

## ‘SEASCAPE EPISTEMOLOGY’ AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN HEALING: A READING OF KIMO ARMITAGE’S *THE HEALERS*

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**Abstract:** *This study analyzes Kimo Armitage’s The Healers to examine how seascape epistemology provides an alternative framework for understanding human-environment relationships. The novel presents Native Hawaiian healing practices that position the ocean as an active, sacred entity central to identity, ancestry, and well-being rather than a passive setting. Armitage’s narrative challenges terrestrial ecological paradigms by emphasizing oceanic relationships where healing encompasses both physical and spiritual dimensions. The novel draws on Indigenous Hawaiian cosmology to reframe the sea as a genealogical and ethical space that preserves cultural memory and sustains ecological balance. This interpretation advances blue humanities scholarship by centering Native epistemologies that Western environmental discourse often marginalizes. The analysis employs literary interpretation alongside cultural theory to demonstrate how The Healers articulates a comprehensive vision of oceanic existence and knowledge systems.*

**Keywords:** *blue humanities, environmental discourse, Indigenous literature, Native Hawaiian, seascape epistemology*

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## Introduction

Environmental literature scholarship increasingly recognizes how literary representations shape human-nature relationships, particularly as ecological crises demand new conceptual frameworks. Buell (1995) argues that environmental problems stem partly from “a crisis of the imagination” (ibid., p. 2) in how Western culture depicts and understands nature. While nature writing<sup>1</sup> has been a significant genre, Anglo-American viewpoints have dominated it. *The Norton Book of Nature Writing* (1990) demonstrates this bias by focusing on white authors like Emerson, Thoreau, and Leopold. This canonical bias has also emphasized nonfictional prose over poetry and fiction, particularly overlooking non-Western literary traditions. Indigenous environmental literature offers alternative frameworks that challenge Western nature-culture binaries. Rather than viewing landscapes as external resources, many Indigenous traditions conceptualize human identity as fundamentally interconnected with specific places and ecosystems (Kerridge, 2014). For many Indigenous communities, understanding and empathizing with the landforms is the core of their cultural identity, shaping their values, traditions, and practices. Indigenous worldviews remain fundamentally interconnected with the natural environment.

American environmental literature has historically emphasized untouched wilderness as a defining characteristic of national geography. Buell (2009) argues that this wilderness imagination distinguishes American environmental thought from European traditions, which lack comparable frontier experiences (ibid., p. 230). The wilderness paradigm became fundamental to American identity formation, reflecting what scholars term the myth-and-symbol approach in American Studies. Hamilton and Jones observe that “no nation on earth, perhaps, has defined itself so profoundly, for so long, or so intimately in terms of its environment” (2015, p. 3) demonstrating a distinctive process of national self-definition through landscape. This environmental nationalism supported narratives of frontier expansion and rugged individualism. Cultural tropes including the “American Adam” and “virgin land” mythology reinforced images of innocent civilization advancing into supposedly empty wilderness (Tate, 1973). Contemporary Indigenous writers challenge these foundational assumptions by offering alternative conceptualizations of human-nature relationships that complicate wilderness-centered paradigms.

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1. Nature writing is a literary genre that examines human relationships with the natural world through observation, reflection, and environmental commentary. The genre draws from travel literature, pastoral traditions, and spiritual writing, achieving particular prominence in American literature. Representative authors such as Thoreau, Muir, and Leopold established its characteristic focus on wilderness experience and personal landscape engagement. Contemporary scholarship increasingly examines nature writing through postcolonial and Indigenous frameworks, challenging the genre’s historical dominance by white male voices (see Buell, 1995; Gatta, 2004; Slovic, 1992).

Contemporary Indigenous and ethnic environmental writers challenge wilderness-centered paradigms through what Homi Bhabha terms “cultural hybridity” – the productive intersection of different cultural systems that generates new forms of meaning (Bhabha, 1994). Bhabha’s “third space” concept illuminates how Indigenous writers construct alternative environmental epistemologies that neither reject nor assimilate dominant wilderness narratives (Bhabha, 1994, p. 37). Adamson and Ruffin (2013) demonstrate how Indigenous and ethnic literatures generate new environmental knowledge within these hybrid cultural spaces (ibid., p. 12). Rather than opposing Western environmental frameworks, these texts create zones where traditional ecological knowledge intersects with contemporary environmental concerns. This hybridization transforms both Indigenous cultural practices and mainstream ecological discourse.

Native Hawaiian literature emerged as a distinctive voice within American environmental writing, shaped by the political and cultural complexities of Hawai‘i’s 1898 annexation despite Indigenous opposition (Ho‘omanawanui, 2015, p. 231). *Kānaka*/Native Hawaiian writers developed literary traditions partly in response to misrepresentation by non-Hawaiian authors, articulating Indigenous environmental perspectives often absent from mainstream American nature writing (Sumida, 1991, p. 231). Hawaiian literary works typically embody cosmological frameworks that position humans within genealogical relationships extending to all natural entities (Indriyanto, 2024; Møllegaard, 2023). This worldview, where ancestral spirits inhabit various physical forms and divine beings assume multiple manifestations, establishes what Ho‘omanawanui (2008) describes as fundamentally relational rather than extractive approaches to environmental engagement. Such perspectives challenge American nature writing’s historical emphasis on wilderness as separate from human culture, instead presenting integrated cosmologies where cultural identity and environmental knowledge develop through sustained kinship relationships with particular places and ecosystems.

*‘Āina* is the land that can nurture and sustain life by providing food, including the majority of environments from the ocean to the highest mountaintops; it is the land that provides food for all living things, not just humans. The *‘āina* (the land) value is not monetary but familial. The land sustains us and nurtures us like a family member. Thus, in our culture, the values of *aloha ‘āina* (love for the land) and *malama ‘āina* (caring for the land) are fundamental (Ho‘omanawanui, 2008, p. 124).

This study analyzes Kimo Armitage’s contemporary novel *The Healers* (2016), which exemplifies key themes in Native Hawaiian literature. Armitage has written over twenty books for young readers and integrates these healing practices with ancestral knowledge. The narrative follows cousins Keola and Pua, who train under their grandmother to become the next generation of family

healers. Through their apprenticeship, they discover plant medicinal properties and learn to treat community ailments. The novel portrays nature as a conscious, active force, reflecting Native Hawaiian epistemology rather than Western objectifying the natural world. Armitage connects the protagonists to their heritage and illustrates how their healing abilities bridge physical and spiritual domains. This representation reinforces traditional Hawaiian perspectives on the interconnectedness of human, natural, and spiritual realms.

*The Healers* and Hawaiian literature generally demonstrate a transition toward water-centered knowledge systems. This orientation corresponds with blue humanities, an emerging field examining oceans and waterways' cultural, historical, and ecological importance. According to Mentz (2024, p. 3), this aquatic criticism aims to describe water's complex dynamics and reconsider human-water relationships. Within this framework, islands function simultaneously as geographic locations and conceptual models for understanding environmental interconnections in the Anthropocene. Blue humanities scholarship suggests that aquatic ecosystem challenges are inseparable from sociocultural factors, arguing that capitalist political structures have degraded global waterways and that effective solutions require sociocultural approaches. Hawaiian scholar Ingersoll (2016, 2023) contributes to this discourse by proposing a seascape epistemology that positions the ocean as fundamental to place-based knowledge, contrasting it with conventional land-centered perspectives. Her methodology incorporates Indigenous Hawaiian sensory-based ocean understanding, a concept that will be examined in subsequent analysis.

### **Reading Seascape Epistemology in a Blue Humanities Context**

This analysis employs blue humanities as its primary theoretical framework, drawing on scholarship that reconceptualizes the ocean as a dynamic cultural and epistemological space rather than passive setting (Mentz, 2009; Oppermann, 2023). Blue humanities reorient environmental criticism from terrestrial models toward literary texts that foreground human-ocean relationships. Blue humanities scholarship challenges environmental criticism's historical emphasis on terrestrial models by examining literary texts that foreground human-ocean relationships. Seascape epistemology, as developed by Karin Ingersoll, provides a more specific framework for analyzing Indigenous oceanic knowledge systems. Ingersoll argues that seascape functions as "a storied place where knowledge is produced through movement, immersion, and bodily engagement" (2016, p. x), emphasizing embodied rather than abstract ways of knowing. The analysis demonstrates how the novel positions marine environments as active participants in Hawaiian epistemology rather than external resources for human use.

Steve Mentz introduced the term "Blue Humanities" in his 2009 article "Toward a Blue Cultural Studies," establishing a framework which conceptualizes

maritime environments as active cultural and geopolitical forces rather than passive backdrops (Menz, 2009, p. 997). Blue humanities scholarship examines how oceanic spaces shape human experience through what Oppermann terms “intersecting Anthropocene narratives, social practices, and cultural dynamics” (2023, p. 4). This oceanic turn challenges environmental criticism’s historical emphasis on terrestrial knowledge systems, which Dobrin (2021) argues has marginalized maritime cultures and epistemologies across diverse historical contexts.

Blue ecocriticism erodes the land-based logic of ecological literacy. In doing so, it exposes literacy’s systemic exclusion of – and subsequent erasure of – Indigenous knowledge-making systems and methodologies and acknowledges the critical role diverse cultural oceanic knowledge plays in both representations of ocean and human–ocean interaction (Dobrin, 2021, p. 47).

Early 21<sup>st</sup>-century blue humanities scholarship emerged primarily in Anglophone literary contexts, focusing on Atlantic, Mediterranean, and Caribbean maritime spaces and their impact on Western cultural narratives (DeLoughrey, 2020; Mentz, 2023). By the 2020s, scholars expanded this framework to incorporate global, non-Western, and Indigenous perspectives, representing both geographical and conceptual enrichment. This expansion reveals oceanic knowledge systems frequently marginalized in Western environmental discourse.

Indigenous maritime epistemologies remain embedded within specific cultural, ecological, and geographical contexts. Decontextualizing such knowledge risks severing the complex relationships between cultural practice and environmental understanding. Analyzing Armitage’s *The Healers* therefore requires engaging with Karin Amimoto Ingersoll’s concept of “seascape epistemology,” which she defines as “an indigenous Hawaiian way of knowing” founded on a “sensorial, intellectual, and embodied literacy of the ocean” (2016, p. 6). This framework positions oceanic knowledge as foundational to Native Hawaiian cultural identity and environmental relationships.

Ingersoll’s seascape epistemology extends blue humanities scholarship by centering Indigenous oceanic knowledge as a complete worldview rather than supplementary perspective. This framework conceptualizes *‘āina* (land) and *kai* (sea) as an integrated system requiring respectful interaction to maintain environmental and cultural balance (Knopf, 2023, pp. 77–78). For Native Hawaiians, oceanic knowledge encompasses spiritual, intellectual, and embodied understanding that connects individual identity with ancestral wisdom. Ingersoll demonstrates how *ma ke kai* (immersion in the sea) enables *Kānaka* to access cultural knowledge systems that Western environmental frameworks often overlook.

the Hawaiian relationship to the ocean is moored in a historical relationship – in which the sea serves as an instrument of migration, as transportation, and as a source of food, medicine, and shelter – as well as spiritual right and responsibility, or *kuleana*, to the sea expressed in the concept of *mālama ‘āina* (caring for the land) The ocean is where we cleanse, dance, play, train, and die. It is the point from which we have always leapt off, physically and philosophically, into our pasts and our futures (Ingersoll, 2016, p. 6).

*For Kānaka, genealogical relationships with ka moana (ocean) constitute fundamental aspects of cultural identity and knowledge systems. The Kumulipo, a traditional Hawaiian genealogical chant, traces life’s origins to oceanic darkness, establishing marine environments as ancestral sources rather than external resources* (Ingersoll, 2023, p. 39). This genealogical framework positions humans as integral components of marine ecosystems and cosmic relationships, with oceanic knowledge forming the foundation of Hawaiian epistemology. Pacific Islands emerge as extensions of the sea through geological formation, origin narratives, and cultural symbolism. DeLoughrey (2020) reinforces this understanding through her “Mother Sea” concept, which emphasizes oceans’ central role in Indigenous genealogies and practices throughout Oceania.

Seascape epistemology integrates practical knowledge of *ke kai* (the sea) and *moana* (the open ocean) with broader cosmological understanding. While UNESCO’s (n.d.) ocean literacy framework emphasizes scientific knowledge of marine systems, Hawaiian seascape epistemology encompasses cultural, spiritual, and genealogical dimensions that extend beyond conventional environmental education. The Hawaiian concept of *‘āina*, meaning “that which feeds,” encompasses origin, mother, inspiration, and environment, reflecting interconnected relationships between terrestrial and marine domains (Meyer, 2003, p. 163). For *Kānaka*, identity-place relationships develop through specific environmental interactions rather than through fixed territorial models. While a connection to land remains fundamental to Hawaiian epistemology, this relationship evolves through ongoing cultural, historical, and environmental interactions. These knowledge systems traditionally circulate through oral narratives that operate outside Western literacy frameworks, emphasizing embodied and relational ways of knowing.

### **From *Mo’olelo* to Genealogy: Reading of *The Healers***

This section examines how Armitage’s *The Healers* embodies seascape epistemology by portraying oceanic knowledge as foundational to Native Hawaiian identity<sup>2</sup>, spirituality, and healing practices. The novel establishes

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2. Native Hawaiian identity emerges through three interrelated concepts: genealogy (*kū’auhau*), love for the land (*aloha ‘āina*), and commitment to family (*‘ohana*) (Kana’iaupuni, 2004; Kana’iaupuni & Malone, 2006), grounding individuals in place, ancestry, and relational responsibility.

genealogical connections between characters and marine environments, presenting the ocean as a living ancestor essential to cultural continuity rather than passive backdrop. Keola and Pua develop as healers through their deepening relationship with oceanic forces that actively guide their therapeutic work. This representation reflects Ingersoll's framework of marine spaces as sites for cultural reconnection and identity formation among *Kānaka*. The narrative challenges Western environmental paradigms that separate terrestrial and marine domains – what DeLoughrey (2010) identifies as “the terrestrial bias of Western epistemologies,” which privilege land-based narratives while rendering the ocean ahistorical, empty, or passive space. Armitage centers Indigenous knowledge systems by portraying healing methods that work in reciprocal relationship with oceanic forces rather than attempting dominance over natural environments.

For Hawaiians, *mo'olelo* (stories) maintain genealogical significance by connecting generations to their *kupuna* (elders) and preserving cultural heritage. These genealogical narratives emphasize care for *Moananuiākea* (the vast ocean) by rebuilding environmental relationships and replacing colonial practices with Indigenous approaches (Møllegaard, 2023, p. 2). *The Healers* examines the interconnection between terrestrial and marine environments and human relationships with both domains. The narrative explores sharks' function as *'aumākua* (spiritual guardians), illustrating Hawaiian perspectives on human-nature kinship. In Hawaiian culture, sharks occupy a complex position as ancestors, protectors, and predators (Kirch, 2012, p. 6). This duality appears when Pua loses a finger after being bitten by Kaleihepule, their family's shark guardian.

Keola put his tiny hand on his grandmother's ear. “We were playing in the water with our fish. Our fish ate Pua's finger. Scary. I'm afraid of our fish.”

Don't be afraid. Some fish are our family.” Tutu comforted Keola. She took the shark's tooth and held it to the light. “We will save this for Pua. I hope that when the time comes, she will remember our god who spoke to her this day,” Tutu said. “Come, Keola, let me tell you about Kaleihepule (Armitage, 2016, p. 4).

The narratives concerning Kaleihepule establish genealogical connections with Keola and Pua in Armitage's novel. Kaleihepule was the stillborn daughter of Kawanana and Kealo, the protagonists' great-great-grandparents. Following her stillbirth, Kealo placed her child, wrapped in *moelua* tapa cloth, into the ocean (Armitage, 2016, p. 4). Divine intervention transformed the child into a shark. When Kealo later gave birth to her son Kealu, Kaleihepule appeared carrying medicinal seaweed in her mouth. Kealo interpreted this as a sign that her son would develop healing knowledge, establishing the family's connection to medical traditions.

This child was going to ease the pain of other people. You see, even before this baby had even seen its first light of day, it already had a high expectation placed upon it. This baby was going to be a healer. Its knowledge would not be limited only to those medicines that come from the mountain but would include those medicines that come from the ocean (Armitage, 2016, p. 46).

Kaleihepule's legacy established the healing tradition in Keola and Pua's family, connecting them to their ancestor and shark *'aumākua*. This spiritual guardian linked the family to their genealogical heritage and the ocean. According to the Hawaiian creation chant *Kumulipo*, the ocean represents the origin of all life (Beckwith, 1972). For *Kānaka*, ocean knowledge carries cultural significance through genealogical ties rooted in the *Kumulipo*. In its verses, life begins in the ocean, with coral and marine creatures emerging first from the darkness, establishing the sea as the ancestral source of all existence. As such, the ocean becomes a living archive of Hawaiian identity, sustaining cultural continuity across time.

Trask (1993, p. 140), a *Kānaka* scholar, establishes that Hawaiian *mo'olelo* are fundamentally connected to *kū'auhau* (genealogies). Armitage employs genealogical narratives in *The Healers* to demonstrate the essential relationship between ancestry and natural environments, mainly marine systems. Like other Polynesian belief systems, Hawaiian spirituality centers on *akua*, divine beings embodying environmental elements. This cosmological framework positions Hawaiian environments – including celestial bodies, landforms, oceans, and marine life – as manifestations of these divine forces (Kana'iaupuni & Malone, 2006, pp. 282-283). Within this spiritual context, Kealu's birth represents divine intervention and blessing within the family's narrative.

The child was pushed out into the ocean water and so we say today that this birth was a sacred birth because it came out of one womb and into the womb of Hina, the salty womb, the ocean. It was born of a woman and then born of a goddess. The child was still connected to the mother and it was Kaleihepule who cut the umbilical cord with her teeth and pushed the new infant into the arms of Kealo (Armitage, 2016, p. 46).

This quote highlights the ocean's sacred role in Hawaiian culture, portraying it as a life-giving and spiritual entity. From a material ecocriticism perspective, the ocean emerges as a vibrant matter – not an inert backdrop but a generative force with agency, affect, and relational capacity (Alaimo, 2010). The “salty womb of Hina” symbolizes the deep bond between human birth and the sea, a central event that interweaves the Hawaiian identity and genealogy. In *The Healers*, this connection shows how Keola and Pua's healing practices are deeply tied to their ancestry and spiritual relationship with the ocean. Kaleihepule, their family *'aumākua*, often brought herbs from the shallows and depths of the

ocean, teaching them healing properties that set them apart from other local healers (Armitage, 2016, p. 64).

Armitage portrays seascape epistemology through characters' embodied relationships with marine environments. The protagonists' physical immersion – swimming, surfing, and interacting with ancestral marine creatures including octopuses, oarfish, and sharks – establishes oceanic knowledge through sensorial engagement rather than abstract learning. Their consumption of seawater, aquatic plants, and sea creatures represents what Ingersoll (2016) terms *ma ke kai* (immersion in the sea), a practice that connects *Kānaka* identity with ancestral wisdom through bodily experience. These embodied practices demonstrate how seascape epistemology operates through direct marine engagement, establishing what Ingersoll describes as alternative political and ethical relationships that transcend Western divisions between physical and spiritual domains. The novel thus illustrates how oceanic immersion becomes fundamental to Hawaiian identity formation and cultural knowledge transmission.

In the same way, Hawaiian ways of being in the sea transcend the physical world to include the metaphysical, spiritual, and sensational, creating codes of grammar through seascape epistemology, which normalise an indigenous sense of knowing and being those travels. Seascape epistemology enables reading and a knowledge of the self that resists the petrification of its dynamic character (Ingersoll, 2016, p. 16).

The novel depicts swimming and surfing as practices connecting characters to the ocean physically and spiritually. These activities represent a “being-in-the-sea” experience that incorporates Hawaiian spiritual traditions. Kealo demonstrates this connection by wanting to wade in water, gather seaweed, and surf (Armitage, 2016, p. 91). When immersed in salt water, he emerges renewed and unburdened. Swimming with Kaleihepule, removing barnacles from her back, and moving through the water together show their deep bond with marine life. This relationship strengthens as they recognize Kaleihepule as their family *‘aumāku*.

*The Healers* portrays the practices of traditional *kahuna lā‘au lapa‘au* (herbal healers) who combine Hawaiian plant knowledge, ocean wisdom, and spiritual techniques for healing. In Hawaiian culture, healing extends beyond physical treatment to address relationships with *‘ohana* (family), community, nature, ancestors, and *‘akua* (gods) to restore balance (Inglis, 2013, p. 45). The narrative emphasizes three healing elements: prayer, connection with nature, and hope – reflected in the saying, “If there is no hope, there is no cure” (Armitage, 2016, pp. 146-147). Central to Hawaiian healing is the metaphorical relationship between land and people, which requires balance with the environment. Traditional healers needed to understand the patient and environment, as illness disrupted *pono* (well-being).

Healers needed this communication with the people they were healing. They also got this from their environment. Once they understood the environment, they could understand how the world works. Once they understood the way it works, they were able to understand the nature of healing. Once they understood the nature of healing, they could understand people. Thus, healing restored the balance of the universe. People are their universe. As Keola had learned, a man is a house. He is a house of water. He is a house of wind. He is a house of fire. And he is a house of dirt. A body, like a house, is a shelter (Armitage, 2016, p. 164).

In Hawaiian mythology, Kanaloa, the god of the ocean and winds, plays a crucial role in spiritual and environmental domains. His relationship with Kane, the creator, highlights his significance in Hawaiian cosmology. Kanaloa governs the ocean and represents themes of creation, death, and the underworld. The octopus serves as one of his *kino lau* (physical manifestations) and features prominently in traditional healing practices. The novel demonstrates this connection when Keola uses an octopus to extract illness from a patient – a practice with deep spiritual meaning despite lacking Western medical efficacy. Armitage establishes the connection between environmental and spiritual health through this portrayal, emphasizing ocean knowledge as fundamental to Hawaiian healing traditions.

A length of cordage between two people or between one person and knowledge was a pathway. And just as the plant body forms of Kane required or stored water, the body forms of Kanaloa extended out. Keola felt good about everything he was learning from Kumu. Keola learned how to place an octopus on the navel of a sick patient. The octopus would symbolically pull the sickness out and disperse it through its tentacles. The tentacles, like the rope and spiderwebs, were necessary for healing because even though there were no medicinal values attributed to these body forms of Kanaloa, they were spiritual medicine (Armitage, 2016, p. 164).

*The Healers embodies seascape epistemology by portraying the sea as a living, relational force central to Native Hawaiian identity and spirituality. Armitage presents the ocean not merely as a setting but as an active agent that shapes cultural memory, ancestral connection, and healing practices.* Hawaiian tradition, the sea transcends its physical properties to become a sacred entity connected to 'akua and 'aumākua. Immersion in ocean waters provides healing that strengthens both body and spirit while connecting individuals to their ancestors and gods. This worldview affirms that true healing is holistic – requiring alignment not only with natural remedies but also with the spiritual rhythms of the ocean.

Armitage's *The Healers* contributes to American environmental literature by articulating seascape epistemology as an alternative to terrestrial-centered frameworks exemplified by Aldo Leopold's *land ethic* (1950). This oceanic approach aligns with blue humanities scholarship that challenges land-based environmental paradigms (Mentz, 2024, p. 8). The novel demonstrates how Indigenous Hawaiian perspectives reframe human-environment relationships through genealogical connections to marine spaces rather than proprietorial relationships to terrestrial territory. Seascape epistemology transforms oceanic environments into what Yi-Fu Tuan and Gretchen Holstein Schoff (1988) terms meaningful "place" – space invested with cultural significance through sustained interaction and emotional attachment. For *Kānaka*, the ocean functions as ancestral geography where identity formation occurs through generational knowledge transmission. This framework positions marine environments as active participants in cultural continuity rather than passive resources for human use. The novel's representation of oceanic healing practices thus offers alternative models for environmental relationships that integrate spiritual, genealogical, and ecological dimensions within contemporary literary discourse. This reconsideration becomes urgent given the increasing ocean threats, including coral reef degradation, plastic pollution, and climate change impacts (Morishige & McElwee, 2019; Randall, 2020).

## **Conclusion**

This analysis demonstrates how Armitage's *The Healers* embodies seascape epistemology by positioning oceanic knowledge as foundational to Native Hawaiian identity formation and healing practices. The novel presents marine environments as genealogical spaces where cultural continuity occurs through embodied engagement rather than abstract learning. Characters' physical immersion in oceanic environments – swimming, consuming sea creatures, and interacting with ancestral marine beings – illustrates how Hawaiian identity develops through sustained relationships with marine ancestors and ecosystems. The text challenges Western environmental paradigms that separate terrestrial and aquatic domains, instead articulating what Ingersoll (2023) terms oceanic ways of knowing that integrate spiritual, genealogical, and ecological understanding. By centering Indigenous Hawaiian perspectives on human-ocean relationships, *The Healers* contributes to blue humanities scholarship while demonstrating how literary texts can articulate alternative environmental epistemologies. This analysis suggests that seascape epistemology offers valuable frameworks for understanding Indigenous maritime cultures.

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