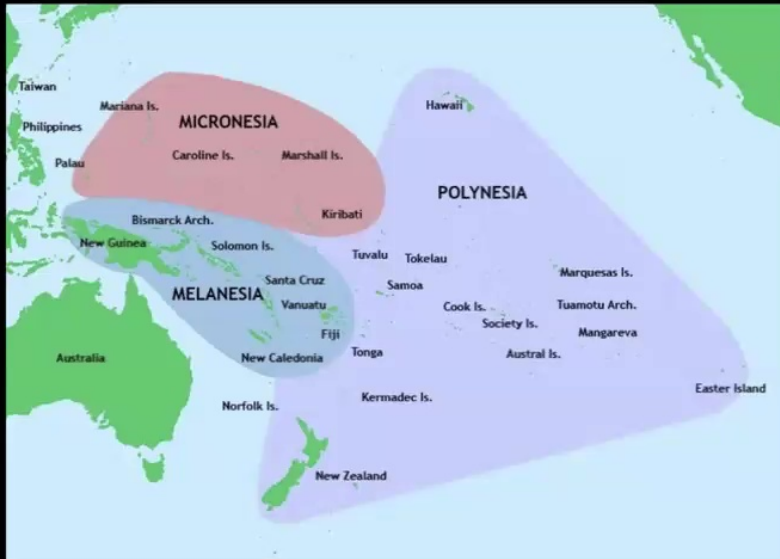
Tahitian

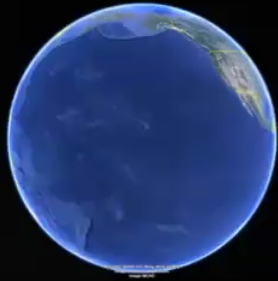
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Our watery continent

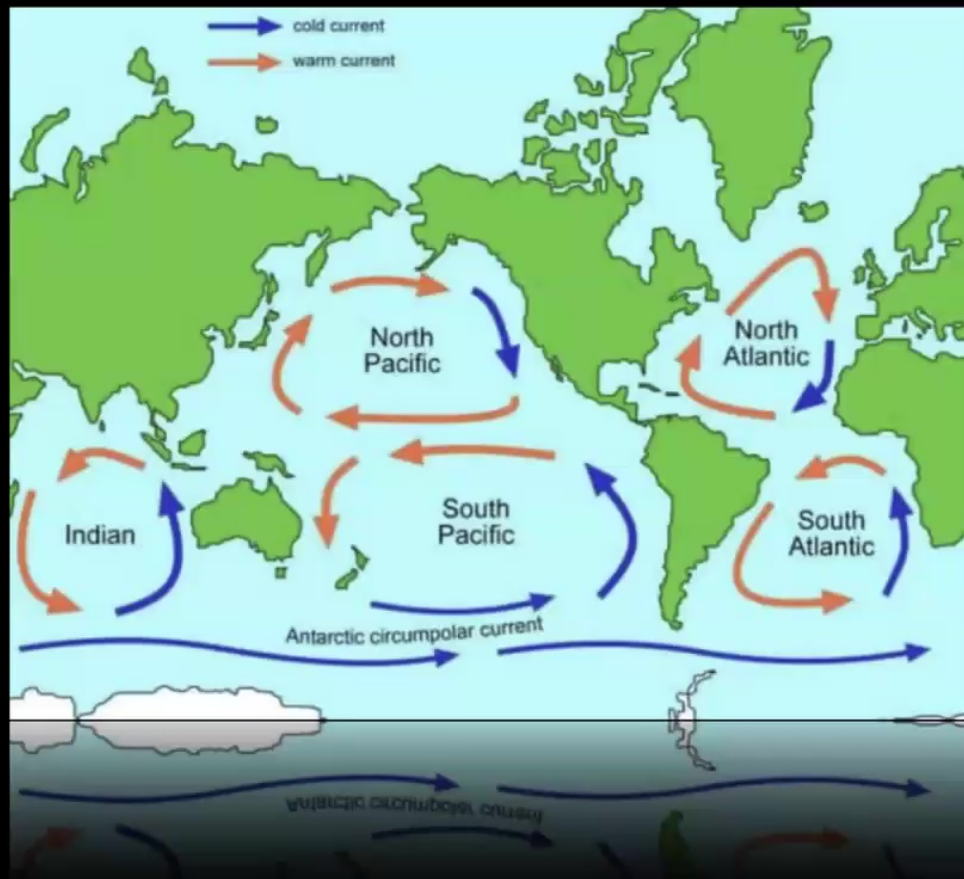


Our watery continent





How did the Pacific Islanders settle the Pacific?



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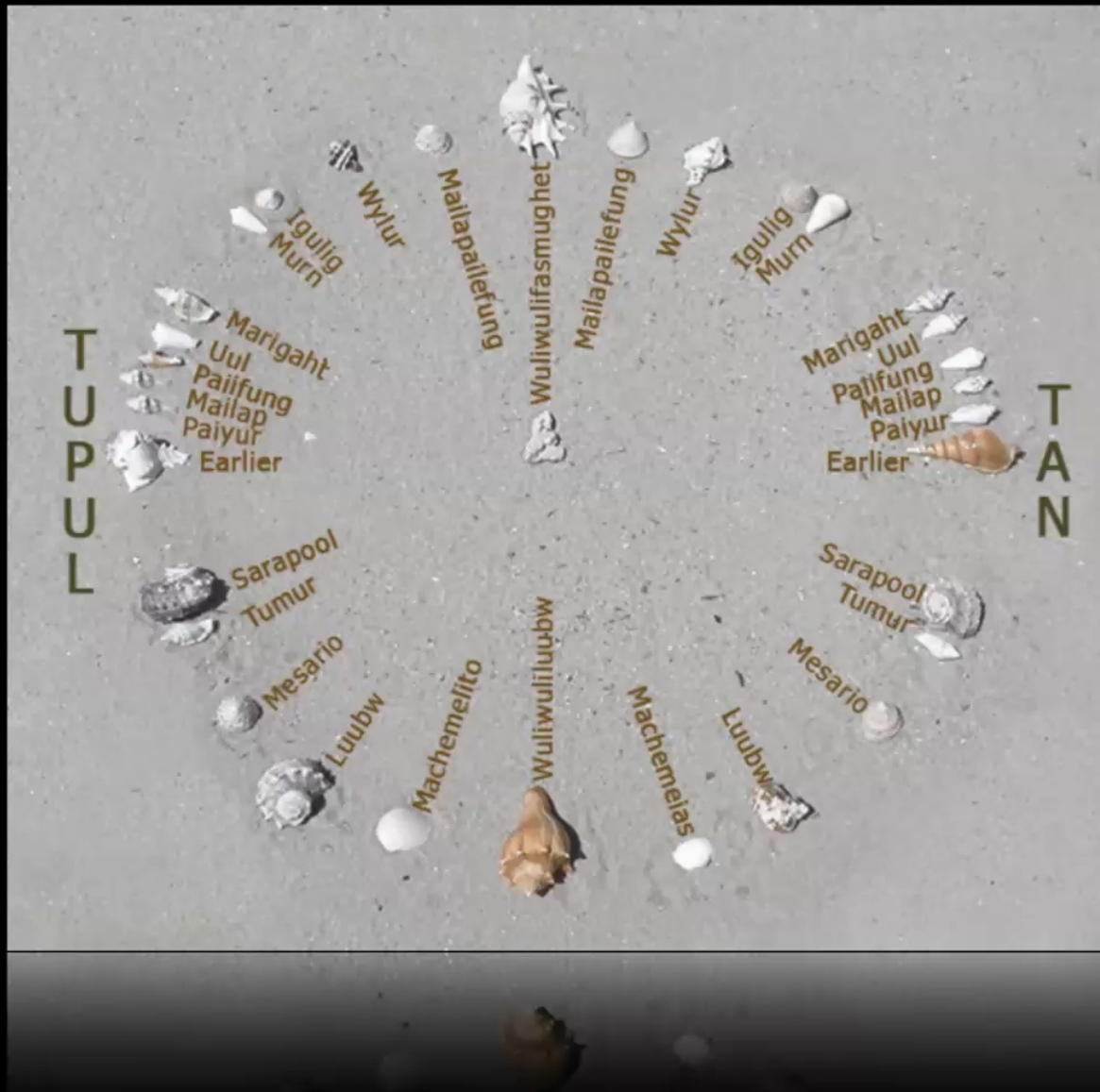


“The Hōkūleʻa Project”

Can we build a performance accurate deep-sea voyaging canoe?

Can we sail it without external instruments between Hawaiʻi and Tahiti?

Paafu : Carolinan Star Compass



Non-“external” Instrument Navigation



Pius Mau Pailug



Werieng School
of Navigation



Brittany Kamai, PhD



Non-“external” Instrument Navigation



Nainoa Thompson



Modern Traditional
Hawaiian Navigation

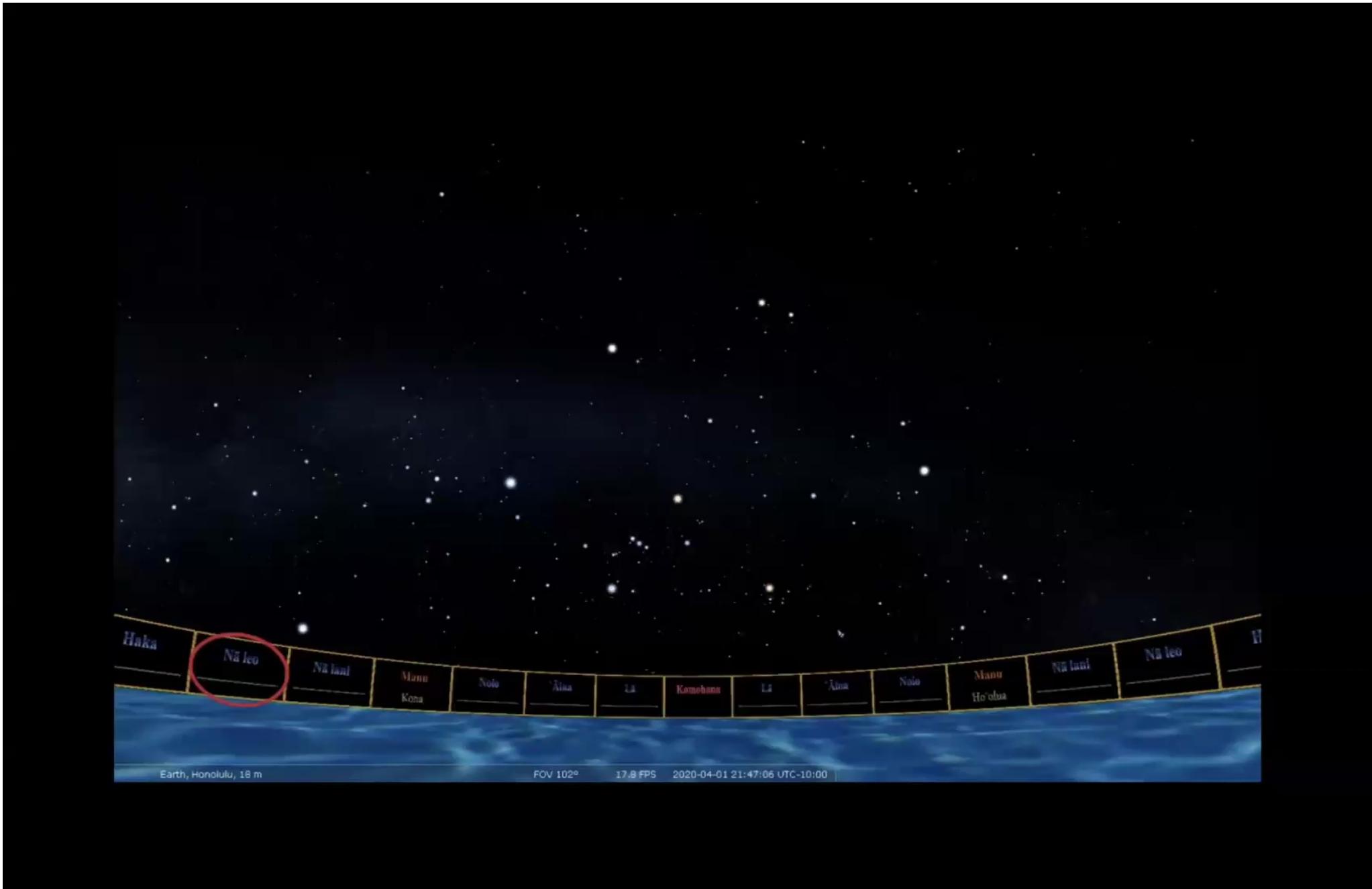


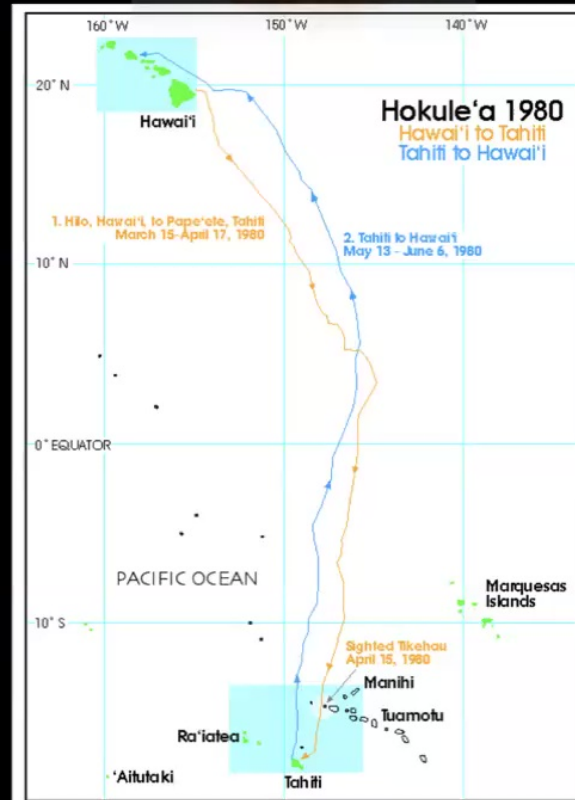
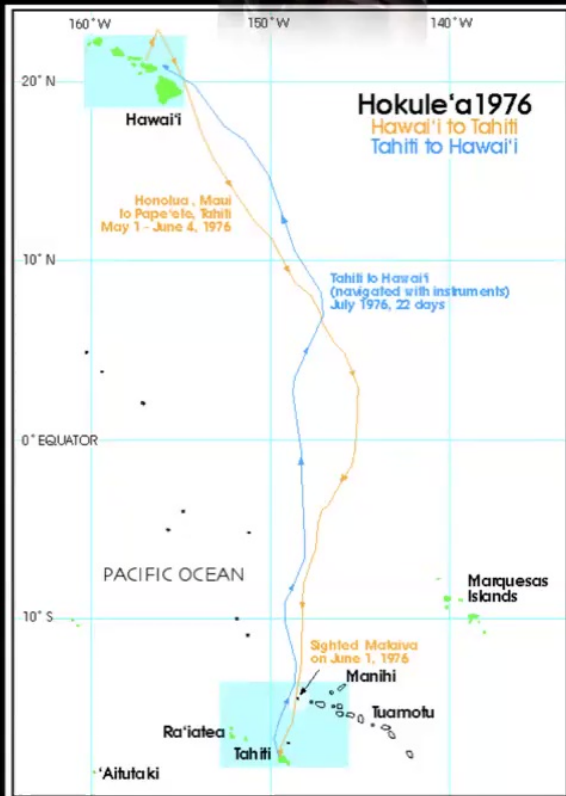
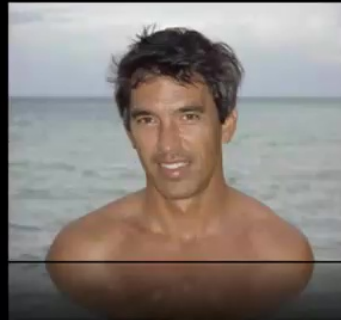
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Kūkuluokalani : Hawaiian star compass







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Renaissance

Hawai'i



Protect Kaho'olawe



Reclaiming our hula practices



Saving our language from extinction

Pacific



Hōkūle'a arrival in Tahiti in 1976



Reawakening our deep-sea voyaging practices

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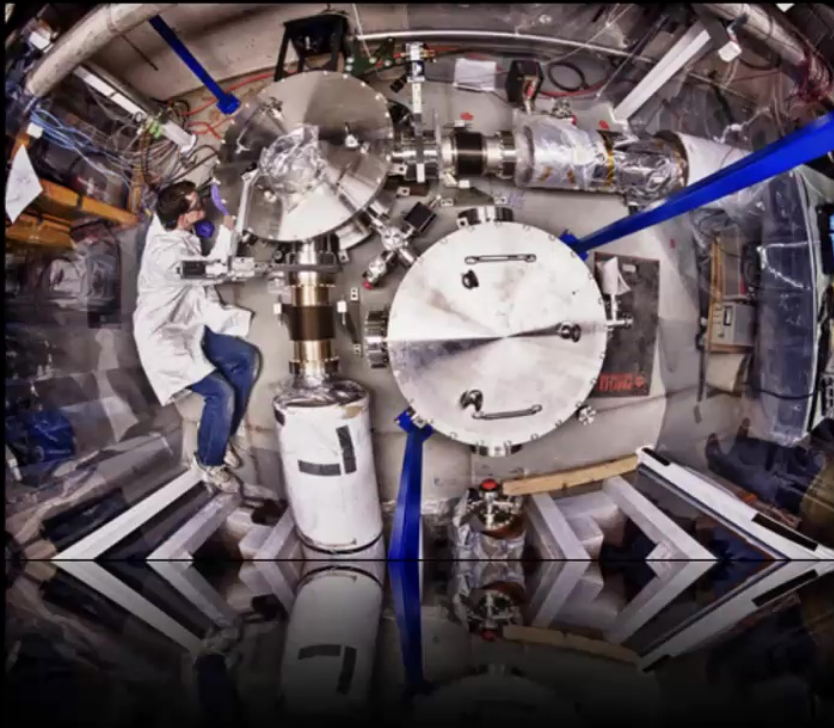
Science

Technology

Innovation

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Science, Technology & Innovation



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Science, Technology & Innovation



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Culture

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Culture



Brittany Kamai, PhD

Culture



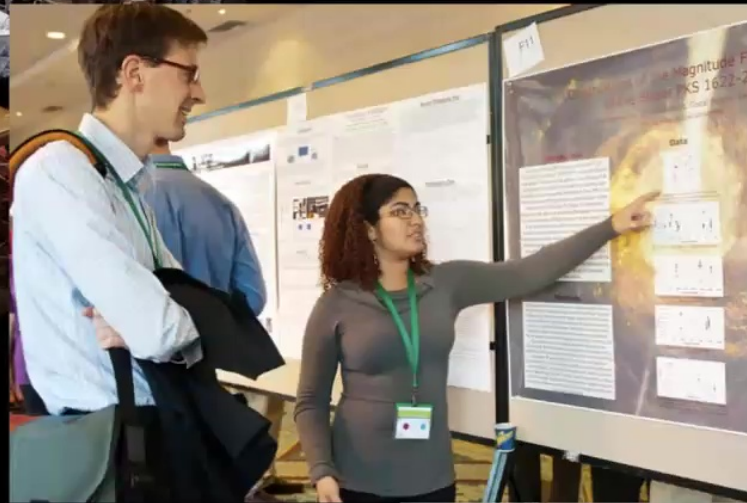
Brittany Kamai, PhD

Culture



Brittany

Culture



Brittany Kamai, PhD



“The Hōkūle‘a Project”

Can we build a performance accurate deep-sea voyaging canoe?

Can we sail it without external instruments between Hawai’i and Tahiti?

Culture vs. Culture

Academics

Data on their “experiment”

Pressures of revising
academic discourse

Cultural Revival

This is who I am as a Hawaiian

Breaking out of the oppression

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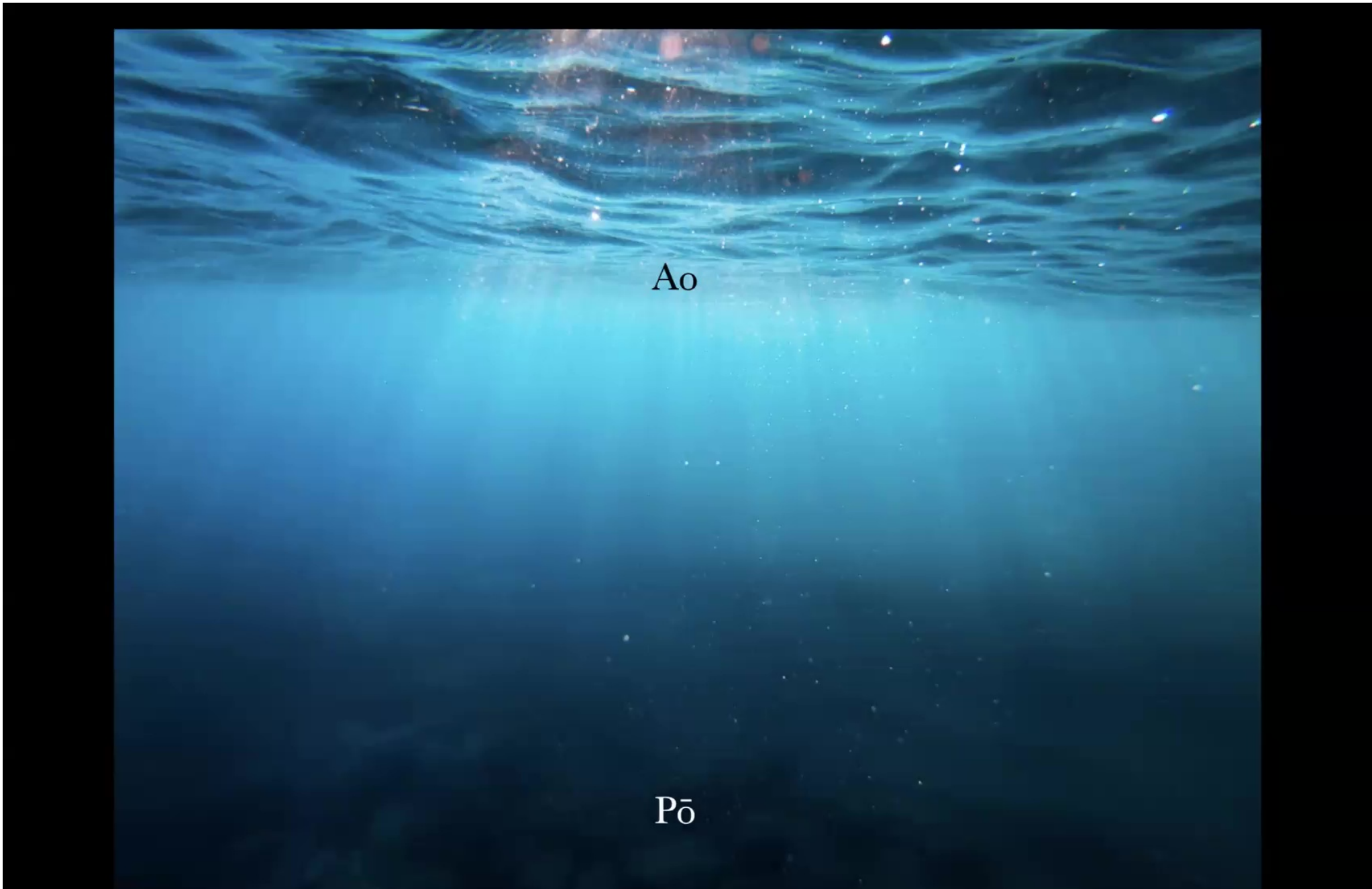


Values on our islands

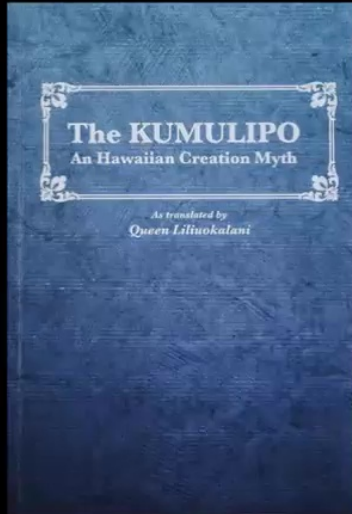


Balance with our natural environment

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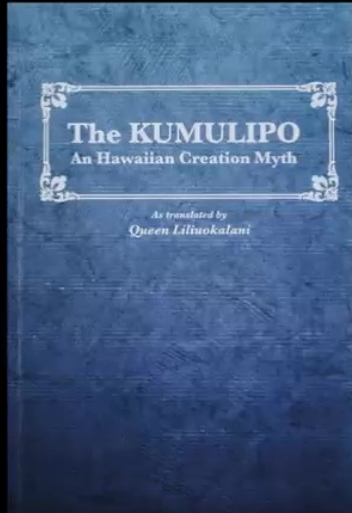


Sophisticated understanding of our natural environment



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Sophisticated understanding of our natural environment



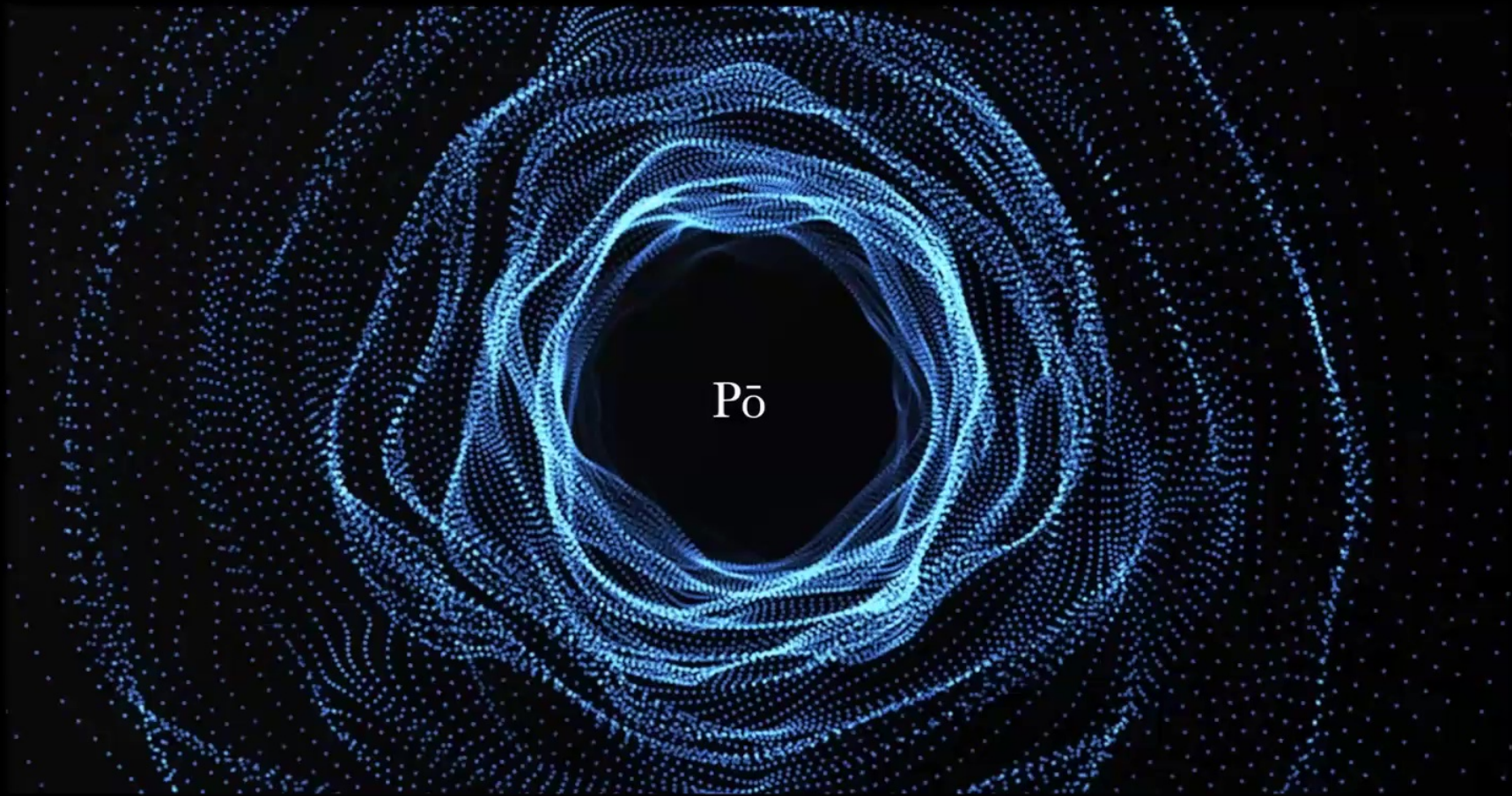
0013. Hanau Kumulipo i ka po, he kane
Born was Kumulipo in the night, a male
0014. Hanau Po‘ele i ka po, he wahine
Born was Po‘ele in the night, a female
0015. Hanau ka ‘Uku-ko‘ako‘a, hanau kana, he ‘Ako‘ako‘a, puka
Born was the coral polyp, born was the coral, came forth
0016. Hanau ke Ko‘e-enuhe ‘eli ho‘opu‘u honua
Born was the grub that digs and heaps up the earth, came forth
0017. Hanau kana, he Ko‘e, puka
Born was his [child] an earthworm, came forth
0018. Hanau ka Pe‘a, ka Pe‘ape‘a kana keiki puka
Born was the starfish, his child the small starfish came forth
0019. Hanau ka Weli, he Weliweli kana keiki, puka
Born was the sea cucumber, his child the small sea cucumber came forth
0020. Hanau ka ‘Ina, ka ‘Ina
Born was the sea urchin, the sea urchin [tribe]
0021. Hanau kana, he Halula, puka
Born was the short-spiked sea urchin, came forth
0022. Hanau ka Hawa‘e, o ka Wana-ku kana keiki, puka
Born was the smooth sea urchin, his child the long-spiked came forth
0023. Hanau ka Ha‘uke‘uke, o ka ‘Uhalula kana keiki, puka
Born was the ring-shaped sea urchin, his child the thin-spiked came forth

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Dark Energy



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Observable universe

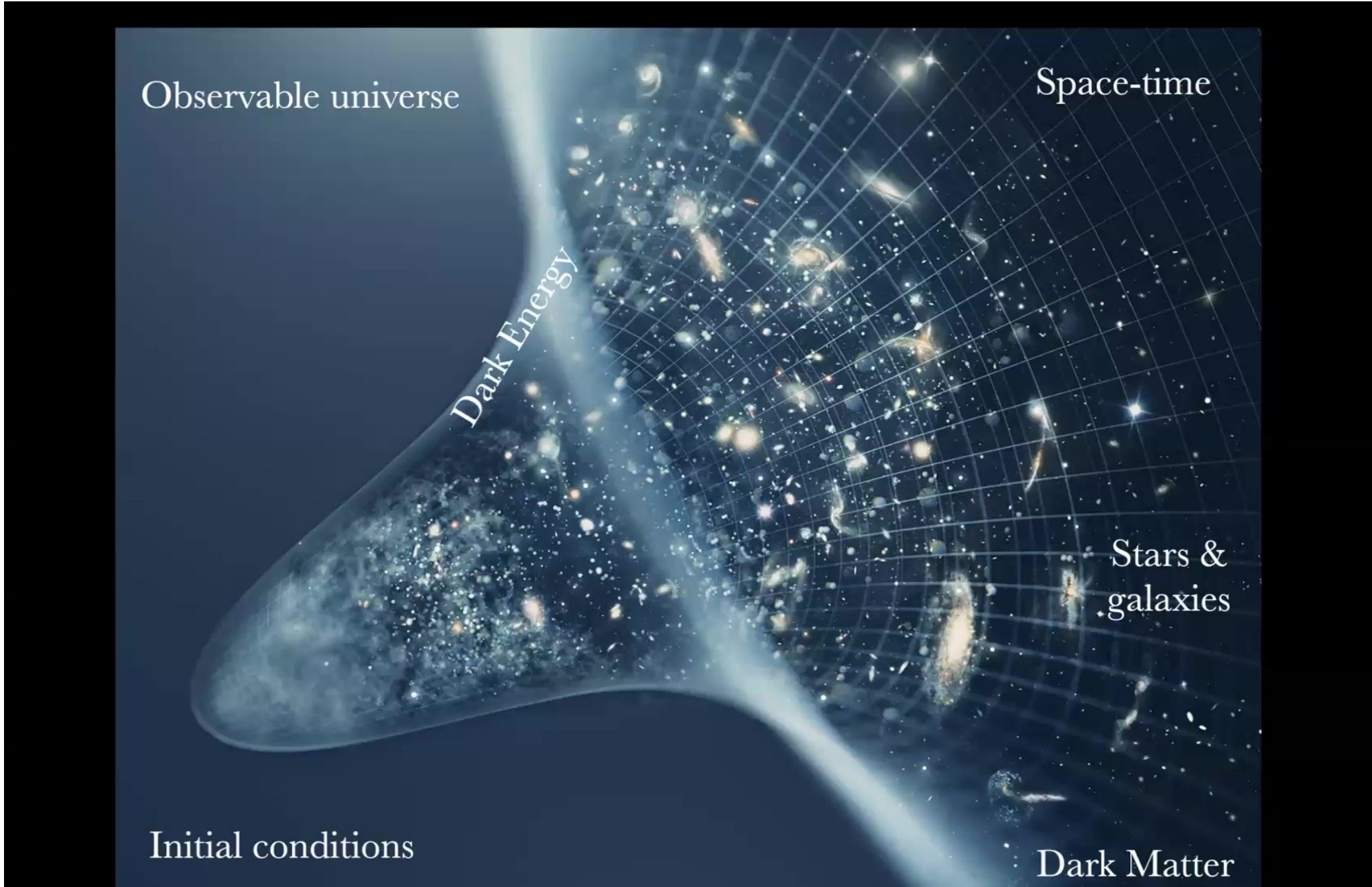
Space-time

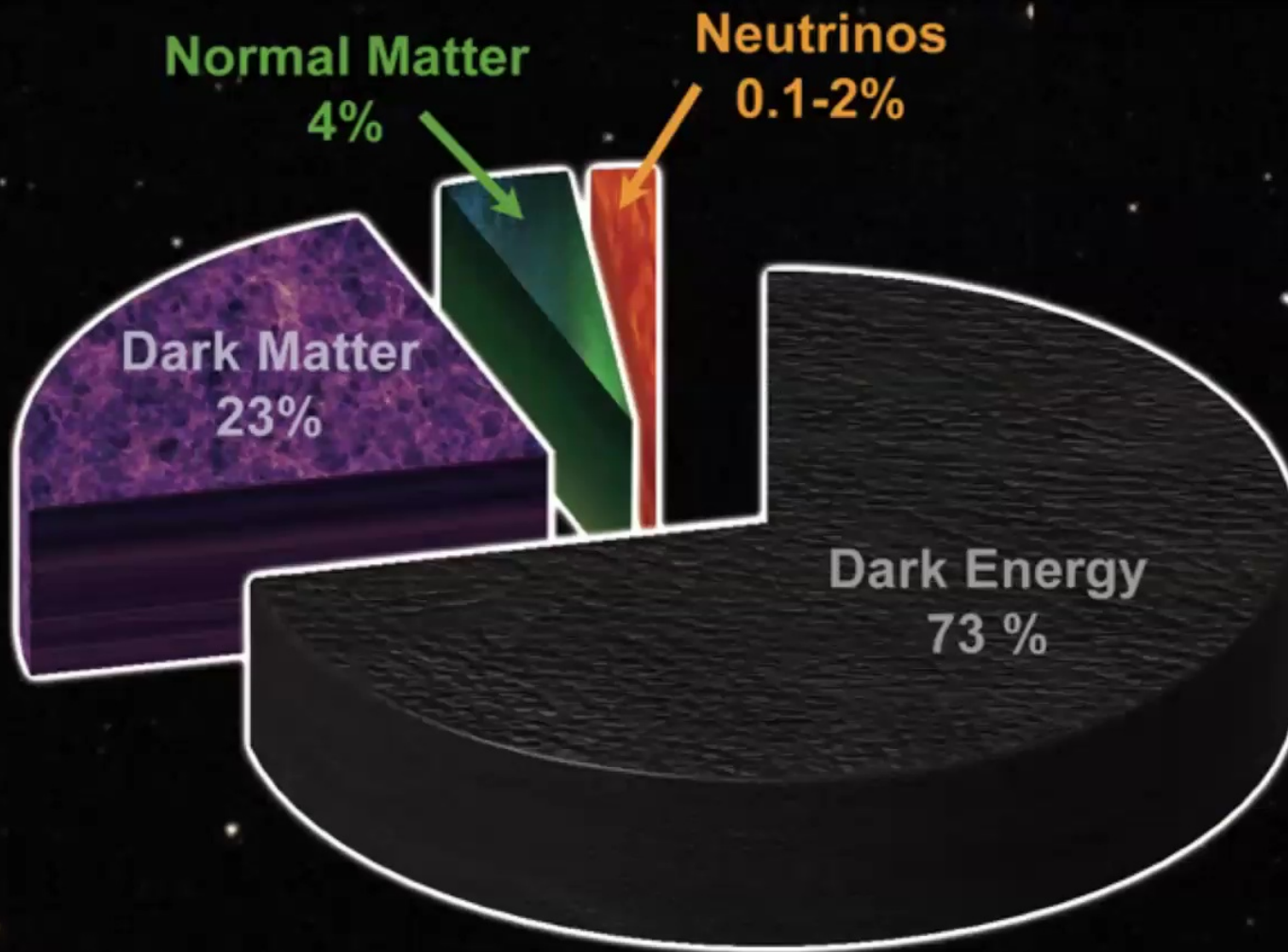
Dark Energy

Stars & galaxies

Initial conditions

Dark Matter





Content of the Universe

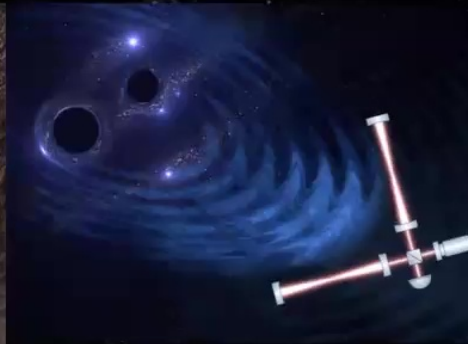
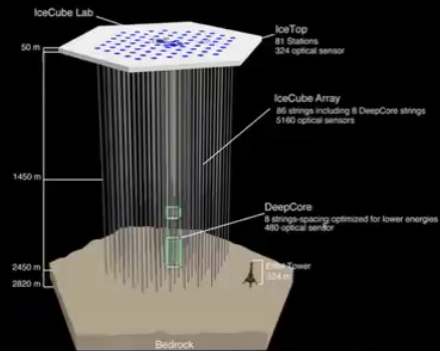
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Measuring the universe

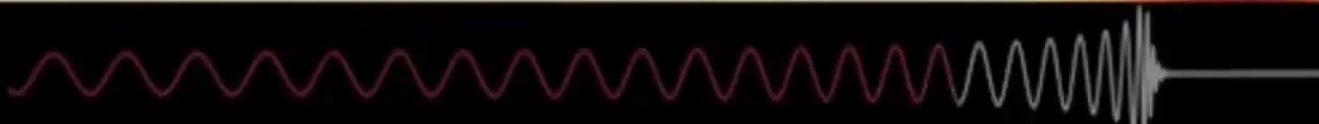
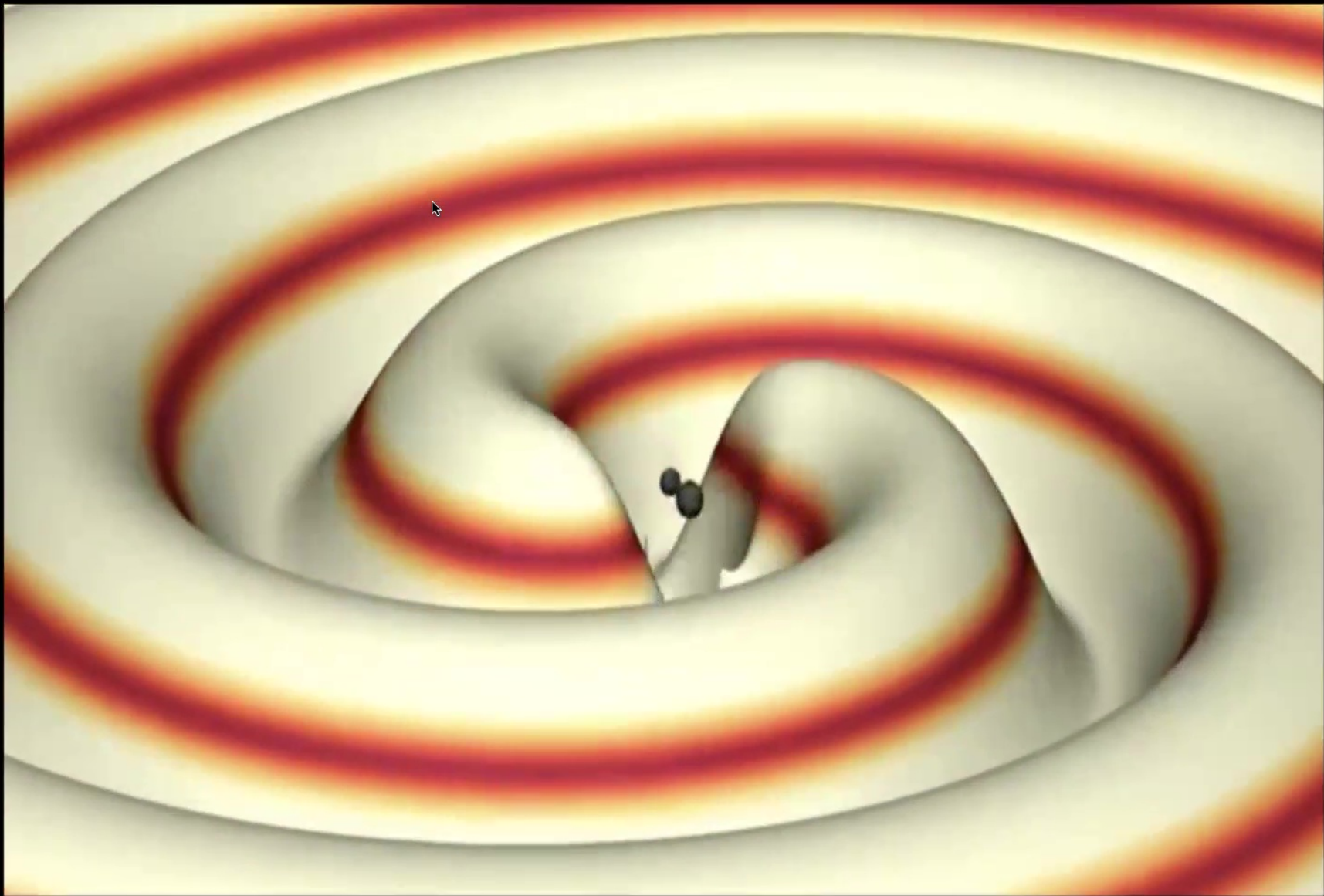


Telescopes
across the electro-
magnetic spectrum

Particle detectors

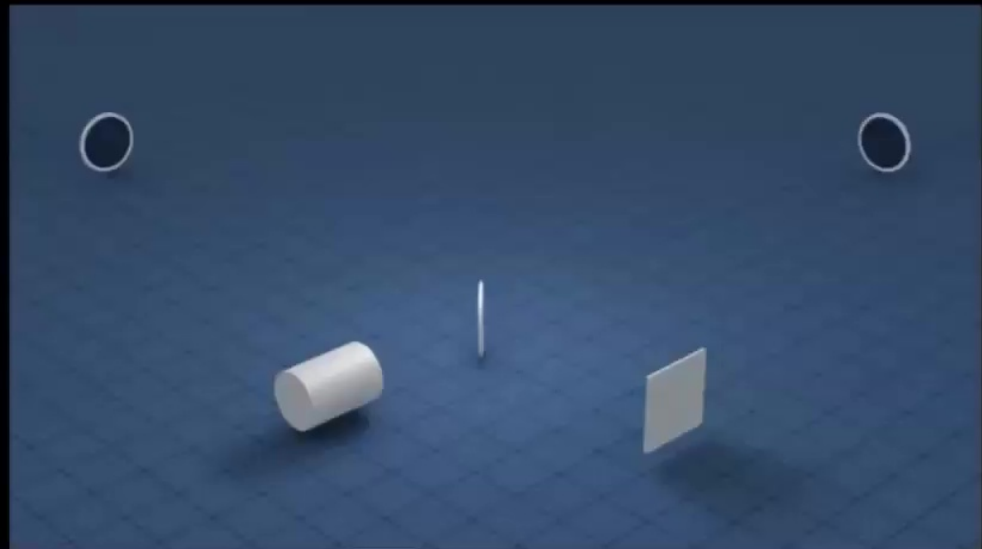


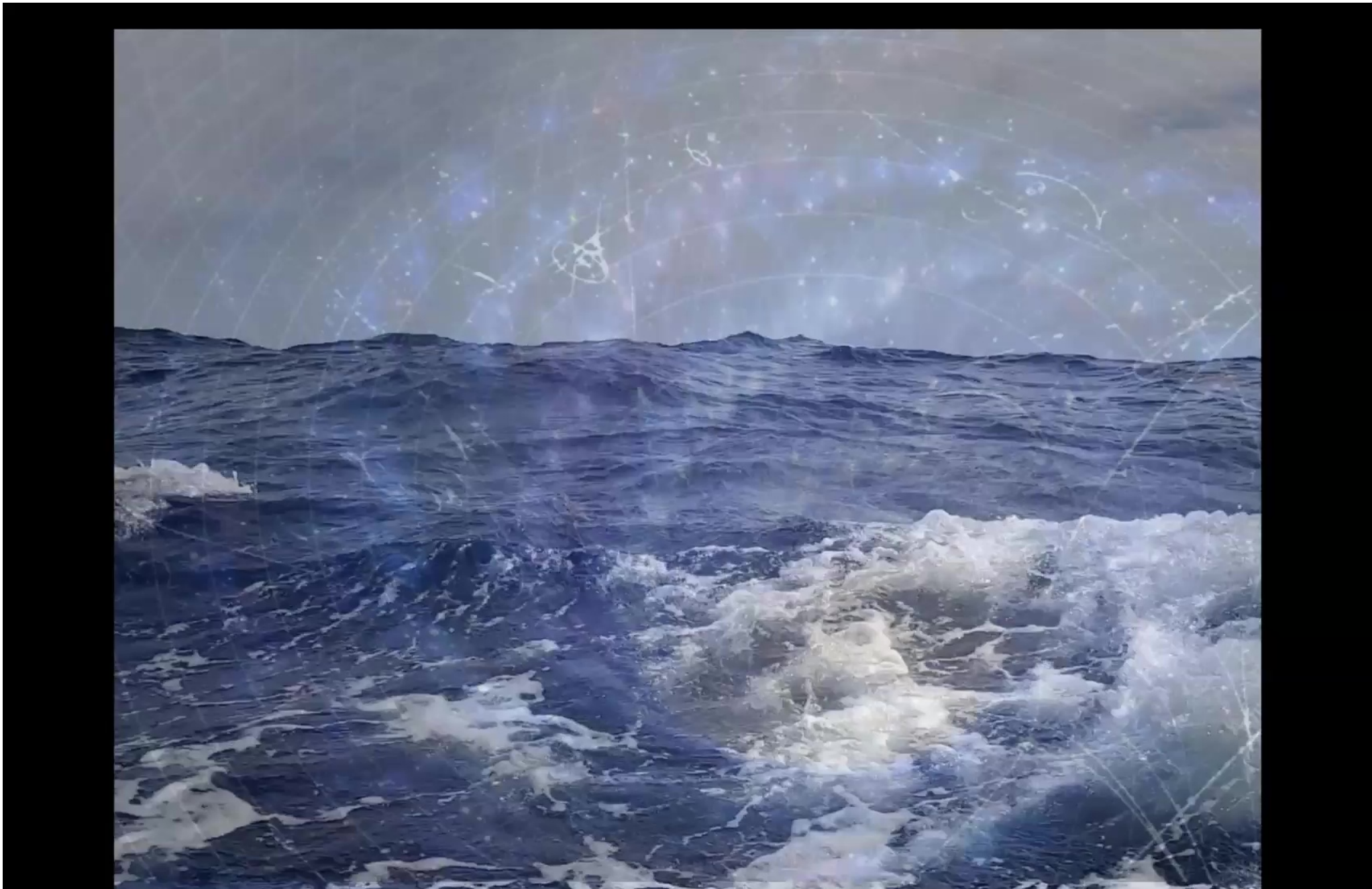
Gravitational wave
detectors





Scale of Effect Vastly Exaggerated







Canoe: Manaiakalani

Captain: Kalani Kahalioumi

Innovation & Technology



Brittany Kamai, PhD

An underwater photograph showing a large school of small fish swimming in clear, blue water. The fish are silhouetted against the light, creating a sense of movement and depth. The overall tone is serene and natural.

Ocean Stewardship

the actions taken towards
the protection and care of the oceans

Our Ocean

Physical, mental and spiritual sanctuary

Provides 50% of the oxygen on the planet

Absorbs ~40% of the greenhouse gas emissions

Regulates 90% of the temperature on the planet

What harms our ocean?

Exploitation

- over-harvesting of marine resources

Abuse

- Marine life, coral, sea temperature

Pollution

- Plastics, nuclear waste, human and city waste

Oli Mahalo

‘Uhola ‘ia makaloa lā
Pū‘ai i ke aloha lā
Kū ka‘i ia ka hā loa lā
Pawehi mai nā lehua
Mai ka ho‘oku‘i a ka hālāwai lā
Mahalo e nā akua
Mahalo e nā kupuna lā ‘eā
Mahalo me ke aloha lā
Mahalo me ke aloha lā

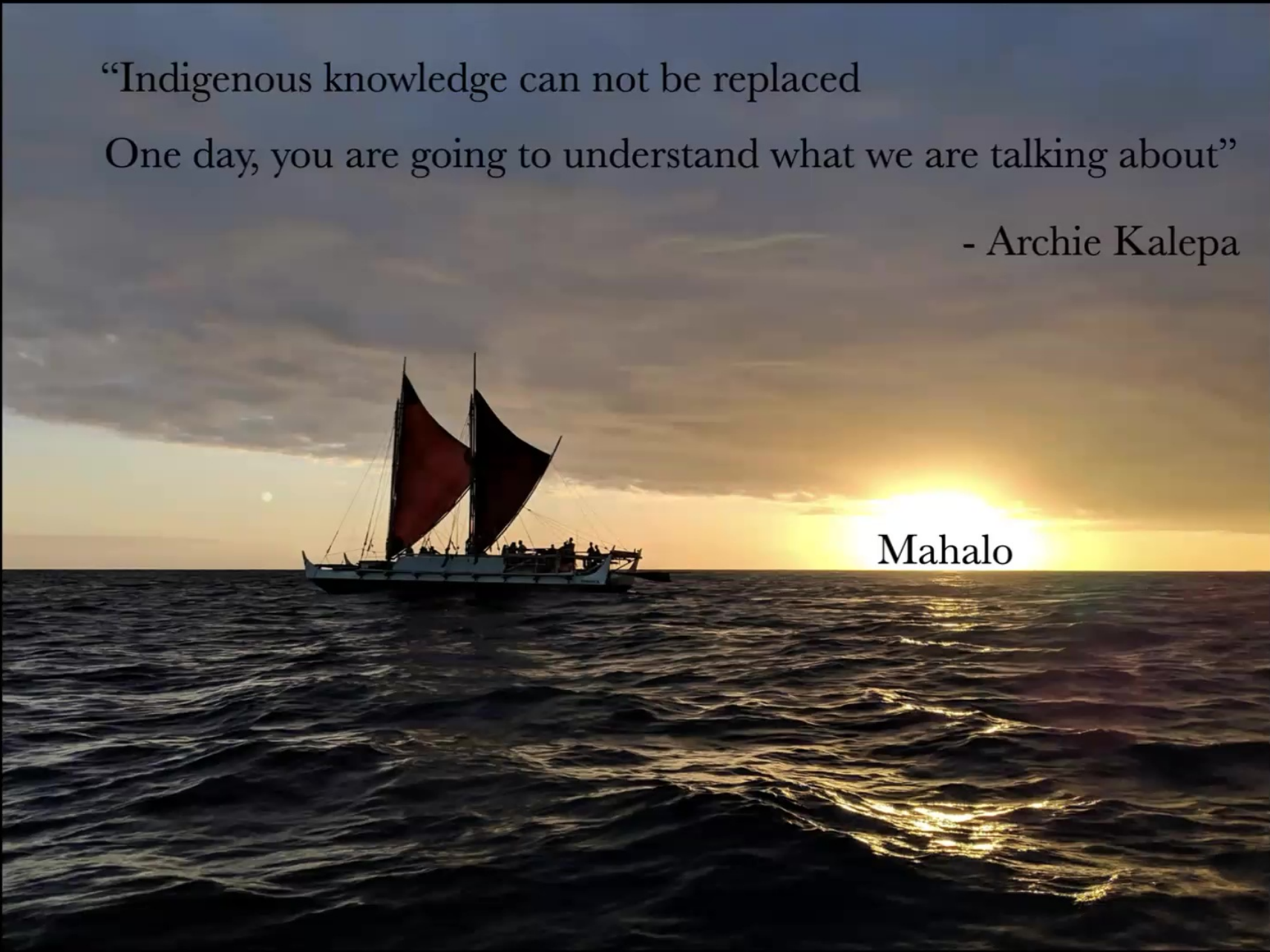
The makaloa mat has been unfolded
Food shared is love
The great breath is exchanged
The lehua honors and adores
From zenith to horizon
Gratitude to our gods
Gratitude to our ancestors
Gratitude with love
Gratitude with love

Brittany Kamai, PhD

“Indigenous knowledge can not be replaced

One day, you are going to understand what we are talking about”

- Archie Kalepa



Mahalo