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“Music is Here to Stay”: Hawaiian, Local, and Global in Reggae in Hawai‘i

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Music

by

Sunaina Keonaona Kale

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September 2021

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“Music is Here to Stay”: Hawaiian, Local, and Global in Reggae in Hawai‘i

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Sunaina Keonaona Kale

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Land

I sincerely thank and acknowledge the Chumash people, the historical and contemporary stewards of the land that UCSB occupies. UCSB was founded on genocidal structures meant to violently erase Native peoples in California and throughout the U.S. UCSB is a “land-grab” university and it supports anthropological projects that even incarcerate Chumash ancestors to this day. Despite such a history, Chumash peoples continue to thrive and take care of their lands and waters. I want to thank Mia Lopez, cultural representative of the Coastal Band of Chumash Nation, for giving so much to the Native students at UCSB. She has taught me important lessons about how to be Indigenous in her many engagements with us. Mia has also shared that in pre-invasion times, the land where UCSB sits was a site of villages on which people from disparate places would come together and share knowledge. Let’s continue forth in that legacy in a good way.

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In Hawai‘i

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ABSTRACT

“Music is Here to Stay”: Hawaiian, Local, and Global in Reggae in Hawai‘i

by

Sunaina Keonaona Kale

Reggae is ubiquitous and normalized in Hawai‘i and consists of a major portion of the live music and recordings produced there. Despite this, very few scholars have written about the scene. Such a gap in scholarship can partially be attributed to the fact that reggae in Hawai‘i is not overtly traditional or political; those are the two lenses through which Indigenous culture is typically viewed in the disciplines of ethnomusicology, anthropology, and even Indigenous studies. However, reggae in Hawai‘i is both traditional and political below the surface, frustrating colonial binaries and representing Indigenous people in the complexity of their lived realities. Through in-person and virtual ethnographic research, archival research, and analysis of musical recordings, I consider the ways in which identity operates in reggae in Hawai‘i. I argue that although Native Hawaiian music and worldviews are implicit—that is, often obscured or not acknowledged—they are the basis of engagement with identity in reggae in Hawai‘i. At the same time, the categories of Local and global build on top of and yet are interrelated with the Native Hawaiian. This study joins a growing body of work on Hawaiian music and Indigenous popular music that centers the messiness of everyday Indigenous life while privileging Indigenous agency and worldviews.

GLOSSARY

‘āina: Land, but can encompass water, sky, and the environment in general. Literally “that which feeds.”

bubble: In roots reggae, the bubble is the rhythmic harmonization on the keyboard, often on an organ setting, that emphasizes beats 2 and 4.

contemporary Hawaiian music: Hawaiian music that came about during the Second Hawaiian Renaissance in the late-1960s and 1970s. Through the lyrics and sounds, Native Hawaiian musicians brought to light the ecological and cultural effects of mass tourism, the importance of preserving “more traditional” ways of life, and the colonial destruction of land and people. Although most of this music is overtly globally-influenced—drawing from western harmony, using western instruments, and utilizing conventions from western popular music—musicians included “more traditional” instruments like the ipu, pahu, and ‘uli‘uli.

contemporary music: In Hawai‘i, “contemporary music” is used to refer to music that is entirely or substantially influenced by U.S. continental popular musics. Often, “contemporary” can be glossed as “pop.” In industry awards, it is often a category that encompasses entries that cannot fit into the requirements of categories with stricter guidelines.

dancehall: Jamaican popular genre that falls under the umbrella of reggae and was created during the 1980s. It has remained the most popular genre of reggae in Jamaica to this day. Since 1985, the riddims of dancehall are produced with synthesizers. Dancehall has been described as more “jittery” and “aggressive” than roots reggae, and the skank-based rhythm became one possibility among many. Dancehall is centered on toasting on a repeated melody over a riddim. It is also known as ragga or raggamuffin in the U.K. and by many international fans.

DJ: In Jamaican sound system culture, DJs are artists who toast (like rap) and sing over pre-recorded instrumentals called riddims. In reggae parlance, the DJ sings and toasts while the selector plays the records. This is the opposite naming practice of hip hop, in which the DJ plays the records and the MC raps.

First Hawaiian Renaissance: The efflorescence of Hawaiian culture, which included the new genres of hula ku‘i and the revitalization of older forms of hula, that took place in the 1870s and 1880s in Hawai‘i. This was primarily brought about by King David Kalākaua around the time of his coronation in 1883. His intention was to send a message of Native Hawaiian nationalism and resistance to haole businessmen who were steadily eroding the Hawaiian monarchy’s power.

haole: White person, can be used as an adjective or noun. I use this word when I specifically discuss white people in Hawai‘i.

hapa haole: Part white, but is used to refer to a person who is white and Native Hawaiian. It is also the name of a genre of Hawaiian music that first became prominent in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries in tourist contexts.

Hawaiian: Native Hawaiian. I use “Hawaiian” interchangeably with “Kanaka Maoli.” “Hawai‘i” used as an adjective means “from Hawai‘i.”

international style: The music of Jamaican roots reggae artists like Bob Marley, Jimmy Cliff, Peter Tosh, Dennis Brown, and others who became globally popular during the 1970s. Their music, unlike that of artists who were more popular in Jamaica than elsewhere, was quite overtly influenced by global forms like rhythm and blues. This is the style of reggae that has had the most influence on a global scale.

island music: Hybrid of reggae and Hawaiian music. The term came into use in relation to reggae after the backlash against Jawaiian music in 1991. “Island music” appeased people who opposed the music because the phrase removed any connection to “Hawaiian.” “Island music” refers to the same music as Jawaiian as well as all of the later iterations of the genre. It can also refer to music that may sound like “more traditional” Hawaiian music in some ways, but may have too many non-Hawaiian elements to “count” as Hawaiian music. Elements can include English lyrics, subject matter, or extensive borrowing from continental U.S. popular music genres.

island reggae: Reggae-influenced island music in addition to music produced in that style in other locations. For example, artists like Katchafire, Sammy Johnson, and Common Kings are often considered island reggae even though Katchafire and Sammy Johnson are from New Zealand and Common Kings is from California. Island reggae thus has a broad, pan-Pacific scope.

Jawaiian: The first word created to refer to the hybrid of reggae and Hawaiian music invented in the 1980s. Currently, many people consider Jawaiian to refer to the style of music from that time period until the 1990s. However, numerous people use the word Jawaiian to refer to the more “mainstream” Localized reggae that is played on the radio, or simply reggae from Hawai‘i in general.

kama‘āina: Native-born, and is typically used to refer to haoles who were born and raised in Hawai‘i. Sometimes, kama‘āina haoles are contrasted to malihini, who are newcomers. Kama‘āina is also used in commercial contexts to refer to discount pricing on tourist products like hotels for residents of Hawai‘i.

Kanaka Maoli: Native Hawaiian. I use “Kanaka Maoli” interchangeably with “Hawaiian.” The plural version is “Kānaka Maoli.”

kanikapila: Informal musicking or jamming, typically in backyards or somewhere outside. The music is often performed on string instruments like guitar and ‘ukulele. The term is a combination of the words kani (sound) and ka pila (the string instrument).

leisure-dance: Music that is meant to accompany dancing for leisure as opposed to “more traditional” Hawaiian music meant to accompany hula. Leisure-dance music can also be thought of as “Local” music.

leo ki‘eki‘e: Hawaiian falsetto singing style, in some ways influenced by pre-contact chanting-inspired ornaments. Today, this style is a major component of what interviewees described to me as “traditional Hawaiian music.” “Traditional Hawaiian music” is based on the core of the hula ku‘i ensemble, the “‘ukulele trio”—‘ukulele, rhythm guitar, and bass. Sometimes a steel guitar and/or Hawaiian semi-improvised piano can provide fill-in embellishments. The songs, typically in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language), are in the hula ku‘i form.

lōkahi: Unity, connectedness, or reciprocal relationships with all human and more-than-human entities in the ‘āina.

mele: Chant or song. In this dissertation, I use mele to refer to pre-contact-influenced chanting.

mo‘okū‘auhau: Genealogy, but also encompasses ‘āina, gods, and other more-than-human entities.

Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards: (“Stars of Distinction”). Founded in 1978 by the radio station KCCN, they are the Hawai‘i music industry’s annual awards that is facilitated by the Hawai‘i Academy of Recording Arts (HARA). They can be understood as the Hawai‘i music industry’s equivalent of the Grammys.

one-drop: Roots reggae drum rhythm that emphasizes beat 3. The name one-drop refers to the fact that beat 1 is deemphasized or “dropped,” a groove that is the opposite of much of Hawaiian music and U.S. continental popular music.

‘ōlelo Hawai‘i: Native Hawaiian language.

pidgin: The Local language of Hawai‘i. It is a combination of English, Hawaiian, and other languages. Although the vocabulary is primarily English, much of its structure and inflection derives from ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Native Hawaiian language). It was originally created as a lingua franca for laborers on sugarcane and pineapple plantations in the nineteenth century, who had been recruited from all over the world. It is also known as Hawaiian Creole.

ragga: See dancehall.

Rastafari: Afro-centric Jamaican religion founded in the 1930s that has become widespread globally through the popularity of roots reggae. Rastafari’s core beliefs are that Emperor

Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia, whom they also call Ras Tafari or the Lion of Judah, is the messiah and that the Black liberationist Marcus Garvey is his prophet.

reggae: Either roots reggae (see below) or the category of Jamaican popular music that includes ska, rocksteady, roots reggae, dub, and dancehall.

riddim: The instrumental portion of a reggae recording.

roots reggae: Jamaican popular music that came to prominence in the 1970s. It includes musical elements like the bubble, skank, minor key, one-drop, melodic bassline, lead vocalist and/or vocal harmony group. Many of the lyrics are influenced by Rastafari. It can refer to DJ music or the international style.

Second Hawaiian Renaissance: The period of Hawaiian cultural revitalization inspired by the Black, Red, and other Power movements of the continental U.S. during the 1960s and 1970s. It was also the beginning of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement, which calls for the political separation of Hawai'i from the U.S. in some fashion.

selector: In Jamaican sound system culture, the person who plays records. This is the opposite naming practice of hip hop, in which the DJ plays the records and the MC raps.

ska: The earliest genre of Jamaican popular music considered reggae, created in the early-1960s. It is sometimes considered the union of Jamaican folk music, based on African forms, with U.S. rhythm and blues. Ska retained an ensemble based on the rhythm and horn sections of jump blues bands (Louis Jordan's bands are a primary example), but has a distinctive, driving emphasis on all of the off-beats and is fast and danceable. Ska became popular in the U.K. following its creation. It was revitalized there in the late-1970s and became known as 2 Tone. It was associated with punk and other "alternative" or "underground" rock genres. 2 Tone ska also became popular amongst "alternative" rock scenes in the U.S. in the 1990s—"third wave" ska—and provided the basis for the genre of reggae rock.

skank: In roots reggae, a stroke or double stroke on the guitar on beats 2 and 4. Some have argued that the skank is where the term "reggae" comes from—"regg-ae." Skanking is also a dance move that accompanies reggae, which involves swinging one's arms backwards and forwards while shifting one's weight from foot to foot.

sound system: In Jamaican popular music, a sound system is a collection of record players, speakers, microphones, and other record-playing equipment that was controlled by a small group, creating a "dancehall" where they would play records and people could come to dance and listen to the music. Sometimes "sound system" means the equipment only, and in other cases, the term refers to the group of people who own the equipment.

toasting: In Jamaican popular music, toasting is much like rapping—"talk-singing" over an already extant recording. In fact, it likely fundamentally influenced the creation of rap in New York City.

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Preface

Aloha kākou e nā hoa makamaka mai ka uka a ke kai, mai kahi pae a kahi pae.
O au ‘o Sunaina Keonona Kale. No Orinda, Kapalakiko mai au.
‘O Patricia ‘Iwakilaukapu Kale ko‘u makuawahine, no O‘ahu, Hawai‘i mai ‘oia.
‘O Jivendra Keshav Kale ko‘u makuakāne, no Pune, ‘Inia mai ‘oia.
Aloha mai, aloha kākou, aloha e.

(Mahalo to Kathleen Ballesteros for writing my Hawaiian language introduction.)

Mahalo nui loa for choosing to read my dissertation. Before I begin, I want to introduce myself to you. As a Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) scholar, it is important to me to abide by Kanaka Maoli protocols involving introductions: I must tell you, the reader, who I am and where I am from in order to begin my relation to you in a good way. Many Indigenous cultures require it and it also tells you why I approach my research in the way that I do. In my discipline of ethnomusicology, being reflexive in this way is also encouraged—research is never objective and is interpreted through the researcher’s own experiences and biases. The preface is about me, but it is also about the cultures that make me who I am and the structures of settler colonialism, white supremacy, and capitalism that are intertwined with them, which are, at times, the same as those that affect the people I write about in my dissertation. In the words of Jessica Bissett Perea, such an introduction is an invitation and an accompaniment (2021). I invite you to be in relation with me and to think of my preface as an accompaniment (in a musical sense) to the dissertation, shedding some light on my interest in and approach to writing about reggae in Hawai‘i as you continue to read.

I was born in the San Francisco Bay Area on Lisjan Ohlone land. I have one younger sister who was also born there. My parents met at U.C. Berkeley while they were students

and decided to stay in Orinda, a town nearby, and that is where my sister and I grew up. My parents still live in that same house. My father was born in Amritsar, one of the largest cities in the Indian state of Punjab and home to the Golden Temple. He grew up all over India until the family eventually decided to stay in Pune. His mother grew up in Amritsar and his father was from the then-village (now city) of Tasgaon in Maharashtra. It is still somewhat unusual to have a marriage between people from different states, but their marriage was even more atypical because it was inter-caste: my grandfather's family is Brahman and my grandmother's is from the merchant caste. My father moved to the U.S. to go to graduate school, eventually getting a Ph.D. and becoming a professor of finance. My mother was born in Honolulu and moved to the Bay Area as an undergraduate at U.C. Berkeley. My haole (white) grandfather is also from Honolulu and my grandmother (Kanaka Maoli and haole) was from Lahaina on the island of Maui. In Hawai'i, being multiracial is normalized, so their marriage was not unusual. My mother is a computer scientist.

It should be clear from this description of my family that I come from a lot of privilege, particularly economic, educational, and the fact that I come from the Bay Area. I also have light skin privilege. This is not the case for my extended family, though. I used to feel extremely guilty about this, especially in graduate school as I continued to learn more about colonialism, racism, heteropatriarchy, and capitalism. At the same time, I constantly felt like I was not enough of any one of my cultures, despite the fact that I strongly identify with being Kanaka Maoli and Indian. Being multiracial in the continental U.S. is still not normalized, and we were never connected to any diaspora communities in the Bay Area. Additionally, I am an "unusual" mix of races—I do not have anyone else like me in my life except my sister. This feeling became increasingly problematic as I dove deeper into my

research and learned about Hawaiian music and history. I was acutely aware that, although I identified with many of the things I read (reading *Hawaiian Blood* by J. Kēhaulani Kauanui early on was particularly formative), my life as a privileged Hawaiian living in diaspora was incredibly different from most Kānaka Maoli living in Hawai‘i. I had grown up going to Hawai‘i every few years or so to visit family, but I never stayed long enough to really make friends there or become involved with the culture and land. My experiences visiting Hawai‘i were in many ways more akin to a tourist’s than to someone’s who actually lived there.

In fact, I was actually scared to engage with Hawaiian people and culture directly, and I thus avoided both even though I had chosen it as my research topic. I spent much of my preliminary research trips to Hawai‘i hiding at my auntie’s house. I realized later, through extensive and healing talks with my good friend Margaret McMurtrey, that what I was experiencing was colonialism and racism that was the flip side of what people typically associate with those structures. Rather than having dark skin, being targeted by the police, or being impoverished, for instance, my experience of colonialism and racism was being alienated from my own identity, culture, and even my family. I must state again that I am not equating these two manifestations of colonialism—I do not live in fear for my life every time I leave the house, have food or housing insecurity, lack basic amenities like many other people of color, nor have I been outright denied things because of my race. Yes, my experiences of racism are far better than the more egregious types that others experience. However, my experiences are still racism—they are not unique and must be understood as a complementary part of the colonial project. My experiences are one of the steps on the road to assimilation, a genocidal project that was supposed to “possess” (Arvin 2019) or disappear Indigenous peoples into whiteness and Americanness. Assimilation occurs

through breaking the connections of Indigenous individuals to their people and culture. The only reason I have the privilege that I do today is because my ancestors, especially my Hawaiian ones, decided to let go of their language and other cultural practices. In the case of my Hawaiian grandmother, this also involved having haole (white) male partners.

I only recently realized that my research triggered me because it reminded me of how “inauthentically” Hawaiian I was and my distance from the culture and other Hawaiians. It was only in my year-long fieldwork trip to Hawai‘i that I really began to engage with Hawaiian people and land. It was only through talking to people and going to concerts there that I started to feel more connected to both of those things. I feel so much more comfortable with myself as a Hawaiian person at this point, though it is still a process. I am also lucky to have been spared being looked down upon by Kānaka Maoli from and in Hawai‘i as “less” Hawaiian than them, yet another colonial mechanism for disappearing Kānaka Maoli. As a person with a great deal of privilege, it is also my responsibility to use that privilege uplift others who do not, which I try to do here and in other facets of my life (however imperfectly).

I actually became interested in the topic of reggae in Hawai‘i because of my disconnect from Hawaiian culture. I have always loved Hawaiian music. I grew up listening to contemporary Hawaiian music from the 1990s and early-2000s, with a smattering of older and “more traditional” music from the 1970s and in between. In fact, I think I was an ethnomusicologist before I knew what it was—for a college application, I wrote an essay on Israel Kamakawiwo‘ole, by far the most famous Hawaiian musician in the world, and why his music connected to so many people globally. I eventually convinced my mother to buy me his complete discography and listened to them all the time as a teenager. The music that

I grew up listening to, however, was somewhat dated by that point and only comprised of a sliver of the breadth of Hawaiian music happening at the time. At some point while growing up, I learned that one of my kūpuna (elders), Joseph Ilala‘ole, was a very important kumu hula (hula master)—he was the brother of my great-great-grandfather, Lincoln Benjamin Kaumeheiwa. My auntie, Kathy Ballesteros, eventually learned that Ilala‘ole became a repository for chants of the Kamehameha family because we are related to them. As an undergraduate music major, I eventually became interested in studying Hawaiian music in more depth and thought that I could go to graduate school to study Ilala‘ole’s mele (chant). I attempted to learn about older mele, but I do not think I approached it in a way that made sense to me, so I wanted to change my topic.

At some point as I was growing up, I realized that reggae was popular in Hawai‘i and that it was called Jawaiian, but I had never knowingly heard the music. The only other thing I knew about it was that my relatives hated it—the only people I knew in Hawai‘i who discussed it were my aunties and uncles, who were all born in the 1940s and 1950s. This piqued my interest. They complained about it being bad and not real Hawaiian music, and I wondered why this was the case when I knew Jawaiian was very popular. My main question was why—why was reggae so popular in Hawai‘i even though my relatives seemed to revile it? I decided to write about it in a seminar paper in my second year of graduate school, opening up the door to what has now become my main scholarly endeavor. I found reggae in Hawai‘i so interesting because it was so slippery—every time I tried to argue something definitive about it, a myriad of exceptions immediately popped up. The question of whether Jawaiian was Hawaiian music or not was particularly fascinating to me. As I explain in Chapter 2, there was a backlash against Jawaiian in 1991 from more traditionalist

individuals involved with Hawaiian music, in part contributing to reactions like my relatives' to the music. And yet, the deeper I dove, the more Hawaiian it seemed to become, albeit fundamentally entangled with the other categories that I focus on in this dissertation: the Local and global.

Reggae in Hawai'i also seemed to be operating along similar lines to my own identity. I strongly identify as Hawaiian and Indian but am also displaced from both of those cultures in several respects: I am multiracial and I grew up in diaspora on both sides with parents who largely did not maintain significant parts of their culture or connect to other diasporic institutions. In reggae in Hawai'i, I found something that was also hard to define, displaced, and yet fundamentally rooted.

I must also be clear about my positionality as a researcher writing about reggae in Hawai'i. Although I am Kanaka Maoli, and thus have genealogical ties to Hawai'i and have family living there, I was not involved with the music until I started researching it. I do not speak from the position of being an individual practicing in the scene and therefore can never know that experience. Additionally, I do not speak for the people in the scene—the thoughts in this dissertation are my own. Despite not originally being involved in the scene, it was easy for me to connect with the people there. They were very willing to help me and some even spent quite a lot of time with me. In this way, as University of Hawai'i, Mānoa ethnomusicologist Ric Trimillos put it to me, I am an outsider-insider—not originally part of the scene nor from Hawai'i, but still Hawaiian.

Introduction

I'm standing in the audience of the MayJah RayJah Festival on O'ahu, the most populous island in Hawai'i. I had heard this festival being advertised on the radio in previous summers while staying with my auntie and uncle on the island, when my uncle would occasionally tune into one of O'ahu's three reggae stations while working outside in the yard. When I was planning my flight to Hawai'i to do the bulk of my research—one year of fieldwork—MayJah RayJah was the only concert that I knew about, so I booked my flight to get there in time to attend. I later discovered that it is the largest reggae festival on the island, attracting thousands of audience members. When I attended in July 2018, the festival was two days long and featured twenty-three bands.

The festival started in the afternoon, but I got there at night. The music was so loud that I could hear it clearly as I walked from my car towards the stage area. As I joined the crowd, vape and weed smoke was illuminated above our heads by lights flashing down at us from the huge outdoor stage. The audience was jam-packed together, but despite that, people were still bobbing up and down or skanking (reggae dancing) around me. They were mostly young people in their teens and twenties, though some people in their thirties to fifties would occasionally pass by. As was the case in almost every concert I went to, there were also young kids—in fact, in the “under 21” section of the audience, there were families sitting on blankets. It was somewhat difficult to see what was going on onstage, but the jumbotrons flanking it made the artists visible. When a song came on that everyone knew, they would sing along and dance even harder.

The MC was trying to hype up the crowd in between sets, which they did by naming places where the members of the audience were from or where they currently reside. WEST SIDE, MAKE SOME NOOOOOISE!!!! EAST SIDE, MAKE SOME NOISSEEE!!! Sometimes, they will be more specific, calling out names like Waimānalo, Wai‘anae, North Shore, Town, MAKE SOME NOISE!!! Town is Honolulu, the sprawling and densely overcrowded capital of Hawai‘i, where nearly a quarter of the state’s incredibly diverse population resides. The North Shore, famous for its white surfer bros, hippies, and tourist overcrowding, is another stretch of coastline. The West Side (which includes Wai‘anae) and the East Side (which includes Waimānalo) have strong associations with Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians). They are the sites of numerous Hawaiian homesteads: plots of land that can only be allotted to Kānaka Maoli who can prove that they have at least 50% Native blood. The MC moved onto other groups of people, yelling statements like—All the Hawaiians in the house, make some noise!! Where are my Filipinos at?? Polys, make some noise!! The largest yells were always for the Hawaiians. As fieldwork went on, I discovered that these shout-outs were standard in reggae concerts in Hawai‘i. As someone who has grown up knowing about Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) and Local culture in Hawai‘i, the shoutouts were not surprising: where you are from and your race or ethnicity are foundational concepts in both cultures—which, as I will explain in the “Key Terms” section, overlap in complicated ways.

At that point, I had only attended one other concert by reggae artists from Hawai‘i and it had taken place in Berkeley, California, near where I grew up. I have lived in California for almost my entire life. I had gone to Hawai‘i every few years to visit family as a child; my mother is Kanaka Maoli and most of her family lives there. In previous

summers, I had also gone to Hawai‘i to begin research and stayed with my auntie and uncle. However, being a multiracial Kanaka Maoli (who is also Asian Indian and white), I constantly felt like I was not Hawaiian enough or somehow did not deserve to be there, so I did not make a great deal of progress in those early trips. However, things started to change as I learned more and became more comfortable with my identity.

By MayJah RayJah, I had built up the confidence to talk to several audience members throughout the festival. After telling some of them that I was interested in reggae and Hawaiian identity, some immediately said that the music we were listening to was not Hawaiian music or even Jawaiian music. They also said that (Native) Hawaiians identified with reggae because it was from another island culture—Jamaican culture. Another said that the reggae I was currently hearing was not Hawaiian “in terms of culture,” but that it represented an “integration.” I also talked to someone who was originally from Japan, who discovered reggae when he lived in Saipan. There, he listened to reggae artists on the radio from all over the world being played alongside each other, and the origin of the bands was unclear. He only discovered that his favorite band, The Vitals, were from Hawai‘i after moving there. Similarly, many of the bands performing at MayJah RayJah are not from Hawai‘i, but rather, from the continental U.S., and the style of reggae that they play is different. Some, like Iration, play in the commercially successful genre reggae rock, which was created in Southern California.

Later on while writing my dissertation, it occurred to me that it is telling that this particular concert featured no famous Black Jamaican artists—one of the bands that performed, Kush County, has a Black Jamaican band member, and I am unsure about the other bands. This reflects larger trends in reggae in Hawai‘i—reggae is such a Local and

Kanaka Maoli phenomenon that the origins of the music in the experiences of poor and oppressed Black people in Jamaica are often absent in the commercial sphere. However, this point is not forgotten in the broader reggae context—a major reason that Kanaka Maoli and Local fans love reggae is that they identify with its messages about struggle against colonialism. The point is central to the underground roots scene—which I found out about soon after attending MayJah RayJah—which is comprised of bands that largely eschew commercial success and events like this one.

I continued researching, which I did through interviewing and hanging out with musicians, fans, and industry professionals, going to concerts, perusing archival materials, and scouring the internet. However, as time wore on, it was difficult to figure out concrete notions of identity in both the more “mainstream” Jawaiian/island music/island reggae scene and the underground roots scene. As soon as I tried to pin something down, contradictions ensued. I was already interested in the question of why reggae had become popular in Hawai‘i in the first place, and the more I learned about the scene, the more I became convinced that Kanaka Maoli culture and worldviews were central. However, they were present without people naming them as such—instead, they were often identified as Local. Also, the popularity of global reggae artists in Hawai‘i outside of Jamaica was unexpected. I was intrigued when I found out that reggae in Hawai‘i had a global presence and influenced other genres of reggae. Finally, it was not until the completion of my fieldwork, when I was beginning to present and talk about my work with others, that I realized that Black people were not as visible in the scene in accordance to the significant popularity of their music. I realized that in order to understand the way identity worked in reggae in Hawai‘i, it was necessary to take all of these threads into account while also privileging Kanaka Maoli

agency and worldviews. MayJah RayJah, in fact, was a microcosm of the various threads that I follow in my dissertation—the privileging of Hawaiian people without calling reggae Hawaiian music, the presence of Locals, the absence of Black artists, and the complicated pathways of global circulation.

Key Terms

Please see the glossary for a more extensive list of key terms.

Throughout my dissertation, I use the words “Hawaiian” and “Kanaka Maoli” (plural: Kānaka Maoli) interchangeably. I use both to mean Native Hawaiian, or the Indigenous people of Hawai‘i—people who can trace their genealogy to the ‘āina (land/environment) before western contact in 1778. I choose to use “Hawaiian” because it is the word that people in Hawai‘i, as well as those who are connected to Hawai‘i elsewhere, use in their everyday language. Additionally, they typically refer to music in that way—“Hawaiian music.” I complement “Hawaiian” with “Kanaka Maoli” in line with the trends in Hawaiian studies scholarship that incorporate ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language). Also, in Hawai‘i, the word “Hawai‘i” is used as an adjective to mean “from Hawai‘i” when discussing non-human entities (such as the Hawai‘i state government and Hawai‘i reggae).

The concept of “Local” in Hawai‘i is significant to this dissertation, and I devote Chapter 4 to it. “Local” has specific meanings in Hawai‘i: it connotes a specific working-class, multicultural identity and culture with roots in the sugarcane plantations in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, interwar urbanization, subsequent union organization, and anti-development movements in the 1960s and 1970s. It is often entangled with Kanaka Maoli identity and culture. In line with some recent scholarship on the “Local,”

I capitalize the “L” when I discuss the specific Localness of Hawai‘i in order to distinguish it from more generalized meanings of local.

“Haole” can be an adjective or a noun and means white person in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i. Technically, “haole” also means foreigner and some are reclaiming that definition, but white person is its most widespread meaning. It is used frequently in everyday speech in Hawai‘i or among people who are connected to it; thus, I use “haole” instead of “white” when discussing whiteness as it particularly pertains to Hawai‘i. Relatedly, “hapa haole” means part white and is used to refer to multiracial people who are white and Kanaka Maoli. “Hapa haole” is also the name of a genre of Hawaiian music that first became prominent in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, which I discuss in some detail in Chapter 1.

“Kama‘āina” means native-born and is typically used to refer to haoles who were born and raised in Hawai‘i. Sometimes, kama‘āina haoles are contrasted to malihini, who are newcomers. “Kama‘āina” is also used in commercial contexts to refer to discount pricing on tourist products like hotels for residents of Hawai‘i.

People use a number of words to refer to Localized reggae in Hawai‘i: “Jawaiian,” “island music,” “island reggae,” “Hawaiian reggae,” “underground roots,” and “Hawai‘i reggae.” When I speak most broadly, I use the phrase “reggae in Hawai‘i.” I do this to accommodate all of the meanings generated by those six terms, as well as reggae from elsewhere that is also popular in Hawai‘i. “Jawaiian” was perhaps the first word used to refer to the hybrid of reggae and Hawaiian music invented in the 1980s. Currently, many people consider “Jawaiian” to refer to the style of music from that time period until the 1990s. However, numerous people use the word “Jawaiian” to refer to the more “mainstream” Localized reggae that is played on the radio, or simply reggae from Hawai‘i in

general. The term “island music” came about in relation to reggae after the backlash against Jawaiian in 1991; it was a way to appease people who opposed the music because the phrase removed any connection to “Hawaiian.” “Island music” refers to the same music as “Jawaiian” does, as well as all of the later iterations of the genre. It can also refer to music that may sound like “more traditional” Hawaiian music in some ways, but may have too many non-Hawaiian elements to “count” as Hawaiian music. Elements can include English lyrics, subject matter, or extensive borrowing from continental U.S. popular music genres.

I am not sure when the phrase “island reggae” was invented, but it refers to reggae-influenced “island music” in addition to music produced in that style in other locations. For example, artists like Katchafire, Sammy Johnson, and Common Kings are often considered “island reggae” even though Katchafire and Sammy Johnson are from New Zealand and Common Kings is from California. “Island reggae” thus has a broad, pan-Pacific scope. People involved in the scene rarely use the term “Hawaiian reggae,” and when they do so, it is typically in a more descriptive sense than as a codified genre name—that is, “Hawaiian reggae” describes “reggae that is Hawaiian.” They might also use “Hawaiian reggae” in order to move away from any of the other mainstream terms. Members of the “underground roots” scene define themselves in opposition to the more mainstream “Jawaiian”/“island music”/“island reggae” and aim to produce music that is close to Jamaican roots reggae with their own interpretation. “Hawai‘i reggae” encompasses any reggae produced in Hawai‘i. I discuss the history of some of these terms in more detail in Chapter 2.

Kanaka Maoli as Piko

Reggae is ubiquitous in Hawai‘i and consists of a major portion of the live music and recordings produced there. Despite this, very few scholars have written about the scene (in general, there is little written about Hawaiian music in the second half of the twentieth century). This is the case even though Hawai‘i has its own music industry, music is a significant component of Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) everyday life, and reggae has become normalized in Hawai‘i. Furthermore, reggae in Hawai‘i challenges basic assumptions about Indigenous cultural practices in the fields of music studies and Indigenous studies. Generally, reggae in Hawai‘i is not overtly traditional or political—the two modes through which Indigenous peoples are typically recognized—yet, at the same time, the music is both those things below the surface.

The central argument of my dissertation is that although (Native) Hawaiian music and worldviews are implicit—that is, often obscured or not acknowledged—they are the basis of engagement with identity in reggae in Hawai‘i. At the same time, the categories of Local and global build on top of and yet are interrelated with the Hawaiian. The centrality of Hawaiian identity in reggae in Hawai‘i is in some ways similar to Kevin Fellezs’s argument about the transPacific and its relation to the Hawaiian music genre of *kī hō‘alu* (slack key). Fellezs uses his concept of the transPacific to position Hawai‘i as the location of power within the genre of *kī hō‘alu* (2019a:22). *Kānaka Maoli* have had an “outsized” influence on *kī hō‘alu* practiced outside of Hawai‘i, reversing the typical power hierarchy of the Pacific in which entities on the rim like the continental U.S. and East Asia have much more power than entities within (ibid). Similarly, my argument centralizes and gives power and agency to Hawaiian artists and actors in the scene while also privileging Indigenous worldviews.

Each body/case study chapter (Chapters 3-5) focuses on a different category in the Hawaiian-Local-global nexus, while at the same time demonstrates different configurations of it.

Broadly, Hawaiian music refers to the music associated with Hawaiian people (Native Hawaiians) and is therefore the Indigenous music of Hawai'i. As George Kanahele states in the original preface to his encyclopedia *Hawaiian Music and Musicians*: "The most telling point of all...was the unresolved question of 'What is Hawaiian music?'" (2012b:ix). Kanahele then describes the impossibility of identifying a definitively Hawaiian melodic or rhythmic character. Other scholars also tend to define Hawaiian music expansively. ku'ualoha ho'omanawanui characterizes it as based on the pre-contact music of Kānaka Maoli (before Captain Cook "discovered" Hawai'i in 1778) and contends that this music is also flexible enough to incorporate global music forms (2006:273). Other scholars have noted the diversity of global influences on Hawaiian music: tourism (Tatar 1987:2), Protestant missionaries (Stillman 1996:481), Mexican cowboys and Portuguese laborers (Troutman 2016:11), sailors and whalers (Carr 2014:3), and "jazz, blues, gospel, rock and roll, [Puerto Rican] cachi-cachi music, American country & western, Jamaican reggae, and rap" (Akindes 1999:15). In this way, the basis of definitions of Hawaiian music often begin with pre-contact music that is then subsequently influenced by global musics (Stillman 2011). Amy Ku'uleialoha Stillman also points out that some consider pre-contact or "ancient" Hawaiian music to be associated with oral transmission, whereas westernized or "modern" Hawaiian music is then associated with a written score (2005:75). She also points out that in a general sense, Hawaiian music is often associated with "tradition" (ibid). The

identity of the performer or composer being Hawaiian and that the music is in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language) are two other significant characteristics (76).

In fact, musical life in Hawai‘i and the Local music industry at large also privilege Hawaiian music. Hawaiian music is the category that musicians are generally expected to perform in Hawai‘i, and it is often considered unusual on some level to be engaged with non-Hawaiian music as a member of the Local music industry. The tendency is especially acute when the musician is Kanaka Maoli. This is the case despite the fact that Hawaiian music is not necessarily the most audible or visible on a daily basis for everyone in Hawai‘i. However, it is the most privileged type of music in industry awards ceremonies and is the most supported by the tourist industry. Hawai‘i’s Local music industry awards are called the Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards (“Stars of Distinction”), and they are awarded by the Hawai‘i Academy of Recording Arts (HARA). They can be understood as the Hawai‘i music industry’s equivalent of the Grammys. Out of the 40 possible categories, seven are explicitly for Hawaiian music and several others (like those labeled “island”) could conceivably be “Hawaiian,” which is more than any other category or genre (see nahokuhanohano.com 2020). Further, several interviewees involved with the recording or business side of the Local music industry told me that it has historically been weighted towards producing and marketing Hawaiian music (see also Stillman 1998:89). Kelly “Kelly Boy” DeLima, leader of the influential and longstanding successful family band Kapena, expressed to me that his father explicitly advised him to perform Hawaiian music in order to be financially successful as a musician (personal communication).

Hawaiian music, often conceived of as “more traditional,” is also frequently privileged as the most valuable of musics in Hawai‘i. Amy Ku‘uleialoha Stillman points out

that such Hawaiian music often holds the greatest authority for traditional practitioners and decolonial activists (2020b).¹ At the same time, it is important to point out that part of this centrality is due to the ways in which Hawai‘i was colonized. White capitalists used Hawaiian culture as a major part of tourism and marketing Hawai‘i as a destination throughout the twentieth century (Imada 2004:116). In this case, they used Hawaiian culture at the expense of Kānaka Maoli, profiting off of their “hyper-visible” images and hyper-audible sounds without supporting actual Kānaka Maoli (Kushi 2019).²

To exemplify this phenomenon outside of reggae, I discuss the preview screening of the documentary *Aloha Got Soul*, which I attended on April 26, 2019. Produced by Roger Bong and directed by Filipe Zapelini, this documentary focuses on musicians in Hawai‘i in the 1970s who played music that was not obviously Hawaiian, typically rock or soul. These musicians often participated in the lively nightclub scene on O‘ahu, which was the same context from which reggae emerged. Between clips of the preview, the filmmakers and several interviewees featured in the documentary provided more detail. One of the most powerful themes in this documentary was the pressure that musicians faced to either perform or compete with Hawaiian music, applied from both the commercial and cultural realms. This “non-Hawaiian” music was often ignored and was not typically commercially successful, the two major exceptions being the rock bands Cecilio & Kapono (C&K) and Kalapana.

In one of the clips, producer Roger Bong asked composer Gordon Broad if bands who were “outside the box” became successful, and Broad replied “no” (Zapelini forthcoming). This was further confirmed by interviewees who spoke live between the clips. The cultural centrality of Hawaiian music was illustrated by another clip, an interview with

Hawaiian singer-songwriter Franz Kahale, who performs music influenced by blues, folk, and rock. Kahale described a conversation that he had had with singer of *leo ki'eki'e* (a “more traditional” genre) Leinaala Haili, whom he had just met. Coming from the perspective of being older and Kanaka Maoli, Haili asked Kahale why he did not play more Hawaiian music. He replied that he was interested in different musics at that point in his life. However, “my sense of rhythm, my sense of root, how I approach...any music, if it's Stevie Wonder, if it's George Benson, if it's The Eagles—I still have that same feel inside of me. And it's from *you*” (ibid).

The *Aloha Got Soul* preview demonstrates the central pull of Hawaiian music on the Local music industry and conceptualizations of musical life. Bong, Broad, and the other live interviewees pointed to the lack of commercial success of this “non-Hawaiian” music, while Kahale discussed the pressure that he faces to perform Hawaiian music. However, Kahale also points to the fundamental role of a Hawaiian *sensibility* to his music-making—his Hawaiianness is still his foundation even though he does not perform Hawaiian music *per se*.

Despite the centrality of Hawaiian music and worldviews to music in Hawai'i, reggae in Hawai'i is not typically considered Hawaiian music. I asked nearly all of my interviewees if they thought any of the reggae produced or performed in Hawai'i counted as Hawaiian music, and the vast majority of them said no. However, many of my interviewees would quickly reconsider their answer and start to break down what actually makes music Hawaiian, sometimes changing their answer to “sometimes” and other times returning to “no.” From their perspective, reggae in Hawai'i did not qualify as Hawaiian music because it did not meet the criteria that they had for the category. Some of the most common criteria

were stylistic, including having lyrics in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i and utilizing sonic signifiers of Hawaiian music like the ‘ukulele and leo ki‘eki‘e (falsetto) singing. Reggae in Hawai‘i is very rarely in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i. The sound of newer reggae in Hawai‘i from approximately the past ten years draws substantially from Jamaican and British roots reggae from the 1980s, as well as continental U.S. popular musics, especially rock and R&B. Generally, it does not sound “distinctively” Hawaiian in a “traditional” sense. Ideologically, this hesitancy to consider reggae as Hawaiian music also seems to be a legacy of the 1991 backlash against Hawaiian/island music/island reggae and appears motivated by a desire to not be criticized. Finally, older Kānaka Maoli often reject reggae because it does not perform the same functions as older Hawaiian music, and is also not something they grew up understanding as a part of Hawaiian music.

As a result, on a surface level, reggae is often associated with Locals in Hawai‘i more broadly as opposed to Hawaiians. However, a deeper look reveals that a large percentage of these Locals are actually Kānaka Maoli. In fact, ku‘ualoha ho‘omanawanui argues that reggae in Hawai‘i is “rooted in Hawaiian culture” (2006:284). Although Amy Ku‘uleialoha Stillman and Andrew Weintraub do not explicitly call reggae in Hawai‘i Hawaiian music, they point out and in some instances gesture towards the Hawaiian underpinnings of the genre (1998; 1998). Additionally, it is important to consider the practices that surround reggae in Hawai‘i. In many cases, the music may not have elements of “more traditional” Hawaiian music, but the ways in which artists relate to each other or live their lives are often grounded in Kanaka Maoli worldviews. As I discuss in more detail in Chapters 3 and 4, some of these Hawaiian underpinnings include aesthetics, ideologies

about the function of music, privileging reciprocal relationships with people and land, and even being open to global influence.

Methodology

The foundation of my dissertation research is my master's project on reggae in Hawai'i, which I began in spring 2016. I completed most of the latter project in 2017 using Internet ethnography as my primary methodology: I drew extensively from music videos on YouTube, YouTube comment discourses, and interviews that musicians gave with news media. For my dissertation, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork from July 2018–July 2019 in O'ahu, Hawai'i. I chose ethnography as my primary method because it prioritizes the lived experiences of Kānaka Maoli, Locals more broadly, and others involved in reggae. On O'ahu, I conducted extensive interviews with 51 people involved in the O'ahu reggae scene and attended 51 relevant concerts. My collaborators were primarily musicians, but also included fans, promoters, and radio industry workers. I attended primarily reggae concerts, either featuring Local reggae musicians or reggae musicians from elsewhere in places like bars, nightclubs, and large open-air venues.

While on O'ahu, I also conducted foundational historical research on reggae in Hawai'i, using previously unstudied photographs, journalistic articles, concert posters, recordings, and other documentation in my collaborators' personal collections. I also listened to the radio on O'ahu extensively, tracking what songs were popular and taking note of advertising techniques and the ways in which Indigenous and racial identity play a role these performances. After returning from O'ahu, I continued my research on Internet music discourse by following relevant musicians, promoters, and fans on Instagram. I also

analyzed and used recordings, newspaper articles, other journalistic articles, and other websites with historical and biographical information.

I do not speak ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i and have never studied it formally. The translations of individual words in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i come from the Pukui-Elbert Hawaiian dictionary or are what I have observed in common practice. I spell and use kahakō (macrons) and ‘okina (glottal stops) according to standard practice except when quoting or in names where they are not used (ex. Ledward Kaapana). I do not italicize the words in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i following Noenoe K. Silva and many others after her because it is not a foreign language in Hawai‘i (2004:13). However, I do so in quotations if italics exist in the original. Additionally, I do not italicize any other non-English words because it others them by marking them as “different.” My introduction in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i at the beginning of the preface was written by my auntie Kathleen Ballesteros. The translation of the chorus of Ka‘ikena Scanlan’s song “He Kanaka” in Chapter 3 is by Joseph Keola Donaghy and me.

My methodology is significantly informed by scholarship on decolonizing methodologies from Indigenous studies, ethnomusicology, and anthropology. Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s critique of academic research in her book *Decolonizing Methodologies* is foundational for me. Smith argues that research is inextricably linked to colonialism: rather than benefiting Indigenous people, she contends that research often exploits them in several senses. Researchers are typically white elite academics, and their research has historically been used as a colonial tool to extract Indigenous information and thus claim ownership over Indigenous knowledge and people (2012:1). Further, Smith maintains that research has historically been done in a manner that ignores Indigenous worldviews and imposes western value systems upon them (128). She argues, therefore, that research on Indigenous peoples

must be decolonized by privileging Indigenous worldviews in its methodology (ibid). In addition, these projects should benefit Indigenous people in some manner, like through the revitalization of Indigenous culture or through projects that pursue social justice (143). Smith advocates a context-specific approach and thus does not advocate jettisoning western methods (144). Scholars in ethnomusicology and anthropology have also critiqued their disciplines somewhat similarly, going through a “crisis of representation” from the 1970s to the 1990s (see Marcus and Fischer 1986; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Barz and Cooley 2008).

As such, studying an Indigenous musical practice in the field of ethnomusicology is a fundamentally colonial endeavor. I accept this, but, as Smith suggests, I have introduced methods that are in line with Indigenous worldviews. In particular, my approach to ethnographic methods, informed by Indigenous studies, attempts to bridge this divide. Ethnography, involving interviews and participant observation, is one of the methods that has been critiqued for assuming that a researcher’s subjective experience is objective and ignoring the researcher’s impact on the community about which they write. However, ethnography can be useful from an Indigenous perspective. A number of Hawaiian studies and Hawaiian music studies scholars have used ethnography in ways that center Indigenous people and worldviews (for music, see Fellezs 2019a; Teves 2018; Imada 2012; Donaghy 2012, for general, see McGregor 2007; Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua 2013; Tengan 2008). To me, certain ethnographic methods are imperative in order to do a project that centers Indigenous worldviews, especially if the project is not solely historical and involves people who are currently alive. It is of paramount importance to talk to and gather the perspectives of the people who are involved with the culture being researched, which inevitably happens through hanging out, informally talking, interviewing, and engaging in participant

observation—in other words, ethnographic methods. In fact, I believe that it is more colonial to dismiss ethnographic methods entirely. Although research is ultimately filtered through the researcher’s own perspective, it is better to at least include these important perspectives in the research than to not do so at all.

The problem with ethnography is that it does not require the researcher to engage with Indigenous communities in a non-exploitative way, and what this means varies depending on context. In Indigenous studies, scholars have dealt with the politics of research by privileging Indigenous worldviews—namely, relationality. Shawn Wilson argues that relationality is the center of Indigenous worldviews and that an “Indigenous research paradigm” must foreground reciprocal relationships (2008:7). To me, this means that researchers must build relationships with the people with whom they work. Researchers must be clear about who they are, what they intend to do with the research they gather, that the people involved have some role in the research, that the researcher does not simply disappear after gathering information but continues to maintain the relationship, and there being a clear benefit to the people involved with the research. Fortunately, ethnomusicologists—especially younger ones—have been increasingly using decolonizing methodologies for the past several decades. However, such practices are neither standardized nor systematically taught across ethnomusicology programs, and they are not necessarily requirements for research projects in ethnomusicology.

Additionally, Indigenous studies scholars have dealt with the colonial trappings of ethnography through refusal. Audra Simpson argues that “ethnographic refusal” not only entails refusing anthropology’s historical entrapment of Indigenous peoples and cultures into “pure” and “vanishing” containers, but is also part of methodology (2014:99). She contends

that ethnographic refusal requires leaving out information (ibid), which prevents the “extraction” of information from Indigenous peoples (Robinson 2020:14). In this dissertation, I write about some individuals in detail. However, many of these people have public personas and are involved in the commercial sphere, so writing about them in this way in a scholarly context makes sense. At the same time, there is information that I have not included in this dissertation for the sake of privacy.

I have attempted to undertake decolonizing methodologies throughout the research process to varying degrees of success. I became better at describing my project to interviewees as my fieldwork went on. If I write about someone in the community that I interviewed, I give them that passage to read and comment on. Also, I wrote this dissertation for the people I worked with as well as scholars, and so I tried to include and frame information in ways that would be meaningful to them while also fulfilling the requirements of the writing genre. I intend to distribute my dissertation to all of my interviewees. Additionally, in the case study/body chapters (Chapters 3-5), when I introduce individuals that I write about extensively, I explain how I met them and name and describe the people who introduced me to them. I do this to thank and acknowledge more overtly the people who helped me and to show the reader the web of relations of which I am a part. When I described my project to interviewees, many of them asked who I had already interviewed, so this gesture (and the acknowledgements) can hopefully provide that sort of clarity for readers.

Literature Review: Hawaiian Music

Scholarship on Hawaiian music spans a wide range of genres and time periods, many of which are substantially influenced by global music forms. Reggae represents one aspect of this long history of Hawaiian creativity.

Scholarship from the early-twentieth century was part of continental U.S. settler attempts to document and capture “disappearing” Indigenous cultures. Nathaniel Bright Emerson’s scholarly activities predate most of this work, but his goals appear to be similar, as it was sponsored by the American Bureau of Ethnology (Emerson 2012; Pukui and Korn 1973:xvi). Helen Roberts’s *Ancient Hawaiian Music*, originally published in 1926, was funded by the territorial government and published by the Bishop Museum (1969:3). Both are devoted to documentation through musical transcription and lyrics. Although Emerson’s and Roberts’s works are associated with governmental attempts to assimilate and therefore disappear Indigenous peoples, these works are also key documents of Hawaiian music of the time. Later scholars of Hawaiian music consistently look to them as authoritative documents despite some shortcomings (see Kealiinohomoku 1964). Additionally, these works represent some of the earliest cultural explorations of music in what would later become ethnomusicology.

The amount of scholarship on Hawaiian music increased substantially during the period of revitalization inspired by the Black, Red, and other Power movements of the continental U.S. during the 1960s and 1970s. Scholars sometimes refer to this moment of political awakening and renewed interest in “more traditional” culture as the “Second Hawaiian Renaissance.” Colloquially, it is simply known as the “Hawaiian Renaissance.” However, recently, scholars have begun to view it as similar to the revitalization of older

styles of hula and mele (chant) spearheaded by King David Kalākaua in the 1880s, which has now become known as the “First Hawaiian Renaissance.” The Second Hawaiian Renaissance was also the beginning of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement, which calls for the political separation of Hawai‘i from the U.S. in some fashion. Following trends from the previous period of scholarship, while also contributing to the then-contemporary interest in the revitalization of culture, Samuel H. Elbert and Nohelani Mahoe’s collection of Hawaiian songs both documents “traditional” mele (chant/song) and provides analysis of the elements of Hawaiian poetry. This collection includes mele that were composed between the 1850s and 1968 (1970:3). Perhaps because cultural revitalization was important to Hawaiians beyond the academy at this time, there were many works that spanned a scholarly and popular audience. George Kanahale’s encyclopedia *Hawaiian Music and Musicians* is an example of such a work, originally published in 1979. The entries range from pre-contact music to then-current popular music, and covers instruments, genres, musicians, and institutions. Journalist John Berger has since updated the original with more current musical trends (Kanahale and Berger 2012). In this vein, two professors at the University of Hawai‘i, Mānoa, Dorothy Kahananui Gillett and Barbara B. Smith, created a compendium of Queen Lili‘uokalani’s music called *The Queen’s Songbook* (Gillett and Smith 1999).

There was also a substantial amount of scholarship created primarily for an academic audience. In this period of scholarship on Hawaiian music, scholars began to center culturally-specific ways of conceptualizing the music. This scholarship also revitalizes “more traditional” culture by preserving it, and the scholars that produce it privilege culture-specific values in their analyses to a greater extent than their predecessors. In *Nineteenth Century Hawaiian Chant*, Elizabeth Tatar argues that the Hawaiian chanter’s approach to

mele (chant/song) was systematic in the nineteenth century. Drawing from written sources and extrapolating from recordings made in the early-twentieth century (including those created by Helen Roberts), Tatar outlines the cultural and historical context of mele in the nineteenth century and earlier. She further creates a system of categorization for different genres of mele and proposes a system of music theory for the music (1982:1). Similarly, anthropologist and dance scholar Adrienne Kaeppler's study of the hula pahu centers categorization. Kaeppler argues that hula pahu is a performance genre that has a distinct tradition, rather than simply referring to hula accompanied by the pahu (sacred drum that was originally housed in the heiau—stone temple or shrine) (1993:3).

Hawaiian music scholarship from the 1980s onward has focused on overtly globally-influenced musics, critiquing colonialism, and privileging Kanaka Maoli worldviews. Further, these scholars take into account the relations of colonial, commercial, and Indigenous spheres. In fact, Hawaiian music has both incorporated and influenced global musical forms since contact with the west. Such scholars argue that throughout this engagement with the global, Hawaiian musicians have had to contend with colonial expectations and commercial salability. At the same time, however, Hawaiian musicians have often found ways to encode subversive meanings and enact agency in this context. The adoption of instruments like the 'ukulele (Tranquada and King 2012) and the guitar (Troutman 2016; Fellezs 2019a) are two such examples. The incorporation of genres like Protestant hymnody (Stillman 1996; Szego 2003), sea chanteys (Carr 2014), U.S. continental popular song forms and Tin Pan Alley (Tatar 1987; Stillman 2005; Garrett 2008; Imada 2013), folk and rock (Lewis 1984), reggae (Stillman 1998; Weintraub 1998; ho'omanawanui 2006), and rap (Akindes 2001; Osumare 2007; Teves 2018) are also

examples of the negotiation of Indigeneity, colonialism, and capitalism. My work on reggae in Hawai'i joins this literature, as I show a basis in Hawaiian worldviews, agency, and creativity, while also taking into account racism and capitalism.

Literature Review: Reggae

Like Hawaiian music, Jamaican music has been fundamentally influenced by global forms. In fact, the creation of reggae in itself was already a global phenomenon, being produced in circuits between Jamaica, the U.S., and the U.K. Carolyn Cooper argues that Jamaicanness is central to reggae even though it is fundamentally transnational (2004:46). David Bousquet similarly contends that the idea of a nation-state with strictly defined borders never made complete sense in Jamaica as Jamaican lower- or working-class cultural expressions have always been anti-statist (2020:217-218). At the same time, however, the Jamaican state has coopted reggae as part of Jamaica's national narrative and cultural heritage. Bousquet asserts that the state attempts to construct reggae as purely Jamaican in order to justify the ruling elite as such and to sell Jamaica as a tourist destination (217).

Reggae is also typically regarded as resistance. Scholars have described a "dancehall"—where live Jamaican popular music takes place—as a space that is central this music (Niaah and Niaah 2006:167). According to Norman C. Stolzoff, the dancehall is a "field of active cultural production, a means by which black lower-class youth articulate and project a distinct identity in local, national, and global contexts" (2000:1). Stolzoff argues that although the word dancehall first entered the Jamaican lexicon around 1985, the concept of a dancehall in some form has existed in Jamaica since the slavery era and thus for over two hundred years. It has been called by a number of different names over time (3-4). He

calls these spaces “cultural counterworlds” where poor, young, Black Jamaican “masses” “attempt” to deal with poverty, racism, and violence (1, 4). This is an interesting conceptualization of Jamaican popular music, but it is important to remember that people in the scene typically use the word dancehall to mean the genre of music, and that is how I use it in my dissertation.

Similarly, Michael E. Veal argues that dub created “a space where people could come together joyously despite the harshness that surrounded them. They created a music as roughly textured as the physical reality of the place, but with the power to transport their listeners to dance floor nirvana as well as the far reaches of the cultural and political imagination: Africa, outer space, inner space, nature, and political/economic liberation” (13). Also, Carolyn Cooper points out that elites have characterized Jamaican popular culture as “noisy” and “vulgar,” which she argues is a “cry to upset the existing social order” (1993:5) that should be reclaimed (8).

Reggae has become a global phenomenon following the success of Bob Marley and other international reggae artists from the so-called “golden age” of roots reggae in the 1970s. Bob Marley’s records were being distributed globally, and he had also been touring internationally from 1972 to 1980. People outside of countries in which reggae formed have been listening to and performing the music for decades, and Hawai‘i is one such place that this happened.

In the introduction to the edited volume *Global Reggae*, Carolyn Cooper maintains that the authors in the volume describe the “‘glocalization’ of reggae” (2012:3). She argues that at first, global practitioners imitate Jamaican reggae to make it as “authentic” as possible. Then, over time, she contends that the “Jamaican model loses its authority to

varying degrees” and a “polyphonic, culture-specific authenticity...now resounds” (ibid). This is true to some extent in Hawai‘i, as I describe in more detail in Chapter 2. However, rather than a neat progression from privileging authenticity to the original culture to privileging a localized authenticity, reggae in Hawai‘i represented all parts of that spectrum at any given time. When reggae first arrived in Hawai‘i, there were artists who attempted to be as authentic as possible to the Jamaican original, but there were also artists whose main goal was to create their own version of reggae with a basis in Hawaiian music. This is also the case today. Simultaneously, more “mainstream” Localized reggae in Hawai‘i has become increasingly similar to Jamaican and U.K. reggae over time, especially within the last decade. Such a trend is the opposite of the trajectory that Cooper proposes.

Global listeners have also identified with the anti-colonial and anti-capitalist messages of reggae because they understand those messages to apply to their own situation. Speaking specifically about Australian Aboriginal reggae bands, George Lipsitz argues that they adopted Bob Marley’s pan-African vision and transformed themselves from a tiny national minority into part of the global majority of “non-white” people, finding that Marley’s performance of Blackness helped them understand what it meant to be Black in former British colonies in the South Pacific (1994:142). For members of dominant cultures, especially white Britons, reggae taught them about the problematic nature of colonialism and capitalism, allowed them to rebel, and offered “prestige from below” (111). Some Jamaicans do not appreciate this adoption or appropriation, but by and large this has not affected global enthusiasm for the music (Chude-Sokei 2012:224; Clough 2012:277). At the same time, reggae can exist in complex contexts, involving questions of appropriation and complicated power hierarchies amongst people of color.

Brent Clough points out that Bob Marley is extraordinarily popular throughout the Pacific, in part because Marley's messages of resistance to oppression seemed to speak directly to Pacific Islanders' experiences (2012:267). Clough notes that in Oceania, colonial structures are still largely intact in comparison to other postcolonial contexts—numerous island states and populations in the region are “governed in association with” or “cared for” by France, the U.S., Indonesia, Australia, and New Zealand (264), not to mention settler colonial contexts like Hawai‘i, Australia, and New Zealand. Marley's image and music are ubiquitous in Oceania (264). In fact, Marley was already known in Oceania by the time he physically arrived there as a part of the *Babylon By Bus Tour* that lasted from April 5 to May 6, 1979 (concerts.fandom.com n.d.). The tour stopped in Japan, Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand), and Hawai‘i (concertarchives.org 2021). Clough argues that Marley is the “unchanging model” for reggae, underscoring a myth of a singular, originating figure for the music (2012:264): “Across Oceania, hundreds, if not thousands, of amateur and professional musicians are interpreters of Marley's songs and play Marley-style reggae. Cassettes, CDs or sound files of his songs are staples in many private collections. Marley's songs are part of folk memory and can be called up in spontaneous performance at parties and social gatherings” (ibid). Sometimes Marley is even referred to as “Brother Bob” or “Uncle Bob” (ibid).

Clough contends that reggae has been the most fervently taken up in Aotearoa (New Zealand), particularly amongst Māori and the other Polynesian people who live there, as a vehicle for anti-colonial and anti-capitalist viewpoints (Clough 2012:268). In fact, Aotearoa has the highest rate of reggae consumption per capita in the world, particularly of Marley's music (Cattermole 2013:113), though hip hop became more popular than reggae in the

country in the 1990s (114). In her article on reggae in Aotearoa, Jennifer Cattermole explains the African signs that Polynesian reggae musicians use to express connections between Black people and Polynesians in Aotearoa. These include experiences of oppression, the “ghetto,” physical and cultural displacement from their homelands, and a desire to return (122). Some even problematically claim to have African roots, often in line with the idea that all of humanity is originally from Africa (129), although this is a controversial viewpoint among Polynesians in Aotearoa (130). Others have advocated for a coming together of people of color in unity and solidarity (ibid). Similarly, Gabriel Solis discusses Aboriginal Australian engagement with reggae, arguing that that and their use of other Black popular musics explicitly positions them as subaltern subjects in a global context (2015:298). Clough’s overview of reggae in Australia is more general and discusses engagement by Aboriginal Australians, Torres Strait Islanders, as well as Black and white artists (2010).

In a different vein, Monika Stern argues that reggae gives male youth in the city of Port Vila in Vanuatu safety and agency. She contends that for them, playing music creates a safe space, constructs discourses and images of a rebel artist in the political context of Vanuatu, while also allowing them to be involved in the “life of the city” (2017:3). Further, it allows them agency and the ability to express themselves freely and the means for building new communities and networks where “traditional” ways of doing so have seemed to have lost their value (ibid).

Like many of the localized versions of reggae described here, reggae has become popular in Hawai‘i because oppressed peoples there, particularly Kānaka Maoli, identify with its anti-colonial and anti-capitalist lyrics. However, as many of the authors that I cite

above describe in other places, the situation in Hawai‘i is more complex than simply identifying with this aspect of the lyrics. Kānaka Maoli and other Locals exist in a complicated context of settler colonialism, Indigenous sovereignty, anti-Black racism, sexism, and capitalism. It sometimes results in making decisions that support solidarity with Black Jamaicans and other people of color, and at other times, undermines that solidarity. Additionally, aesthetic identification with the music is very important in the context of reggae in Hawai‘i.

Contributions to the Literature

There have only been a handful of academic and semi-academic works on reggae in Hawai‘i (Weintraub 1998; Stillman 1998; ho‘omanawau 2006; Clough 2012; Berger 2012a; Junker 2015d). They offer histories of the music in Hawai‘i, and many of them insightfully focus on how Local and Kanaka Maoli identity are expressed and constructed through the music. However, these works are on a smaller scale—some of them focus on reggae in Hawai‘i as one of several contemporaneous musics produced in Hawai‘i (Stillman 1998) or one of several examples of reggae in Oceania (Clough 2012). Although the others focus solely on reggae in Hawai‘i (Weintraub 1998; ho‘omanawau 2006; Berger 2012a; Junker 2015d), they are also smaller endeavors—mine is the first dissertation-length study of this music. Further, the scholarship primarily focus on Jawaiian/island music/island reggae and may only mention artists from the underground scene in passing or not at all. I also contribute to the literature by discussing the global circulation of reggae from Hawai‘i and its impact on other reggae scenes. Finally, I take fan perspectives into account, which is not typical of such scholarship.

My study on reggae in Hawai‘i contributes to the literature on Hawaiian music and Hawaiian studies in a number of ways. First, my dissertation makes a major contribution to ethnographic research on Hawaiian music. The vast majority of literature on Hawaiian music is historical or text-based—in fact, there is only one ethnographic monograph on Hawaiian music at the time of writing (Fellezs 2019a). Second, there is very little scholarship written on Hawaiian music that was created after the 1970s, so my dissertation contributes to filling that gap. Third, both academic and non-academic discussions of reggae in Hawai‘i tend to emphasize only one facet of identity in relation to the music—Hawaiian, Local, or global. In my dissertation, I bring all of these together because I believe that it is necessary to do so in order to understand the full extent of the complexity of how identity works in this music. Finally, my study joins a recent and growing body of literature on Blackness in Hawai‘i (see Sharma 2018; Enomoto 2017; Warren 2017) and Blackness and Indigeneity more broadly (see King 2019; Rifkin 2019).

Regarding ethnomusicology, my approach to reggae in Hawai‘i using the categories of Indigenous, Local, and global is new. Typically, only two of the categories are considered in a given study, sometimes without privileging Indigenous worldviews. My dissertation grounds literature on globalization and localness in Indigeneity, contributes localness to scholarship on Indigenous music, and privileges Indigenous worldviews in studies of localness.

Typically, Indigenous people and culture are categorized as either or both traditional and political. This characterization is implicit in much of the discourse about Indigeneity inside and outside the academy. In ethnomusicology, anthropology, and even Indigenous studies, traditional culture occupies a privileged place. Ethnomusicologists have long

focused on traditional musics and only since the 1980s have had sustained interest in popular musics. In Indigenous studies, revitalization of the elements and material of traditional culture—language, for example—has been a primary way in which scholars have combatted colonial erasure. Fortunately, academics have increasingly focused on Indigenous popular musics over the last couple of decades. Much of the time, especially outside of ethnomusicology, they have also emphasized the decolonial aspects of Indigenous popular musics, like lyrics that critique colonialism. However, it is necessary to step outside of the categories of traditional and political in order to do justice to Indigenous musicians, listeners, and others involved in the scenes we write about. Truly taking on the implications of centering Indigenous worldviews, including those related to sounded Indigenous cultures, requires resistance to pigeonholing Indigenous people and culture into the categorizes of traditional and political. That is what I attempt to do in this dissertation.

Audra Simpson’s notion of “ethnographic refusal” involves refusing an imaginary “pure” Indigeneity that academic disciplines like anthropology assume (2014:99). Ethnographic refusal then prevents the colonial entrapment and containment that is the purpose of this sort of pure Indigeneity (ibid)—in fact, Maile Arvin points out that Indigenous knowledge and praxis can both be anti-colonial and participate in it (2015:121). Additionally, scholars like Elizabeth Povinelli and Glen Coulthard point out that the state and the university use “pure” definitions of Indigeneity to promote multiculturalism and diversity, create criteria for institutional recognition based on colonial discourses, and take away self-determination from Indigenous people (Povinelli 2002:6; Coulthard 2014:6). In this vein, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson advocates abandoning searching for legitimacy

within such colonial systems, such as those to Indigenize the academy in Canada, and reclaim the context from which Indigenous worldviews operate (2017:171).

Writing about Indigenous studies, Chris Andersen argues that the basis of the discipline's definition of Indigenous peoples should not rest on a fundamental difference from westerners. Rather, borrowing from Robin D.G. Kelley, Andersen contends that Indigenous studies should consider the “density” of Indigenous being in the world that “is constituted through the numerous subject positions” of contemporary Indigenous peoples that “eclipses staid tropes to come to terms with a more serious and infinitely less schematic livedness which defies easy (academic) description” (2009:92). In order to do this, Andersen asserts that it is necessary to take into account the ways in which whiteness and colonial oppression have shaped Indigenous peoples' experiences (81). Teresia Teaiwa thinks similarly, arguing that getting to choose one's intellectual ancestors, whether they be Indigenous or white, is true sovereignty (2014:52-53).

Brendan Hokowhitu points out that Indigenous studies scholars have also been fundamentally influenced by the “Enlightenment's tradition of dissent,” especially by Marx and Gramsci (2016:89). However, Hokowhitu asserts that this tradition of dissent is often paired with notions of pure Indigeneity (91). That is, resistance becomes a trajectory in which Indigenous peoples are supposed to “overcome” the physical and cultural destruction of colonialism to “reinvent themselves” in modernity as recognizably—that is, purely—Indigenous (ibid). In other words, resistance becomes a western criteria that makes Indigenous people “comprehensible” in the academy (ibid).

Similarly, in ethnomusicology, the continued use of the binary of traditional and modern as a theoretical framework regarding Indigenous music is problematic. Needing to

prove that Indigenous people are modern or opining that Indigenous people are letting their traditions die assume that tradition is static, perpetually in the past, and not fully human, when it in fact tradition is dynamic, spans time, and is fully human. Similarly, only focusing on Indigenous culture that is overtly political at the expense of more quotidian culture forces Indigenous people to only be recognized as Indigenous in resistance mode. Categorizing Indigenous people according to these sorts of binaries, then, reduces Indigenous people into colonial stereotypes. The way into an Indigenized future, one that treats Indigenous people as full subjects, is to sit in the mess of the simultaneity of everyday Indigenous life that frustrates binaries: foregrounding creativity and agency, which is traditional, modern, political, and apolitical all at once—in other words, just being ourselves. Stephanie Nohelani Teves calls this “defiant Indigeneity” (2018: xiv). Teves argues that defiant Indigeneity is Indigenous formations that are “devalued” by critical traditions in the academy and that comes from the margins (ibid). They involve “working between and across the quotidian spaces where Kānaka Maoli perform the routines of everyday life” that imagine new possibilities for being Kanaka Maoli (ibid).

Reggae in Hawai‘i is significant to studies of Indigenous music and Indigeneity more broadly because it disrupts long-held assumptions about Indigenous identity and culture. My dissertation joins scholarship from music studies on Indigenous music that similarly centers the complexity of Indigenous lived experience (see Samuels 2004; Diamond 2007; Scales 2012; Diamond, Szego, and Sparling 2012; Hoefnagles and Diamond 2012; J.B. Perea 2012; Dueck 2013; Berglund, Johnson, and Lee 2016; Jacobsen 2017; Przybylski 2017; Mays 2018; Levine and Robinson 2019; Robinson 2020). On a surface level, reggae in Hawai‘i is not obviously traditional or political. Yet, when one digs deeper, it is both those things as

well. For these reasons, reggae in Hawai‘i is a primary example of the messiness and simultaneity of defiant Indigeneity and is thus a critical site in the discussion of Indigeneity more broadly. Reggae in Hawai‘i is typically not considered Hawaiian music because it is neither overtly traditional nor political, but both elements are present below the surface. Reggae in Hawai‘i, then, frustrates colonial binaries and represents Indigenous people in the messiness of their daily lives.

Chapter Overviews and Theory Literature Reviews

Chapter 1 is a short overview of Hawaiian music and reggae history. The Hawaiian music section focuses on Hawaiian music genres that have been influenced by global forms from western contact in the late-eighteenth century onwards. The reggae portion begins in the 1930s with the creation of Rastafari and the development of Jamaican rhythm and blues. I trace both musics into the present day.

In Chapter 2, I review a history of reggae in Hawai‘i. It emerged from informal jamming, nightclubs, and non-commercial and commercial radio stations in the 1970s and 1980s. I also situate it at a crossroads of Hawaiian music and non-Hawaiian “leisure-dance” music. Reggae in Hawai‘i became increasingly popular throughout the 1980s, reaching a peak in the early-1990s. Traditionalists decried Hawaiian at this point, arguing that it was pulling young Hawaiians away from “real” Hawaiian music. Despite this backlash, reggae continued to remain popular and become increasingly normalized into Local musical imaginaries and the Hawai‘i music industry.

Chapter 3 deals with the basis of identity as it relates to reggae in Hawai‘i—the Hawaiian, or the Kanaka Maoli. I argue that Kanaka Maoli engagements with reggae

parallel Kanaka Maoli worldviews that consider genealogy simultaneously grounded in the ‘āina (land/environment) but constantly in motion like water. That is, Kanaka Maoli are grounded in particular aesthetics and ideologies about music into which reggae “fits.” In this chapter, I focus on the nahenahe (sweet-sounding) aesthetic and political consciousness. Reggae also “fits” because Kanaka Maoli worldviews entail being open to the new and different, and reggae represents a more recent addition in a long line of global musical forms that Kānaka Maoli have adopted into Hawaiian music.

Hawaiian music history since contact is emblematic of Kānaka Maoli worldviews: a solid foundation in identity and land coupled with an affinity for adaptability.³ Just like these other influences, reggae must be considered a piece of this long history of global influence and exploration. Scholars in the field of Native Pacific Cultural Studies, working in Pacific Island studies and Indigenous studies, have explored this groundedness and multiplicity in a variety of ways. According to Teresia Teaiwa, scholars working in this area “see our work as the expression of ‘Native’ genealogies, ‘Native’ commitments—complicatedly entangled with, but distinct from ‘colonial’ products” (2001:343). Teaiwa thus separates Indigenous and colonial elements, while at the same time acknowledging that they are very difficult to pry apart. Similarly, Judy Rohrer characterizes the work as moving “away from authenticity and toward continuities, contingencies, paradoxes, multiplicities, entanglements, and relationships” (2016:30). Jeffrey Carroll, Brandy Nālani McDougall, and Georganne Nordstrom express this multiplicity through using the ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i word “huihui,” which can mean mixed, joined, cluster, constellation, and the constellation the Pleiades (2015:1).

However, most of the Native Pacific Cultural Studies scholars tend to use the ocean as their primary metaphor for such multiplicity. Writer and anthropologist Epli Hau‘ofa was

foundational to this literature, and he argues that Pacific peoples should expand their subjectivities beyond the nation to resist settler colonialism (1993:6). He contends that the ocean should be the foundation of their subjectivities because it transcends the land associated with nations, which were created by colonial forces. Further, it resists settler colonialism because the ocean is the basis for “more traditional” Pacific ontologies. Even the history of Pacific scholarship is based in movement—Teresia Teaiwa’s discussion of Native Pacific Cultural Studies on the edge demonstrates the oceanic crossings that have constituted academic thinking on the Pacific, while also reminding academics to flatten their perspectives and not only consider the Pacific from the “high cliffs” of the urban centers on the edge of the ocean (2001:343). Paul Lyons and Ty P. Kāwika Tengan add on to this by contending that the metaphor for Pacific subjectivities and cultures should be currents, or “au” in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (2015: 546).

At the same time, many scholars recognize that Hawaiians or other Pacific peoples are often metaphorically rooted in or tossed around their landed ‘āina while riding the ocean currents. Similarly, Karin Animoto Ingersoll argues that Hawaiian epistemologies are both located in the ocean and parallel it. In her concept of a “seascape epistemology,” she maintains that Kānaka Maoli know the world through “knowledge of the sea” (2016:5). Despite being something that is always moving and adapting to change like colonial realities, a seascape epistemology anchors Hawaiians in a specific time and space (15-16). David A. Chang reclaims the term “exploration”: rather than conceptualizing Hawaiians as objects of western exploration, he argues that Kānaka Maoli were explorers in their own right. Kānaka Maoli took vast voyaging trips after arriving in Hawai‘i until around 1400 (2016:vii) and then rekindled this practice in the nineteenth century. They knew that there

were distant places throughout the Pacific, were interested in them, and knew that these lands held powerful and good things that Kānaka Maoli could use strategically. At the same time, they looked outward from Hawai‘i, with grounded knowledge of the land, sea, and sky (3). Vicente M. Diaz grounds Pacific worldviews in the canoe, a fundamentally mobile base that is nonetheless stable (2011:21-22). Diaz also discusses the Micronesian navigation technique of “etak,” which involves calculating the distance between one’s departure island and one’s destination island through their distance from a third island. Etak thus centers the navigator—rather than the navigator moving from island to island, the navigator stays stationary and the islands move around them (26). The navigator is a stable base in this moving world, even though the navigator is actually also moving.

Regarding music specifically, Joseph Keola Donaghy uses the hydrologic cycle of the ahapua‘a as a metaphor for musical composition, which he calls “mele as ahapua‘a” (2013:8). Ahapua‘a is a Hawaiian land division created in pre-contact Hawai‘i that typically begins at the tops of mountains and reaches the ocean, often stretching to coral reefs. The ahapua‘a is supposed to contain all of the elements needed to sustain life, such as food and the materials for shelter and tools. The ahapua‘a also typically contains all of the stages of the hydrologic cycle: rain falls at the tops of mountains, runs in rivers down to the ocean, and then evaporates into clouds, only to rain again at the mountaintops. In this metaphor, the individual composer’s “thought” trajectory is represented by water as it moves through the hydrologic cycle, “society” is the ‘āina, and the already existing body of compositions is the ocean (ibid). According to Donaghy’s model, an individual’s compositional trajectory must always be influenced by society and older compositions as it flows through the ‘āina and into the ocean. However, the individual adds their own creativity once the water evaporates

and is away from the ‘āina and ocean, and then falls and nourishes both, thereby influencing others.

Similar to Diaz’s understanding of canoes, Kevin Fellezs discusses *kī hō‘alu* (slack key guitar) and its circulation across the Pacific. Fellezs places Hawai‘i at the heart of his conceptualization of *kī hō‘alu*—as it moves throughout the Pacific to Japan and California like ships or waves, Hawaiian musicians retain a Hawaiian feeling and have agency in how the practice roots itself in these new places, not simply responding to capitalism and settler colonialism (2019a:29). Fellezs also reverses the typical hierarchies of the Pacific, where its rim is more important than its “empty,” watery center. He calls this place the “transPacific,” considering California an “east coast” and Japan a “west coast” of a transPacific that privileges Hawai‘i at its center (28).

In a slightly different context, James Revell Carr writes about *Kānaka Maoli* on whaling ships in the nineteenth century. He argues that these sailors were working-class cosmopolitans, working alongside other sailors from across the globe and traveling on the earth’s natural “byway” of the ocean (2014:8). Carr contends that cosmopolitan whaling ships presented a unique opportunity in which sailors could “mimic” the cultures of others without assimilating into them (10). Rather, it was an opportunity for *Kanaka Maoli* sailors to forge new identities for themselves through engaging with music like sea chanteys and minstrelsy while maintaining connections to their original culture (8-9). Moreover, *Kanaka Maoli* sailors shared their own music with others (9).

Hawaiian notions of identity and descent, while anchored in Hawaiian ‘āina, are multiple and rooted in these ways. They are genealogical,⁴ and though Hawaiian ‘āina is the origin point, the presence of other origins do not compete with or overshadow the Hawaiian.

Standards of authenticity like blood quantum, the length of residence in Hawai‘i, being born in Hawai‘i, or degree of participation in Hawaiian culture also do not affect this ontological foundation (Kauanui 2008:13; Arvin 2019:22). Daily being is multiple and fluid, as Paul Spickard documents in his study of multiracial Pacific Islander Americans, and it involves the shifting of modes amongst Pacific Islander Americans’ various ancestries depending on context. Their origins are “centers,” rather than an impetus for the erection of boundaries (2002:53).

In Chapter 3, I exemplify this rootedness and routedness through the examples of “father of Hawaiian music” Bruddah Waltah Aipolani and roots reggae fans Bernice Helgenberger Musrasrik and Fiore Anderson. Aipolani understands his initial interest in reggae as a new and different influence that he incorporated into his basis in “more traditional” Hawaiian music. Although Musrasrik and Anderson do not consider reggae to be compatible with certain Kanaka Maoli worldviews, it nonetheless led them to become aware of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement and to become more fully ingrained into Kanaka Maoli ways of being.

Chapter 4 focuses on the next layer of identity—the Local. In this chapter, I explain my notion of the “Kanaka Local,” one of the most important ways that the Local is experienced in reggae in Hawai‘i. I contend that although musicians, listeners, and scholars will often treat the Hawaiian and the Local as separate categories, it is necessary to put them in relation in order to understand reggae in Hawai‘i. The Kanaka Local is a more globalized variety of Hawaiian identity and culture that is typically glossed as Local. That is, the Kanaka Local names culture that is based in Kanaka Maoli worldviews and often enacted by Kanaka Maoli, but is somehow too global to be considered “traditional” Kanaka Maoli

culture. Much of the time, the elements of reggae in Hawai‘i that are called “Local” are actually the Kanaka Local. The elements of the Kanaka Local that I focus on in this chapter are: a basis in “more traditional” Hawaiian music, reciprocal relationships or lōkahi, and genealogical connection to place or mo‘okū‘auhau.

Generally, scholarship on the Local in Hawai‘i falls into two categories with significant overlap: literature that locates the term in a history of labor that began on sugarcane plantations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and scholarship that critiques the Local for perpetuating settler colonialism. Although both types of scholarship are significant to any study of the Local, they do not take into account the Kanaka Local. However, a number of scholars point towards its existence without naming it as such.

As early as 1979, Eric Yamamoto argued that there is no singular “type” of Local nor singular Local culture (1979:106). For instance, Eli R. Wilson asserts that Chinese and Japanese middle-class and upper-middle-class, white-collar office workers identify as Local (2019). In his interviews with them, they would draw attention to the “traits, values, and practices” that portray them as both Local and “professional”—in other words, the “right kind” of Local. Wilson contends that they defined themselves against haoles on the one hand and the “super Local” Asian, Polynesian, or darker-skinned custodial employees or employees who did manual labor in the office building on the other. These “super Local” or “too Local” individuals were typically working-class, had lower levels of education than the office workers, and tended to be Kānaka Maoli, Sāmoan, and Filipinx. Wilson’s work shows that race and class are not only salient to Local identity and culture, but that there are different *types* of Localness—a middle-class, East Asian, educated Local, as opposed to a brown, working-class, less educated, “super Local.” Candace Fujikane’s notion of a settler

ally, a settler who firmly places themselves on the “frontlines” of decolonial struggles (2018), could be another type of Local. A settler ally could share the race and class of Wilson’s self-identified “right kind” of Local but still be Local in a different way (2019).

In fact, “super Local” individuals are often Kanaka Maoli and are typically considered the “most” Local group. For instance, Jeffrey Moniz explains, “A Kanaka Maoli who possesses an Indigenous worldview may choose to identify as Local. This choice would not be contested because Kānaka Maoli are usually considered the most authentically Local identity associated with Hawai‘i” (Spickard 2018:186). Or consider a response to a survey about Localness that I describe in Chapter 4: one of the participants indicated that it was easier to consider a Hawaiian Local than an Asian (Edles 2004:58). Darby Li Po Price also points out in her analysis of Local humor that when multiracial Local comedians discuss their identity, they are the least likely to omit Hawaiian (2001:124).

Several scholars have noted that characteristics of the Local originated in Kanaka Maoli culture. Jonathan Y. Okamura identifies Hawaiian culture as the second principal influence on Local culture, after that of the continental U.S. (1980:121-122). He notes that important Local values that privilege relational ways of connecting to people and land come from Hawaiian culture (ibid). These values include minimizing personal gain in favor of “interpersonal harmony and satisfaction,” love of the land (aloha ‘āina), and being “easygoing, friendly, open, trusting, humble, generous, [and] loyal to family and friends” (121-122, 128). In addition, Georganne Nordstrom points out that pidgin has a foundational basis in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language) (2015:320). In its earliest years as a shared method of communication among plantation workers from disparate countries, she asserts that pidgin had a large number of Hawaiian words and a Hawaiian structure (320-321). This

was the case despite the fact that there were not great numbers of Kānaka Maoli plantation workers compared to those from other countries (ibid). According to ethnolinguist Larry Kimura, even after the early plantation days, pidgin's structure and inflection more closely resemble 'ōlelo Hawai'i than English (321).

Few scholars have written about the Local in music in Hawai'i, but all of them acknowledge the concept of the Kanaka Local in some way. Eugenia Siegel Conte uses the term "kama'āina" rather than Local, but considers the two to be synonymous (2016:20). She argues that for choral singers in Hawaiian churches, kama'āina means "of the island" rather than "of the land" (99), which moves away from connotations of Indigeneity and into the realm of the Local. Conte contends that these kama'āina choral singers are explicitly taught to code switch between musics from different places and that this skill parallels the negotiation that they must make as kama'āina in their daily lives in multicultural Hawai'i (ibid). She also notes that although some of the music that they perform is worship music based on mainstream U.S. continental popular music and traditional Protestant hymns in English, each choir programs and celebrates hīmeni (Hawaiian hymn music), music in 'ōlelo Hawai'i, and music about Hawai'i (98). Even though these choirs may consider themselves kama'āina and not Hawaiian, the way they define themselves as such is through their focus on Hawaiian choral music and Hawaiian identity, largely driven by Kanaka Maoli practitioners (99).

Amy Ku'uleialoha Stillman, Andrew Weintraub, and ku'ualoha ho'omanawanui have written about reggae in Hawai'i in a manner that deals with the Kanaka Local. Stillman explicitly categorizes Jawaiian as a Local music, specifically describing performers as being "allied with the performance of reggae" (1998:97). Although she considers Local music to

be distinct from Hawaiian music, she argues that Local music “cross-cuts” Hawaiian music in “interesting and even surprising ways” (1998:90). She considers Local music to be music that “explores local perspectives on issues of shared concern, as well as common sentiments and aspirations that unify Hawai‘i’s ethnically diverse population” (ibid). She asserts that although Local music contains a great deal of more mainstream U.S. popular music styles, it is “striking” how many musical groups have found success with producing music that is based on Local culture (96). Tellingly, the vast majority of the music she categorizes as Local is produced by Kanaka Maoli artists, much of it is in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, and the lyrics expresses Kanaka Maoli culture and worldviews. Additionally, her discussion of Hawaiian and Local music charts from July 1996 demonstrates the Kanaka Local. The Hawaiian and Local music charts are largely the same (99-100) and are heavily skewed towards Hawaiian music.

Weintraub also argues that Jawaian is Local music and identifies Local elements in specific Jawaian songs. However, these qualities are largely Hawaiian, which he acknowledges near the end of his piece (1998:86). Unlike Weintraub, ho‘omanawanui definitively argues that reggae in Hawai‘i is “rooted in Hawaiian culture” (2006:284). In fact, she contends that focusing on the Local is misleading because it obscures Jawaian’s fundamental reliance on Kanaka Maoli cultural elements (284). She also points out the problematic implications that arise from eliding this influence, namely that Kānaka Maoli have endured particular forms of oppression as Indigenous people of Hawai‘i (ibid).

Chapter 4 focuses on Kapena and Ryan “Jah Gumby” Murakami as examples of the Kanaka Local. Like Bruddah Waltah, the members of Kapena’s musical world is based in “more traditional” Hawaiian music even though they are often categorized as Local,

Jawaiian, contemporary, or non-Hawaiian. Additionally, the ways in which they interact with their audiences and other artists in the Hawai'i music industry is based in the Kanaka Maoli practice of reciprocal relationships or lōkahi. Murakami's understanding of his Local identity is the Kanaka Local and is based on lōkahi and mo'okū'auhau. Although the Kanaka Local is not necessarily present in the music he creates, Murakami lives it and supports it in regards to his other artist friends.

In Chapter 5, I consider the global, the final layer of identity in my dissertation. I assert that the global is what is typically left out of the Hawaiian and the Local, and I focus on two iterations of it in this chapter—Blackness and circulation. Even though Blackness is foundational for Kānaka Maoli and Locals as a medium through which to express their identities (i.e. reggae), it is often considered to be too global to fully fit into those categories. Reggae from Hawai'i has also circulated to other places and influenced reggae there. I concentrate on reggae rock in California, which was influenced by reggae from Hawai'i and has in turn, influenced reggae in Hawai'i. Like reggae from Hawai'i, reggae rock also has had a large following of non-Black people of color.

The concept of Blackness was born of circulation, and as it continues to travel, it has accumulated unexpected new meanings. Paul Gilroy's notion of the Black Atlantic describes such a notion of Blackness: it is western and modern but also challenges the conventions of western notions of identity and art (1993:73-4). He argues that the Black Atlantic is fundamentally hybrid and creole, using the metaphor of ships sailing around the Atlantic (3). As Black culture, especially music, has circulated outside of Black communities, it has accumulated new meanings shaped by the forces of colonialism and capitalism. For instance, white and non-Black people of color became fans of and appropriated Black

American music like hip hop, circulated through transnational corporations. This occurred to such a great extent that hip hop has become a global movement and has affected non-musical culture like language and fashion around the world.

One of the reasons that hip hop became so popular is what Halifu Osumare calls connective marginality (2007:63, 69-72). Connective marginality is the idea that marginalized peoples on a global scale identify with Black culture, specifically hip hop, because they recognize themselves to be similarly oppressed to Black people (63). That idea is an important part of why reggae initially and continues to be popular in Hawai'i. However, as Marvin D. Sterling describes in the context of reggae in Japan, many Japanese reggae musicians and fans use Blackness in a manner that works for them but is "stripped of its human substance" (2010:41). That is, they "opportunistically construct" Blackness for their own benefit and do not help or even engage with individual Black people (9).

It is much easier to critique Japanese appropriation of reggae in this regard, as Japan is a colonial power. However, power hierarchies become more complicated when discussing colonized non-Black people of color. Kyle Mays discusses Native American hip hop, arguing that Native people use the genre to engage with specific Native realities and challenge structural oppression like settler colonialism, white supremacy, and heteropatriarchy (4). However, he points out that there are tensions, including anti-Black racism within Native communities and appropriation of Native culture by Black rappers (90-91). He also argues that "through hip hop, Native artists are able to remix representations of indigeneity with blackness, and repackage a digestible form of being Native to their audiences. Importantly, they also challenge myopic conceptions of blackness in a way that respects but also expands the very notion of it" (89).

In addition, Black culture also signifies modernity on top of marginality. Gabriel Solis argues that Aboriginal Australian popular music artists identify and incorporate global Black musical forms into their own because it is “politically effective and serves as a way of recognizing and engaging the modern world system from an explicitly subaltern position” (2015:298). In addition, this means that Aboriginal Australians are also recognizable as oppressed in a global context.

I will now consider literature on the global circulation of popular music more broadly to inform my discussion of the relations of reggae rock and reggae from Hawai‘i. Music scholars and anthropologists have debated the extent to which globalization and circulation are governed by the structures of colonialism and capitalism versus individual agency and local contexts (Slobin 1993; Erlmann 1999). Jocelyn Guilbault contends that the global is not necessarily dominant or hegemonic culture, but is rather a “contested terrain where there are only locals engaged in a battle over transnational markets” (2006:138). Many music studies scholars also discuss the genre of “world music.” They tend to critique the practice of transnational recording companies and white artists profiting off of non-white artists from the global south (Feld 2000; Taylor 1997).

I am particularly interested in literature that focuses on the co-constitutive nature of the local and the global created through circulation. These authors discuss culture that makes multiple circuits around the global, multiplying and transforming as it goes (Tsing 2005; Lipsitz 1994). In the edited volume *Making Waves: Traveling Musics in Hawai‘i, Asia, and the Pacific*, various contributors discuss cultures that have traveled and formed in circulation in the Asia-Pacific region. Editors Christine R. Yano and Fredrick Lau describe this process as “making waves,” the process of musics traveling along global flows and then “instigating

ripples of change and generating new possibilities” (2018:2). They also consider how the Asia-Pacific region shapes and is shaped by such “musical waves” (ibid). Taking the ocean as a basis allows one to consider music as shifting structures that “instantiate a particular time and place”—a momentary snapshot (12). They point out the indeterminacy of what happens when music travels somewhere, of the mishearings or generative reinterpretations that might occur (8-9). However, they note that taking music out of context can be violent and problematic (10). Yano and Lau also acknowledge that many Pacific music cultures take place outside of dominant recording industries and ideological power structures and are thus less invested in them (13).

Chapter 5 focuses on reggae artist Maacho and reggae rock bands Rebelution and HIRIE. Maacho’s lack of commercial success as a Black Jamaican artist residing in Hawai‘i reveals that the Hawai‘i music industry privileges Local musicians. Maacho is not fully Local on a number of levels: he is not originally from Hawai‘i, Black people can only become conditionally Local, and Local people associate Blackness with the military. Both Rebelution and HIRIE have influences from Hawai‘i—Rebelution through interacting with reggae musicians from Hawai‘i while the band formed at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and HIRIE because lead singer Patricia “Trish” Jetton grew up in Hawai‘i. Both bands have now become popular in Hawai‘i and, similar to reggae in Hawai‘i, have become popular amongst non-Black people of color.

Reggae in Hawai‘i exists in a complicated and ever-shifting negotiation of the Hawaiian, Local, and global. At the same time, however obscured it may be, the Hawaiian still remains the basis for engagement with identity in reggae. For me, one of the most memorable moments of the MayJah RayJah festival, the concert with which I opened this

chapter, was when headliner Katchafire was being introduced. A DJ from one of O‘ahu’s reggae stations strolled onstage with a huge Hawaiian flag, which is often displayed to represent pride in one’s Kanaka Maoli heritage or the lāhui (Hawaiian nation), and urged the audience to welcome their “bredren” from New Zealand. Even in a such a commercialized and “not traditional” context, Hawaiian identity came through.

Chapter 1 *Hawaiian and Jamaican Music History*

Hawaiian Music

Reggae in Hawai‘i fits into a long history of Kānaka Maoli musicians incorporating global forms into Hawaiian music going back to the eighteenth century, when European explorers first made landfall on the islands. Beginning with Captain Cook’s and later explorers’ travels to Hawai‘i, Hawaiians went with them on voyages to California. Even in these early trips, Kānaka Maoli used hula to mediate their experiences of contact with Europeans and the people they met on the continental U.S. (Carr 2014:29). Hīmeni is another substantially western-influenced Hawaiian music that emerged in the early-nineteenth century—it is Hawaiian hymn music, sacred hymn texts translated into Hawaiian by Protestant and Catholic missionaries (Stillman 1987:224). The first missionaries to arrive in Hawai‘i—in 1820—were part of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and they were one of the earliest colonizing forces to arrive in Hawai‘i. Hīmeni is often performed with string band accompaniment, and there are also numerous secular songs done in the style (ibid).

Hawai‘i subsequently became a strategic stopping place in the early-nineteenth century, and numerous ships on trading and whaling routes sailing from the continental U.S. to Asia passed through the islands. This caused a great number of sailors to visit the burgeoning port cities of Hawai‘i like Honolulu and Lahaina (Carr 2014:101). Hawaiian sailors joined these ships and, in the process, incorporated elements from sea chanteys into their music (178). Kānaka Maoli also influenced the creation of more typical sea chanteys such as “John Kanaka” (1). Because of this influx of sailors into the islands, Hawaiians and

other Hawai‘i residents established businesses that catered to the sailors, providing entertainment in the forms of music, dance, and theater. Many of the sailors hailed from the east coast of the continental U.S, so their favorite performance genres included sea chanteys and minstrelsy (101). Hawaiian musicians, then, incorporated formal elements like western harmony and musical instruments like the banjo, ‘ukulele, guitar, and fiddle from the sailors into their music to produce genres like hula ku‘i (ibid). Kanaka Maoli performers even adopted minstrelsy because it was popular among American sailors and used the egregiously racist genre to negotiate the rapidly changing racial topography in Hawai‘i (137). Although this demonstrates great creativity on the part of Kanaka Maoli musicians, they worked in an environment of racism imported from the continent and colonial encroachment by missionaries who were beginning to gain political control and to stamp out Indigenous cultural practices like hula (111).

Later in the nineteenth century, Hawaiian musicians adopted western instruments. The guitar was first popularized in the 1830s in Hawai‘i when Mexican cowboys came to herd cattle on newly-formed ranches (Fellezs 2019a:86). One of the Hawaiian music genres to emerge out of the incorporation of the guitar is kī hō‘alu (slack key), which Kevin Fellezs defines as a Kanaka Maoli “fingerpicking open-tuning acoustic steel-string guitar folk music tradition” (20). Kī hō‘alu is associated with a romanticized version of paniolo culture, cowboy culture that is specific to Hawai‘i and is strongly associated with Kānaka Maoli. Kī hō‘alu guitarists often attribute the origins of the genre to Kanaka Maoli paniolos who adopted the guitar and incorporated Mexican and Spanish influences into Hawaiian music. However, Fellezs contends that there is little evidence to support this origin, as documents from ranches indicate that cowboys were spending their nights on opiates or exhausted from

work rather than creating new music (96). Kī hō‘alu eventually became an important expression of Kanaka Maoli identity and culture during the Second Hawaiian Renaissance in the 1970s.

The guitar was one of a number of string instruments—including the ‘ukulele, banjo, and violin—that later become adopted into different genres of Hawaiian music. This string band tradition was codified by Nā Lani ‘Ehā (Heavenly Four), a collection of royal composers consisting of siblings King David Kalākaua, Princess Lydia Lili‘uokalani (later, Queen Lili‘uokalani), Prince William Pitt Leileohoku, and Princess Miriam Likelike (Reece 2018:93). They were all prolific composers and multi-instrumentalists who wrote music about their contemporary lives and kingdom (ibid). They created string band-backed singing groups, which they called “glee clubs,” giving birth to the string band style that swept Hawai‘i and then went on to become popular globally, both through live performances and through recordings. The hula ku‘i also emerged out of this string band tradition, codified during the revival of hula by King Kalākaua and others around the time of his coronation in 1883 (Carr 2014:164). Kalākaua was known as a lover and patron of a great variety of music (ibid). In a statement of overt Indigenous nationalism, Kalākaua presented “more traditional” hula at his coronation, which had been banned by white plantation-owning and missionary elites, along with hybridized forms of music like hula ku‘i (Tranquada and King 2012:47). Some scholars consider this efflorescence of culture to be the First Hawaiian Renaissance.

Around the same time, the Royal Hawaiian Band, which King Kamehameha III had founded in 1836, reached its peak under the direction of Prussian military band leader Henry Berger (Reece 2018:97). After a U.S. military-backed junta of haole businessmen illegally

overthrew the monarchy, the members of the Royal Hawaiian band refused to declare allegiance to the new rulers and quit in protest (ibid). They created a new band, Ka Bana Lahui, and ventured on a railroad tour of the continental U.S., their repertoire including the string band music of Nā Lani ‘Ehā between more typical militaristic brass band music (ibid). After traveling and performing with Hawaiian music string bands on the continent, flutist Mekia (Major) Kealakai returned to lead the re-formed Royal Hawaiian Band in 1920, changing the focus of the group to the string band repertoire of Nā Lani ‘Ehā (ibid).

The most famous song composed by a member of Nā Lani ‘Ehā was probably “Aloha ‘Oe” by Queen Lili‘uokalani. It may have been the first example of Hawaiian music to circulate outside of Hawai‘i, beginning with its first performance on the continent in 1883 (Imada 2013:35). According to Adria Imada, Lili‘uokalani was inspired by her witnessing a young woman giving her male lover a lei in parting. However, Imada contends that elite haoles reinterpreted “Aloha ‘Oe” to obscure their role in their illegal overthrow of Lili‘uokalani in 1893. They created the story that Lili‘uokalani composed the song while under house arrest during the overthrow to “tragically and inevitably” (37) bid her kingdom farewell, which is now the song’s most common interpretation (39). “Aloha ‘Oe” became the most published Hawaiian song of the early-twentieth century (35): it was popularized at world’s fairs, was the bestselling recording between 1916 and 1918 (41), and would regularly greet tourists arriving in Hawai‘i up until the 1960s (42). Therefore, Imada argues that the song provided a way for haole elites to present a romanticized version of Hawai‘i’s colonization that obscured the actual violence of the process (36). Despite this colonial cooption, Hawaiian musicians from the early-twentieth century and into the present day perform the song as an act of resistance, reinterpreted for their own purposes (45).

“Aloha ‘Oe” was not alone, for there was a great deal of Hawaiian sheet music produced during this era. Amy Ku‘uleialoha Stillman, who has sifted through the repertoire and found many variants of any given song, discusses some of the challenges faced by someone attempting to compile it into a “critical edition.” She observes that the “critical edition,” the end goal of traditional musicology projects, is incompatible with Hawaiian sheet music of the nineteenth century because of “more traditional” Hawaiian cultural emphasis on variability (2005:70). The existence of many versions of a song, the fact that music changes over time, and the room left for improvisation are integral to musicking from a Kanaka Maoli perspective; however, these notions cannot be accounted for in a critical edition (ibid). Stillman, in her critical edition, ultimately chooses to include a wide range of genres (from the “more traditional” to more recent) to demonstrate the fluidity of pre-contact and global influence throughout the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries (77).

World’s fairs, vaudeville, and the advent of recording technology provided new contexts in which Kanaka Maoli musicians performed for global audiences in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. They subsequently sparked global crazes for Hawaiian music and inspired Americans to incorporate Hawaiian elements into their own music. Additionally, haole businessmen first established the tourist industry in Hawai‘i in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century (Desmond 1999:35), and it became a major factor in the incorporation of global forms into Hawaiian music. Focusing on music and dance, the industry made Hawaiian culture a distinguishing characteristic that marked Hawai‘i’s as unique from other tropical island paradises (Imada 2004:118).

In order to effectively capitalize on Hawaiian culture, haole businessmen needed to make Hawaiian land and people recognizable to potential white tourists from the continental

U.S. Just as this was happening, Tin Pan Alley composers started publishing overtly exoticizing songs with titles like “My Honolulu Hula Girl” and “Yaaka Hula Hickey Dula.” These songs, which became known as hapa haole (part white), generally had almost nothing to do with Hawai‘i; and composers even incorporated racist musical forms like the coon song into this music (Garrett 2008:172). However, Kanaka Maoli composers reinterpreted the genre, starting substantially with A.R. “Sonny” Cunha, known as the “father of hapa haole songs” (174). Cunha later mentored other hapa haole composers like Johnny Noble (ibid). Also influential was the radio program *Hawaii Calls*, which was broadcast from the Moana Hotel between 1935-1963 and featured hapa haole music. This program was meant for listeners on the continent, and it allowed U.S. broadcasters to appear “internationalist, open, and multicultural” without changing much about their programming philosophy (Smulyan 2007:64). Susan Smulyan calls these programmers’ approach a “carefully negotiated Orientalist version of Hawaiian culture” (ibid).

Beginning in the early-twentieth century, the ‘ukulele and the steel guitar circulated globally as signs of Hawaiianness. Jim Tranquada and John King argue that the ‘ukulele is derived from the Portuguese machete, first brought to Hawai‘i by Portuguese plantation workers from the Madeira Islands in 1879 (2012:37). They contend that the ‘ukulele became incorporated into Hawaiian music through King Kalākaua’s coronation (47), and that subsequently, haole elites recognized the commercial potential of Hawaiian music, and worked to get Kanaka Maoli musicians into world’s fairs (93). Hawaiian musicians also brought the ‘ukulele to the continental U.S., performing the newer popular music that made use of the instrument. These musical groups toured the continental U.S. throughout the early-twentieth century, participating in vaudeville acts, in the wildly popular play *The Bird*

of Paradise in the 1910s (75), and recording sessions. Eventually, musicians on the continent incorporated the ‘ukulele into non-Hawaiian music contexts like jazz in the 1920s (125) and amateur music making and music education later in the twentieth century (158). Solo ‘ukulele virtuosos from Hawai‘i who do not typically play Hawaiian music, like Jake Shimabukuro in the present day (162), continue to be popular in a global context.

The steel guitar has followed a similar trajectory to the ‘ukulele. John Troutman contends that Hawaiian musician Joseph Kekuku was the first to develop the steel bar and slide technique near the end of the nineteenth century (2016:59). He and other guitar players traveled to the continental U.S. at the turn of the century and performed at world’s fairs (most importantly, the 1915 Panama Pacific Exhibition in San Francisco), and subsequently toured throughout the country. Other Hawaiian music troupes toured Europe, Asia, the Pacific, the Middle East, and North Africa (76). The sounds of the guitar were disseminated globally through recordings, and they outsold every other genre of recordings at the time (95). Later, Hawaiian steel guitarists performed in Hollywood in the 1930s and 1940s (131). Despite the fact that these musicians performed in a commercialized and colonial context, they occasionally managed to insert oblique political critique into their music (86). Finally, Troutman argues Hawaiian musicians first introduced the slide guitar technique to Black and white musicians in the southern U.S., where it became a part of blues and country music. This important influence is often neglected because U.S record companies only categorized U.S. popular music according to a Black/white dichotomy (156), something that persists today.

Charles Hiroshi Garrett notes that the dissemination of Hawaiian music became a major way that people on the continent were introduced to Hawai‘i, through a sort of

cultural diplomacy (2008:171). In order to lure tourists to Hawai‘i, the tourist industry has mobilized discourses of an erotic and feminized soft primitivism to transform hula to fit white American expectations. These expectations included hula being sexualized and yet non-threatening, performed by hapa haole (part Hawaiian and part white) women, for a white male gaze. Additionally, in order to appeal to tourists, the industry compelled Hawaiian musicians to incorporate the most popular music on the continental U.S. of the time into Hawaiian music.

Ideologically, haole businessmen invoked extant western discourses of the Pacific that constructed Hawaiians as erotic, primitive, and feminized objects. Haunani-Kay Trask focuses on such sexualization of Hawaiian land and people and argues that the tourist industry in Hawai‘i has “prostituted” Hawaiian culture and land (1999:140). She maintains that, like prostitution, the tourist industry is highly exploitative and is a major cause of environmental degradation, low wages, land dispossession, and the highest cost of living in the country (144). In addition, Trask contends that the tourist industry has commodified Hawaiian culture and framed it as “available” for tourists, “like a lovely woman” (ibid). Discussing hula specifically, Trask argues that it has been transformed from a sacred, powerfully erotic form to “smutty,” commodified drivel (ibid).

More specifically, Jane Desmond locates the center of the Hawai‘i tourist industry in the body of the “hula girl.” She maintains that the tourist industry has constructed the female hula dancer, or the hula girl, as the most well-known sign of Hawaiian culture. Further, Desmond contends that the marketing of the sign and of its live performance have become central to the industry since the 1930s (1999:xxii). Additionally, the hula girl has powerful racist connotations. The tourist industry has constructed the female hapa haole phenotype

(part Hawaiian, part white) as the “look” of the “ideal native”—exotic, white enough to be non-threatening, not Black or Asian, and premodern (56).

Bringing many of these threads together, Adria Imada contends that Kānaka Maoli became legible and desirable to Americans, typically white Americans, through “hula circuits,” which thrived in the early- to mid-twentieth century (2012:5). According to Imada, these hula circuits were comprised of popular tours of hula performances, spanning the continental U.S. and Europe, and ranging from cities to small rural towns (ibid). Audiences attending the shows came to know Hawai‘i through the bodies and performances of hula girls, and in the process, Hawai‘i became known as an eroticized and feminized “space disposed to political, military, and tourist penetration” (6). Imada argues that these sexualized and gendered performances established an “imagined intimacy” between the U.S. and Hawai‘i, facilitated by the concept of “aloha,” which was framed as love and hospitality (11). In this way, the violence of colonialism, militarization, and possession could be obscured by benign metaphors of integration, assimilation, and submission (ibid).

Despite these powerful arguments that reveal the colonial violence inherent in the tourist industry, tourism has also presented opportunities for agency, creativity, and resistance on the part of Hawaiian musicians and dancers. For instance, Imada points out that female hula dancers who performed on hula circuits often engaged in modern activities that brought them status or that they simply enjoyed (64). She frames the activities as “counter-colonial”—while not resisting colonialism outright, hula dancers “deflected” and “evaded” forces that sought to exploit or trap in them in the past (65). Similarly, Elizabeth Buck argues that Hawaiian music of the late-twentieth century is constituted by the relations of tourist discourses of paradise and Indigenous discourses of sovereignty and authenticity

(1993:5). In addition, she characterizes the relationship of tourism and Hawaiian music as symbiotic: the tourist industry provides jobs and a market for recordings, while Hawaiian music enhances Hawai'i's attractiveness and entertains tourists (1993:178). Although Buck argues that the tourist industry has more power, it does not completely stamp out Kanaka Maoli constructions of community and identity (6).

Relatedly, Elizabeth Tatar contends that musicians have transformed Hawaiian music because of the tourist industry since its formal inception in the early-twentieth century. She contends that beginning with hapa haole music (1987:5), Hawaiian musicians have incorporated global forms to fit tourists' musical tastes (7). Later influences included genres like jazz and rock 'n' roll (15). Additionally, Tatar maintains that other forms of Hawaiian music became "more traditional" in opposition to tourist music, even if this "more traditional" music was overtly hybrid (7). The forms include mele oli and mele hula (chanting based on pre-contact material), hula ku'i, hīmeni, and later genres (5).

Musicians continue to perform Hawaiian music for tourists in the present day. Like their predecessors, they perform music that is recognizably Hawaiian in a global context but incorporates western elements. These include hapa haole, slack key, and other popular music played on Hawaiian instruments like the 'ukulele. In his study of hapa haole music in the early-twenty-first century, Masaya Shishikura explores how the genre is not merely tourist fodder, but is meaningful to its practitioners. He argues that hapa haole music evokes nostalgia in two manners: first, as American colonial nostalgia for an "exotic-romantic Hawai'i" promulgated by the tourist industry, and second, as Local "adoration" for a past Hawai'i as home (2007:120). Shishikura notes a "sense of loss" in both brands of nostalgia in his interviews with hula practitioners who perform hapa haole (130). He maintains that

tourist nostalgia is based on colonial desires for premodern exotic and feminine lands and peoples, while Local nostalgia longs for the “good old days” when far more musicians and dancers performed the music (ibid). Further, Shishikura contends that the practitioners also recognize hapa haole’s continuity with older forms, which many others deem to be “more authentic” than hapa haole music (132). These hula practitioners’ engagements with hapa haole continue to reproduce the relations of a colonial tourist industry with Local and Indigenous agency. In other words, they “take back” a music that Hawaiian musicians originally created for others and is typically considered not Indigenous enough and too exploitative to be applicable to Hawaiians. Such a re-appropriation presents a critique of the tourist industry in Hawai‘i because it reveals the multiple layers of meaning that create music for tourists rather than obscuring it, as is the case in most tourist or Indigenous-centric contexts.

Moving into the mid-twentieth century, other genres of Hawaiian music appeared. There was Hawaiian music presented by “medium-sized instrumental ensembles” in Waikīkī hotel showrooms and nightclubs, often accompanying after-dinner dancing (Stillman 2014). Another style emerged during this time, which has now become known as *leo ki‘eki‘e* or falsetto style. Today, the style is generally what interviewees described to me when they talked about “traditional Hawaiian music.” The genre is based on the core of the hula ku‘i ensemble, or the “ukulele trio”—ukulele, rhythm guitar, and bass (ibid). Sometimes a steel guitar and/or Hawaiian semi-improvised piano can provide fill-in embellishments (ibid). The singing style is falsetto, in some ways influenced by pre-contact chanting-inspired ornaments. The songs, typically in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language), are in the hula ku‘i form.

However, Hawaiian music changed in the late-1960s and early-1970s, influenced by the civil rights and race-based power movements simultaneously occurring on the continental U.S. George H. Lewis argues that this period of time was marked by a resurgence of interest in “more traditional” Hawaiian culture and political awareness of colonialism (1984:41). It came to be known as the Hawaiian Renaissance (scholars sometimes call it the Second Hawaiian Renaissance), inspired by a speech by George Kanaha in 1977 outlining the characteristics of the movement (ibid). Lewis contends that the music produced during this period departed strongly from earlier music for tourists (42). He further maintains that the music, which came to be known as contemporary Hawaiian music, made important interventions into Hawaiian political consciousness (49). Through the lyrics and sounds, Kanaka Maoli musicians brought to light the ecological and cultural effects of mass tourism, the importance of preserving “more traditional” ways of life, and the colonial destruction of land and people (ibid). Although most of the music is overtly globally-influenced, drawing from western harmony, using western instruments, and utilizing conventions from western popular music, musicians included “more traditional” instruments like the ipu, pahu, and ‘uli‘uli. Haole elites had driven these instruments and musical forms underground in previous decades, so their revitalization was a political statement (48). Lewis also points to the importance of kī hō‘alu (slack key), most famously performed by Gabby Pahinui, which was then brought into the public sphere and helped instigate the movement (44).

Since the Second Hawaiian Renaissance, overt musical resistance has remained important in Hawaiian music. For this reason, the music of specific hip hop artists is to some extent accepted as part of Hawaiian music. According to Fay Yokomizo Akindes, hip hop

serves as a “liberatory discourse” for Kānaka Maoli seeking sovereignty (2001:95). Akindes focuses on the music produced by perhaps the most famous Hawaiian rap group, Sudden Rush, which came into prominence in the 1990s. Akindes argues that Sudden Rush members consider themselves to be messengers of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement (93). They take steps to ensure that their message is heard and understood throughout Hawai‘i and that it connects physically and psychologically displaced Kānaka Maoli back to their ‘āina (land/environment) (94). She contends that one of the ways they achieve this is by grounding their individual identities in their Indigenous identity to give their message rhetorical strength (95), which they do through referencing “more traditional” Hawaiian culture (93). For instance, they often rap in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i. Additionally, Akindes argues that Sudden Rush departs from “more traditional” elements to facilitate spreading their message widely. For example, they are overt in declaring their political agenda, rather than evoking it obliquely through kaona (multiple layers of meaning), a rhetorical strategy that Hawaiian musicians have long utilized to evade political oppression (90). Further, Akindes maintains that Sudden Rush uses rap as a medium to facilitate connection to youth because they signify the future and the potential for political change (93). Similarly, Stephanie Nohelani Teves argues that Kanaka Maoli rapper Krystilez strategically resists and yet utilizes state-mandated notions of blood quantum and authenticity for his own advancement (2018:61).

Global interest in Hawaiian culture has continued in the past several decades. Israel Kamakawiwo‘ole’s smash hit, “Over the Rainbow/What a Wonderful World” (first released in 1990), has been used in a myriad commercials and Hollywood movies while simultaneously relaying a message of Indigenous resistance. Israel Kamakawiwo‘ole

originally came to prominence in the band Mākaha Sons of Ni‘ihau in the 1970s and went solo in the early-1990s, eventually attaining international recognition. Ricardo D. Trimillos argues that Kamakawiwo‘ole’s cover of “Over the Rainbow” is an entextualization of the original, first released in the film *The Wizard of Oz*. According to Trimillos, entextualization involves the removal of a cultural element from its context, which allows agents to infuse it with alternative meanings (2018:189). Trimillos contends that Kamakawiwo‘ole incorporates Hawaiian musical elements into the cover to resist hegemonic commercial musical forms and promote Hawaiian sovereignty (198). However, in a global context, he maintains that the song becomes disembodied and loses its Hawaiinness and message of resistance (200).

Jamaican Popular Music

In Hawai‘i, reggae artists consistently compare themselves to Jamaican reggae musicians and bands like Bob Marley, Black Uhuru, Roots Radics, and Chronixx. They also draw comparisons with certain famous global artists, notably those in the U.K.—Steel Pulse, Aswad, and UB40, for example—and a smattering of other places, including Alpha Blondy from Cote d’Ivoire. These performers provide the original template for reggae in Hawai‘i, and they serve as an ongoing point of reference, regarded as “more authentic” representations of the genre and its focal point. Additionally, reggae artists in Hawai‘i imported certain aspects of reggae language and other cultural practices, so it is necessary for me explain what they are and where they come from in order for my description of the scene in Hawai‘i to make sense. Several scholars and journalists have written definitive and comprehensive histories of reggae (White 1984; Hebdige 1987; Chang and Chen 1998;

Bradley 2000; Katz 2012; Manuel and Largey 2016), and here, I will go over some of the most critical moments in the history of Jamaican popular music.

The word “reggae” most commonly refers to the genre that is also known as roots reggae, which was popularized in the 1970s and 1980s. This is the genre that has become the most influential in Hawai‘i. At the same time, “reggae” is also used as a category to refer to several genres of Jamaican popular music that existed from the 1960s to today: ska, rocksteady, roots reggae, dub, and dancehall. Some of the genres have very different aesthetics qualities compared to roots reggae, especially dancehall, while others, like rocksteady, sound quite similar. Compared to other reggae genres, roots reggae is slower, has a pronounced, melodic bassline, tends to be in a minor key, and is often associated with Bob Marley. In Hawai‘i, “reggae” typically means roots reggae, but can also signify the broader category. Likewise, I primarily use “reggae” to refer to roots reggae and occasionally employ it to name the larger category in my dissertation.

The origins of Jamaican popular music lie in a coming together of Jamaican folk music based in African forms and continental U.S. popular music in the twentieth century. In the 1930s-1950s, a specific split in musical taste based on class began to occur. Middle-class and upper-middle-class Jamaicans began to become interested big band music, which was performed in hotels and dance halls (Chang and Chen 1998:16). In the late-1940s, sugar cutters temporarily migrated from Jamaica to the U.S. south and brought back rhythm and blues to Jamaica (19). In the 1950s, there was a substantial migration of working-class people from rural areas who moved to Kingston to seek better economic opportunities, and they became very interested in rhythm and blues (15).

Not long after, entrepreneurs started to create what became known as “sound systems”—“large, mobile discotheques playing at dances, houses, parties, fairs and nightclubs” (Chang and Chen 1998:19)—which are often outside. Essentially, a sound system is a collection of record players, speakers, microphones, and other record-playing equipment that was controlled by a small group, creating a “dancehall” where they would play records, and people could come to dance and listen to the music. Sometimes “sound system” means the equipment only, and in other cases, the term refers to the group of people that own the equipment. Buying records and record players was expensive, as was attending the middle-class and upper-middle-class dancehall and hotel events. Originally, in the 1940s, shop owners would play music loudly in their stores to entice passing trade into bars and shops (Goffe 2020:97; Bradley 2000:4). It then became a social phenomenon in its own right within approximately ten years (Bradley 2000:5). The sound system became a key element for the dissemination of Jamaican popular music. The people who owned sound systems—Clement “Coxsone” Dodd, Arthur “Duke” Reid, and Cecil “Prince Buster” Campbell among them—eventually created key record companies that were the foundation of the Jamaican recording industry (19).

At first, sound system operators would play “harder” rhythm and blues from the U.S. that was not being played on the radio or in live venues in Jamaica, but they soon turned to local musics (White 1984:51). By the 1950s, Jamaicans had started to create their own rhythm and blues (also known as “proto-ska”), possibly motivated by the intense rivalry between sound systems and a desire for locally-produced records (Stolzoff 2000:4). A factor may also have been Jamaicans’ dislike of newer rock ’n’ roll coming from the U.S., their preference being for the “harder,” driving beat of older rhythm and blues (Chang and Chen

1998:21). In addition, this new Jamaican popular music became clearly stratified according to the racialized class system of Jamaica—lighter-skinned, brown, middle and upper-middle class people defined themselves against the sound system culture, whereas lower or working-class Black people identified with it (Stolzoff 2000:6).

As this musical innovation was occurring, Rastafari started to become increasingly popular and eventually began to influence Jamaican popular music to a great extent. The Jamaican religion of Rastafari, especially its imagery, has become influential in Hawai‘i. Not all reggae musicians are Rastas and not all Rastas are reggae musicians, but the religion has become an important part of the appeal of reggae in Hawai‘i and on a global scale. Also, reggae eventually became the primary vehicle for Rastafari’s global spread (Stolzoff 2000:80). Founded in the 1930s, Rastafari’s core beliefs are that Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia, whom they also call Ras Tafari or the Lion of Judah, is the messiah and that the Black liberationist Marcus Garvey was his prophet (Murrell 1998:2). Rastafari is based in Judeo-Christian traditions, African cultures, and is in some ways similar to other Afro-Caribbean religions (4). Rastas (followers of Rastafari) are pantheistic, believing that God resides in everything and thus all life and the earth must be protected. They aspire to world peace and racial harmony, and accordingly, they strive for social, economic, and political reform (4-6). They also believe in raising consciousness about the beauty of African heritage (4). Finally, Rastas believe that Black Jamaicans are stuck in a colonial “Babylon,” which has come to mean oppressive and corrupt systems everywhere, and need repatriate to “Zion” in Ethiopia, which they regard as the true home of Black people (5).

Before the mid-1970s, Rastas also believed that the ways of white men were evil, that Jamaica specifically was Babylon, that it would fall, and that the master/slave hierarchy

would be reversed (6). Beliefs have changed since then, as returning to Africa has become voluntary and can also be symbolic. Vilification of whiteness is less prominent, and Babylon now includes all oppressive and corrupt systems in the world. Rastafari has also historically been dominated by men, and since the 1980s, women Rastas have spoken out against patriarchy within the religion (ibid).

Two elements of Rastafari have become strongly associated with reggae music globally: dreadlocks and marijuana. Dreadlocks are a significant part of the Rasta bodily image, and there are several origin stories for their importance. These include one of the vows of the Nazarites from the Book of Numbers, which forbade them to trim their hair or shave, and a basis in Africa (Edmonds 1998:31). Near the beginning of Rastafari's spread in the 1940s, several small groups of Rastas adopted dreadlocks to look "fearsome" or to directly "assault" Jamaican social norms, and the style took off from there (ibid). Marijuana (called ganja) is used as a recreational, medicinal, and ritual substance in Rastafari. Some anthropologists have argued that this usage comes from Central African uses of the plant, though others have argued that it was brought by (East) Indian laborers (1998:131).

Marijuana is an important part of global reggae scenes, and Hawai'i is no exception. When I asked interviewees about the importance of marijuana in the scene, they generally agreed that there was a connection between marijuana and reggae. However, they disagreed about its importance and any one-to-one correlation—that people who smoked marijuana would be more likely to have an affinity for reggae or vice versa. However, for some, marijuana was part of the appeal of reggae. In fact, several described unlearning damaging stigmas about it through reggae songs. People generally agreed that smoking it while

listening to reggae made the experience more enjoyable, and audience members at the concerts that I attended certainly partook in it.

In the mid-twentieth century, Jamaican popular musicians started to become interested in the music of Rastafari and visited Rasta camps to participate in the music (Chang and Chen 1998:27). This music was Nyabinghi drumming (26-27). Perhaps the most striking aspect of Nyabinghi drumming is a two or three note rhythm that is constantly repeated throughout Nyabinghi songs. The rhythm was adopted into reggae, and in roots reggae, became the bubble and skank (described below). Sound system owner Prince Buster eventually hired Count Ossie (Oswald Williams), a Nyabinghi drummer, to record alongside other popular musicians (27).

After Jamaica became independent in 1962, there was still a great deal of discontent, part and parcel of the migration from rural areas to western Kingston. The cultural changes of the time period were expressed in sound system culture (Chang and Chen 1998:31; Stolzoff 2000:77) and it yielded ska, which is often considered to be the first “originally” Jamaican popular music. Some have described ska as a union of Jamaican mento rhythm (mento is a Jamaican folk music) with rhythm and blues (Chang and Chen 1998:30). The most celebrated ska band is probably the Skatalites, led by trombonist Don Drummond. Ska retained the rhythm and horn sections of jump blues bands, which thrived in the U.S. in the post-World War II time period (Louis Jordan’s band is probably the best known example), but it has a distinctive, driving emphasis on all of the off-beats and is fast and danceable. Ska also became popular outside of the Black Jamaican working-class, as “uptown” middle- and upper-middle-class teenagers would go “downtown” to the lower or working-class areas of Kingston to listen to the music (Stolzoff 2000:66).

The notion of the “rudeboy” started to take hold around 1961 and musicians began to celebrate them in songs (Hutton 2010:28). Rudeboys were gangsters who embraced “audaciously bold reckless courage, defiance and impish adventurousness usually identified in Hollywood cinematic characters, especially those in Western and gangster movies,” and they were in fact influenced by the movies (27; Stozloff 2000:82). They “haphazardly” incorporated Rastafari into their image, adapting it to become more secular and politically confrontational (Stozloff 2000:81). Rudeboys eventually became pawns of a catastrophic political rivalry between the two dominant political parties in Jamaica: the Jamaican Labor Party (JLP) and the People’s National Party (PNP), which shaped the social landscape for the next thirty years (Hutton 2010:29; Stolzoff 2000:83). The parties checkered Kingston into political garrisons, violence increased extraordinarily, and eventually guns were introduced (Stolzoff 2000:84). Violence between political gangs came into sound system culture and gang members became influential players in it, though some songs were also critical of rudeboy culture (ibid).

The globalization of ska began almost as soon as the genre first appeared on the music scene in Jamaica. In fact, it became popular in England among Jamaican expatriates and other Caribbean immigrants before it became popular in Jamaica (Connolly 2002a). The song “My Boy Lollipop” by Millie Small, which is a cover of the 1957 Barbie Gaye rhythm and blues song, was recorded in the U.K. and became the first reggae record to become popular globally. Several other songs from the U.K. followed suit (Chang and Chen 1998:35). Chris Blackwell of Island Records, which sold Jamaican popular music but was based in the U.K, recorded this song (Bradley 2000:151). A number of ska musicians moved to England in order to capitalize on the genre’s popularity. By contrast, ska proved to be

much less successful in the U.S. (Bradley 2000:138; Chang and Chen 1998:37). After being initially popular in the U.K. in the 1960s amongst white, working-class subcultures like the mods, ska became popular there again in late-1970s. This revitalization had an anti-racist agenda, involved both Black and white artists, and became known as 2 Tone (Traber 2013:8).

Around 1966 in Jamaica, the sound of Jamaican popular music started to change into what became known as “rocksteady.” Rocksteady is slower than ska, focuses more on the singers (solo and group) than instrumentalists (which had been the case with ska), is known for “outstanding balladeers” and love songs, though there is an introduction of an “ominous” tone to much of the music (Stolzoff 2000:89). Basslines became more melodic, and it featured lyrics that dealt with rudeboys, oral tradition, Rastafari, and Black power ideology (ibid; Chang and Chen 1998:40-41). Many of the musicians from the ska era continued on into rocksteady. There was also a shift from centering sound system culture to emphasizing recording. Certain famous sound systems stopped performing live and shifted to running recording studios, notably Sir Coxsone Dodd’s Downbeat and Duke Reid’s Trojan (Stolzoff 2000:1998). Other sound systems moved inside because of the escalating violence in Kingston (ibid).

There are a number of songs that could qualify as the first reggae song (also known as roots reggae), though many agree that “Do the Reggay” by Toots and the Maytals was probably the first song title to include the word “reggae.” The song was named for a particular dance. Musically, reggae sounds a great deal like rocksteady (Chang and Chen 1998:42). The riddim (instrumental portion) has a pronounced emphasis on beats 2 and 4, which is emphasized by the skank and bubble. The skank is a stroke or double stroke on the

guitar on those beats, which some have argued is where the term “reggae” comes from—“regg-ae.” The bubble—rhythmic harmonization on the keyboard and often on an organ setting—also emphasizes 2 and 4. Another characteristic of reggae is the one-drop, a drum rhythm that emphasizes 3. The name one-drop refers to the fact that beat 1 is deemphasized or “dropped,” the opposite of much of U.S. continental popular music. Some interviewees described the one-drop to me as having the opposite groove of rock for that reason. Underneath it all is a prominent melodic bassline, which some musicians have described to me as the main melody. The vocals, influenced by rhythm and blues and other U.S. popular genres, often features a lead vocalist backed up by a vocal harmony group or a vocal harmony group by itself.

Although reggae is often rightly touted as being “conscious,” and musicians and listeners value the lyrics a great deal, Kevin O’Brien Chang and Wayne Chen point out that reggae emerged from a leisure dance-oriented cultural context. They describe reggae in this way:

In a sense reggae combines all the previous forms of Jamaican popular music—the ska riff on top of a slowed down rocksteady bass line with a dash of mento influence. Rastafarian influences were heard in increasingly pointed spiritual, social and political commentary. Lyrics called attention to the reality of Ghost Town, Denham Town, Trenchtown, Waterhouse [ghettos in Kingston]. Some analysts have placed a lot of emphasis on this aspect of the music, claiming that ‘Reggae is not just music, more a philosophy, with the advice handed out to a danceable beat.’ But history shows that the core of Jamaican music is the ‘riddim’, not the meaning. How it sounds has always been more important than what it says (1998:43)

The anti-colonial edge of Jamaican popular culture was always present, as David Bousquet argues (2020:217-218), but it is important to remember that listeners and dancers were gathering at sound systems to enjoy and to be themselves. This is also the case to a great extent with reggae in Hawai‘i, where reggae emerged from a nightclub and backyard

context in which musicians were performing the music for their own enjoyment or the enjoyment of others.

In the late-1960s, two-track recording technology also brought about two important musical innovations invented and/or facilitated by Osbourne “King Tubby” Ruddock: dub and DJing. (Stolzoff 2000:92) At one point, King Tubby played test pressings of a record on acetate, which had much of the vocals dubbed out. He liked how it sounded, so he brought it to a sound system dance and it became extremely popular. King Tubby’s “dub versions” of a song then began to appear on the B-side of records (ibid). DJs began to “talk” over the records—which became known as toasting and is similar to rapping. They also sang over the records live, improvising and making their own versions of the songs. In reggae parlance, the DJ sings and toasts while the selector plays the records. This is the opposite naming practice of hip hop, in which the DJ plays the records and the MC raps. The dub versions that DJs sang over became known as rhythms or riddims, and riddims have also been described as the instrumental portion of a reggae song. Eventually, record producers decided to record DJs, who had become extremely popular for their live performances, but these records did not take off until Ewart “U-Roy” Beckford, King Tubby’s popular selector, started to make DJ recordings (ibid).

Dub was the other important innovation that King Tubby created. He realized that he could manipulate the two tracks of a dub using various recording devices while still keeping the song recognizable to listeners—he could drop the vocals out of the mix, add intensity to the sound, and incorporate effects like reverb, echo delay, and different sound overlays (Stolzoff 2000:92-93). Michael E. Veal describes dub as a “remix” of the original song, and “a style that is built around fragments of songs over a hypnotically repeating reggae groove”

(2007:2). Lee “Scratch” Perry, Errol “Errol T.” Thompson, and others were also innovators in dub. Veal points out that dub and its techniques have become a cornerstone of global popular music, especially in dance music like techno, house, ambient, and more (ibid).

Although reggae was already popular in the U.K. in the 1960s, it “exploded” on a global level in the 1970s when roots reggae was invented (Stolzoff 2000:94). International record companies started to become interested in the potential of reggae in the U.S. and European markets. In fact, before the Wailers were signed to Chris Blackwell’s Island Records, the band was signed by the American producer Danny Simms. Eventually, Blackwell bought out the Wailers’ contract and then financed their album *Catch a Fire*, released in 1972, which became the first of Bob Marley’s extraordinarily popular albums (ibid). Blackwell also made the brilliant move to market Bob Marley and the Wailers as a rock band aimed at an alternative, “hippie” rock audience (read: white) (Connolly 2002b; Farley 2010:168-169). Marley also received extensive promotion and became a crossover hit (Stolzoff 2000:94). His success sparked the so-called golden age of reggae or roots reggae music (ibid). The 1972 Perry Henzell film *The Harder They Come* starring Jimmy Cliff also became an international global success and became one of the most significant mediums for the dissemination of reggae globally (Chang and Chen 1998:48). Eric Clapton’s cover of “I Shot the Sheriff” also helped popularize reggae (51).

Over the next few years, major U.S. labels like CBS began to sign Jamaican acts to the point that reggae became the most influential non-western popular music form at the time (Stolzoff 2000:94). The globalization of roots reggae thus raised the economic stakes in Jamaica and competition increased (ibid). In fact, it became fashionable for rock musicians and non-Jamaican record producers to record in Jamaica (57). According to Chang and

Chen, global record companies started to demand that artists sound and look like Rastas, especially to grow dreadlocks and have conscious lyrics, in order to be considered for a recording contract (ibid). Chang and Chen argue that for many Jamaican artists, the goal became a record deal rather than local success (58). In fact, Linton Kwesi Johnson characterized the music of these artists as having a different sound, which he called “international reggae” (49). As demonstrated by the recordings of Dennis Brown and Big Youth, artists who achieved international fame in Bob Marley’s wake, this included significant influences from rock, soul, blues, and funk not present in more localized reggae (ibid).

Although Jamaican popular musicians had been interested in Rastafari for decades, greater numbers of artists were becoming interested in it and growing dreadlocks in the 1970s (Stolzoff 2000:95). More locally popular groups like Burning Spear, The Mighty Diamonds, Culture, and Israel Vibration became more deeply influenced by Rastafari (Chang and Chen 1998:54). In fact, Rastafari became accepted in Jamaican society at large during this time. Previously, the middle- and upper-middle classes “reviled” Rastafari and it was highly stigmatized (53). However, in the 1970s, while running for prime minister, Michael Manley and his democratic socialist PNP party used reggae and Rastafari to gain popularity among the Black Jamaican lower- and working-classes (Murrell 1998:9; Chang and Chen 1998:48; Stolzoff 2000:95).

Emerging in this context was a split between the Rastafari-influenced, international style of reggae and localized, Jamaican DJ music (Stolzoff 2000:97). DJs tended to perform in Jamaican patois and their lyrics covered local concerns (and were thus not understandable to a global audience), whereas international reggae used Jamaican Standard English and

spoke to more generalized concerns. Eventually, sound system culture returned in the 1970s after retreating in the late-1960s, and DJs began to perform live, which became known as rub-a-dub (98). Sound system clashes, which in previous decades were decided by the quality and amount of equipment one had amassed and the volume of its output, switched to privileging the performance of live entertainers and their virtuosity in working the crowd (99). At the time, it was difficult to find DJ music outside of the sound system, as it was not allowed on the radio and was only popular with Jamaican expatriates overseas (98). DJs then became as or even more popular than international artists in Jamaica, but the situation was reversed in a global context (Stolzoff 2000:98; Veal 2007:8).

As the 1970s continued, Jamaicans in the U.K. decreasingly identified with the reggae produced in Jamaica (Connolly 2002b). Children of Jamaican and other Caribbean immigrations were becoming increasingly middle-class and did not see themselves in the suffering and racial and economic strife depicted in roots reggae (Connolly 2002b; Hebdige 1987:124). In response, they created their own music called lover's rock, which was smoother, more influenced by soul, and spoke about love relationships. Importantly, lover's rock was to a much greater extent sung by and aimed at women, unlike the rest of reggae (Hebdige 1987:120). Important artists include Carroll Thompson, Janet Kay, Louisa Mark, and 15, 16, 17. Initially, much of this music did not do well in Jamaica, but, by the late-1970s, lover's rock had become a significant influence on Jamaican musicians (121). Several Jamaican musicians even moved to London because they were more attracted to this kind of music. England thus became home to expatriate Jamaican artists like Gregory Isaacs, Sugar Minott, and Dennis Brown (122).

The election of Edward Seaga in 1980 and the death of Bob Marley in 1981 marked a distinct change in reggae: a new genre, which became known as dancehall (also known as ragga or raggamuffin), began to become extremely popular. Dancehall has been described as “jittery” and “aggressive” by comparison to roots reggae, and the skank-based rhythm became one possibility among many (Manuel and Largey 2016:202). Dancehall is centered on toasting on a repeated melody over a riddim. Riddims are also recycled, as they had been in earlier decades, but sometimes they are written anew. In 1985, riddims “went digital” with the Wayne Smith song “Under Mi Sleng Teng,” which then became extremely popular (Stolzoff 2000:106). From then on, riddims were produced with synthesizers. Although the sound of dancehall is significantly different from roots reggae, scholars have argued that dancehall represents a “logical evolution” of sound system culture (Manuel and Largey 2016:201; Stolzoff 2000:107). Yellowman was the first artist to become extremely popular in this new genre in the early-1980s, becoming “king of the dancehall” (Stolzoff 2000:105), later followed by Shabba Ranks (Connolly 2002c). In Hawai‘i, even though fans of reggae tend to distance themselves from dancehall, its influence is nonetheless felt. For instance, Yellowman is often considered among the canon of foundational, “authentic” reggae artists; and the song “Angel” by Shaggy ft. Rayvon was regularly covered by mainstream Local reggae artists in live performance during my fieldwork. Also, incorporating the musical elements of dancehall in a minor way has been an important part of the mainstream Local reggae sound.

In the years that followed, a number of cultural shifts in Jamaica would have an impact on the musical environment, including moving from a democratic socialist economy to a neoliberal, free market one, and the overt rejection of everything to do with Michael

Manley by Seaga (Stolzoff 2000:102). Additionally, cocaine arrived in Jamaica, inspiring even more violence in the Kingston ghettos as gangs vied with each other to distribute the drug. Rastafari was fading away, and international reggae had historically not appealed to lower- and working-class Jamaicans anyway (102-103). Dancehall celebrated consumerism, sexuality, guns, gangsters, and the local (99). Live sound system sessions became even more popular, and by 1982, they were being recorded on cassettes and distributed in an informal dancehall economy (100). Additionally, dancehall has been criticized for its “slackness,” or “indecent” and “crude” sexuality that goes against Protestant Christian norms and Rastafari teachings (Stolzoff 2000:104-105). Middle- and upper-middle-class Jamaicans blamed dancehall for Jamaica’s social problems, following a pattern, as Stolzoff notes, of Jamaican elites blaming Black music for social ills since the time of slavery (5-6).

Dancehall was much more successful than roots reggae in the U.S. mainstream, and artists like Yellowman, Shabba Ranks, and Shaggy became popular to varying extents throughout the 1980s and 1990s (Connolly 2002c). In turn, the “alarming” amounts of violence in Kingston from the cocaine trade prompted dancehall artists in Jamaica to turn to Rastafari and incorporate it into their music. Buju Banton, who became the “king of the dancehall” after Shabba Ranks, was one such individual (Stolzoff 2000:112). Stolzoff asserts that this revival of Rastafari and roots reggae began in 1993 (103), but others contend that it started in the late-1990s and early-2000s (Connolly 2002c).

However, roots reggae never entirely disappeared during the early dancehall era in the 1980s and 1990s. Rather, it began a “new life” outside of Jamaica, where groups like British bands Steel Pulse and Aswad, Ivorian artist Alpha Blondy and South African artist Lucky Dubé carried the torch (Manuel and Largey 2016:201; Gilroy 1987:189). Bob

Marley's sons Ziggy, Damien, Stephen, Ky-Mani, and Julian Marley have also been successful in the ensuing decades. Additionally, established Jamaican international reggae artists like Gregory Isaacs and Barrington Levy continued to perform in that style (Manuel and Largey 2016:201). In the early-2010s, there was another revival of Rastafari and roots reggae, particularly outside of Jamaica, as dancehall remains the dominant popular music in the country. However, this newer revival privileged acoustic sounds as opposed to the synthesized sound of dancehall (Afrofusion TV 2013). Bands that emerged during the second roots revival like Chronixx and Protoje continue to remain popular today (ibid).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I highlight the interactions between local musicians, in Hawai'i and Jamaica, and global flows of popular music. Musicians in each location have incorporated music from elsewhere to create new genres over the last two centuries. The next chapter will build on the groundwork laid in this chapter by focusing on the history of reggae in Hawai'i and the environment in which it was created.

Chapter 2 History of Reggae in Hawai‘i

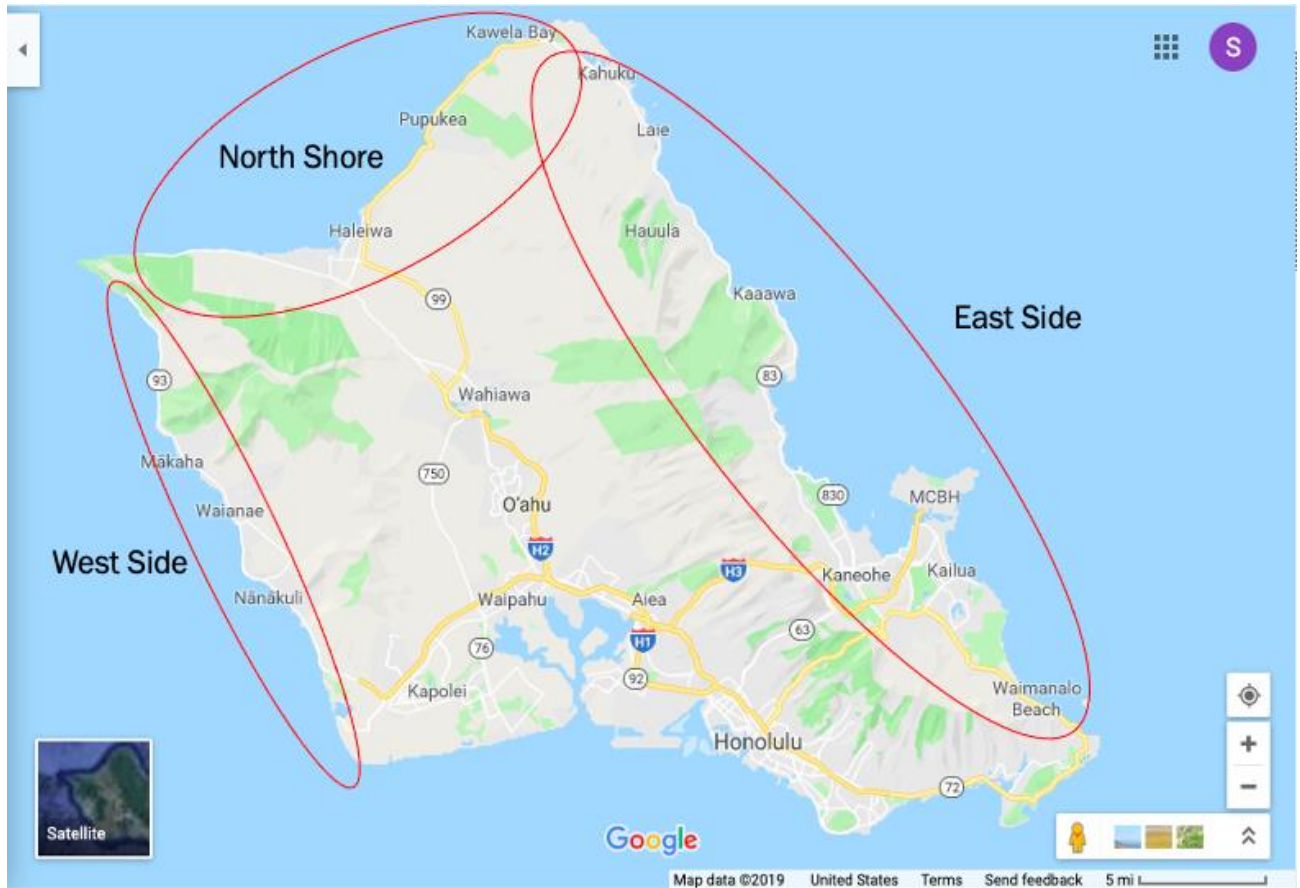
In this chapter, I set the scene by explaining the Hawaiian contexts from which reggae emerged. I illuminate the kanikapila backyard context in which reggae first took root, its transference to nightclubs in the 1970s and 1980s, the popularity of reggae in the 1980s and early-1990s, the ensuing backlash of 1991, and the scene since then organized by decade. The events show how reggae in Hawai‘i became incorporated into Hawaiian culture but then was excluded from it to some degree. That reggae was both accepted into and rejected from Hawaiian culture shapes the ways in which musicians and fans think about the relationship between identity and the music in the present day. The arguments in the subsequent chapters originate in this history. Moreover, Chapter 2 serves as an overview of the bands and trends of the reggae scene in Hawai‘i, a thorough account of which has heretofore been missing.

Hawai‘i is the most remote landmass in the world, and O‘ahu, where I did the majority of the ethnographic research for this dissertation, is only 597 square miles. Compared to the total state population of around 1.4 million, the population of O‘ahu is 980,000 (HNN Staff 2019) and is mainly concentrated in Honolulu. As such, most of the activity, especially commercial activity, related to reggae in Hawai‘i happens there. A number of artists and bands that have become widely popular were from the other islands; however, I could not do fieldwork outside of O‘ahu during the course of my dissertation, and I intend to pursue this line of research in later scholarship.

Throughout my dissertation, I use several common terms for different areas of O‘ahu: “North Shore,” “West Side,” and “East Side.” Generally, Locals use these terms to

refer to the towns that exist on the north, west, and east coasts of O‘ahu. The terms seem to have come into use in the past couple of decades and were the primary ways that the people I interviewed named the areas. Previously, Locals more commonly used terms like “leeward” and “windward” instead, which are still used today. On O‘ahu, the “West Side” is the dry, leeward side of the island and the “East Side” is the wet, windward side (windward means the side which faces the direction that the wind blows and leeward is the opposite). Besides the central area of the island (where I lived during fieldwork), the inner parts are taken up by the Wai‘anae and Ko‘olau mountain ranges. The mountains are sparsely populated due to their extreme terrain. The circles on the maps below give a rough idea of where the areas lie:





As I described in the Introduction, there are a number of different terms that people in the reggae scene use to name the music. Generally, Jawaiian, island music, island reggae, and Hawaiian reggae are used to denote the more mainstream Localized reggae that is played on the radio. It was also featured in most of the concerts that I attended during fieldwork. Mainstream reggae in Hawai‘i has “more obviously” Hawaiian or non-reggae musical and lyrical elements than does music from the underground roots scene. The Hawaiian elements can include the sounds of Hawaiian instruments like the ‘ukulele, references to specific genres like kī hō‘alu (slack key), leo ki‘eki‘e (falsetto), or pre-contact style mele (chanting). However, much of it does not sound particularly “Hawaiian,” especially in music produced in the last ten years. The lyrics of some mainstream reggae

deal with Local concerns like Local food, activities (surfing), and more overtly Hawaiian topics (love of the land or Hawaiian sovereignty). By and large, however, the lyrics deal with love relationships. By contrast, the goal of underground roots artists is typically to get as close as possible to the sound and lyrical content of Jamaican reggae while adding their own inflection. Those inflections may include more Localized subject matter like Hawaiian sovereignty, or unique sounds not typically found in mainstream reggae in Hawai'i or Jamaican reggae. At the same time, there is flexibility across the mainstream and underground divide. Some bands that started out in the underground roots scene have "crossed over" and become more successful in the commercial sphere, sometimes even responding to the transition with changes of style.

Broadly speaking, the new musical media that reggae artists in Jamaica invented, namely dub and DJ music (see Glossary), did not catch on in Hawai'i. Rather, bands have been the center of reggae in Hawai'i. That being said, some individuals have engaged with the new media. For example, Ryan "Jah Gumby" Murakami and Dubkconscious have produced dub albums. Sound systems have become increasingly popular in the last decade, but were not so initially. Selector Daniel Warner had a physical sound system in the early-1980s, and a number of other selectors have performed since then.

University of Hawai'i, Mānoa ethnomusicologist and concert promoter Jay Junker contends that reggae on O'ahu emerged from five contexts: informal musicking associated with backyards, Hawaiian and rock-oriented nightclubs, Jamaican military personnel clustered around a reggae radio show from the University of Hawai'i, Mānoa (UH), an urban world music community that included alternative rock fans, and the exchange of home-made cassette tapes (personal communication). Generally, I found Junker's argument

to be true; however, my research shows that the world music community he describes started slightly after the initial interest in reggae in the 1980s and remained somewhat adjacent to rather than integrated into the reggae community. Instead, I contend that rather than world music specifically, the underground roots scene started to develop as a part of and yet in some ways adjacent to a broader underground or alternative rock scene on O‘ahu. Further elaboration is also necessary with respect to the UH radio show Junker includes among the critical factors for the emergence of reggae in Hawai‘i. Essential for the popularization of the genre were several commercial radio stations that privileged mainstream reggae from Hawai‘i and that appeared after the original UH radio show. I devote the majority of this chapter to discussing such early formations, some of their histories, and the rise of Hawaiian and underground roots in public consciousness until 1991. I then discuss the directions that reggae has taken in the ensuing decades in less detail. Chapter 2 is thus only a partial history.

Backyards

The Kanaka Maoli practice of kanikapila and the concept of “backyard” music is important to the incorporation of reggae music into Hawaiian and Local culture at large. Kanikapila does not exist in the official dictionaries of ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language) of which I am aware, but it is comprised of the words kani (sound) and ka pila (the string instrument). Kanikapila is the practice of informally playing music or jamming, typically in a backyard or somewhere outside. Often, it is done on string instruments like guitar and ‘ukulele. George Kanahale describes kanikapila in this way:

While it is not considered perfect Hawaiian (which would be *ho ‘okani mai ka pila*), it has come into such wide usage that it is now acceptable. It is difficult to pinpoint its introduction, but it appears to have come into general use by the 1940s. The phrase was probably first used in informal jam sessions in a garage *lū‘au* [Hawaiian

feast], or a private lanai [porch], or a bar, for it still retains a vernacular flavor (Kanahele 2012a: 445)

Kanikapila has associations with Kanaka Maoli identity, Hawaiian music, rurality, informality, intimacy, banter, family, and friends. It is also a space in which one learns how to sing, play instruments, and perform music in general. Additionally, since kanikapila is informal and intimate, it does not have to be constrained by commercial or cultural mores. In other words, participants can perform whatever music they want, and it was thus one of the contexts in which musicians in Hawai'i first started to experiment with reggae. Kanikapila provided the space in which many Jawaiian, island music, and other reggae bands formed.

Apart from informal jam sessions, the concept of “backyard” has another related but slightly different association: private gatherings accompanied by live music that often take place in backyards or at another outside venue, like at a park or the beach. The parties are often held for birthdays—especially first birthdays—and graduations. Many of the reggae groups from Hawai'i began their careers performing for such events and continue to do so. Groups performing in this context would provide the audience with what they wanted to hear, while also incorporating the music that they themselves like playing. As in the backyard jam sessions (kanikapila), the music played in backyard private gatherings is characterized by a sense of informality, intimacy, and playfulness. Bands might, for example, take requests or allow someone from the audience to lead a song.

The same informality persists as the bands start performing in more public venues like nightclubs, or even larger concerts. Groups may allow other artists from the audience to come and perform a song. For many reggae artists in the 1980s, primarily in the Jawaiian scene, their song choices, like the repertoire of backyard gatherings, continued to be a mix of what audiences wanted to hear as well as what the group desired to play. Many of the

early Jawaiian groups began as “more traditional” Hawaiian groups, and played reggae alongside other genres in their nightclub sets—oldies, R&B, and rock among others. The same informal performance codes also governed their “pre-Jawaiian” practices.

Nightclubs

In the context of nightclubs, reggae in Hawai‘i emerged out a convergence of two streams of music: Hawaiian music and “non-Hawaiian” “leisure-dance” music. Originally coined by ethnomusicologist Jay Junker, the term “leisure-dance music” refers to music that accompanies dancing for leisure and stands in contrast to the music accompanying hula (personal communication). Leisure-dance and hula have very different functions and exist in distinct contexts. Leisure-dance music can also be thought of as “Local” music. In a Hawaiian music context, leisure-dance music is significant because the accompanying dancing is informal and participatory in opposition to hula. Typically, hula is danced in two arenas that may overlap: a strictly controlled and ritualized setting or in the context of a more presentational performance. Hula also requires rigorous training and is much more culturally conservative as opposed to the more laissez-faire and fad-driven nature of leisure-dance (Jay Junker, personal communication). Many musicians have commented that the leisure-dance aspect of reggae was something new in Hawaiian music. However, the advent of Jawaiian in the 1980s was not the first time that the streams of Hawaiian music and non-Hawaiian leisure dance music came together.

Since contact with the west in 1778, when Captain Cook first made landfall in Hawai‘i, there have been musics in Hawai‘i that are not typically categorized as Hawaiian music. Ethnomusicologist James Revell Carr, for example, writes about sea chanteys and

minstrelsy in Hawai‘i, both of which were popular in the nineteenth century. In fact, minstrelsy, which includes dance prominently, was so well-liked that Kanaka Maoli performed their own version and it was a favorite in the court of King Kalākaua (2014:161-171). In the twentieth century, several leisure-dance music formations developed. To take just one example, Ted Solís writes about kachi-kachi music, a Local collection of Puerto Rican dance music genres that are derived from a variety of Puerto Rican, Latin American, and Caribbean genres (Solís 2005:75). Kachi-kachi is the music of Puerto Rican jíbaro farmers who came to Hawai‘i in the early-twentieth century to work on sugarcane plantations (75-76).¹

The mid-twentieth century was a particularly rich time for the convergence of Hawaiian and leisure-dance musical streams. Notable in this regard was the profusion of lounge acts that performed hapa haole music, generally meant for tourists and white continental listeners. Amy Ku‘uleialoha Stillman describes the music as being performed by “medium-sized” ensembles that presented floor shows followed by more music or after-dinner dancing in hotels and nightclubs (2014). She characterizes the music as being influenced by various trends in popular music from the continental U.S., and she names famous bandleaders like Johnny Noble, Harry Owens, Andy Iona, Dick McIntire, Ray Kinney, and Pua Almeida (ibid). Some of the musicians went on to win film studio and recording contracts (ibid).

Perhaps the most famous of these artists was Don Ho (Donald Tai Loy Ho), whom mainstream media portrayed as the “archetypal lounge lizard” (Junker 2015b). He became famous on the continent and globally as well, even hosting his own series on ABC in the 1970s (ibid). He was backed by The Aliis, who were praised for their “musicianship and

progressive vocal harmonies” and their “jazz-inflected arrangements” (ibid). They were widely imitated (ibid). Ho and The Aliis performed some hapa haole music, but largely continental popular songs, all in a crooner style. Later, Ho provided opportunities for newer Hawaiian performers during the Second Hawaiian Renaissance, artists popular on the continent (ibid), and even reggae and hip hop artists. Despite the fact that much of the music was not recognizably Hawaiian, the way that they would perform was in line with kanikapila performance styles. For example, the artists would attend their colleagues’ shows and would sometimes purposefully interrupt performances, the artist on stage would invite the interrupters up to perform, and they would then joke around together (Kit Ebersbach, personal communication).

Outside of the lounge music context, other smaller ensembles performed in nightclubs and would incorporate a number of different genres. Some performed in the *leo ki’ekie’e* (falsetto) style backed by ‘ukulele trio or other ensembles (Junker 2015f). One of the most celebrated of those singers, Genoa Keawe, headlined nightclubs like Club Polynesia, Kapahulu Tavern, Queen’s Surf, Waikiki Sands, the Aloha Grill, Sierra Café, Steamboat’s, and Primo Garden (Berger 2012d:469). Another legendary *leo ki’ekie’e* singer, Lena Machado, opened a Hawaiian nightclub called Club Pago Pago on South Beretania Street in Honolulu in 1949 (Motta 2006:9). Renowned *kī hō’alu* (slack key) guitarist Gabby Pahinui was even featured on steel guitar at Machado’s nightclub (ibid). In 1950-1951, Machado was the featured performer at the Niumalu Hotel on Kālia Road (now the Hilton Hawaiian Village). She also performed at the Waikīkī Liu Yee Chai on Kalākau Avenue (now the Ambassador Hotel) and the Biltmore Hotel also on Kalākau Avenue (now the Hyatt Regency) (10). Richard Kauhi, influenced by jazz that was popular when he was

young in the 1940s, sang and played jazz piano and often performed hula ku‘i songs in this style (Haugen 1978:7). The genre of exotica was also popular in Hawai‘i from the mid-1950s to the early-1960s, with Martin Denny at its center. His group famously included Arthur Lyman, a Kanaka Maoli vibraphonist who contributed greatly to the sound and later went on to form his own group (Fitzgerald and Hayward 1999:96-97).

John Fitzgerald and Philip Hayward polemically call the 1960s the “Dark Age” because Hawaiian music seemed to have fallen out of public favor; for example, it was largely not being played on the radio (1999:95). Rather, U.S. continental popular music dominated the airwaves. Many complained that only “old-timers” and tourists bought Hawaiian music and that all of the young Kānaka Maoli were “converted” to rock ‘n’ roll (Akindes 1999:59).

However, musician and record producer Kit Ebersbach, who moved to O‘ahu from the continental U.S. in 1967, explained to me that a vibrant live music scene continued to thrive on the island. He recalls that Kalākaua Avenue, the main thoroughfare in Waikīkī, was full of bars, nightclubs, and restaurants with live music, and that many of the establishments were open air. As a result, music would emanate from these establishments up and down the streets. Each of the numerous military bases would also have clubs with live music for the various ranks of military personnel who had been stationed in Hawai‘i or were on rest and relaxation. Ebersbach estimated that there may have been one hundred such establishments throughout the island. Many of the bands who performed there were cover bands that presented whatever music was most popular on the continent (personal communication). As part of that live scene, plenty of artists were still performing some form of Hawaiian music in nightclubs at the time (personal communication). Bands that brought

together Hawaiian and leisured-dance included Buddy Fo and The Invitations (sometimes known as Buddy Fo and His Group).

Perhaps the most famous Kanaka Maoli artist to come out of this era was Kui Lee. Ebersbach noted that when he moved to Hawai‘i, “practically all” of the musicians in the nightclub scene were covering Kui Lee songs (personal communication). Don Ho famously championed Lee’s compositions (Junker 2015b; Stillman 2014), the most famous of which are “I’ll Remember You,” “Days of our Youth,” and “It Ain’t No Big Thing” (Junker 2015b). According to Jay Junker, Lee “showed an entire generation of songwriters how to expand their musical options without compromising their local identity” (ibid). In fact, Ho and Lee’s songs were so famous that even Elvis Presley and Andy Williams covered “I’ll Remember You.”

In the 1970s, music in the O‘ahu nightclub scene started to change dramatically. The number of showrooms decreased as neoliberal economic models became the norm. Multi-national corporations bought hotels, and live music was seen as an unnecessary expense. However, the decline happened slowly, and the 1970s and 1980s saw a vibrant O‘ahu nightclub scene persist. Most importantly, however, the Second Hawaiian Renaissance made a huge impact on the sort of music being played in nightclubs. Groups such as the Sunday Manoa, Eddie Kamae and the Sons of Hawaii, and solo artists or other bands who grew from such groups like Palani Vaughan and the Brothers Cazimero performed. Keola and Kapono Beamer, Olomana, Ho‘okena, Mākaha Sons of Ni‘ihau, John and Randy (Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwo‘ole Osorio and Randy Borden), Country Comfort, Liko Martin, and many others were part of this wave of what has become known as contemporary Hawaiian music (see Fellezs 2019a and Lewis 1984 for more detailed descriptions of this type of music).

During the Second Hawaiian Renaissance, Kānaka Maoli revitalized ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language) and older styles of hula and music that had gone underground during decades of assimilation in the twentieth century. Additionally, younger musicians were creating new music that was more obviously influenced by older cultural traditions. Kī hō‘alu (slack key), which had previously been almost absent in the public sphere, was brought there by groups like the Sons of Hawaii and particularly Gabby Pahinui. Hui Ohana, comprised of Dennis Pavao, Ledward Kaapana, and Nedward Kaapana brought the leo ki‘eki‘e (falsetto) style to greater prominence alongside other similar bands (Stillman 2014). At the same time, the new music was influenced by 1970s rock, disco, R&B, and folk music to varying degrees. Sometimes the music would have a Hawaiian sentiment or anti-colonial message even though it might sound more akin to the Bee Gees or the Young Rascals (several interviewees told me that the Young Rascals were extremely popular in Hawai‘i at the time). Certain nightclubs began to specialize in the new music, and so live Hawaiian music became far more present in the public sphere.

At the same time, there were groups that leaned more heavily towards the leisure-dance direction. The most famous of these bands were Cecilio and Kapono (C&K) and Kalapana. Cecilio David Rodriguez (originally from Santa Barbara, CA) and Henry Kapono Ka‘aihue came together because they shared an interest in Crosby, Stills, and Nash, Stevie Wonder, and Hall and Oates (Junker 2015a). They formed a band and became established as a “top club act” in Honolulu in the mid-1970s (ibid). They were eventually signed to Columbia Records, which released the first three of C&K’s albums. The band broke up in 1981, and both Cecilio and Kapono pursued solo careers (ibid). Kapono has continued to maintain a very successful career into the present day. Kalapana became well-known doing

shows at The Toppe Ada Shoppe, leading to enough attention that they opened for C&K and major visiting artists (Junker 2015e). Kalapana eventually became very popular in Hawai‘i and Japan, and is still successful today (ibid). Similar bands active during the 1970s were the Mackey Feary Band (Mackey Feary was originally in Kalapana), Nohelani Cypriano, Leimuria, Lil Albert, Babadu, Aura, Phase 7, Vic Malo, Mike Lundy, Hal Bradbury (Bong 2016), The Dimensions, Glass Candle, and Golden Throat.

Journalist John Berger described disco nightclubs during the 1970s, where bands like the ones listed above would play. However, Berger pointed out that some discos had all live music, others had DJs in combination with live music, while others were solely devoted to DJs (personal communication).

The nightclub context was one of the primary places from which reggae emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, and which, like the genres of nightclub music before it, straddled the division between Hawaiian and leisure-dance music. Bands that were already performing Hawaiian music started to incorporate reggae into their existing sets. Brother Noland (Noland Kaleolikelani Conjugacion), Billy Kauai (originally in Country Comfort), and the Peter Moon Band (Moon was originally in the Sunday Manoa) were several early artists to being performing reggae in such a manner. Some of the bands recorded a single reggae song in an album surrounded by “more traditional” Hawaiian music or covers from other genres. The earliest reggae recordings I have been able to find are the Olomana song “Reggae” from their album *And So We Are* (Olomana 1977) and “Mr. Reggae” from Billy Kauai’s self-titled album (Billy Kauai 1977). “Reggae” is the last track on *And So We Are*; the song serves as an outro for the album and it clearly showcases a reggae bassline and skank on the guitar. Billy Kauai’s “Mr. Reggae” is still played on the radio today. It sounds much more like an R&B

song, but the skank, instrumentation, and political sentiment in the lyrics clearly gesture towards reggae.

Although not truly a reggae song in terms of sound or musical structure, the song “Pakalolo” (Marijuana) by the Mākaha Sons of Ni‘ihau and composed by Israel Kamakawiwo‘ole certainly expresses a pro-marijuana sentiment present in a great deal of reggae (Mākaha Sons of Ni‘ihau 1978). It does not sound as obviously influenced by reggae as “Reggae” and “Mr. Reggae”: it has a very subtle skank and overall, sounds more akin to other contemporary Hawaiian music of the time than reggae.

Henry Kaponō’s “Stand In the Light” on the album of the same name (Henry Kaponō 1981) is another early example of reggae in Hawai‘i. This song was ahead of its time in many ways. Although Kaponō does not typically perform reggae, the instrumental accompaniment sounds very similar to what would later become codified as Jawaiian music. The Peter Moon Band also dabbled with reggae. They released the song “Cane Fire” and a cover of the Bob Marley song “Guava Jelly” on their album *Cane Fire* (The Peter Moon Band 1982). Their songs have more of a suggestion of a reggae beat. “Cane Fire” is about Operation Greenharvest, which was an anti-marijuana campaign carried out by police and the National Guard that started on Hawai‘i Island in the 1970s: they set fire to abandoned sugarcane fields in which growers had illegally planted marijuana plants.

Brother Noland’s “Coconut Girl” (Brother Noland 1983a; Brother Noland 1983b) was another early reggae song, which strikingly critiques the fetishization of Hawaiian women’s bodies by continental U.S. media. Brother Noland has become known as the “father of Jawaiian music,” releasing such well-known songs as his cover of Freddy McGregor’s song “Big Ship.” Some credit “Coconut Girl” with launching widespread public

interest in Hawaiian music. Brother Noland describes his inspiration to incorporate reggae this way: “It all started on a back porch on Maui...Early ‘80s. I was thinking about music. I was thinking about crossover music, in world music. I wanted to do something Hawaiian and international at the same time...” (Burlingame 1991). Simultaneously, like the other artists mentioned previously, reggae was simply one of the styles that he performed. Much of the music on his albums from the 1980s, for instance, sounds much more akin to R&B and pop from the continent rather than reggae or Hawaiian music. His first album, *Speaking Brown* (Brother Noland 1980), has several songs in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i and sounds similar to other contemporary Hawaiian music of the 1970s.

Brother Noland’s eclectic collection of different styles of music was representative of a trend that later became prominent in Hawaiian albums in the 1980s: artists recorded music that they would have performed during a nightclub set. In these situations, what kind of music one performed was not as important as performing music that the audience wanted to hear. Similar to the 1970s, there were still bands who performed a range from Hawaiian-style music to more leisure-dance music. As the 1980s went on, audiences, particularly Kanaka Maoli and Local, wanted to hear increasingly more reggae.

Unfortunately for Brother Noland, he was a bit ahead of his time. He embarked into reggae when the nightclub scene on O‘ahu was retreating based on a number of different factors. Hotel companies, nightclubs, and restaurants were shifting away from live music. John Berger pointed out to me that on O‘ahu then, people were increasingly moving farther away from the nightlife center of Waikīkī and so were less likely to want to return to the area again after coming home from work. The trend was exacerbated by the tightening of drunk driving laws. Berger also mentioned that more at-home entertainment appeared, most

significantly, the VHS. He highlighted that one of the most important demographics for nightclubs evaporated with the elevation of the drinking age from 18 to 21 in 1986—although this happened later, it was part of a general decline that had begun much earlier (personal communication). Such laws and economic forces contributed to a slump in interest in Hawaiian and leisure-dance music in the early-1980s, both in nightclubs and recordings (Burlingame 1991). Brother Noland left Hawai‘i for Seattle not long after releasing “Coconut Girl,” but while he was gone, reggae slowly ramped up in popularity. When he came back to Hawai‘i, according to Mike Kelly, the future general manager of KCCN, Brother Noland became “like a cult hero, a legend” (ibid).

Commercial Radio

Radio has also played a foundational role in the popularization of reggae in Hawai‘i. Currently, O‘ahu has three radio stations devoted to reggae—KCCN-FM100, KDNN Island 98.5, and KQMQ-FM HI93 93.1. Other reggae radio stations on Hawai‘i include KWXX-FM 94.7/101.5 on Hawai‘i Island, KSRF-FM HI95 95.9/103.9 and KITH Island 98.9 on Kaua‘i, and KLHI-FM HI92 92.5 on Maui. Individual reggae songs are occasionally played on other stations. Some, like the University of Hawai‘i, Mānoa’s station, KTUH, have devoted reggae shows once a week. Reggae radio stations play reggae from all over the world—international style roots reggae like Bob Marley and more recent music—but the stations are primarily devoted to mainstream Local reggae.

Such a proliferation of reggae radio stations, not to mention stations that showcase music produced in Hawai‘i, is only a more recent occurrence. In the 1950s and 1960s, radio in Hawai‘i played mainly rock and pop from the U.S. continent. Musician and graphic

designer Craig Okino explained to me that during this period of time, music choices were limited to what one could hear on the radio or records available in local stores. As a result, choices were quite narrow compared to the abundance that listeners enjoy today (personal communication). John Berger described to me his experience of listening to the radio in high school. He remembered that he and his friends primarily listened to KPOI, which was owned by Tom Moffatt at the time (personal communication). Tom Moffatt was probably the most successful concert promoter in Hawai'i then and for many subsequent decades, bringing in top acts from the U.S. continent like Elvis Presley, the Rolling Stones, Jimi Hendrix, Elton John, Frank Sinatra, and Bruno Mars (HNN Staff 2016). After the Korean War, Moffatt worked in radio for some time. He was later hired at a new radio station that eventually became KPOI, where he played Top 40 hits and became the first DJ to bring rock to Hawai'i radio (HNN Staff 2016; John Berger, personal communication).

The first radio station in Hawai'i in a Hawaiian music format was KCCN-AM, which was owned by a Texas company and went on the air in 1966 (Akindes 1999:57). This station was run by non-Kānaka Maoli who marketed the station to tourists by playing hapa haole music. The producers concluded that Kanaka Maoli listeners were a minority in the market after doing shoddy market research (58). However, Victor Hoonani Opiopio, known by his DJ name Krash Kealoha, introduced the Hawaiian music he heard at home—in the style of Genoa Keawe and others—onto the station (59). The company fired him and then rehired him after an uproar from Kanaka Maoli listeners (59-60). After being rehired, Opiopio hired two Kanaka Maoli DJs: Kimo Kahoano and Jacqueline Leilani Rosetti (formerly Jacqueline Leilani Lindsey, and also known as Honolulu Skylark). The three retooled the station to feature the new music emerging at the time: the contemporary

Hawaiian music of the Second Hawaiian Renaissance (60). It was a huge success. According to interviewees, the Second Hawaiian Renaissance was another moment in which “something new” appeared over the airwaves and in record stores, galvanizing interest in Locally-produced music.

John Berger remembers that Local musicians who recorded songs in a more continental style got airplay on Top 40 stations in the early-1980s. Songs in English like “Island Love” and “Slack-Key Boogie Woogie” by The Peter Moon Band, C&K, and Kalapana got a lot of airplay (personal communication).

Underground Roots Scene Begins

Around 1980, bands devoted solely to reggae started to form outside of the nightclub scene after Local musicians began hearing reggae recordings. Starting in the 1970s, large, transnational record companies began to release reggae on a global scale. This was the music of the so-called international style of reggae, produced by record companies like Island Records and featuring the likes of Bob Marley, Jimmy Cliff, and Peter Tosh. Such recordings, like the soundtrack to the 1972 Perry Henzell film *The Harder They Come*, found their way into local record stores in Hawai‘i. *The Harder They Come* was also released on a global scale, and it was shown in Hawai‘i as early as 1974 at the Mid-Pacific Institute. Additionally, songs like Desmond Dekker & The Ace’s “Israelites,” Millie Small’s “My Boy Lollipop,” and later, Eric Clapton's cover of “I Shot the Sheriff” began to be played on Top 40 commercial radio. At the time, as interviewees mentioned to me, no one knew that these songs were reggae because they were presented as undifferentiated hit songs from the continental U.S.

Daniel Warner, a reggae selector and enthusiastic reggae collector, first became aware of the music when he heard Clapton's cover on the radio around 1974. At the time, he was a student at the University of Hawai'i, Mānoa. Warner was born in Japan to a Japanese mother and white American father in the military, and he lived there until he attended college. The rest of his family moved to Hawai'i with him. Once Warner discovered reggae, he started buying reggae records from record stores on O'ahu. He also started following reggae charts in the British magazine *Black Music*, available at the UH bookstore. In the mid- to late-1970s, he bought records from Jamaica, London, and New York City, learning more and more about the breath of the music beyond what was available through transnational record companies. At the time, it was very difficult to find such music in Hawai'i (especially since it was before the internet), so it was necessary to get the music through mail order (personal communication).

In 1979, Warner spun records for a party at school and met someone who worked at the school's radio station, KTUH. This person hosted a reggae program but was leaving the radio station and so invited Warner to take his place. Warner accepted and called his show "Daniel in the Lion's Den," which was broadcast on Saturdays from 6-9 p.m. The show lasted from 1979-1985 (personal communication).

Eventually, Warner's show became known amongst expatriate Jamaican nationals as well as people from other Caribbean islands who were serving in the U.S. military. His show was the only way to hear the latest reggae hits from Jamaica at the time. Soon after, the Caribbean islanders started to come to the station when the show was being broadcast. Some people danced and hung out, but others began to DJ—sing and toast (rap)—over riddims live on the air. Harold Johnson, who went by the name Ranking Scroo, and Maacho were

two of these individuals, and they went on to have professional careers as reggae singers. Others included Dallas Rodgers, who was an assistant cameraman on the reggae film *Rockers*, and Norris Jarrett. Warner also became a node in the nascent social network of reggae fans, facilitating introductions among enthusiasts for the music. One of the early people was ethnomusicologist Jay Junker. Junker also wrote in the Local music media under the nom-de plume Ras Manu and had his own radio show on KTUH before Warner, filling in for him when he could not make his shift (Daniel Warner, personal communication; Jay Junker, personal communication).

At the same time, another small reggae collective was forming. After moving away from O‘ahu to go to college in the Bay Area, Craig Okino and Chris Planas returned around 1980 and started spending time at the store Records Hawaii. A group of friends developed there that included an employee, Earl, who had an art studio above the record store. The friends began to meet at the studio and listen to reggae together. They eventually began to play it and soon recorded themselves, ironically naming their band Yellow Peril (Okino, Planas, and other members of the group are Asian). Yellow Peril never performed in public and was simply the name they used for their jam sessions (Craig Okino, personal communication; Chris Planas, personal communication).

Okino ultimately met Daniel Warner, who then befriended the group. Okino and Junker told me about going over to Warner’s house with several other reggae fans like radio DJ Seth Markow and Jamaican military personnel to have reggae listening sessions. They would also meet at Junker’s house and on the roof of the UH art department. In the early-1980s, it was difficult to get records beyond what was sold by major record labels like Island Records, so this was the only way that they could listen to the latest releases beyond

Warner's radio show (Craig Okino, personal communication; Daniel Warner, personal communication; Jay Junker, personal communication).

Warner eventually introduced the members of Yellow Peril to a drummer (James Ganeko) and a group of "dreads" (Rastas with dreadlocks) who were mainly singers and wanted to start a band. The dreads included members of the group that got together at Warner's KTUH show, among them Ranking Scroo and Maacho. Others included Bongo, who was Black American from Philadelphia, and Sluggo, who said that he was from St. Thomas. All of the parties met in 1981 at a house in Haleiwa (North Shore of O'ahu), where their friend Dee was living in an old church along with a very small Rastafari community. They named their band Cool Runnings and had their first performance at the Kapiolani Park Bandstand in Honolulu (Craig Okino, personal communication; Chris Planas, personal communication; Maacho, personal communication). A lot of people attended and it even got some newspaper coverage (*The Sunday Star-Bulletin and Advertiser* 1981).

At this point, Ranking Scroo decided to leave the band and begin his own, which he called Crucial Youth. Several years later, he formed another band, Wareka. His girlfriend, Sister Ginger, who is Local Asian, was also in his bands. Eventually, Ranking Scroo left Hawai'i around 1984, moving to the San Francisco Bay Area where he continues to perform as a reggae artist (Daniel Warner, personal communication; Craig Okino, personal communication; Chris Planas, personal communication).

The remaining members of Cool Runnings continued rehearsing after Ranking Scroo left and performed several times at the Haleiwa Theater, a defunct movie theater that no longer exists. The concerts were "jam-packed" with relatively little advertising. The group realized how "hungry" people were for this kind of music (Craig Okino, personal

communication). They eventually got steady gigs at the Wave Waikiki and 3D, which catered to underground rock music genres. Warner would also spin records before and in between sets on his sound system, and Ranking Scroo and others would sing and toast. Cool Runnings disbanded around 1982, and the members went on to found other bands. Okino, Planas, and others eventually started the world beat group Pagan Babies and Maacho went on to found his own bands (described in detail in Chapter 5) (Craig Okino, personal communication; Chris Planas, personal communication; Maacho, personal communication).

Butch Heleman started to become active at the same time. Heleman was unique because he is Hawaiian, and at the time, Kānaka Maoli were largely not participating in the emerging roots reggae-centric scene. Heleman was born in Hawai‘i but moved to San Francisco as a child with his family in 1955. In the 1970s, he became involved with the local Jamaican music scene. He joined a calypso band and even recorded several 45 rpm singles. Heleman then moved back to O‘ahu in 1978 or 1979. Heleman eventually got a gig opening for Don Ho at the newly renamed Don Ho’s Island Grill around 1981. Heleman’s band was made of up the musicians who would eventually become Crucial Youth. He told me that his band “shocked everybody” because it was comprised of Black, dreadlocked Rasta artists in the midst of a tourist-oriented, hapa haole, yet also Hawaiian establishment (personal communication). Heleman noted that the people in the audience did not know what reggae was at that point. Later on, he joined Crucial Youth and Wareka (personal communication).

Although reggae was underground at this point and not many in Hawai‘i knew about it, famous international reggae artists started to perform in Hawai‘i in the 1970s. Toots and the Maytals performed at Andrew’s Amphitheater on the University of Hawai‘i, Mānoa

campus in 1976; Jimmy Cliff performed at that same venue in 1978 and also performed on Maui. Warner, who attended both of the concerts in Honolulu, remarked that the audience was close to full (he estimates around 3000 seats). This surprised him because the artists were not well-known in Hawai‘i at the time (personal communication). The most famous of the concerts was Bob Marley’s, which took place in 1979 at the Waikiki Shell (he also performed at the Lahaina Civic Center on Maui the day before). Several of my interviewees attended Marley’s concert, all remarking that it was incredible, and even, for some, life-changing. However, interviewees remarked that the concert was not as full as they expected it to be—Marley was globally famous and the face of reggae at this point. The concert coincided with several high profile events that may have appealed to the same demographic and thus diminished audience numbers: the Mākaha Sons of Ni‘ihau were performing at the Honolulu Zoo, the Na Hoku Hanohano Awards ceremony was happening, and May Day was the previous weekend. However, it is possible that more than 4000 people attended (Imig 1979).

This early activity trickled out to some extent by the mid-1980s, around about the time Ranking Scroo left Hawai‘i for the Bay Area. However, it would start to gain momentum again in the late-1980s.

Underground or Alternative Rock on O‘ahu

Underground roots emerged in a larger underground or alternative rock scene in Hawai‘i in the 1980s. The scene consisted of artists who performed non-mainstream rock or rock-adjacent genres of the time like punk, ska (2 Tone), heavy metal, and eventually, world music or world beat. This trend makes sense from a commercial standpoint, as Chris

Blackwell and other record company executives purposefully marketed reggae to white audiences as an alternative rock genre (Connolly 2002b; Farley 2010:168-169). In contrast to the continent, where rock music scenes often emerged around specific genres, in Hawai'i the nascent alternative rock scene was eclectic (Takasugi 2003:76). For example, a 1983 article on drummer Frank Orrall describes him being in several different bands that cross genre boundaries in the underground scene (Hartwell 1983). Orrall was the drummer in Pagan Babies, which performed "world beat" music that included soukous, Haitian music, soca, zouk, and reggae. He was also in Mumbo Jumbo and The Squids, which performed ska (the 2 Tone variety), and Hat Makes the Man, a post-punk band (ibid).² Stephanie Nohelani Teves, herself a participant in the underground punk scene between 1997 and 2005, notes that she also attended concerts in the hip hop and LGBTQIA+ performance scenes (2018:6). She points out that because the scenes are small and members differentiate themselves from the "mainstream Hawaiian music scene," there is a sense of "radical marginality" (ibid).

Teves's notion of radical marginality applies to underground roots at certain points. For instance, Daniel Warner remembered that a Local heavy metal band opened for Bob Marley when he performed in Honolulu in 1979 (personal communication). Several of the founding members of Cool Runnings went on to found Pagan Babies. The band Roots Natty Roots played alongside punk bands because some promoters classified them as alternative rock in the early-1990s. Venues that hosted such an eclectic mix included Anna Bannana's (later Anna O'Briens), the Wave Waikiki, 3D, Pink's Garage, and The Backdoor. In some ways, roots reggae being a part of the alternative rock scene has continued into the present, as certain venues that explicitly focus on alternative rock genres will generally feature underground roots, like Hawaiian Brian's. However, more famous underground roots bands

eventually started being booked alongside Jawaiian or even “more traditional” Hawaiian groups. In other words, concert promoters assumed that their audience (often Kānaka Maoli) would like all of these types of music. Such combinations involving “more traditional” Hawaiian or Jawaiian music are unusual in the underground rock scene writ large (Takasugi 2003:76).

Rise of Jawaiian

There are several origin stories for the word Jawaiian. Maacho told me that he heard Ranking Scroo use the word to refer to the Hawaiian-influenced reggae that started to emerge at the time, identifying it as part Jamaican and part Hawaiian (personal communication). Later, others started to use the word Jawaiian, but they likely created this name independently because Ranking Scroo was not known by people in the larger Jawaiian scene. He also left Hawai‘i around 1984, which was just as Jawaiian bands were starting to perform in nightclubs and had not yet become widely popular. According to John Sexton, member of Simplisity, the term Jawaiian was the invention of his brother Andy who was also in the band. John Sexton said that “It was just a word we made up in the parking lot at Jubilee’s one morning” and that it actually means “Jamming Hawaiian” (Simon 1991). Andy Sexton trademarked the word in 1990 (ibid). Another origin story comes from Jay Junker, who remembers hearing it for the first time from radio DJ, singer, and former Hawai‘i state senator Brickwood Galuteria. In 1986, Junker, Galuteria, and UH ethnomusicologist Ric Trimillos met to plan a revival of Peter Moon’s successful Kanikapila concert series that he held at Andrews Amphitheater on the University of Hawai‘i, Mānoa campus (personal communication; 2015d). Junker stated that Galuteria seemed to suggest the name “off the

cuff,” but Junker is not certain if Galuteria had heard the word elsewhere before. Galuteria’s definition was also a combination of jamming and Hawaiian, and he remarked that the Hawaiian group that they wanted to invite to the festival was “always ‘jamming’ but focused on Hawaiian music” (Jay Junker, personal communication). Galuteria later claimed credit for term, saying that he and his partner David Awong invented it as a marketing term (Star-Bulletin Staff 1991).

Despite the efforts of the members of Cool Runnings, Crucial Youth, and Wareka, few heard live reggae in areas outside of Haleiwa and the nightclubs in Honolulu where they performed (Chun 1990b). At this point, other nascent reggae groups began to perform publicly. Bruddah Waltah (Walter Aipolani) and his brothers took it upon themselves to bring reggae to Wai‘anae. They created free Mā‘ili Beach Park concerts that they called Tumbleland Jams from 1983-1985 (ibid). The concerts were a huge success. Tumbleland Jam III in 1985 was so big that it included eleven acts and “special guests” Jacqueline “Honolulu Skylark” Rossetti, Brickwood Galuteria, and Norm Compton (*Honolulu Advertiser* 1985a).³ Journalists estimated that around one thousand people attended (*Honolulu Advertiser* 1985b).

In the mid-1980s, musicians started to codify Hawaiian into its own genre. Importantly, the groups who performed Hawaiian were comprised of and/or led by Kanaka Maoli artists, and they were performing in nightclubs that catered to Local (often Hawaiian) clientele. Bands who were already playing Hawaiian music and/or Hawaiian-influenced pop music started to incorporate reggae into their existing repertoire. In fact, many of their early albums primarily draw from “more traditional” and contemporary Hawaiian music genres.⁴ Some of the bands that would eventually be at the forefront of Hawaiian started performing

during this time period, primarily non-reggae. Bruddah Waltah started out in Aku Palu around 1978-1979 and then moved to his uncle's group Na Mele Kane in 1980—the latter was known as a contemporary/contemporary Hawaiian music group. Simplicity started to perform in nightclubs around 1984 and was known for performing R&B and rock. For instance, their recorded cover of Eric Clapton's "Wonderful Tonight"—"You Look Wonderful Tonight"—would become well-known (Berger 1992b). Kapena formed in 1984 and started to perform soon after. They began their career wanting to be a group patterned on leo ki'eki'e (falsetto) trio Hui Ohana, but decided that "they had other gifts to offer the listening public" (Mossman 2015). Ho'aikāne started performing publicly around 1986 on Hawai'i Island, although they had been performing earlier (Chun 1990c). A newspaper article from that time describes them as "a musical group of four cousins that specializes in contemporary Hawaiian paniolo music" (*Hawaii Tribune-Herald* 1986). Their music was influenced by kī hō'alu (slack key), country, contemporary Hawaiian music, and other Hawaiian music genres. Ilona Irvine, sometimes called Princess Ilona, also started performing in nightclubs contemporaneously.

One of the early record producers to realize the economic potential of Hawaiian was the record label owner Ken Kahanu Post of Kahanu Records. He signed groups like Kapena, Ho'aikāne, and 3 Scoops of Aloha in those early days, as well as other famous Hawaiian and Hawaiian-influenced artists, among them Tony Conjugacion, Ka'eo, and Kaleo O Kalani. Pierre Grill and Dave Tuccarone also appeared on numerous recordings as musicians and engineers, and Grill started recording reggae by the late-1980s.

Much of very early reggae sounded more akin to the contemporary Hawaiian music of the time than to Jamaican reggae. For example, the original version of "Sweet Lady of

Waiahole” by 3 Scoops of Aloha composed by Gordon Broad (3 Scoops of Aloha 1986) is in this style. To my ears, the only musical element in the song that sounds distinctively like reggae is the addition of a skank. As Craig Okino pointed out to me, Hawaiian groups typically do not have a drum set and sometimes do not include a bass—however, drum and bass are the musical foundation of reggae (personal communication). He and others also pointed out to me that reggae has a particular “feel” or groove that is different, and sometimes even the opposite, of the music that was familiar to Hawaiian artists of the time. The foundational groove of reggae is the one-drop: a deemphasis of beat 1 and an accent on beat 3. It is the reverse of the groove of much of Hawaiian music and continental U.S. popular music.

Some groups became increasingly interested in reggae, while also being nudged in that direction by promoters and record companies (or their own sense of the industry) who could tell that Hawaiian was becoming lucrative. For instance, composer Gordon Broad specifically instructed 3 Scoops of Aloha to perform “Sweet Lady of Waiahole” in a Hawaiian style because he knew that it would make the song popular (Zapelini forthcoming). In 1989, when Danny Kennedy and John Baricuatro Jr. founded Mana‘o Company with Sean Na‘auao, Salaam Tillman, and Kuhio Yim, they did not intend to become a Hawaiian group. Rather, they “wanted to be the next Surfers-slash-Makaha Sons, doing four-part harmonies,” and their goal was to be a part of the Hawaiian music scene (Berger 2019). In fact, some of their most famous songs were recorded as an afterthought. When they were recording their first album *Just Beyond The Ridge* (Mana‘o Company 1991) several years later, they decided to “throw” in two reggae songs because they were successful in live performance (Berger 2019). These covers—“96 Degrees in the Shade” by Third World and

“Drop Baby Drop” by Eddy Grant—have become two of Mana‘o Company’s most famous songs (ibid).

Underground Returns

When Marilyn Mick arrived on O‘ahu in 1985, after working on reggae shows in Seattle, she heard reggae everywhere—on the “beaches, anywhere you went, Wai‘anae...everything was Bob Marley back then...it was just waiting to explode” (personal communication). However, when she approached other promoters to put together reggae concerts, they were not interested because they were used to promoting pop from the continental U.S. She eventually teamed up with Mari Matsuoka and a group of other like-minded people, and they started to create their own concerts. Their first show was a tribute to Peter Tosh soon after he was murdered in 1987. The concert featured Maacho and the Cool Connection, Pagan Babies, Wisdom Tree, and Shival Experience. It was a success, so the group started putting together more concerts. They also partnered with Norm Winter, owner of the record store Jelly’s (now Ideas), who helped provide financial backing for the concerts. Matsuoka became the primary producer of the shows and soon started working for Winter. Although Matsuoka was never a great fan of reggae, she was drawn to the music because of its anti-colonial message. Mick worked more directly with bands. Other members of the group made and sold merchandise, worked security, operated sound equipment, and more (Marilyn Mick, personal communication; Norm Winter, personal communication).

Soon after, Mick discovered that there was a community of Black Caribbean people serving in the military who performed reggae. She found them DJing at Anna Bannana’s. The group subsequently put on a weekly concert series for a summer called King Jelly’s Hi

Power Reggae Dance Hall in 1988 that was open to audience members under 21. They hired some of the same bands that participated in the original Peter Tosh tribute, invited the Black Caribbean DJs from Anna Bannana's, and held an open mic. Winter bought the newest reggae releases from New York to play on a sound system (Marilyn Mick, personal communication).

Black Caribbean artists started to approach the group. The artists included Ras Inando, who had moved to Hawai'i from Boston but was originally from Barbados, Ital from Antigua, and Tony Gits from Jamaica. They eventually got together with H. Doug Matsuoka, Mari Matsuoka's husband at the time, who had an avant-garde band called Hawaii Amplified Poetry Ensemble with Richard Hamasaki and Taishi. They all formed a band, and in 1989, H. Doug Matsuoka created the album *Hawaii Reggae International Volume 1* (Various Artists 1989). Mick characterized the album as the launchpad for the larger concerts that followed (personal communication).

The first large concert that the promotional group put on featured Alpha Blondy in 1990 at the Neal S. Blaisdell Arena. Winter was the primary driving force behind the show (Marilyn Mick, personal communication). Alpha Blondy was hugely successful in Hawai'i at the time. The group went to great lengths to advertise the concert, including having a graffiti artist make a work inspired by Alpha Blondy on a wall of Pearl City High School (Chun 1990a). Lions International (Tony Gits's band), Stevie I-ton (now Stevie Char) of Wisdom Tree, and Maacho and the Cool Connection opened for the concert.

Mick also told me that during this time, she, Matsuoka, and the other individuals involved with the scene were primarily concerned with building a reggae community (personal communication). One of the ways that they did it was to organize celebratory

events for the Jamaican or international reggae artists who had traveled the thousands of miles to Hawai‘i, making sure that the artists felt appreciated. They also allowed any dread from the Local scene to attend the shows for free because their culture was being showcased (personal communication).

Jawaiian Fever

By the late-1980s, more and more Jawaiian groups had appeared upon the scene. Nā Waiho‘olu‘u o ke Ānuehue (The Colors of the Rainbow) was formed in 1988. In 1989, Leahi started performing publicly and Mana‘o Company was formed. Ho‘aikāne embraced Jawaiian when they signed with John Kahale Chang’s record company, Kahale Music, and when member Jamieson Wong’s son, Jamin, and Derek “Hoku” Tolentino joined the band. Their first album with Kahale Music was *A New Beginning* in 1989 (Chun 1990c). Willie K “exploded” in 1991, catering to a “Jawaiian crowd” at Malia’s Cantina (Berger 2012b:407), although he is now known for performing blues, rock, and other genres.

These groups also started to perform in larger concerts, many of which were Hawaiian-themed. For example, Peter Moon started to incorporate Jawaiian acts into his decades-long Kanikapila concert series at Andrews Amphitheater at UH Mānoa. A memorable instance of this was the October 1990 performance that featured Ho‘aikāne. According to Gary Chun, the band “nearly stole the show” even alongside well-known “more traditional” Hawaiian bands (1990b). Ho‘aikāne had actually initially suggested performing “more traditional” Hawaiian music—which included featuring member Nolan Hao’s renowned kī hō‘alu (slack key) playing, as well as country and reggae. However, Moon insisted that they concentrate on reggae, leading to their successful concert (ibid). In a

similar vein, the music for Aloha Week 1989 even featured reggae.⁵ The organizers devoted a stage to “Hawaiian Reggae” and featured Simplisity and Maacho and the Cool Connection (*Honolulu Advertiser* 1989).

It is widely agreed that the event that sealed Jawaiian’s popularity was the decision to convert KCCN’s new FM station to a primarily Jawaiian format. The brainchild of Jacqueline “Honolulu Skylark” Rosetti and William “Billy V” Van Osdol, the new format was launched on May 14, 1990. Rosetti and Osdol intended for the station to target “hard-working young adults who were familiar both with Hawaiian pop and mainland bop, the type who had both Rolling Stones and Gabby Pahinui albums” (Burlingame 1991). Osdol explained that their target audience was men ages 18-34 (personal communication). The station concentrated on Jawaiian, but also occasionally played older music like Genoa Keawe, Gabby Pahinui, and other contemporary Hawaiian music of the Second Hawaiian Renaissance (Chun 1991a). Osdol told me that their intention with this format was not only to appeal to their target demographic, which demanded Jawaiian, but also to educate listeners and keep Hawaiian culture alive by incorporating older Hawaiian music (personal communication). At the time, some credited KCCN-FM with inspiring other radio stations that primarily played U.S. continental popular music to include individual Local songs (Burlingame 1991). KCCN was “an almost instant success” and “remained a major—and unchallenged—presence in Hawai‘i radio for most of the decade” (Tatar and Berger 2012b:673).

Responding to the popularity of the station, KCCN itself and other promoters produced large concerts specifically centering Jawaiian and other reggae music. Bruddah Waltah opened for Jamaican reggae band Inner Circle and South African reggae artist Lucky

Dubé on August 11, 1990. The show was put on by Norm Winter and his group and it was called Jelly's 1st International Reggae Festival. The Pacific ReggaeFest in November of the same year featured Ho'aikāne and the Jamaican reggae acts Israel Vibrations, Peter Broggs, and Roots Radics (Chun 1990d). William "Billy V" Van Osdol remembered setting up smaller concerts through KCCN at nightclubs, but they were so popular that they needed a larger venue (personal communication). KCCN's first large concert, Jawaiiian Jam, took place on September 14, 1990 at Aloha Tower, featuring Simplisity, Bruddah Waltah & Island Afternoon, and Butch Helemano & the Players of Instruments. There were monthly Jawaiiian Jams in 1991 from January to November, and there were several more in 1992 and 1993. Several individuals that I talked to remembered these concerts fondly. They were highly successful—lines to get into the event would go down the street. On June 15, 1991, Jawaiiian Jam celebrated the first birthday of KCCN and became the first annual KCCN "Birthday Bash" concert.⁶ Eventually, having monthly Jawaiiian Jams became too much, so the radio station managers decided to consolidate them into an annual large concert at the Waikiki Shell. As with the larger concerts mentioned previously, the Jawaiiian Jams and Birthday Bashes were not restricted to Jawaiiian music only. They regularly featured Butch Helemano, and some concerts included Dubb Version and Roots Natty Roots, two other roots reggae bands, as well as Pagan Babies. Israel Kamakawiwo'ole, who was a well-known reggae lover, was featured at a Jawaiiian Jam (Kamakawiwo'ole was also part of Hawaiian Style Band). Even the Brothers Cazimero were featured in the 1993 Birthday Bash.

Jacqueline "Honolulu Skylark" Rossetti saw the escalation of interest as a continuation of the past: "We're doing what we did in the '70s, getting people interested again in their culture" (Burlingame 1991). Arbitron, which collected listener data from radio

stations, assigned KCCN-FM third place during the “morning drive-time” at the beginning of 1991 (Harada 1991b). Interestingly, engagement with Jawaiian extended to older Hawaiian genres as well, as demand had also increased for contemporary Hawaiian music (Burlingame 1991).

In the 1980s, the rise of the cassette, a very inexpensive and portable medium compared to an LP, was an important contributing factor to the boom in popularity of Jawaiian (Burlingame 1991). The first general manager of KCCN, Mike Kelly, pointed out that the cassette and reggae music both catered to “low-income” markets (ibid). RaeAnn Isobe, then-cassette buyer for Tower Records in Hawai‘i, stated that their stores sold more Local cassettes than any other media or type of music and pointed out that the low price of cassettes made it possible for many Local artists to record at all (ibid). Cassettes were also a fraction of the price of an album to record, according to Pierre Grill of Rendez-Vous Recording (ibid). The format provided artists with more control over their product (ibid).

Norm Winter, owner of the record store Jelly’s (now Ideas) on O‘ahu, described the popularity of Jawaiian recordings:

In the last six months, we’ve sold 70,000 cassettes of Bruddah Waltah—he’s been in the Top 10 for seven or eight months—and the rest of anything else, Mainland music, maybe 20,000. Ho‘aikane is our No. 2 tape. Butch Helemano is No. 1 lately. That’s No. 1 *overall* (Burlingame 1991)

Several individuals described the effect that Jawaiian bands had on audiences of the time. Promoter David Booth noted, “At the May (1991) Jawaiian Jam...there were girls fainting at the sight of...Ho‘aikane, as if this was 1964, and it was the Beatles” (Simon 1991). Peter Moon remembered “watching a hoard of young dancers rush the stage during Ho‘aikane’s performance at last year’s Kanikapila Concert [1990], an unprecedented incident for the annual Hawaiian music event” (ibid).

Journalist Timo Ramirez describes the enthusiasm romantically:

Next time you're in the parking lot at Sunset Beach, Sandy Beach, Ala Moana Park or Makaha, stop and listen, look around. Reggae is everywhere./On some cars you'll see stickers with positive messages like 'Don't worry, be Irie' or 'One World, One Love,' framed by graphics in red, yellow, black, and green. The African colors also appear on trunks of cars, bathing suits, towels, T-shirts and occasionally on surfboards. Those who can grow them, wear dreadlocks—long, tangled strands of sun-bleached hair that look like wild moss./You'll also hear the thump and click of reggae music. Hawaii loves the sound. Drifting out from car or truck stereos, reggae perfectly fits the rhythms of waves and wind. It's tropical music, mellow and sensuous, though the lyrics often possess an edge of rebellion and remind us that there are people who put money and power before sunshine, music and love (Ramirez 1990)

Backlash

However, the enthusiasm for Jawaiian and the commercial success that it engendered soon inspired a backlash by more traditionalist members of the Hawaiian music community. By and large for these critics, the problem was not that Hawaiian artists were taking music that was not theirs. Rather, from the critics' perspectives, younger Hawaiian artists were turning away from "real" Hawaiian music. This "real" Hawaiian music referred to older styles, including contemporary Hawaiian music, leo ki'eki'e (falsetto) and 'ukulele trio, and older mele (chanting) styles. In other words, the problem was purity and authenticity rather than appropriation—Jawaiian was an "invasive species" (Junker 2015d). Jay Junker points out that the critique was generally not personal, but had more to do with preserving "more traditional" culture (personal communication).

According to journalist Liza Simon, the first public critic of Jawaiian was kumu hula, composer, and singer Frank Kawaikapuokalani Hewett. At the 1991 Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards while accepting the award for "Haku Mele" (best Hawaiian language composition), Hewett "offered congratulations to the traditional artists, who, he said, had made the

culturally correct decision not to stray into foreign territory” (1991). Jawaiian music dominated the nominations for several categories in the Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards that year, specifically “Group of the Year,” “Most Promising Artist(s) of the Year,” and “Contemporary Album of the Year” (Harada 1991a). They were nominated in several other categories as well (ibid). However, as Simon points out, “more traditional” Hawaiian artists won most of the awards that night—the only Jawaiian winners were the Hawaiian Style Band for “Live a Little Hawaiian Style” for “Single of the Year” and *Hawaiian Reggae* by Bruddah Waltah & Island Afternoon for “Contemporary Album of the Year” (Viotti 1991).

Individuals from outside of the “more traditional” Hawaiian music community also criticized Jawaiian. Listeners who knew Jamaican reggae considered Jawaiian to be an incorrect copy of the original because many of the distinctive musical and lyrical elements of Jamaican reggae were not present. As I described previously, early Jawaiian interpretations from the mid-1980s in particular were far more Hawaiian music-oriented than later ones. In addition, much of Jawaiian also draws heavily from U.S. popular music genres like R&B, rock, and pop. Others criticized Jawaiian artists for engaging in a music that they did not know about—that is, they were engaging with reggae without knowing about reggae’s origins, Rastafari, and the “real” meaning of the music. Another criticism was that Jawaiian was unoriginal. This criticism was in part motivated by the fact that many of the reggae songs that Jawaiian artists performed and recorded were covers, especially early on.

The criticism mounted as 1991 wore on, eventually resulting in a public conference held at Windward Community College on October 30 on the merit of Jawaiian (Berger 2012a:394). The panelists included Frank Kawaikapuokalani Hewett, Frank B. Shaner,

Brickwood Galuteria, William “Billy V” Van Osdol, Israel Kamakawiwo‘ole, Bruddah Waltah Aipolani, “Bully” Soares, Liza Simons, Robert Kekaula (serving as moderator), and others. According to Gary Chun, all of the panelists acknowledged the positive effect that Jawaiian had had on “revitalizing” Local music (1991b). However, Chun stated that some found the word “limiting” (ibid). Others decried the word “Jawaiian,” said that KCCN was not doing enough to promote “real” Hawaiian music, and critiqued Jawaiian for not being political enough. Still others critiqued it for not being “real” Hawaiian music and decried the fact that young Hawaiians were turning their backs on their culture (ibid; Berger 2012a:394-395).

According to John Berger, the only change that seemed to result from this conference was that KCCN dropped its usage of “Jawaiian,” renaming it “island music” (2012a:395). Jawaiian, now island music, remained as popular and commercially successful as before. Based on my research, the term “island music” had been used previously to refer to Hawaiian music—the earliest instance I found was in the 1890s. Toward the mid-twentieth century, however, “island music” was also used to refer to “music in Hawai‘i” or “music from Hawai‘i” as well as Hawaiian music. At the time of the Jawaiian backlash, however, island music became somehow “less Hawaiian” than Hawaiian music. Eventually, the Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards implemented an island music category in 1995 (“Island Contemporary Album of the Year”). Winners in island music categories tend to have a “more traditional” Hawaiian sound regarding instruments, vocal styles, and language, but may have some significant U.S. continental or global influence like lyrics in English.

1990s

The artists popular in 1990 and 1991 continued to remain popular in the early-1990s and still performed at large concerts and in nightclubs. They were joined by others such as Robi Kahakalau (also a member of Hawaiian Style Band), Ka'au Crater Boys, Natural Vibrations, and Sean Na'auao (who went solo from Mana'o Company) (see Appendix for a full list of band names). Large concerts continued, and, in 1993, the first KWXX Ho'olaule'a took place. In the vein of KCCN's Birthday Bash, this concert is in Hilo and is put on by the radio station KWXX on Hawai'i Island.

In 1995, the amount of live music being performed in nightclubs went down, likely because of an economic downturn in the 1990s. However, activity recovered as the decade went on. The second half of the 1990s saw the emergence of quite a few bands, including groups like Ten Feet and Baba B (see Appendix). Activity increased in the last years of the decade, and bands formed then went on to become more popular in the 2000s. They include Ekolu, B.E.T., and the 'Opihi Pickers (see Appendix). Jamin Wong of Ho'aikāne went solo under the name Chief Ragga in 1998 and started primarily performing a blend of dancehall toasting and rap. He even became a finalist on MTV's *The Cut* that year (Berger 1998b). Fiji, perhaps the most famous of these artists, began to perform in nightclubs in the band Par Three around 1989 (Berger 1999a). He later joined the Hawaiian Style Band, started to perform solo around 1991, and eventually released his first solo album in 1994. However, he did not receive much acclaim until the release of his second album, *Born and Raised* (Fiji 1996), for which he won "Favorite Entertainer of the Year" (by audience vote) and "Male Vocalist of the Year" at the Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards in 1998.

Stylistically, in the 1990s, musicians started incorporating more Jamaican roots reggae influence. Specifically, they more consistently used a drum set with a one-drop beat, a melodic bassline, and a bubble performed on keyboards. Many groups consistently included a toasting interlude with dancehall style accompaniment. The only major uses of dancehall before this trend that I am aware of are the music of the band Wisdom Tree, which was active in the 1980s-1990s and primarily devoted to genre, and the well-known song “Girlie Girlie” by Nā Waiho‘olo‘u o ke Ānuehue (1990), which has a dancehall instrumental accompaniment and includes quite a bit of toasting. The dancehall toasting interlude trend is very similar to the way that Shabba Ranks and other dancehall DJs were used with Top 40 artists on the continent in the 1990s, or the way that rap interludes are inserted into Top 40 music today. On the other hand, some groups continued to lean towards the ‘ukulele trio, the most famous of which was the Ka‘au Crater Boys.

In the late-1990s, groups started to incorporate R&B vocal styles into their music. This trend includes the sounds and techniques of both R&B solo and R&B vocal groups. Interestingly, the R&B vocal group style sounds very similar to that of the leo ki‘ekie‘e (falsetto) and ‘ukulele trio vocal group, which is probably due to their shared roots in Protestant hymnody. It is likely that the overt influence from R&B originated with Fiji, as it was one of the elements distinctive to his sound. Also, compared to Jamaican roots reggae, the tempo of island music is faster, the skank is often louder, and the music is typically in a major key.

As was the case in the 1980s, bands in the 1990s continued to perform alongside contemporary Hawaiian and Hawaiian music-adjacent, Local, “leisure-dance” music artists like Henry Kaponu and Loyal Garner. Like older bands, many of the songs that these artists

performed were not reggae and could include “more traditional” Hawaiian, rock, and country songs.

1999 marked two major additions in the commercial realm. In November of that year, Clear Channel Communication, the owner of KDNN FM 98.5, decided to change from a “popular niche market” classic rock format to Island Rhythm 98.5 (Tatar and Berger 2012b:674-675). A reggae category was also added to the Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards that year (“Reggae Album of the Year”), and the first winner was Natural Vibrations for their album *All Natural* (Natural Vibrations 1998).

During this time, Jamaican reggae artists seemed to respond to their popularity in Hawai‘i and started to perform there frequently. Individual artists like Gregory Isaacs, Third World, and U.S.-based reggae band Big Mountain performed in Honolulu in 1990s. In addition, Reggae Sunsplash, the annual Jamaican reggae festival held in Montego Bay, toured in Hawai‘i from 1989-1994.

The underground roots scene started to increase during the early-1990s with the formation of bands like Roots Natty Roots, Dread Ashanti, and Marty Dread. They joined active artists like Maacho and the Cool Connection, Ras Inando, and Tony Gits (see Appendix). Despite the popularity of roots reggae, the underground roots scene did not receive widespread commercial support. Nightclub owners and producers tended to believe that roots reggae would not be commercially successful because the music was not being played on commercial radio. However, the underground reggae bands were getting airplay on the independent radio station Radio Free Hawaii, operated by Norm Winter of Jelly’s (now Ideas) record store from 1991 to 1997 (with a break in 1994 when it briefly switched to a commercial format). Many of my interviewees remembered this radio station fondly

because it was listener-driven and would broadcast music that was rarely or never played on commercial radio stations. Listeners could fill out ballots and indicate to the station what songs they wanted to hear. Radio Free Hawaii was one of the main avenues through which underground reggae bands became popular. However, eventually, nightclubs like Anna Bannana's, Wave Waikiki, Pink's Garage, and others increasingly let roots reggae bands perform on their stages. The promotion company Golden Voice, originally founded in Southern California to promote punk groups, had a branch in Hawai'i at the time and also occasionally produced concerts with reggae bands.

Simultaneously, outdoor reggae parties in rural areas on O'ahu began to become very popular. Reggae parties had existed since the 1970s (Simon 1991), but they became much larger in the 1990s. These parties would occur in places like the North Shore and the West Side. However, most of them were on the East Side, which is where many of the members of Roots Natty Roots, Dread Ashanti, and Natural Vibrations lived. Sometimes, reggae parties would begin as more typical backyard parties, celebrating a high school graduation or a baby's first birthday, but they eventually grew into big events through word of mouth as the day progressed. Other reggae parties were block parties, some of which were organized by the clothing company Souljahz and later, Rayjah. The parties could have anywhere from one hundred to one thousand people in attendance. Reggae parties continued into the mid- to late-1990s, but they started to become smaller and less frequent in the second half of the decade. Ice (methamphetamine) started to become prevalent at the events. At the same time, the implementation of new noise laws made it more difficult to stage large events at night.

Sound system culture returned through the establishment of Pacific Sounds Outernational in 1998. It was founded by selector Lethal Selecta (Liloa Dunn, known at the

time as DJ Liloa) and was created with the intention of connecting the members' Kanaka Maoli identity with Rastafari through music (Pacific Sounds Outernational n.d.). The group also worked with a number of underground roots artists in Hawai'i as well as internationally famous reggae artists from Jamaica and elsewhere (ibid).

As was the case in the 1980s, there was some overlap between the underground and island music scenes. Ises Lipman of Roots Natty Roots and THC remembered that the only reggae he could find when he arrived in Hawai'i around 1990 was island music. He would go to nightclubs like Malia's Cantina to listen to groups like Bruddah Waltah, Willie K, Simplicity, Kapena, and Mana'o Company. These artists would then allow him to come onstage and sing with them, in a kanikapila style, and Lipman would perform a more "strict" reggae song. Willie K also paid for the studio time for Roots Natty Roots's first album, *Roots Natty Roots* (Roots Natty Roots 1992), at Rendez-Vous Recording. Additionally, Lipman told me about mentoring the members of the band Natural Vibrations, who quickly became incorporated into the island music scene while continuing to have more of a roots reggae sound (personal communication). They steadily became more popular, and according to a Tower Records report in October 1998, Natural Vibration's album *All Natural* (1998) was the number 7 top-selling CD in Hawai'i (*Honolulu Advertiser* 1998).

2000s

In the early-2000s, there was a proliferation of live music in nightclubs and large concerts on O'ahu, and both the island music and underground scenes increased in size. Many of the artists who had started performing and releasing albums in the final years of the 1990s became very popular during the 2000s. New bands also started to emerge in the early-

2000s, such as O-shen, Hot Rain, Inoa‘ole, Kupa‘āina, and Pati (see Appendix). There was far more widespread industry support for island music and reggae in general. This was apparent in 2002, when Mana‘o Company (and their sound engineer) won five Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards for their album *Spread A Little Aloha* (Mana‘o Company 2001): “Contemporary Album of the Year,” “Single of the Year,” “Song of the Year,” “Album of the Year,” and “Engineering.” Keahiwai, an island music duo, won “Favorite Entertainer of the Year,” “Most Promising Artist(s)” and Sean Na‘auao got “Reggae Album of the Year.” Since then, reggae has been better represented amongst the winners of the Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards.

In 2001, David “Davey D” Daniels, who at the time was the program director at KCCN, KINE-FM, and KKNE-AM, started the television program *Overdrive Live*. This show was comprised of music videos of the island music played on KCCN and Daniels’s radio show of the same name. *Overdrive Live* was broadcast on OC16—Oceanic Time Warner Cable’s 24-hour cable channel—until the late-2010s. Daniels’s intention with *Overdrive Live* was to showcase newer, less famous island music artists because it was getting increasingly harder for them to get radio airplay (Genegabus 2005). The show became popular and was a successful promotional vehicle for the artists during the time. Daniels did not restrict the playlist to artists based in Hawai‘i; he also featured groups like Katchafire from Aotearoa (New Zealand).

Despite the success of many of the island music groups active in the first decade of the twenty-first century, the amount of live music in nightclubs decreased significantly in 2009 likely due to the financial crisis of 2007-2008. Still, quite a few reggae bands began in the mid-2000s, some of which remain very popular today: Paula Fuga, Josh Tatofi, Rebel

Souljahz, and Kimié Miner (see Appendix). In the late-2000s, many of the most popular groups currently formed, including Anuhea, Kolohe Kai, and Maoli (see Appendix). J Boog is probably the most well-known of these recent bands. Originally from Compton, CA, J Boog (Jerry Afemata) moved to Hawai‘i to work with Fiji, who then mentored him (thepier.org 2012). J Boog continues to remain popular in Hawai‘i, though he lives between there and California. The Green is another extremely popular band, and its members are deeply rooted in the island music and underground roots scenes. Guitarist J.P. Kennedy and lead vocalist Caleb Keolanui were both in the band The Next Generation (along with their cousin Micah Keolanui, who went solo under the name Micah G). Guitarist Zion Thompson and keyboard player Ikaika Antone were in the band THC, and Brad Watanabe was in Ooklah the Moc. The Keolanuis and Kennedy are also nephews of Danny Kennedy, one of the founding members of Mana‘o Company. Danny Kennedy also manages Kolohe Kai. Relatedly, Imua Garza of ‘Opihi Pickers started a record label in 2009 and started working with many of these artists (zeomusic.com 2020).

The dominant sound of island music of the 2000s became that which privileged R&B and the more distinctive elements of Jamaican roots reggae. Some groups still leaned toward the instrumental ‘ukulele trio sound, but the trend was not as common as it was in the 1990s. Also, after the early-2000s, dancehall toasting interludes largely disappeared, though it is not uncommon for artists to reference the beat or vocal delivery of dancehall and toasting.

At the beginning of the 2000s, the underground roots scene exploded. This was primarily driven by the great popularity of Ooklah the Moc and several other bands that formed at the very end of the 1990s. Like Natural Vibrations before them, Ooklah the Mock’s popularity also crossed over into the island music scene, but they remain more

ideologically tied to the underground. Humble Soul was another very popular artist at that time. A number of reggae bands were formed in their wake, like Wicked Blend, Isouljahs, and The Ionz (see Appendix). It was more common to see such bands featured in nightclubs than had been the case in the 1990s. The groups were joined in the mid-2000s by Lion Fiyah (who has crossed over into the island music scene), Dubkconscious (Mike Love and Paula Fuga were members), “Mama T” Gonsalves, Mr. 83, and others.

During the 2000s, there was a greater proliferation of other types of reggae besides island music and roots reggae. A more robust ska scene started to form, built upon bands like The Squids from the 1980s and the Tantra Monsters from the 1990s. In the 2000s, ska bands like Go Jimmy Go and Red Session would often play alongside underground roots bands in nightclubs or other concerts. Additionally, sound system culture became more popular.

Around 2003, nightclubs started programming far more DJ nights (in the U.S. sense) across a number of genres. Roots reggae in the form of a sound system was one of the featured genres played by selectors like Pacific Sounds Outernational DJs Liloa/Lethal Selecta, I-Chard, Dunze, Mr. Bone, and others like Jahson the 45 Revolver. Daniel Warner, Kimo Nichols, and Ryan “Jah Gumby” Murakami also performed as Club Dubwize at Auntie Pasto’s restaurant in Honolulu in the early-2000s (Chun 2002a).

Reggae parties were still being held, but to less of an extent than they were previously. Ihilani Gutierrez described to me being a fan in this scene in the late-2000s and early-2010s. She did not know most of the people who put on reggae parties but would find out about them through word of mouth and would attend them during the weekends. She also told me that there was a Reggae Hotline that she could call to find out where these parties were taking place (personal communication). Despite the availability of live music, it

was somewhat difficult to get recordings of it from groups other than the most famous ones like Ooklah the Moc. Fans would share music by allowing other fans to download their iTunes playlists onto a computer or MP3 player.

Eventually, the Black Caribbean artists who were important to the launching of the reggae scene in the 1980s left Hawai‘i one by one, except for Maacho. Tony Gits left Hawai‘i at some point the 1990s (Marilyn Mick, personal communication). He eventually moved to Berlin and passed away in the mid- to late-2010s (H. Doug Matsuoka, personal communication). Ital was deported, likely back to Antigua, not long after 9/11. He passed away in 2021 (ibid).

2010s

Moving into the 2010s, there was a decline in the number of live concerts. Paulele Alcon, the founder of the wildly popular clothing company Hawaii’s Finest, decided to combat this trend. Alcon, who had been producing island music concerts previously, started Hawaii’s Finest on Moloka‘i in 2009 (Stephenson 2011). He decided to launch the “Revive the Live” campaign in 2012 in order to revitalize the live island music scene (revivethelive.com 2016). By 2013, he was producing monthly “Revive the Live” concerts on O‘ahu, which continued throughout 2014. Since then, Hawaii’s Finest continues to be one of the largest producers of reggae concerts in Hawai‘i, along with others like TMR Events (run by Raymond Ho, Jr.). KQMQ also transitioned from a Top 40 station into a reggae format station in 2011, becoming 93.1 Da Pā‘ina (allaccess.com 2011). It then became the third reggae radio station on O‘ahu. As of 2020, it is called HI93. In 2018, Island

98.5 began presenting the Island Music Awards. Nominees do not have to be from Hawai‘i but can include island reggae artists from throughout the U.S. and Pacific regions.

Although island music and more famous underground roots artists had performed outside of Hawai‘i regularly, touring became much more important during the 2010s. Most of the more famous island music bands toured in the continental U.S. and sometimes internationally for the majority of the year. These artists would often perform alongside other reggae bands from the U.S., Jamaican reggae artists, and other global reggae artists. They would appear at reggae music festivals in California like the California Roots Music & Arts Festival in Monterey, the One Love Cali Reggae Festival in Long Beach, and Reggae on the River in Humboldt County. Several interviewees explained to me that artists had a choice to tour outside Hawai‘i or perform in smaller nightclubs or venues almost every day. Pragmatically, there are not nearly enough of such smaller jobs to fully employ all of the reggae artists from Hawai‘i, and I only know of one group that continues to do it (Kapena). Although touring is grueling, it is an opportunity to make more money in a shorter amount of time and is perhaps the biggest chance for a group to earn a living in the age of streaming, when recording revenues have diminished dramatically.

In the 2010s, island music essentially lost the “more traditional” Hawaiian sound that had persisted since the 1980s. Some artists started to experiment with a more pop or rock sound, and in general, groups further embraced the Jamaican roots reggae sound instrumentally. Additionally, songs that more overtly discuss Hawaiian sovereignty became more popular. More broadly, island music was still largely about love relationships and occasionally about Local culture. However, especially in the wake of Kanaka Maoli opposition to the Thirty Meter Telescope on Mauna a Wākea, more artists have released

songs dealing with Hawaiian sovereignty.⁷ The music of Ka‘ikena Scanlan, followed by songs like “Desecration” by Ekolu and “My Hawai‘i” by The Green are examples of this trend.

Even though reggae artists from Hawai‘i had been known outside the islands for several decades, its stature there has risen substantially. Since the termination of the Grammy Award for Best Hawaiian Music Album in 2010,⁸ several island music artists have been nominated for the Grammy that replaced it—the Best Regional Roots Music Album. This category is shared with Native American, polka, zydeco, and Cajun music groups, and island music artists have been nominated for it as either the primary artist on the recording or as a producer. They include artists like Kimié Miner and Anuheā. Several island reggae artists have also been nominated for the Best Reggae Album, like J Boog and Common Kings. Island music artists are also often in the top few of the iTunes Reggae Charts. Some of the bands that formed in the 2010s include: The Jimmy Weeks Project, The Vitals, and PeniDean (who went solo from Natural Vibrations) (see Appendix).

A number of these artists have become increasingly involved with other professional activities outside of performing. For instance, many have become involved with the Mana Mele Project. The Mana Mele Project is run by the non-profit Mana Maoli, and it is a curriculum that teaches children “more traditional” Hawaiian culture like the Hawaiian language, how to use multimedia and technology, and business and career-building fundamentals. Music is a major part of this endeavor. Numerous island music artists participate in the Mana Mele Project, as well as star in songs and music videos that the Mana Mele Project creates.

After a dip in popularity in the late-2000s, the underground roots scene became reinvigorated in the 2010s because there was a new interest in sound system culture. Ryan “Jah Gumby” Murakami suggested to me that this was because record collecting had become more popular. Murakami started hosting sound system nights accompanied by live DJs (in the Jamaican sense) regularly in 2013, calling them “rub-a-dubs” after the Jamaican practice of the same name from the 1970s. Since then, his rub-a-dubs have become quite popular, and he has amassed a following based on these performances (personal communication). Other selectors like Lethal Selecta have remained active. Newer selectors have also come into prominence in the late-2010s, like Hanimal Selecta and the rocksteady nights at Downbeat Lounge in Chinatown in Honolulu put on by Pressure Down Sounds, Rudie’s Hi-Fi, and Zion Coptic Sounds.

New underground roots bands have formed during the 2010s despite the shift in interest toward sound system nights. These bands include the Guidance Band, Kapu System, and Herbculture (see Appendix). Large concerts featuring these bands still occur; for example, tributes to Bob Marley on his birthday. In the wake of the disappearance of the reggae party scene, Die Hard, the creator of the reggae hotline in the 2000s, turned to another form of concert promotion. He started a regularly updated website and Instagram account called Hawaii Reggae Guild, which lists all of the reggae concerts happening in Hawai‘i that he can find.

Conclusion

The contexts of backyard kanikapila musicking, nightclubs, the backlash of 1991, and the ensuing history of reggae in Hawai‘i are foundational to notions of identity in this

music. Reggae in Hawai‘i is rooted in Hawaiian cultural practices, has significant outside influence, and has been disdained by many people. At the same time, reggae moves across the divide between Hawaiian music and Local leisure-dance music. My central argument, developed in the next chapters, is that reggae in Hawai‘i is based in Hawaiian identity while simultaneously being integrated with the categories of Local and the global, and the history documented here is a critical factor.

Chapter 3 *Hawaiian: Au Me ‘Āina*

When I first heard “He Kanaka” (A Hawaiian) by Ka‘ikena Scanlan featuring The Vitals (Ka‘ikena Scanlan 2016), I thought it was a blazing critique of reggae transmitted through the genre itself. The song begins with the sound of an ipu, a percussion instrument from pre-contact Hawai‘i that typically accompanies hula, backed by atmospheric synths. Scanlan draws out an e, in a manner typical of ornaments in pre-contact-style chanting and then switches into a recitation in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language):

‘O Wākea ke kāne	Wākea lived with Papa
Noho iā Papahānaumoku	Begetter of islands
Hānau ‘o Hawai‘i he moku	Begotten was Hawai‘i, an island.

The song then shifts into reggae, as reggae’s characteristic bubble and skank accompany Scanlan singing the chorus for the first time:

‘A‘ole au he Rasta nō ho‘i	I am not a Rasta
He kanaka wale nō au	
He kanaka no Hawai‘i nei	I am a Hawaiian

When I found out about the translation of the chorus, it seemed to confirm my initial feelings about the meaning of the song: Scanlan presents being Rasta and Kanaka Maoli as mutually exclusive—Hawaiians can’t be Rastas. The first verse appears to drive home this point by portraying Rastafari as a colonizing force analogous to Christianity:

According to my name, which is Elijah
The one that I give praise to, his name is Jah
Sorry, I don’t believe in your religion
No offense to you, it’s just that I’m a Hawaiian.
When I said that ever since the day you landed on my island
Many of dem-a pass away and-a many of dem gone

All of dem giving dem praises to your holy begotten son
My people have to chant and sing, “This is my song,”
I said....

At first glance, Scanlan appears to be critiquing Kanaka Maoli engagement with reggae because he believes that it is neither “traditional” nor “real” Hawaiian music. Despite the fact that the genre is extremely popular in Hawai‘i and is especially so among Kanaka Maoli, such statements have been mobilized in a widespread manner since the height of reggae’s popularity in the early-1990s. However, a closer look at “He Kanaka” reveals that, much like Kanaka Maoli engagement with reggae more broadly, it is often inexplicitly associated with Hawaiian identity.

Scanlan is from Hilo on Hawai‘i Island and is a graduate student at the University of Hawai‘i, Hilo. He also teaches classes there in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language) and ethnobotany and is a pig farmer (hawaiinewsnow.com 2019). “He Kanaka” is Scanlan’s first recording, which came to be through a reggae song contest put on by another popular Local reggae group, The Vitals, in April 2015 (ibid).¹ The Vitals are also featured on “He Kanaka.” This song launched Scanlan’s career when it was released to radio on May 18, 2016. Within a few weeks, the song was the number one requested on Island 98.5, one of O‘ahu’s reggae radio stations (The Vitals 2016). Scanlan’s career has continued to blossom, with two more huge hits (“Smoke All Day” and “Utu Bang Bang”) and two more singles released in 2019 (“Brains” and a song by Kāwika Aspili on which Scanlan is the featured artist: “I Am Not American”).

“He Kanaka” has also been interpreted by others as a critique of Rastafari from a Kanaka Maoli perspective. Several people that I interviewed mentioned that this song was controversial in the underground roots scene because they thought that it “called out”

Kānaka Maoli's and other's engagement with reggae and Rastafari. In that scene, both practices are actually mediums through which members enact or use as a springboard to delve deeper into their Kanaka Maoli identity. The song caused them to reflect upon the fact that reggae and Rastafari are from somewhere else and therefore originally not Hawaiian. "He Kanaka" also inspired them to consider their motivations for engaging with those practices as politically aware Kānaka Maoli.

However, Scanlan's intention for this song seems to be far less critical than I initially thought. In an interview, he discussed his aims for "He Kanaka":

I actually wrote this song based on the current influence that Jamaican culture has in our Hawaiian community....As a reggae musician, I have been asked if I am a Rastafarian and if I belong to the faith. I wrote this song in hopes that I could bring awareness to the lack of authentic Hawaiian ideas in Hawaiian music these days...I say in my lyrics that I am not a Rasta, but simply just a kanaka [Hawaiian] who lives in Hawai'i nei (Noh 2016)

Scanlan has also talked about his musical philosophy more broadly in another interview:

What I always said is I want to be like the combination of Bob Marley and Bruddah Iz [Israel Kamakawiwo'ole]. And like Bob Marley had Africa, right? And so, he was unifying his people back to the homelands in Africa. And I would like the Pacific, in a way. I would like to bring the islanders back to where they call home, back to their culture, to be proud of that, instead of being pushed out because there's no income, because they need to find jobs and a better place, cheaper place to live—come back...So, reunite the Pacific, and kind of just bring everybody home (hawaiiinewsnow.com 2019)

According to these interviews, Scanlan's intention in his music is to promote Hawaiian sovereignty and culture: for him, reggae appears to be part of Hawaiian culture. That is, reggae is Hawaiian enough to need to be brought back to "authentic Hawaiian ideas" ("the lack of authentic Hawaiian ideas in Hawaiian music"), rather than something that has nothing to do with it and should be cast off or made entirely anew as Hawaiian. He

contends that he rectifies this through providing “more traditional” examples of Hawaiian culture, like his recitation of the genealogical mele (chant or song) “‘O Wākea Noho iā Papahānaumoku” as the prelude.² Scanlan’s intentions and personal philosophies therefore are based on the assumption that reggae is a fertile place within which to promote Hawaiian culture. Reggae is thus a normal thing for Scanlan to like as Kanaka Maoli, is a positive model (like Bob Marley), and is therefore an appropriate vehicle for Scanlan to relay his message. The chorus of “He Kanaka” is then an assertion that one does not have to be a full-on Rasta or deeply involved with reggae in order to like and perform it—one can be “just a kanaka who lives in Hawai‘i nei.” Therefore, rather than simply adding Kanaka Maoli culture to reggae, “He Kanaka” reveals, makes overt, and extends the underlying Kanaka Maoli worldviews in reggae in Hawai‘i.

In this chapter, I demonstrate some of the ways in which Kanaka Maoli worldviews undergird reggae in Hawai‘i. I argue that they parallel Kanaka Maoli understandings of genealogy as it relates to the ‘āina (most commonly understood as land, but also includes other aspects of the environment like water). In much the same way that the genealogies of Kanaka Maoli are rooted in specific places in the ‘āina, Kanaka Maoli adopted reggae and continue to like it because it “fits” into the already established aesthetics and ways of knowing about music. These include the nahenahe aesthetic (“sweet-sounding”) and political consciousness. Reggae also fits because, when it was first introduced, it was new and different. Much like the ever-changing ocean through which Kānaka Maoli sailed through over a thousand years, Hawaiians are open to new ideas and global culture, and their inclusion of newer kin into family structures is a normal mode of establishing relation. The adoption of reggae can be understood as a part of long traditions of openness to global

musical forms that have characterized Hawaiian music since western contact and openness to change that parallels ocean currents—which I call *au me ‘āina* (currents with land). I exemplify these arguments through the early career of the “father of Hawaiian music,” Walter “Bruddah Waltah” Aipolani, as well as the experiences of roots reggae fans Bernice Helgenberger Musrasrik and Fiore Anderson.

Reggae Fits

Although most of the people I interviewed did not consider reggae in Hawai‘i to be Hawaiian music, reggae initially became popular there and remains so because it “fits” into Kanaka Maoli worldviews that pertain to sound, lyrics, and performance practices. In interviews, most people were conscious of “fit” on a surface level: they maintained that reggae must be popular in Hawai‘i because of a similar lifestyle and culture to that of Jamaica. The fact that both are tropical islands and therefore have a beach culture based upon swimming in the ocean, surfing, fishing, and other like activities, as well as the fact that locals in both places share an interest in marijuana, perhaps inspired such assertions. However, the appeal of reggae reaches far deeper. Ethnomusicologist Jay Junker argues:

The main reason classic roots reggae became so significant in Hawai‘i is that it reinforces many long-cherished Hawaiian musical values and practices: These include but are not limited to an emphasis on positivity and inclusiveness, a sweet sound, string band instrumentation, hymn-influenced vocal harmonies, straightforward song structures embellished with subtle nuances, the power of sounded words, and the dual role of a performer as both entertainer and culture bearer. Reggae's rhythm was different enough to introduce something new to leisure dance in Hawai‘i, and Reggae's eloquent songs inspired covers as well as locally-composed originals, but the music itself was not much of a stretch for musicians in Hawai‘i to play. It is also extremely important to keep in mind that Reggae and Hawaiian commercial music are both genres of the people, by the people, for the people. They can appeal to casual listeners even as they flow below the surface in the deeper currents of holistic cultural perpetuation (personal communication)

Notions of “fit” were also clearly exemplified in my interview with William “Billy V” Van Osdol, one of the founders of KCCN-FM100. He pointed out to me that he and co-founder Jacqueline Leilani “Honolulu Skylark” Rosetti realized that reggae seemed to sonically “fit” well with contemporary Hawaiian music by 1986 when they first started working together at another radio station (personal communication). Such an ear for “fit” goes back even further, as Rosetti noted that an impetus for including “non-Hawaiian” music was listening to Motown and soul on the radio as a child. She realized that these genres “kind of blended with Hawaiian music” (Chun 1991a). Building on Junker’s argument, I focus on three ways in which reggae fits into Kanaka Maoli worldviews: the nahenahe (sweet-sounding) aesthetic, political consciousness, and openness to global influence.³

One of the most important ways in which reggae fits into Hawaiian musical aesthetics is through the concept of nahenahe. Kevin Fellezs argues that nahenahe, which means “sweet, gentle, melodious” in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, is an important aesthetic of Hawaiian music generally (2019b:425). Fellezs also adds that a nahenahe aesthetic from pre-contact Hawaiian culture privileged abundance and the “fecund materiality of human life” (430). Roots reggae is also “nahenahe” sonically and conceptually. In terms of sound, the timbres of the keyboard, guitar, and bass in reggae are generally softer, and the instrumentation is spare. Although vocal delivery is inflected with the audible vocal fry (low pitch accompanied by a characteristic creaking sound) and strain of “soulful” rhythm and blues, reggae singers generally do not sound like they are straining their voice and melodies typically include a relatively wide range of pitch. Many roots reggae singers also adopt a “sweet” style of singing that is in some ways similar to that in traditional and contemporary Hawaiian music, notable for their use of high voices and falsetto. In fact, when “Skylark”

Rossetti first realized that reggae could fit with contemporary Hawaiian music, she made this connection via the music of Jimmy Cliff rather than that of Bob Marley (Chun 1991a). The connection makes sense within the understanding of Hawaiian music and reggae as nahenahe. Jimmy Cliff's voice is higher and sweeter-sounding than Marley's, which, in comparison, is raspier and lower.

The nahenahe aesthetic also extends to the kinds of global reggae artists favored in Hawai'i, something that became evident in my discussions with several interviewees. For instance, the song "Night Nurse" by Gregory Isaacs (Gregory Isaacs 1982) has been extremely popular in Hawai'i for decades (Ryan Murakami, personal communication). It was still played regularly on the radio and covered by bands in live performance while I was doing fieldwork. Isaacs is well-known for being one of the most famous performers of lover's rock, and the themes of love, relationships, and sexuality are central to this song. Although Isaacs is backed by the heavily rock-influenced Roots Radics in "Night Nurse," sweet sounds are a central part of the aesthetic, including 1980s softer-sounding synth and Isaac's intimate, quiet vocal delivery.

Conceptually, nahenahe is present in reggae through "positivity." Many interviewees remarked that they liked reggae because of its "positive" and "uplifting" messages. Often, people said or implied that such positivity stood in contrast to "negative" genres like rap. Their opinions of rap rest on a stereotypical understanding of the genre that reduces its content to sex, drugs, and violence, and, at the same time, such an opinion reveals racist assumptions about the "threatening" nature of the Blackness embedded in that characterization (see Marsh 2012:352 for the same opinion in another Indigenous context). To reggae musicians and fans, the topics of rap are the opposite of the "uplifting" message

of peace, love, and anti-colonial sentiment common in reggae music. “Three Little Birds” by Bob Marley is a great example of positivity on multiple levels. The lyrics describe an innocent scene in which three little birds perch on the narrator’s doorstep and sing: “don’t worry about a thing/Cause every little thing is gonna be alright.” However, there is an underlying political critique—the birds’ message implies that the current situation is not “alright” and they are comforting the narrator. The song, then, has a peaceful surface-level meaning and a gentle anti-colonial undercurrent. Sonically, what does differentiate rap from reggae preferred in Hawai‘i is that it generally has “noisier” timbres and sometimes does not employ a wide range of pitch in its melodies.

Further, an “uplifting” message with “positive vibes” is a general aesthetic in Hawaiian music. This positivity is also important in Hawaiian music contexts. Junker described to me that in many of the “more traditional” Hawaiian performances of the era, from backyard kanikapila (informal musicking) to formal concerts and even political protests, musicians raised in the tradition invariably ended the proceedings on a positive note: “Because the sounded word has power, musicians played in a spirit of ha‘aha‘a (humility) and lokahi (cooperation). According to many of the musicians I spoke with, they consciously designed their performances to keep everyone present feeling relaxed, uplifted and unified” (personal communication).

A second way that reggae fits into Hawaiian culture is through its use of politically resistant lyrics, which speak to the experiences of Kānaka Maoli as a colonized group. Many of the people that I talked to said that the presence of “rebel” lyrics was an important reason that they liked the music. Numerous others conjectured that Hawaiians and other Locals were attracted to reggae because of its political consciousness. Reggae's messages of

freedom from oppression sparked what Halifu Osumare calls "connective marginality," the idea that the common experience of oppression can connect disparate groups of people (2007:63, 69-72). In fact, connective marginality through reggae and hip hop is common in Indigenous and specifically Kanaka Maoli communities. Reggae has been popular in this way for Hopi (Walsh 2016; Ullestad 2006), Aboriginal Australians (Solis 2015:298), and throughout the Pacific (Clough 2012:267). Faye Yokomizo Akindes, Adria Imada, and Halifu Osumare discuss similar interest in hip hop in Hawai'i regarding the Hawaiian rap group Sudden Rush in the 1990s (2001; 2006; 2007). Stephanie Nohelani Teves also writes about resistance concerning Hawaiian rapper Krystilez (2018).

Although political resistance is a very important way in which Kānaka Maoli engage with reggae, it is important to understand it as only one aspect of Kanaka Maoli culture and worldviews rather than the single impetus behind its taking root in Hawai'i. Most people who described the message of reggae as being one of the attractive features of the genre to them mentioned it alongside other aspects like messages of positivity or the beat. Some people were primarily interested in the "the whole thing," which I take to mean the sound, message, culture, and style. In fact, the popularity of Bob Marley in Hawai'i with his "diverse repertory and genius for catchy melody" is an example of this phenomenon (Jay Junker, personal communication). Although Marley is often held up as the voice of oppressed people everywhere, some of his most famous songs are not overtly about fighting against colonialism. "Waiting In Vain" and "Is This Love" are in many ways straightforward love songs. "Could You Be Loved," "One Love," "Jamming," and "Three Little Birds" have anti-colonial messages, but they are delivered to the listener indirectly: in the package of a love song, a song about music, or a metaphor and with an upbeat, danceable musical

accompaniment. In fact, even some of Marley's more overtly anti-colonial songs like "Get Up Stand Up" and "Stir It Up" employ similar strategies and refrain from the very pointed language of songs like "War" or "Crazy Baldhead." Not only do these more implicitly anti-colonial songs make them more palatable for white or global audiences, but they also fit into Kanaka Maoli understandings of positivity and the nahenahe aesthetic.

Finally, another important way that reggae fits is that, ironically, it was new and different when it first appeared in Hawai'i. This fact was one of the main reasons that reggae fans were first drawn to the genre in the 1970s and early-1980s. In fact, Kānaka Maoli have long been interested in different sorts of musics and have readily incorporated them into their culture since western contact (see Stillman 1987, 2005; Fellezs 2019a; Troutman 2016; Tranquada and King 2012; Carr 2014). Kevin Fellezs argues that the "polycultural"—looking outward and incorporating inward—is an "integral" part of Hawaiianness (2019a:25). Using the example of foundational and creative kī hō'alu guitarist Gabby Pahinui, Fellezs argues that Pahinui's career reveals that the "strength of Hawaiian cultural traditions was its fundamental fungibility" (2019a:30). Fellezs further argues that this approach to slack-key guitar playing is "an organic Native Hawaiian approach" to performance, as being creative in this way is part of the tradition (ibid). Going back further, Amy Ku'uleialoha Stillman argues that variation on a composed melody is an expected component of Hawaiian performance practice (2005:86). Multiplicity, creativity, and difference are thus an inherent part of Hawaiian music.

When musicians and fans first encountered reggae when it initially arrived in Hawai'i, they generally believed that reggae sounded utterly different from anything they had ever heard before. In fact, Andrew Weintraub notes that for Hawaiian musicians, "reggae

symbolizes a freedom to interpret and transform contemporary music” (1998:85). Unfamiliar musical elements like the skank (strumming on off-beats) and one-drop (emphasis on the third beat of each measure) stood out to listeners. Additionally, reggae was a “leisure-dance” music, which was uncharacteristic of most Hawaiian music up to this point (79). Much of Hawaiian music is designed to accompany hula, either in the collection of older, more percussion-driven styles that are now called hula kahiko, or the string instrument-driven, softer, and more recent hula ‘auana. These dances are choreographed and strictly controlled, unlike the improvised and freeform “leisure-dance” performed at nightclubs, which was the sort of dance that accompanies reggae. Furthermore, fans tended to like that fact, and generally sought out music that was different from their baseline of Hawaiian music or mainstream pop of the time. This idea is further cemented by the fact that across the board, many reggae musicians generally spent a fair amount of time outside of Hawai‘i or were firmly oriented in that direction. Several musicians grew up and later lived outside of Hawai‘i because they were in military families and lived all over the world. Others toured outside Hawai‘i frequently, while still others had family members who were from outside Hawai‘i. Thus, an orientation to the global was foundational for the history of reggae in Hawai‘i and Kanaka Maoli engagement with it.

Walter “Bruddah Waltah” Aipolani

The early career of Walter Aipolani, most commonly known by his stage name Bruddah Waltah, is a great example of how reggae in Hawai‘i fits into Kanaka Maoli worldviews. Aipolani is one of the most iconic singers of Hawaiian music of the 1980s and 1990s and is often called the “Father of Hawaiian music.” His first album, *Hawaiian Reggae*

(Bruddah Waltah & Island Afternoon 1990), was a watershed moment in the history of reggae in Hawai‘i that “took everything that everybody knew and just threw it all away” (William Van Osdol, personal communication). Aipolani is part of a group of Kanaka Maoli Hawaiian or roots reggae artists who achieved commercial success in the 1980s and early-1990s. They includes groups like Brother Noland, Butch Helemano, Ho‘aikāne, Simplisity, Kapena, 3 Scoops of Aloha, and then a little later Nā Waiho‘olu‘u o ke Ānuenuue, Leahi, Mana‘o Company, and Willie K. Many of these bands, most famously Ho‘aikāne, Kapena, and Mana‘o Company, began their careers by performing “more traditional” Hawaiian music and then shifted towards reggae over time. I focus here on Aipolani’s musical career until the early-1990s, though it must be noted that he has remained an active performing artist into the present.

I originally met Walter Aipolani through Kalenakū DeLima, a member of the band Kapena who takes on some managerial duties. She introduced me to him at a large concert that I had attended in March 2019—an album release party for Kolohe Kai, an extremely popular Local reggae band, which took place on the Bishop Museum lawn. DeLima was hanging out with most of the rest of her family and her church, who had set up a tent and were selling Local foods like poke bowls, beef stew, and spam musubi. Aipolani happened to be performing, backed by the Mana‘o Company, so DeLima and I chatted for a bit until Aipolani was done performing. When she introduced me to him, he immediately said yes to an interview. I got choked up and nervous and so couldn’t explain my project properly, but this didn’t seem to deter him. I was able to interview him a couple weeks later over the phone as I sat in my auntie’s house in Mililani on O‘ahu. Aipolani was in his house in Hilo on Hawai‘i Island. I could hear roosters crowing in the background occasionally, and

eventually he had to leave because his dog needed to be let outside. He was very generous in answering my questions, and we talked for nearly three hours. Most of the information I present here is from this interview. I was also able to talk to “Bully” Soares, one of the producers of *Hawaiian Reggae* and the bass player in Aipolani’s band Island Afternoon, whom I met through Chris Planas. Planas was a member of several of the earliest reggae groups on O‘ahu, among them Cool Runnings and the world beat band Pagan Babies, and was also one of the musicians who performed during the creation of *Hawaiian Reggae*. Soares was also very generous, and allowed me to interview him twice for a total of about three hours. These interviews are supplemented by journalistic articles, material from George Kanahale’s definitive encyclopedia *Hawaiian Music and Musicians*, and my own observations.

For Aipolani, who is Kanaka Maoli, the foundation of his musical life has always been Hawaiian music. As a child growing up in Hilo and then O‘ahu in the 1950s and 1960s, much of his musical education was attained through accompanying his sister, hula dancer Dale (DeeDee) Kahelelani Aipolani Nielson. She went on to win the esteemed title of Miss Aloha Hula at the Merrie Monarch Festival in 1974, which is arguably the most prestigious hula competition in the world. Aipolani would join his parents in singing for her halau (hula group). Other siblings also started performing early on, including one of Aipolani’s younger brothers, who performed for Don Ho. As a result, Hawaiian music was the basis of Aipolani’s musical world (personal communication).

However, Aipolani was also fundamentally influenced by other dance musics during his childhood. He told me that at this time, his parents would bring him and his siblings to nightclubs but would leave them to sleep in the car so that they could go inside to drink,

dance, and party. Aipolani remembered waking up in the car during the night and hearing dance music emanating from the club and then sneaking around to look inside. He told me that “there were all these Hawaiians in there and dancing to Hawaiian music,” and that they played on instruments like congas, timbales, drumkit, keyboard, and horns (personal communication). “All these Hawaiians” were “going crazy” (personal communication). He identified the music as kachi-kachi, which is a Local collection of Puerto Rican dance music genres (Solís 2005:76). Aipolani also reported that his mother would perform the genre sometimes. Kachi-kachi was what made Aipolani fall in love with music (personal communication).

From a young age, Aipolani was always interested in the new and different. In fact, he thought that “more traditional” Hawaiian music was “really boring,” even as a child (personal communication). Inspiration came in the form of a birthday gift from his mother when he was in the fifth grade, around 1964-1965: a transistor radio. Aipolani told me that he would listen to the radio away from the rest of his family—while drifting off to sleep—tuned to the stations that played rock ’n’ roll and other U.S. continental pop musics. He would also play along on his ‘ukulele. At this point, he already knew that he wanted to be a singer, but he wanted to perform rock ’n’ roll or something similar because that was the music that made people dance. Even at this point, his mother chastised him and told him to play Hawaiian music, but Aipolani continued on (personal communication).

As he grew older, Aipolani began to play in backyard parties kanikapila style, which allowed for an eclectic mix of what the musicians wanted to play alongside what the audience wanted to hear. A song like “Brown-Eyed Girl” by Van Morrison could be performed after a “more traditional” Hawaiian song like “Papalina Lahilahi.” In this context,

music also inspired dancing. Throughout the 1970s, Aipolani recollected that he and other young musicians were strongly influenced by the contemporary and contemporary Hawaiian music that was emerging during the Second Hawaiian Renaissance. To this generation of musicians, the music of bands like C&K and the Sunday Manoa sounded completely different from the Hawaiian music that they had heard growing up, and it was therefore extremely attractive. To Aipolani, these groups retained the Hawaiian ensemble of 'ukulele, guitar, and bass, but they played these instruments in a totally different way. Aipolani said that he became interested in Hawaiian music again at this point after trying to avoid it as a young person (personal communication).

Aipolani first encountered reggae through a cassette that his sister DeeDee Nielson mailed to him from her home in Aotearoa (New Zealand,) probably in 1979. He said that he listened to it, but did not think much of reggae. However, everything changed once he attended Bob Marley's only concert in Honolulu, which took place at the Waikiki Shell on May 6, 1979. Aipolani was "hooked." He had actually planned to attend a Mākaha Sons of Ni'ihau concert at the Honolulu Zoo that day, but Nielson had tickets to see Bob Marley and Aipolani fortuitously decided to go along with her. Although the Waikiki Shell was not full that day, Marley's impact on Aipolani's musical world was profound. The music sounded so utterly different to him live, with new elements like the prominent melodic bassline, the one-drop, the minor key, and the bubble. The music was so loud that Aipolani could feel the bass vibrating beneath his seat. He went down to the stage to get a closer look. The image of Bob Marley was similarly impactful and impressive: he had dreads so large that they looked like a marijuana leaf, and he appeared onstage smoking the "fattest" spliff Aipolani had ever seen. The smell of marijuana and body odor enveloped him. "Stir It Up" was the first song

that he remembered, and hearing Marley's songs there was the first time he really "listened" to this music. The "rebellious" spirit of reggae matched that of Aipolani, who "just wanted to be different": "He was a prophet to me I guess. Everything he was singing about was what I was about at the time" (personal communication). This experience thus inspired Aipolani to take his music "to another level" (personal communication).

At around the same time (1978-9), Aipolani formed a band with his brothers, who were in intermediate and high school, called Aku Palu (Bonito Guts). The formation of the band coincided with veteran Hawaiian showroom performer Melveen Leed giving Aipolani his first solo gig: at Keeki's Lounge in Waikīkī. Aku Palu eventually got a steady gig at the Pokai Bay Tavern and Mama's, and they played original songs that brought together Hawaiian music and reggae like "My Little Baby Likes to Hotchacha" (Chun 1990b). They would play these songs alongside their interpretations of reggae classics—Bob Marley's "Stir It Up," for example—and "more traditional" Hawaiian favorites such as "Hi'ilawe" (ibid). In 1980, they recorded their first album and were just about to release it when their manager, Ernie Amona, was murdered in front of them at Mama's. KCCN offered to help the band with their recording career, but Aipolani was too shaken. Instead, he and his brothers joined their uncle Lamond Kanakaole's band, Na Mele Kane (The Music Men) for extra security (ibid; Gleason 2014).

Eventually, Na Mele Kane got a regular gig at Jubilee Nightclub in Honolulu (rebranded as Jubilation in 1992), which specifically catered to a Hawaiian and Local audience in the late-1980s. Aipolani remembered playing there five nights a week. They also performed at larger events throughout the 1980s, including the Hawaii County Fair, several different hula and other non-profit entity fundraisers, an Auto-Rama auto show at the Neal S.

Blaisdell Arena, and Buffalo's Surf Competition at Mākaha Beach. Additionally, Na Mele Kane played at small events like luaus, parties, weddings, and school assemblies (personal communication). Aipolani also created the very successful free concerts Tumbleland Jams from 1983-1985 at Mā'ili Park on the West Side of O'ahu, at which he performed reggae with other emerging Hawaiian bands of the time (Chun 1990b). Aipolani remembered that during this time period reggae started to spread because the members of all of these bands would attend one another's shows and copy each other (personal communication).

Aipolani described the style of music played by Na Mele Kane as consisting of Hawaiian music, reggae, and other genres—"Local kine." Aipolani likened it to the sort of music that the Peter Moon Band was playing—a Hawaiian basis in sound, but repertoire in English drawing from number of different genres. Aipolani described their music as "not really reggae" (personal communication). This music is based upon the Hawaiian ensemble of 'ukulele, guitar, and bass, and often involved singing with harmonies, timbres, and ornaments associated with "more traditional" and contemporary Hawaiian music. If they performed a reggae song, their version may have incorporated small elements of the genre, like a strong guitar strum on beats 2 and 4 (skank). Their repertoire ranged widely, from Hawaiian or Local hits to reggae and other pop music from the U.S. continent. In nightclub contexts, Aipolani was surrounded by this sort of music: it was what audiences and promoters wanted to hear, and at the same time, it was what he wanted to play (personal communication).

Aipolani left Na Mele Kane around 1989-1990, but the rest of the band continued to perform at Jubilee for about two months before being let go. I found ads for the band as late as 1992. After leaving Na Mele Kane, Aipolani started his own band called Bruddah Waltah

and Island Afternoon, which was completely devoted to reggae (personal communication). He played larger concerts similar to those he had done with Na Mele Kane, but started to perform more regularly at nightclubs throughout O‘ahu that specialized in Local music like Malia’s Cantina, Jubilee, Fast Eddie’s Nightclub, and Chuck’s Steak and Seafood Restaurant. In recounting stories about concerts during this time, Aipolani especially remembered performing at Jubilee, where his was the house band in 1992 (personal communication). Throughout the year, they alternated, regularly playing Friday and Saturday 1-3:30 am for a couple of months straight and then taking break of a month or less. Aipolani was an extremely popular act. He would also often follow “more traditional” Hawaiian musicians, like the esteemed kī hō‘alu (slack key) artist Ledward Kaapana, famous kumu hula Chinky Mahoe and his halau, contemporary acts like Kaleo O Kalani and Lawai‘a, and contemporary Hawaiian groups like the Mākaha Sons of Ni‘ihau, Ho‘okena, and Olomana.

Around the same time, KCCN started to host their Hawaiian Jams, which Aipolani participated in multiple times. He also started to perform as the opening act for larger U.S. continental or international acts. The first of these was the Jamaican reggae band Inner Circle and South African reggae artist Lucky Dubé, at a concert that took place on August 11, 1990 at the Neal S. Blaisdell Arena, the second-largest venue on O‘ahu. Aipolani reported that many of the Local audience members would attend these sorts of concerts to see him perform and would discover international reggae bands in the process (personal communication). He would also occasionally play alongside “straighter” Local reggae bands like Butch Heleman and the Players of Instruments and Maacho and the Cool Connection, as well as world beat band Pagan Babies that played reggae alongside other African and

African diasporic genres. According to “Bully” Soares, the people in attendance were primarily working-class Kānaka Maoli (personal communication). Both he and Aipolani repeatedly stated that the music reached a diverse age range too—Aipolani expressed intense satisfaction in being able to make even the kūpuna (elders) smile and dance, a feat made greater by the fact that many older Hawaiians strongly disliked mixtures of Hawaiian music and reggae (Walter Aipolani, personal communication; Bully Soares, personal communication).

Despite his intense attraction to reggae music and marijuana, Aipolani told me that he was never interested in trying to become Jamaican—being Hawaiian and Hawaiian music was always his foundation. He did, however, make a concerted effort to learn about reggae culture. He described seeing Rastas sitting on the side of road on the West Side of O‘ahu and picking them up to talk to them about Rastafari, as well as being able to meet and hang out with some of the great Jamaican roots reggae artists like Jimmy Cliff (personal communication). He also became friends with the brother of a Wahiawa record store dealer, a Jamaican known as Rashan, from whom he learned about Rastafari (Chun 1990b). However, Aipolani still regards reggae and Jamaican-ness as an outside influence that he used to put his spin on a foundation of Hawaiian music, and he repeatedly impressed this upon me throughout our interview (personal communication). “Bully” Soares confirmed this as well (personal communication). Furthermore, Aipolani unconditionally stated to me that music produced by a Hawaiian person was Hawaiian music. His conviction was strong enough that he has always disliked the term “Jawaiian” because he believes that it obscures the Hawaiian identity of the musicians and the Hawaiian musical context into which reggae was incorporated:

If one Hawaiian is singing a song, then it's Hawaiian music...Even the music I play—you can say, oh, he's playing Hawaiian reggae, but it's *Hawaiian music*. It's Hawaiian reggae—it's Hawaiian music! No difference, only the words. And the people playing the music is different. But other than that, we're all Hawaiians playing music....No matter what you play, what style you play....You're singing kachi-kachi, you're singing chalangchalang, traditional, you're singing Hawaiian reggae. If you're Hawaiian doing 'um, it's all Hawaiian music. Because you know why? Us Hawaiians, we are a drum culture in the beginning...rocks, sticks, bamboos. We started with that. And chant. We got influenced when they brought the guitar in and the 'ukulele in, and we started incorporating that in our music, and it became Hawaiian music still yet. Even when we sang without our sticks and our bamboos and our 'uli'uli-s and our rocks—that's all Hawaiian chant, Hawaiian music....You cannot categorize it. No category is actually Hawaiian music....Might be different for other people—they might have a different perspective....But to me, it's all influence....Everything except Jawaiian. Jawaiian's not us. I don't like the word...no such thing...We do our own thing—play our *own* way (personal communication)

In 1990, Aipolani and his group recorded and released their first album, *Hawaiian Reggae*, out of “Bully” Soares’s studio Platinum Pacific Records. *Hawaiian Reggae* was an instant hit and has since become a classic. It may have sold 40,000 copies soon after its release, when selling 10,000 constituted a major hit in Hawai‘i (Berger 2012a:390). It also outsold all Local recordings and U.S. continental hits that year (Simon 1991:5). Additionally, *Hawaiian Reggae* received the Nā Hōkū Hanohano Award for “Contemporary Album of the Year” in 1991 (Berger 2012a:390).

Some of the most striking aspects of this album are the ways in which it fits into Kanaka Maoli worldviews. The album’s songs are mostly covers: “No Woman No Cry” by Bob Marley & The Wailers; a medley of “Long Ago” by reggae band the Herbs from Aotearoa (also previously covered by Kapena) and “Give Peace a Chance” by John Lennon; “Great Pretender” by The Platters, which was also covered by Freddy Mercury; “Church in an Old Hawaiian Town,” composed by Johnny Noble, one of the foundational developers of hapa haole music; “Sweet Lady of Waiahole” composed by Gordon Broad and originally

recorded by 3 Scoops of Aloha; the original “Funny Talk,” which was composed by Aipolani’s brother Duke “Dukie” Aipolani; “Don’t Let Me Down” by the Beatles; “Tiny Bubbles,” composed by Leon Pober and originally recorded and made famous by Don Ho; “Imagine” by John Lennon; “To Love Somebody” by the Bee Gees, which has been covered by many other famous pop singers; and finally, Aipolani’s original song “Hawaiian Lands” (which was later covered by Ho‘aikāne). In 1991, journalist John Berger maintained that “Long Ago” was the lead single on this album and was probably the definitive Hawaiian single of 1990 (1991). Now, he asserts that “Tiny Bubbles” was more important (personal communication). In my estimation, the song that has most remained in public memory is probably “Hawaiian Lands,” followed by “Church in an Old Hawaiian Town” and “Sweet Lady of Waiahole.”

From an outsider perspective, this list is diverse and unexpected. Not only are there very few recognizably Hawaiian songs, but most of the songs are not identifiable as reggae. Rather, they could be classified as Top 40 pop hits from the U.S. continent, disseminated by the radio and thus exerting a hegemonic hold over musical life even in Hawai‘i. As both Aipolani and Soares confirmed to me, this album was essentially a recorded version of a set that they would have performed live at a nightclub like Jubilee (Walter Aipolani, personal communication; Bully Soares, personal communication). The songs would also be familiar to many audience members and would thus elicit a more positive reaction (in other words, people would dance more enthusiastically and buy more alcohol). The working-class Kanaka Maoli clientele who would have been the target audience thus had diverse tastes that were not limited to strictly Hawaiian music or even reggae. Furthermore, this kind of diversity is representative of the sort of music that would figure in kanikapila backyard

jams; it is, in other words, integral to Hawaiian musical life. In addition, Soares told me that the way his band mixed genres was in service of trying something “different” (personal communication). The expansiveness and interest in the new and different exhibited by Aipolani and his band “fit” the Hawaiian context: they folded reggae into a norm of already established Hawaiian music and U.S. continental pop music that appealed to Kanaka Maoli audiences.

The songs on the album also fit into the *nahenahe* aesthetic and Hawaiian notions of political consciousness. Bruddah Waltah and Island Afternoon’s original “Hawaiian Lands” is perhaps the most overtly Hawaiian song. Its chorus, Aipolani’s original line “Keep Hawaiian lands in Hawaiian hands,” is an explicit call for Hawaiian sovereignty and has become a slogan used throughout the Hawaiian sovereignty movement (Perry 2014:274). The song also did well on the radio (Harada 1991b). The chorus includes the line: “Ua mau ke ea o ka ‘āina i ka pono,” which translates to “the land is perpetuated (or restored) in righteousness,” which has also been associated with the Hawaiian sovereignty movement.⁴ However, other than the lyrics, the song does not “sound” very Hawaiian; rather, it sounds largely like 1980s pop—complete with synthesizers and drum machine—with a reggae beat. Aipolani told me that this song came to him as he was driving to Waimānalo for a concert, when Bob Marley’s “Waiting in Vain” came on the radio. He described “Hawaiian Lands” as having the same musical accompaniment as “Waiting in Vain” but with different lyrics (personal communication). Soares also completed the final verse and made the arrangement for the recording (personal communication). The accompaniment departs substantially from the Bob Marley original, but the chord progressions and basslines are very similar. The

message and extra-musical use of the song are very Hawaiian, even though the accompaniment may not sound that way.

“No Woman No Cry” is perhaps the most recognizably reggae song on this album. Besides being one of Bob Marley’s greatest hits, Aipolani’s version has a number of reggae elements. These include a melodic bassline characteristic of roots reggae, one-drop beat, skank in the guitar, spare instrumentation, and R&B and Protestant hymnody-inspired close vocal harmonies. Aipolani’s vocal delivery is also evocative of reggae—his rhythm and his strong articulation of the words are reminiscent of Bob Marley’s in his definitive recording from *Live!* (Bob Marley & The Wailers 1975). Additionally, Aipolani occasionally sings with a touch of Jamaican patois. The organ keyboard sounds much more like church music than the bubble typical of reggae and the skank is understated, characteristics that are both present in the original Marley version. The guitar often departs from the skank and goes into melodies that are much more typical of kī hō‘alu (slack key)—a clear invocation of “more traditional” Hawaiian music.

Most strikingly, Aipolani changed the lyrics to be relevant to a Hawaiian audience (ho‘omanawanui 2006:293).⁵ For this recording, Aipolani and his producers got written permission from Rita Marley to change the lyrics. Both Aipolani and Soares reported to me that Marley was actually “overwhelmed” and happy that they were recording it with these changes (Walter Aipolani, personal communication; Bully Soares, personal communication). In the first performance of the chorus, amongst the refrains of “No, woman, no cry,” Aipolani interjects “Hawaiian woman.” However, Aipolani’s most obvious changes are in the first verse:

Bob Marley's version (Bob Marley and The Wailers 1975):

I remember when we used to sit
In the government yard in Trenchtown
Observing the hypocrites

As they would mingle
With the good people we met

Aipolani's version:

I remember when we used to swim
On a little beach down in the country
It's all yours, from the hill to the sea,
Hawaiian!

We could go fishin' aplenty

Aipolani also repeats these lyrics followed by a slightly different version in the second verse. At this point in the song, Marley is referencing specific occurrences that could take place in the life of a poor and probably Black Jamaican. This includes sitting in a government yard (government-owned, low-income housing) in the notoriously “dangerous” neighborhood of Trenchtown in Kingston, Jamaica. Aipolani changes these references to relate to his own audience of working-class Kānaka Maoli by discussing activities that they would typically engage in, like swimming at beaches in the country and fishing. Further, it is possible that Aipolani references the Hawaiian concept of ahapua‘a through the lyric “from the hill to the sea” (Jay Junker, personal communication). At first glance, it appears that he could be simply evoking Hawaiian land through the phrase, but on closer inspection, it is clear that he chose a specific way to do it. Hawaiian conceptualizations of land are oriented along the axis of the ahapua‘a, from the top of mountains to the coastline: mountains occur in the middles of the Hawaiian islands as one end and the ocean at the bases of these mountains as the other end (Oliveira 2014:54). Aipolani could have evoked Hawaiian land in a number of ways, such as referencing two opposing ends of an island, but he chose to align himself in a Hawaiian way. Furthermore, Aipolani's invocation of Hawaiian orientation to land is more than just a reference—he adds that “it's all yours...Hawaiian!” Here, as in the song “Hawaiian Lands,” he is asserting that Hawaiian land belongs to Hawaiian people, making a political assertion.

“Great Pretender,” “Funny Talk,” “Don’t Let Me Down,” “Imagine,” and “To Love Somebody” in their original forms do not have Hawaiian or reggae connotations. However, the way that Aipolani and Soares arranged and performed these songs made them relevant to the working-class Hawaiian audiences *even without* “more traditional” sonic Hawaiian influences. The original versions of the songs probably would have been played on Top 40 or similar radio stations (minus “Funny Talk”), as would have been the case on the continental U.S.. Therefore, they would have been familiar to Hawaiian listeners. Aipolani and Soares consciously chose to arrange non-reggae songs in a reggae style, something for which their band was known and a response to the popularity of the genre among Hawaiian people (Berger 1992a).⁶ “Don’t Let Me Down,” “Imagine,” and “To Love Somebody” are in a roots reggae style. “Great Pretender” has a much lighter roots reggae influence.

“Funny Talk” and “Sweet Lady of Waiahole” are the two tracks influenced by a variety of Afro-Caribbean and Latin genres. Such genres have also long held an appeal for Hawaiians and fit into Hawaiian musical aesthetics of “sweet-sounding” and “positivity.” Aipolani discussed the influence of Puerto-Rican kachi-kachi in the 1950s and 1960s with me, which was no doubt amplified by larger U.S. continental trends toward Latin jazz music around that time. Soares also pointed out specific Latin influence in songs by contemporaneous Hawaiian musicians like “Malia My Tita,” composed by Leroy Melandre and recorded by Buddy Fo and the Invitations (still played on Hawaiian music radio today) (personal communication). There was also Latin influence in the genre of exotica, which was created in part in Hawai‘i and Hawaiian musicians were important to its invention. Soares also remembers listening to calypso and Latin jazz as a child, and he eventually performed calypso and other Caribbean genres (personal communication). Furthermore, the

“tropical” feel of the music seemed to match the sensibilities of Hawaiians. “Sweet Lady of Waiahole” exemplifies the “tropical:” the song prominently features congas in the opening and the lyrics describe a woman who sold produce from the side of the highway in the Waiāhole area of O‘ahu. Soares attributed his inspiration to include congas to the Caribbean associations of the coconuts and papayas referenced in the lyrics (personal communication). All of these songs reference sounds and genres that are not necessarily Hawaiian, but nonetheless fit into Hawaiian musical aesthetics and culture.

“Church in an Old Hawaiian Town” more obviously appeals to Hawaiian audiences through references in the lyrics, though it forges instrumentation and styles with more overt connections to Hawaiian music. The song references an “old Hawaiian town” that has “a little village church” in which the narrator meets “the girl that God had blessed.” The fact that the song is about a Hawaiian town clearly localizes the song. However, the fact that it is a “Hawaiian” town rather than “Hawai‘i” or “Local” more clearly references a specifically Kanaka Maoli identity. In addition, the clear references to Christianity further target Hawaiians because many Hawaiians are Christian. In fact, missionaries had a profound effect on Hawaiian music and culture since their arrival in 1820. That “Church in an Old Hawaiian Town” belongs in the hapa haole genre also references “more traditional” Hawaiian music, although hapa haole is often not considered “as Hawaiian” as other genres. Apart from these references, there is not much overtly Hawaiian in the song—it is in English and is accompanied by synthesizers in a 1980s R&B slow jam style. Such styles would have been available on the radio and are “sweet” and “positive.” This song, then, bridges examples with more obvious Hawaiian references like “No Woman No Cry” and overtly non-Hawaiian ones like “The Great Pretender”: “Church in an Old Hawaiian Town” has

more overt Hawaiian lyrical references and yet is accompanied by seemingly non-Hawaiian music that nonetheless “fits” into Hawaiian aesthetics and genres.

Aipolani’s engagement with reggae clearly demonstrates the ways in which the music fits into Kanaka Maoli worldviews. First, Aipolani repeatedly stressed that that he performs *Hawaiian* reggae, revealing a basis in a rooted Hawaiian identity and a need for the outside music to fit into preexisting Hawaiian musical culture. Even though he was brought up surrounded by different sorts of musics, Hawaiian music was the foundation—it was the first music he learned and was the music that his mother told him he should be performing. As he moved through his career, Hawaiian music remained his basis. Aipolani repeatedly stated that his intention was not to copy Jamaicans or pretend to be them; rather, he considered his Hawaiian reggae to be an original *Hawaiian* interpretation of Jamaican reggae. There was a Jamaican influence upon his music, but it was less important than the Hawaiian context that provided the foundation and underlying assumptions about musical aesthetics and ethos. This seems to be why the word *Jawaiian* bothers him so much, even though others often identify him as a leading figure in the creation of music that falls under that rubric. Such an orientation is further supported by Aipolani’s understanding of Hawaiian music, which is characterized by the identity of the performer: Hawaiian music is performed by Hawaiian people.

Similarly, for Aipolani, the breadth of Hawaiian music makes it impossible to identify definitive sonic characteristics. This is clear from the extended quote I reproduced earlier, in which he presents a brief history of some of the outside influences on Hawaiian music and placed reggae squarely within that history. Aipolani made the argument despite his contention that there may be some differences between “more traditional” Hawaiian

music and his Hawaiian reggae, notably “the words” and the performers: reggae is often about love relationships and dancing whereas “more traditional” Hawaiian music is not, and not all Hawaiian music performers play reggae. For Aipolani, the identity of the performer and reggae’s place in the history of Hawaiian music are more important. Aipolani also points out the instability of definitions of Hawaiian music by openly stating that others may disagree with his opinions on it and that “no category is actually Hawaiian music.”

Furthermore, the aesthetics and lyrical content of reggae fit into the music that Aipolani was already playing. In the context of kanikapila sessions and nightclubs, Aipolani’s music had to make sense together and conform to audience expectations in order to “work.” Since the basis was Hawaiian music, other genres needed to have a similar nahenahe aesthetic and political ethos to be successful, and reggae was perhaps Aipolani’s most successful addition. To this end, the more overtly Hawaiian songs on *Hawaiian Reggae*, like “Hawaiian Lands” and “No Woman No Cry,” are not anomalies in the repertoire of reggae in Hawai‘i—they reveal what was already there.

Simultaneously, Aipolani’s orientation toward new and “different” music fits into the Kanaka Maoli tendency to be open to outside culture. This openness became ingrained early on: during Aipolani’s childhood, he was exposed to and then consciously sought out different cutting-edge, non-Hawaiian musics, ranging from kachi-kachi to 1960s rock ‘n’ roll. In the late-1960s and 1970s, his tastes expanded further, encompassing progressive contemporary Hawaiian music (which he liked because it was different from older styles) and finally reggae. Aipolani’s experience with reggae at the Bob Marley concert also exemplifies this. Marley’s music, image, and reggae culture more broadly were totally

unlike anything Aipolani had encountered and so became extremely attractive. Marley became a “prophet” to Aipolani who “just wanted to be different.”

Aipolani’s personal tastes are in many ways mirrored in his experiences of playing a variety of musics at kanikapila sessions in backyards and in nightclubs. Kanikapila is a distinctively Hawaiian activity that leaves room for the participants to bring whatever music they prefer or the music that an audience demands. This mentality transfers seamlessly into performing more formally for private parties in backyards and into nightclubs, although perhaps with a greater emphasis on audience demand. From a musical perspective, one could think about nightclubs as a commercialized version of kanikapila. Not only did Aipolani perform a variety of music at nightclubs and bigger concerts, but he performed *alongside* a variety of different groups that performed an enormous range of musics, including “more traditional” Hawaiian, contemporary Hawaiian, contemporary music, island music, reggae, and world beat (although not always at the same time). This *particular* variety of music was chosen because it was what Kanaka Maoli audiences liked.

Two Roots Reggae Fans

For my second example, I will discuss the ways in which roots reggae fans Bernice Helgenberger Musrasrik and Fiore Anderson engage with reggae, and how their views of it have changed over the course of their lives as they became more politically active. Musrasrik and Anderson are also members of the underground roots scene, demonstrating that my argument reaches beyond just Hawaiian or island music. For artists in this scene, the goal is typically to get as close as possible to the sound and lyrical content of Jamaican reggae while incorporating their own interpretation. They define themselves against the

mainstream Jawaiian or island music scene and receive little commercial support in comparison. Musrasrik and Andersen are therefore much more overtly politically motivated than Bruddah Waltah Aipolani and others listed above. However, Musrasrik's and Anderson's engagements with reggae still operate along the lines of fit: being rooted in the 'āina and open to the global, despite their reservations about reggae because it did not originate Hawai'i.

I met Musrasrik and Anderson through Flame Porter, who is both a fan and artist within the O'ahu underground roots scene. My own auntie Kathleen Ballesteros introduced me to Porter because he was a student at Honolulu Community College and worked with Ballesteros. When I interviewed Musrasrik and Anderson in September 2018, both women worked on the farm at the non-profit Kōkua Kalihi Valley (KKV). KKV is dedicated to improving the health of the people of Kalihi, the stereotypically "poor and dangerous" neighborhood of Honolulu, which has this problematic association likely because of the great number of immigrants who live there. KKV has a wide range of operations, including a farm in the back of the valley. Musrasrik and I met at KKV's cafe, which serves food made from plants grown on the farm. The cafe happens to be inside a medical building, underscoring KKV's emphasis on health, and next to the "notorious" Kuhio Park Terrace government housing buildings. Anderson happened to be walking by and Musrasrik hailed her, inviting her to join our interview. To my delight, it turned out that many of the farm's employees were reggae fans and somehow involved with the underground roots scene. During this interview, they gave me a list of numerous important figures in the underground roots scene, which eventually led to me meeting Ryan "Jah Gumby" Murakami, whom I discuss in detail in the next chapter.

Musrasrik and Anderson described themselves as best friends who love roots reggae music. Musrasrik is originally from Pohnpei (Micronesia) and grew up in Hawai‘i, and Anderson is Kanaka Maoli. Even though Musrasrik is not Kanaka Maoli, the ways she thinks about Hawaiian music and culture are in line with the thinking of many Hawaiian people. In their teens and twenties, they would regularly go to concerts of Local roots reggae music. Musrasrik has a collection of reggae records from around the world, and Anderson’s partner, Bryant Vergara, is the keyboard player in the underground roots bands Kapu System and Deep Roots Around Sound (DRAS). Through the process of my interviewing them, they realized that the anti-establishment politics of roots reggae ultimately inspired them to pursue their current careers as farmers at Kōkua Kalihi Valley (Bernice Musrasrik, personal communication; Fiore Anderson, personal communication).

When they first got into international roots reggae, they heeded the messages of the genre’s lyrics: its general “rebel” ethos, but more specifically the notions of eating well (ital diet) and being anti-capitalist:

Musrasrik: At one point, reggae music inspired me to eat better. I’ve been vegetarian/vegan at many different points in my life, especially high school when I was first getting really into it [the music]...It inspired me to drink less, because Rasta culture talks about not poisoning your body or your mind...[and also] buying consciously. I was only buying secondhand for a long time, and this was all because of music. Now, I do it just more so because of sustainability and, like, I farm and see the implications of bad decisions in the land, but before, it was all just based on the music...

Anderson: And we’re [Local roots reggae scene] all rebels of society, and so the music talks about how fucked up the government is, and what I think we all have in common is that we all believe that what the government...is not to be sustainable for all the generations. So just rebels...

Musrasrik: I think that’s one thing about reggae that I didn’t realize. It taught me to be anti-establishment from a very young age...And that’s why we work at a non-profit now. And you’re sitting in front of me making me realize all of that.

Anderson:And it was drilling into our soul the whole time...It was massaging our souls....(personal communication)

This foundation then led them to apply the messages of reggae to their own context of Hawai‘i, which brought them to issues of Hawaiian sovereignty. From there, it was a short step to food sovereignty, which has become an important component of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement. In fact, Anderson also described being brought in to her current job through another member of the underground roots scene, with whom she would converse about food in the parking lots of venues after reggae shows. She also brought up the fact that numerous important people in the underground roots scene and those closely related to them, most of whom are Kanaka Maoli, are highly interested in food sovereignty. These include artists Ryan “Jah Gumby” Murakami, “Mama T” Gonsalves, and Pauline Kekukiha Kaiwi Navales (singer Nicholas Jon “Kali” Navales’s wife). Not all underground roots artists or fans are as strongly political or as interested in food as Musrasrik and Anderson. However, almost all of the other underground roots artists and fans that I talked to brought up politics, foregrounding the issue of Hawaiian sovereignty in some way. Although Musrasrik and Anderson are perhaps more involved than many reggae musicians and fans, they are nonetheless representative of wider beliefs in the scene (Bernice Musrasrik, personal communication; Fiore Anderson, personal communication).

Interest in politics and food sovereignty are often tied to Kanaka Maoli identity in some fashion, and Kōkua Kalihi Valley centers “more traditional” Hawaiian culture and worldviews in their practices. Musrasrik and Anderson described listening to “more traditional” Hawaiian music as they work, observing traditional protocols that sometimes involve performing mele (chants), and growing plants that are culturally significant to Hawaiians like taro (which is the basis of the pre-contact Hawaiian diet) (Bernice Musrasrik,

personal communication; Fiore Anderson, personal communication). Since the Second Hawaiian Renaissance in the 1970s, and especially in the last twenty years or so, there have been numerous non-profits, charter schools, and other organizations devoted to revitalizing “more traditional” Kanaka Maoli culture and decolonizing education (see Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua 2013; Chirico and Farley 2015). More recently, there have also been many similar food-based initiatives, which are in part inspired by interest in protecting the environment (Chirico and Farley 2015:1). In fact, it is typical for Indigenous environmental initiatives in the U.S. at large to focus on food sovereignty (Whyte 2019:320).

In Hawai‘i, many people are currently interested in food sovereignty because of the small geographic area and extreme isolation of the islands. Huge swaths of land in Hawai‘i were devoted to the capitalist agricultural industry from the mid- to late-nineteenth century onwards, primarily for growing sugarcane and pineapple (although many sugarcane plantations have been abandoned because it is cheaper to grow the crop elsewhere). The sugarcane and pineapples grown on the islands were meant for export, not to sustain the people in Hawai‘i. Water was also diverted to the massive plantations that produced these commercial foods. As a result, “more traditional” Kanaka Maoli food systems like community lo‘i kalo (taro patches) and fish ponds, farming, and hunting based on reciprocity with the environment were largely stamped out. Today, much of the food consumed in Hawai‘i is shipped from elsewhere, which creates a great deal of pollution and presents another money-making opportunity for food corporations (Chirico and Farley 2015:3-4). Food sovereignty initiatives like KKV aim to reverse such trends by bringing back some elements of “more traditional” food systems, the desire being that they will heal relations to Hawaiian land based on Kanaka Maoli worldviews.

Despite the fact that reggae awakened their Kanaka Maoli-based political consciousness, Musrasrik and Anderson feel unsatisfied with reggae because it is not fundamentally Hawaiian:

Musrasrik: Because even for me and her [Anderson], we listen to a lot of roots, but then now—remember how I told you that we met in reggae but we farm now? So now that we farm...our organization is very culturally based. So remember how I talked about Hawaiian gods, like Kū, Kāne, and Kanaloa, Lono? How does that fit into Haile Selassie I and like His Imperial Majesty? It doesn't, and we learned a lot about that working here, up at the farm. Because we have ahu-s [altars] that we make offerings to, and we preach Indigenous food sovereignty or Indigenous ways of eating. And so it's like just our whole life now is based on growing food and preparing it, and we're doing ceremony, we're doing all these things that are very Indigenously-based. And it's kinda like—like just coming from listening to reggae all the time—it doesn't really fit. So reggae is now a hobby, and we've never been Rasta at all.

Anderson: Contemporary is when we became colonized....

Musrasrik: ...But we're just purists.....

Anderson: [Traditional is] representing all the people's systems that helps us grow the food and praising those gods....[like] pahu drumming....our culture is like slipping away through music....

Musrasrik:She's at the point—and I'm at the point too—where we're trying to convince her man to just play slack key....Like enough of this reggae stuff, just play slack key! (personal communication)

For Musrasrik and Anderson, political engagement is an important component of the ways they relate to reggae, Hawaiian music, and Kanaka Maoli identity. For them, reggae “fits” into Hawaiian culture because of its political engagement and yet does not count as fully Hawaiian. At the same time, the fact that reggae can be acceptable, and even be crucial in Musrasrik and Anderson's Kanaka Maoli political consciousness, exemplifies “fit” in another way—the importance of openness to outside culture in Hawaiian worldviews.

Firstly, it is necessary to examine how Musrasrik and Anderson's engagement with reggae is political and how Kanaka Maoli identity and Hawaiian music relate to politics.

Most obviously, they are inspired by the rebellious and political messages of reggae, and listen to reggae from all over the world. To be clear, the majority of reggae songs produced in Hawai‘i are not about Hawaiian sovereignty, but are rather about love, sexuality, dancing, marijuana, and not obviously political Local topics. However, the genre of reggae itself is associated with politics on a global level, so simply alluding to it sonically can be political. Musicians can up the political ante by using Dread Talk, the language of Rastafari, or by singing about “conscious” topics typical of reggae music, which include themes like being oppressed by Babylon (colonizers in Rastafari) or alluding to important figures in Rastafari like Haile Selassie I and Marcus Garvey. In Hawai‘i, some musicians politicize reggae by alluding to Hawaiian culture in some fashion. This could include adding pre-contact instruments like the pahu drum as Anderson suggested, an ‘ukulele, or even describing ahapua‘a, as Aipolani does in his version of “No Woman No Cry.” Reggae in Hawai‘i can also have more explicit calls for Hawaiian sovereignty in the lyrics.

Reggae then led Musrasrik and Anderson to become politically active in a Hawaiian context. As Indigenous entities, Kanaka Maoli identity and culture become necessarily political. As in many Indigenous contexts, simply asserting a Native identity and practicing Native culture in the U.S. is political because the hegemonic assumption is that Indigenous people and culture have disappeared. In many cases, the culture is not accessible and/or does not exist in common practice. Gerald Vizenor calls this assertion “survivance,” which is a Native “presence” and “continuation” that cannot be quashed in the face of genocide (2008:1). As a result, being Hawaiian is a political act. Messages of perpetuating and being aware of one’s “roots” and “culture” from reggae reinforce this point. Musrasrik’s and Anderson’s work through Kōkua Kalihi Valley, through farming “traditional” foods and

working with the land in a way that revitalizes Kanaka Maoli practices of reciprocity, is therefore also political.

In fact, Hawaiian sovereignty in all of its forms is the most visible and central political movement in Hawai‘i. The legacy of the Second Hawaiian Renaissance has resulted in a great deal of established Hawaiian cultural revitalization and the increasingly robust Hawaiian sovereignty movement.⁷ On top of that, Hawaiian music and culture is the center of musical life and the basis of Local culture. This is why it was a “natural” jump for people who are politically aware in Hawai‘i, and in Anderson’s case, are Hawaiian themselves, to “more traditional” Hawaiian culture.

However, Musrasrik and Anderson believe that reggae is not Hawaiian enough to adequately fit their political and cultural needs, even though it is political and led them to activism in a Hawaiian context. Their specific understanding of politically engaged Kanaka Maoli culture is “pure.” Mobilizing notions of strategic essentialism, they cannot accept reggae fully into Hawaiian music because reggae is not originally or purely Hawaiian—they consider “true” Hawaiian culture to be that which derives from the material that existed in Hawai‘i before western contact. The situation is analogous to that found in numerous Indigenous communities around the world, in which “traditional” culture is considered “more Indigenous” or “more politically salient” than “more modern” Indigenous culture. Performing and/or revitalizing “traditional Hawaiian music” that fits into “traditional” Kanaka Maoli worldviews in the ways that Musrasrik and Anderson gesture towards are also survivance. This is exemplified by their convictions that Hawaiian gods and religion are not compatible with Rastafari. Anderson’s statement about “contemporary” being equivalent to “colonized,” and the action of encouraging Anderson’s partner to learn kī hō‘alu (slack key)

are also based on such assumptions. In addition, this argument is a legacy of the backlash against Hawaiian music in the early-1990s, as is any assertion that reggae is not Hawaiian music made after that time.

Finally, by bringing up the idea that Hawaiian music relates to food production and religion, Musrasrik and Anderson gesture to the fact that musical practices were key parts of relations of reciprocity with the land and environment in pre-contact Hawai'i (Oliveira 2014:96; Tatar and Berger 2012a:93). Reciprocal relationships between human and more-than-human beings—animals, plants, gods, lands, waters, and more—are the center of “more traditional” Hawaiian culture (and Indigenous cultures more broadly). Mele (chant) could be used to build and maintain relationships, like being used as a gift, prayer, or offering. In addition, mele was the repository for knowledge of science, history, art, and many other topics (see Louis 2017). It is clear from their statements that Musrasrik and Anderson do not believe that newer music like reggae can perform the function of pre-contact mele in such relations of reciprocity. Musrasrik's assertion that Hawaiian gods are not compatible with Haile Selassie is motivated by her belief that Rastafari does not fit into those relations. Anderson's comment about “traditional” being part of the systems that help “us grow the food” and praise “those gods” more overtly underscores the issue.

Ultimately, however, reggae fits: it remains significant for Musrasrik and Anderson because it connects them with Kanaka Maoli identity and the idea of resistance. This point demonstrates the Kanaka Maoli penchant for openness to outside culture. Despite the fact that reggae is not Kanaka Maoli or Hawaiian music to the two fans, thus prompting them to seek other ways of being Kanaka Maoli or engaging in Hawaiian music, reggae is still meaningful and important to them. Its messages of political resistance inspired Musrasrik

and Anderson to take steps to be “more Hawaiian” or to be more attuned to Hawaiian issues in the first place. Reggae is thus not the final destination, but is rather a *medium* for Hawaiian sovereignty, revitalization, and resistance. Additionally, the fact that Musrasrik and Anderson would be open to the message of a non-pre-contact Hawaiian music from the beginning further indicates an openness to outside culture. They still attend reggae concerts for fun, and enjoy learning about the genre and participating in the reggae community on O‘ahu.

In this chapter, I have discussed the ways in which reggae relates to Kanaka Maoli identity, which forms the basis of my study of reggae. Reggae fits into the Kanaka Maoli worldviews of nahenahe aesthetics, political consciousness, and affinity for outside culture. I also place reggae in a longer history of Hawaiian music, which is undeniably grounded in Hawaiian land and yet is expansive and ever-moving like ocean currents. The stories of Ka‘ikena Scanlan, Bruddah Waltah Aipolani, Bernice Helgenberger Musrasrik, and Fiore Anderson all exemplify these notions of fit. Having established the basis of interactions between the Hawaiian, Local, and global, I now move to the next layer: the Local.

Chapter 4 *Local: The Kanaka Local*

I'm on the dance floor at Hawaiian Brian's, a nightclub and billiard room in the Ala Moana area of Honolulu that frequently features reggae. The club is hosting the second in a series of concerts that is being promoted by the Local clothing company Hawaii's Finest, which also produces concerts aimed at Kānaka Maoli. Right now, I'm listening to PeniDean (Peni Dean Puaauli-Kahahawai), a popular Kanaka Maoli reggae artist. One of the band members, the singer Sly Mongoose, is being introduced and is encouraged onto the stage to repeated chants of "Filipino, Filipino, Filipino" (Sly Mongoose is Filipino). He begins the next song in a somewhat robotic and satirical tone, miming what he says with his arms: "Aloha, aloha, aloha, pehea 'oe? Maika'i, maika'i, maika'i nō kākou." He translates and expands: "Hello, and how are you doing? I am doing fine, and I hope that you are too. 'Cause if you don't remember where the island feeling comes from, it comes from the *East Side*, the *greeeen* side." The crowd cheers. "Where we all get our red eye." Louder cheers. Sly Mongoose urges the crowd on and then counts the song in: "'Ekahi, 'elua, 'elima, 'ehāāāāāā." [1, 2, 5, 4]. The song begins: "Hot like fi-yah." Chord chord. "Cool like watah." Chord chord. The audience starts to dance.

Hawaiian Brian's is in the Ala Moana area of Honolulu. On route there, you can see the Ko'olau mountain range standing tall behind skyscrapers. These skyscrapers are apartment and condominium buildings, many of which are built primarily for Japanese and other East Asian nationals as vacation homes that lie empty most of the time. They are surrounded by a smattering of strip clubs, Asian restaurants, and the Hawai'i Convention Center. Buildings in this area have been torn down to make way for the Honolulu Rail

Transit, a deeply contentious light rail that is supposed to cut through this densely urban area and has been under construction since 2005 (honolulutransit.org n.d.). It is not yet complete, draining the state and Hawai‘i’s residents of money. Ala Moana is on the ocean—Ala Moana means “path to the ocean” after all—and the Ala Moana Beach Park is right across the street from Hawaiian Brian’s, where residents of these apartment buildings jog and go to the beach alongside tourists. The area is dominated by the gigantic Ala Moana Mall, which has been marketed increasingly as a destination for tourists and those visiting their vacation homes, especially those from Japan. However, at the top of the mall lies the now-defunct Mai Tai Bar, the only venue on the island of O‘ahu that was primarily dedicated to reggae music and for a Local clientele during my fieldwork.

The area is cramped and somewhat desolate. The buildings are packed closely and very few people walk on the street amongst the buildings. The location of Hawaiian Brian’s clearly illustrates the way in which businesses are crammed together. In order to get to the bar on foot, you have to go through the ground floor entrance of a 24-Hour Fitness gym, climb a flight of stairs, and then exit into the second level of a relatively small parking garage. Hawaiian Brian’s sits at the other end of the garage. Once there, you will find a variety of ways for you to spend your night, including playing billiards and darts, eating bar food, and, of course, listening to music.

However, undergirding Ala Moana are the Kanaka Maoli mo‘olelo (stories) of the area. Originally called Kaka‘ako Makai, a part of the larger ‘ili (a type of land division) of Kaka‘ako, the area was once a rich fishing site (Coleman n.d.:2). It had natural salt ponds, fresh water springs, and small fish ponds (ibid), and was also the site of a village where kahuna lā‘au lapa‘au (healers) lived and ali‘i (chiefs) would go for recreation (3). There are

also mo‘olelo of the area that involve the god ‘Ai‘ai, who came upon this area while establishing fishing shrines in Hawai‘i, and another about the place that the goddess Hi‘iaka traveled in her circuit of the Hawaiian islands (4). The area was eventually parceled out during the Great Mahele of 1848, which broke up the lands held by the monarchs of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i and paved the way for land privatization in Hawai‘i. The landowners later funded the dredging and filling of the reefs and fishponds of the area, which mostly occurred from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century (5).

In short, in order to attend a concert at Hawaiian Brian’s, you would have to travel through the materiality of being Local in Hawai‘i. You would have experienced the extreme emphasis on tourism as Hawai‘i’s primary economic sector at the expense of Locals, the corruption of the state government, and poor urban planning. You would have also stepped on top of the fishponds and sacred sites that were destroyed in order to build the Ala Moana of today.

Despite this structural violence, other facets of Local and Hawaiian identity and culture creep in when listening to Local reggae at Hawaiian Brian’s. People are enjoying themselves, dancing, drinking, and singing about marijuana. Many musicians commented to me that they particularly liked performing at Hawaiian Brian’s and felt that the venue supported them. The diversity of races and ethnicities of Locals in Hawai‘i is evident not just from who is present onstage and in the audience; it is acknowledged explicitly by the performers as they engage with the audience (“Filipino, Filipino”). At the same time, Kanaka Maoli culture fundamentally comes through. To an outsider, the sudden presence of ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language) right in the middle of a concert that is not obviously “more traditional” Hawaiian music could be a surprise and may seem like an anomaly.

However, such signaling of Kanaka Maoli identity is a regular occurrence at reggae concerts in Hawai‘i, especially those that fall under the “Jawaiian,” “island music,” or “island reggae” umbrella. This is especially true in live performance—as PeniDean’s performance of “Hot Like Fire” exemplifies, the introduction with ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i is not present in the recording of this song (originally recorded by Natural Vibrations, the band in which Puaauli-Kahahawai came to prominence). Even in the underground roots scene, where overt evocations of Hawaiian identity are less frequent, they are present for those with the capacity to recognize them. Additionally, Hawaiian people are literally present in the audience and onstage. Puaauli-Kahahawai is Kanaka Maoli and, in addition, is related to legendary slack key guitarist Gabby Pahinui (Puet 2017b). Hawaii’s Finest, his management company, is run by Kānaka Maoli and supports Hawaiian artists. Hawaii’s Finest events also typically draw a Kanaka Maoli audience.

Scholars of Hawaiian music maintain that there is something Hawaiian about reggae in Hawai‘i, but typically focus on the Local or non-Hawaiian aspects of the music. As such, they often categorize reggae in Hawai‘i as “Local music” because it is relevant to non-Hawaiian Locals and it references Local culture. However, these scholars also point towards the fundamental influence of Kanaka Maoli identity and culture on the Local in reggae. As I have shown in the previous chapter, Hawaiian people and culture play a foundational role in the reggae scene.

At the same time, Hawaiian studies scholars rightly critique Local identity and culture in Hawai‘i. Mainly, they do so because some Locals coopt Kanaka Maoli Indigeneity. In other words, some non-Hawaiian Locals argue that *all* Locals have equal claim to Hawaiian land, thereby perpetuating settler colonial structures that erase Kānaka

Maoli's genealogical and cosmological connection to the 'āina (settler colonialism is oppression for the purpose of acquiring land). Although these sorts of discourses are sometimes promulgated by reggae musicians and fans, they do not account for the fundamental presence of Kanaka Maoli and Kanaka Maoli worldviews in the reggae scene. Rather, I argue that the way the word "Local" is used regarding reggae in Hawai'i is largely unrelated to "Local culture" as it is typically conceived of in Hawai'i—it is mainly "Local" in name only. Pertaining to reggae, the way "Local" is used is a phenomenon that I call the "Kanaka Local": a more overtly globalized and "less traditional" variety of Hawaiian culture that is typically glossed as Local. "Kanaka Local" identifies culture that is typically called Local and not Hawaiian—that is, culture that has too much outside influence to be recognizable as "traditionally" Hawaiian. However, what distinguishes the Kanaka Local is that it is still rooted in Kanaka Maoli worldviews and is often enacted by Hawaiians. The Kanaka Local is key to understanding identity in reggae in Hawai'i because it gestures toward an answer to a central question about identity in relation to the music: why are individuals hesitant to call reggae Hawaiian music even though it has such a strong grounding in Kanaka Maoli worldviews?

You One Local If...

Although the Kanaka Local is largely distinct from the Local as it is typically understood in Hawai'i, it is still essential to understand the standard meanings evoked by Local so that my departure from them makes sense. The Local in Hawai'i has multiple, contradictory, and ever-shifting meanings, and it has its own histories and racial politics particular to Hawai'i. The root of the Local is connection to place in a way that exceeds

ethnic or racial identity (Rosa 2018:86), while simultaneously having racial or ethnic connotations. The Local also has a historical precedent in problematic discourses of multiculturalism (Hawai‘i as harmonious melting pot or salad bowl, for example), interracial cooperation in plantation labor contexts, and opposing settler colonial impositions like tourism and the military.¹ The Local has also been described as a sort of mainstream culture in Hawai‘i that exists in relation to a continental U.S. mainstream (Yamamoto 1979:114-115; Miyares 2008:514).²

Like island cultures more broadly, identity and culture in Hawai‘i involve a heightened sense of the local and the communal derived from the bounded and isolated nature of islands—something conservationist Philip Conkling calls “islandness” (2007:191-192). In Hawai‘i, this sensibility is manifested through the conditions of being remote that are then exacerbated by colonialism and capitalism: lack of space, limited resources, widespread and intense interest in a given Localized phenomenon, strong relations to others in the community, and a robust sense of Local identity. Local in Hawai‘i can also denote the identity and the culture of the people who were born, raised, and live in Hawai‘i regardless of race or ethnicity. Furthermore, John P. Rosa points out that generations of Local family members often live in the same places and thus develop a deep connection to those areas (2014:104).

Hawai‘i has a very diverse population compared to most of the U.S.; there is no racial or ethnic majority, and the most populous groups are haole (white), Asian (including Filipinx, Japanese, Chinese, and Korean), Pacific Islander (primarily Kanaka Maoli, but also including Sāmoan and others), and Black people (census.hawaii.gov 2017). The Local is sometimes outwardly touted as being welcoming to anyone who lives in Hawai‘i by entities

like the Hawai‘i state government, the tourist industry, and Locals themselves. However, in practice, this is not the case. People who identify as or are identified as Local are typically Hawaiian, Asian American, Puerto Rican, and Portuguese. In other words, these groups made up the “first wave” of contract laborers who arrived in Hawai‘i (or were already there) in the late-nineteenth century and turn of the twentieth century to work on sugarcane plantations. They are also not considered white or fully white in Hawai‘i.

Most overtly, Locals do not grant “full” Localness to haole, Black, and immigrant (especially Asian and Pacific Islander) peoples. According to Paul Spickard, haoles may be incorporated into the Local to some extent, but only because they have been accepted out of outsider status by other Locals (2018:184). Spickard notes that it is easier for haoles to be accepted into some version of Localness if they look “brownier” or conform to Local cultural norms (ibid). John P. Rosa also points out that Local haoles cannot ever be just Local, but must always have a “qualifying adjective” and remain “Local haole” (2018:85, capitalization mine). “Immigrant” groups, or what Rosa calls “Others,” are communities of people who are descended from groups who moved to Hawai‘i in greater numbers after World War II and the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965, as well as more recent immigrants (82). Sāmoan, Black, Vietnamese, Micronesian, and even sometimes Filipinx people are only contingently Local (82-83). Phenotype is also important for Local inclusion. Although there is a high rate of intermarriage (Okamura 2008:30), and thus it can be difficult to determine someone’s race or ethnicity in Hawai‘i through phenotype alone, looking “brownier” and “less white” (though not Black) will allow someone to be perceived as more Local by Locals (Spickard 2018:184). Adjacent to race or ethnicity, being working-

class also signifies the Local, based on histories of laboring and shared oppression from haoles in Hawai‘i (Rosa 2014:44-45).

Besides having racial or ethnic associations, the Local also has many cultural ones. Sociologist Laura Edles gave an open-ended survey to 128 of her students at the University of Hawai‘i, Mānoa in 2001, which proved to be quite illustrative on connections of race and ethnicity to culture pertaining to the Local. Edles reported that over 90% of those students used culture to describe the Local, as opposed to racial or ethnic categories (2004:46), though being born and raised in Hawai‘i were still important (57). Based on the data from Edles’s survey, Jonathan Y. Okamura argues that cultural elements had become more pertinent to definitions of the Local at the time of the survey than they once were (2008:120). I suggest that it might be the case because of the rise of colorblind rhetoric at that time of the survey. However, as Edles and Okamura point out, the racial or ethnic associations of the Local are still explicitly important to Locals (Edles 2004:60-61; Okamura 2008:120).

Amy Ku‘uleialoha Stillman describes Local culture as “shared experiences of daily living,” as well as “shared concerns” among Locals (1998:90). Local culture also includes various values, such as being “easygoing, friendly, open, trusting, humble, generous, loyal to family and friends, and indifferent to achieved status distinctions” (Okamura 1980:128), “aloha ‘āina” or love of the land (Weintraub 1998:80, 82), and being “laid-back” (Okamura 2008:115). For Locals, deep knowledge of place is imperative. A “place-based commonality that does not always necessarily emphasize race” (Rosa 2018:86), nostalgia, and affective connection to Hawai‘i as home are thus also important. Similarly, Locals often ask each

other where they went to high school as a way to establish connection to specific places and communities and to mark class identity (87).

Material aspects of Local culture are indicative of the mixing of cultures that have occurred since western contact. Food like spam musubi (spam sushi), kalua pig, laulau, and malasadas are variously from the continental U.S., Japan, (Indigenous) Hawai‘i, Portugal, and more, and are representative of this wide range of influences on Local food. Pidgin or Hawaiian creole, the Local language, was originally created as a lingua franca for laborers on sugarcane plantations in the nineteenth century, who had been recruited from all over the world (Takaki 1983:118). Even casual dress, including slippers (flip-flops) (Okamura 2008:114-115) and more formal “aloha wear” like aloha shirts (Hawaiian shirts) are part of Local culture.

Another integral part of Local culture is humor. Famous Local comedians range from older celebrities like Rap Reiplinger (James Kawika Pi‘imauna Reiplinger), Frank De Lima (Franklin Wilcox Napuakekaulike De Lima), and Augie T (Augusto Tulba) to younger, Instagram-famous entertainers like Zavier Cummings (@howsdiguy) and Alex Farnham (@alex_farnham). Local humor is often ethnic humor, based upon stereotypes of ethnic or racial groups that live in Hawai‘i. Sometimes the stereotypes are Hawai‘i-specific, but in other instances, they derive from the continent. Local humor also targets Locals in general, casting them as obtuse. Comedians have justified their use of ethnic humor by contending that no one ethnic group is immune from being made fun of and that everyone laughs at themselves (Okamura 2008:167). However, Okamura points out that not everyone finds such humor funny (ibid). It has real consequences for members of ethnic groups with less power in Hawai‘i, like Filipinx people, causing individuals like employers to actually

believe the stereotypes and contribute to the oppression of the groups (194). Roderick Labrador argues that ethnic jokes in Local humor enact what he calls “racial hazing,” in which the targets of ethnic humor have to endure “humiliating or denigrating initiation-type activities as a ‘rite of passage’ into the Local” (2018:67, capitalization mine). Nowadays, comedians like Cummings and Farnham tend to make fun of Hawaiians (they themselves are Hawaiian) and Locals more generally, more in the style of Rap Reiplinger, perhaps because of a lower tolerance for racism in the public sphere in the U.S. PeniDean and Sly Mongoose’s opening to their show at Hawaiian Brian’s can be understood as working within the assumptions of Local humor.

Local culture is also stereotypically male. According to John P. Rosa, Local culture was first formed as a primarily male youth culture in the 1920s and 1930s by children of plantation workers who were increasingly moving into urban areas (2014:12). Local youth culture was formed in opposition to hegemonic control of haole elites, including increasing numbers of haole servicemen from the continent (ibid). Schools and missionary activities also brought youth from different ethnic groups together, although some haole parents took their children out of these schools and put them in standard English schools fueled by racist fears (14). Local culture drew upon continental U.S. culture—on its sports, movies, radio, and social dances. But Locals refigured these practices and entities for their own ends (15). Additionally, Local youth started to gain notoriety and attract suspicion from military personnel (6).

The maleness of the Local has precedent in the Massie-Kahahawai Case, an important event in the formation of Local identity, in which a white woman accused five men of color of raping her. The discourse surrounding the case set up the Local as a type of

racialized masculinity that threatened white womanhood (Rosa 2014:19). I also noticed the masculinity of the Local during my fieldwork after realizing that far more people have large trucks in Hawai‘i than in any other place that I have visited. It was clear that the trucks were desirable because of their style, not necessarily for hauling (see Schmitt 2021). In addition, the stereotype of the “Localest” of Local women is the tita, a masculinized woman who is “sassy,” (Hisatake 2018:36) and a “tough Local girl or sister” (47, capitalization mine).

Reggae on both the island and the underground sides has an overarching male ethos, as does reggae in general. In fact, a great deal of global reggae is misogynistic and homophobic. At the same time, most professional musicians in Hawai‘i are men, and this is probably true for the rest of the U.S. as well. On the island side, people reported to me that there is a fairly even split between men and women in the audience, but that the musicians are overwhelmingly male. To their credit, many male musicians or fans have noticed the dearth of women and wanted to see more female performers. Female fans who are a part of the underground scene reported to me that they are vastly outnumbered by men and observed that most of the women who attend concerts are there to support male partners who are performing. I noticed a lot of male bonding facilitated by smoking, hanging out, and partying together in the scene. Some listeners said that they preferred “harder” sounds in reggae, which they associated with masculinity. One fan even told me that he thought that women could not achieve that sort of a sound. Generally speaking, however, reggae concerts appeared to be less misogynistic spaces than concerts in other genres. Most reggae performances occur in bars and clubs, which can be threatening places for women. However, several women reported to me that men treated them better at reggae concerts than at performances of other sorts of music. I am not sure about the experiences of non-binary,

transgender, or other genderqueer people in the reggae scene, as I did not talk to any out individuals.

Most Hawaiian studies scholars address a relationship between the Local and the Hawaiian. For instance, Jonathan Okamura asserts that Hawaiian culture is the second most important influence on the Local, after continental U.S. culture (1980:121-122). More recently, scholars have written about Asian settler colonialism or critique the Local for coopting Kanaka Maoli Indigeneity (Trask 2008; Fujikane 2008; Hall 2005; Halualani 2002; Rohrer 2016; Ohnuma 2008). These vitally important critiques point out that non-Kanaka Maoli Locals, who are often Local Asians, undercut Kanaka Maoli Indigeneity by claiming that Kānaka Maoli are an oppressed minority with the same status as any other. That is, these Locals assert that all Locals in Hawai‘i have the same claim to Hawaiian land. Another common cooptation is non-Kanaka Maoli appropriating Kanaka Maoli culture to make themselves “more Local” or “Indigenous” to Hawai‘i. Yet another trend is non-Hawaiian Locals calling something Local that is “traditionally” Hawaiian, like advertising a quintessentially and overtly Hawaiian food like poi as a “Local food” rather than “Hawaiian food” (Kushi 2019). Poi, the basis of the pre-contact Hawaiian diet and made of the very cosmologically significant kalo (taro) plant, is then cast as just as Local and non-Indigenous as any other Local food like spam musubi and malasadas, which derive from Japanese and Portuguese cuisines respectively.

Contradictorily, Local culture also involves a recognition of Hawaiian Indigeneity. A common example of this is the meaning of the word “Hawaiian.” In Hawai‘i, or among people with some relation to Hawai‘i, people use it to mean Kanaka Maoli or Native Hawaiian (Sumida 1991:xv). In fact, usage of “Hawaiian” in such a manner dates back at

least as far as Queen Lili‘uokalani (Fellezs 2019a:xvi). This is even the case in public discourse, in advertising, and sometimes in government discourse. The vast majority of the time, “Hawaiian” does not mean “from Hawai‘i.” Rather, Locals tend to use the word “Hawai‘i” as an adjective to mean “from Hawai‘i” for non-human entities. For example, I have seen “Hawai‘i reggae” or “Hawai‘i state government,” but a person would be referred to as “Local” or “Local X (individual’s race or ethnicity, like haole).” Hawaiian is not equivalent to “Californian” or “Texan,” which actually denote being “from” those specific states. Hawaiian is also not equivalent to the public, non-Indigenous usage of the word “native” on the U.S. continent, where “native” is used to mean “from,” like a “California native,” a “Boston native,” or a “native of D.C.” All of these usages of “-ian” and “native” erase Indigeneity.

Additionally, Hawaiians are often considered the most authentically or quintessentially Local ethnicity. For instance, older Locals have told me that I am Local because I am Kanaka Maoli even though I have lived in the diaspora for almost my entire life. This idea persists despite the efforts of some Hawaiians, governmental institutions, and even some entities in the Hawaiian sovereignty movement to question the Hawaiianness of Kānaka Maoli in the diaspora. The move is colonial and is based on genocidal politics that de-authenticate Indigenous people if they are not from their ancestral homelands in order to disappear them (Kauanui 2007:139).

Despite the overlap between the categories of Hawaiian and Local, they are typically considered separate entities in Hawai‘i. A Local person would typically *only* refer to a Local who is Native Hawaiian/Kanaka Maoli as “Hawaiian” in everyday speech—“Hawaiian” means Native Hawaiian/Kanaka Maoli.

The category of Hawaiian/Native Hawaiian/Kanaka Maoli has several *simultaneous* and *contradictory* relationships to Local, then (some of which are problematic): Hawaiian falls under the larger umbrella of Local; Hawaiian is adjacent to Local and is considered a separate and in some ways unrelated category; Hawaiian is one of many Local ethnicities with a claim to Hawaiian land; and Hawaiian is Indigenous—it is the most quintessentially “Local” of the Local ethnicities and has a unique, genealogical connection Hawai‘i.

Kanaka Local

The “Kanaka Local,” on the other hand, is in many ways quite different from the typical understandings of the Local described above: it is a variety of uniquely *Hawaiian* culture. I contend that the Kanaka Local is a more globalized or “less traditional” type of Hawaiian culture that is typically glossed as Local. The Kanaka Local is not the argument that Kanaka Maoli identity and worldviews are the basis of identity in reggae (though this is the central claim of my dissertation). Rather, the Kanaka Local is the phenomenon that Kanaka Maoli worldviews are the foundation of *understandings of the Local* in this music. It could also be applied to other forms of music like hip hop. The Kanaka Local places Kānaka Maoli and Kanaka Maoli worldviews at the center and accounts for the fact that Kānaka Maoli are typically the ones driving this culture.

The Kanaka Local is Hawaiian culture that Locals typically consider not “traditional” enough to count as Hawaiian. Usually, Hawaiian culture is characterized by having some connection to pre-contact Hawai‘i. However, the more global influence it has, the “less” Hawaiian it becomes. For example, Locals, including Kānaka Maoli, often consider older styles of mele (chanting) to be more Hawaiian than newer music, like the

contemporary Hawaiian music of the Second Hawaiian Renaissance or music using the ‘ukulele. In other words, Hawaiian often becomes analogous to some sense of “traditional,” “old,” or pre-contact. However, there is also newer Hawaiian culture that is still based on pre-contact Kanaka Maoli worldviews but has very significant global influence. Reggae and hip hop in Hawai‘i are primary examples. Kānaka Maoli/Locals often hesitate to classify this kind of culture as Hawaiian, perhaps because the Hawaiian foundation is obscured, buried, or because it is not recognizable as Hawaiian according to colonial metrics of Indigeneity based on purity. Rather, people gloss this “more globally-influenced” or “less traditional” Hawaiian culture as Local. To some, the fact that a version of Hawaiian culture is referred to as “Local” may seem like appropriation. In fact, I talked to and observed many people in the reggae scene who mobilized discourses of the Local that erased Kanaka Maoli Indigeneity in various ways. However, this is not the case with the Kanaka Local because it is typically mobilized by Hawaiians themselves.

I chose the term Kanaka Local because it exemplifies various aspects of my concept. It is a version of the ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i term Kanaka Maoli, thus privileging the language. Additionally, the grammatical structure of the term privileges ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i. In the language, “adjectives” follow “nouns” (nouns and adjectives as they are conceived of in English do not exist in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i)—Local, then, modifies Kanaka, so Kanaka is the basis. I also included an English word to represent the overtly mixed or globalized nature of the Kanaka Local. Although the extant word kama‘āina could have worked for my term, I decided against it for several reasons. Kama‘āina centers Kanaka Maoli culture because it is in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, but I wanted my term to have more than one language to signify multiplicity. Additionally, kama‘āina already has a set of associations that do not necessarily

pertain to my concept, which include haoles and the tourist experience. Finally, I wanted to create something new because Kanaka Local is that—right now, it is not conceptualized explicitly in Local culture, does not have a name, and has not yet been theorized in scholarship though it has existed for a long time.

Reggae in Hawai‘i is typically understood to be Local rather than Hawaiian, and much of the time, this Local is actually the Kanaka Local. As discussed previously, reggae in Hawai‘i has been categorized by scholars as Local music and the majority of my interviewees did not consider reggae to be Hawaiian music. Local music could be considered the “not-Hawaiian” stream of leisure-dance music that I discuss in Chapter 2. However, the term Local music is typically not used by musicians, listeners, and individuals in the music industry. Instead, they refer to the music by the name of its genre in Hawai‘i, such as “island music,” “reggae,” “hip hop,” or “contemporary.” Scholars have generally distinguished the Local in reggae by identifying when musicians express Local identity and culture in music, or by pointing out that Local music is accessible to Local people who are not Kānaka Maoli (see Stillman 1998:90; Weintraub 1998:85).

I agree that references to Local culture abound in and around the music. For example, one of the most striking aspects of this is that at most island music concerts that I attended, the DJs that perform and hype up the crowd between the sets of each band regularly call out to the audience based on ethnicity—“Hawaiians make some noise,” “Filipinos make some noise,” etc. They also call out place, asking people from the West Side, East Side, Town (Honolulu), etc. to make some noise in turn. In addition, most of the musicians that I encountered were working-class or self-identified as lower-middle class, and this also seems to be the case with musicians in Hawai‘i in other genres (see Fellezs

2019a:30). Categorizing reggae as “Local” or just simply “not Hawaiian” thus becomes a way to take into account the very obvious non-Hawaiian aspects of the music (be they from Jamaica or the continental U.S.), as well as the actual Local culture that is being referenced in the music. It is also a way to make reggae more acceptable to traditionalists.

However, I argue that the most important facet of the Local in reggae in Hawai‘i is the Kanaka Local. Upon closer inspection of the elements of the Local present in reggae in Hawai‘i, it becomes apparent that they have a strong Hawaiian undercurrent. I base this assertion on ku‘ualoha ho‘omanawai’s positioning of reggae as “rooted in Hawaiian culture” (2006:284). As part of the Kanaka Local, reggae in Hawai‘i sits on a branch of Hawaiian culture that has been more obviously influenced by global culture, a little farther away from the pre-contact Hawaiian root. In fact, the Kanaka Local component of reggae is so strong that people have naturalized reggae’s presence in Hawai‘i. Numerous musicians and fans considered reggae the soundtrack or soundscape of the ‘āina (land/environment), describing scenes of reggae accompanying sitting on the beach or driving down a highway around the island and looking out onto the ocean. There are also a significant number of Kānaka Maoli participants, especially in the primarily-Hawaiian island music scene. Although the Kanaka Local is present in reggae to a great degree, it is not necessarily the way in which everyone engages with the music. It was largely the case for the people that I talked to, but there were many circles of reggae musicians and fans that I did not have the chance to interview.

I focus on several elements of the Kanaka Local in this chapter: a basis in “more traditional” Hawaiian music, reciprocal relationships or *lōkahi*, and genealogical connection to place or *mo‘okū‘auhau*. Firstly, the Hawai‘i music industry has privileged “more

traditional” Hawaiian music throughout the period of reggae’s existence in Hawai‘i, even in the realm of Local or leisure-dance music. As such, it is the center of many reggae artists’ musical worlds or is hegemonic in some way. One of the ways this occurs is through making a distinct connection between Hawai‘i as a place and any sort of music produced there, thereby characterizing the music as unique. For example, program director and radio personality Jacqueline “Honolulu Skylark” Rosetti stated: “We want our audience to relate to this place, Hawaii, as their home...It’s important that we have something like our music to be proud of and to call our own” (Chun 1991a). Additionally, Kevin Fellezs recounts an interview in which renowned slack key guitarist Rev. Dennis Kamakahi played with legendary Chicago blues artist Muddy Waters. Kamakahi remarked to Waters: “If you stayed in Hawai‘i a couple of years, you’d play the same way” (2019a:142).

Commentators also assume the centrality of Hawaiian music to Local music in recounting musical histories and constructing radio playlists. For instance, journalist Wayne Harada enumerates different facets of island music, which he considers to be equivalent to the term Local music (1992). He argues that Hawaiian is the “dominant motif” of island music from 1990-1991, and he lists performers of contemporary Hawaiian music like Palani Vaughan and The Brothers Cazimero, ‘ukulele virtuoso Herb Ohta, and pop musician Glenn Medeiros as further examples of island music (ibid). Ohta and Medeiros are generally not considered to perform Hawaiian music though they are from Hawai‘i. Harada also identifies The Brothers Cazimero as the then-current apex of island music. He then goes on to recount its history, and his telling involves only “more traditional” Hawaiian music until the 1950s (ibid).

In addition, historically, radio stations that did not specialize in Hawaiian music would play it if a Hawaiian song were a hit (Jay Junker, personal communication; John Berger, personal communication). This was especially the case if the song had elements of U.S. popular music and some English language lyrics, such as “(Me Ke Aloha) Ku‘u Home ‘O Kahalu‘u,” a major “across the dial” hit in 1976 (Jay Junker, personal communication). A few reggae songs became similarly popular, like “Guava Jelly” and “Cane Fire” by the Peter Moon Band and Loyal Garner’s arrangement of Rev. Dennis Kamakahi’s “Koke‘e” (ibid). It occasionally still happens. I recall hearing a couple of radio stations during my fieldwork playing songs by Israel Kamakawiwo‘ole, particularly his covers of “Wind Beneath My Wings” (recorded most famously by Bette Midler) on KSSK 92.3 and “Over the Rainbow/Wonderful World” on KRTR 96.3. Both of these stations are in the adult contemporary format and therefore would be expected to play only continental U.S. repertoire. Although it could be argued that the songs are popular beyond Hawai‘i, especially “Over the Rainbow,” the fact that they are performed by Kamakawiwo‘ole—and further, “in a Hawaiian style” that would be recognizable to Local people—locates the songs in Hawai‘i specifically. In other words, they are clear attempts by the radio stations to use something recognizably Hawaiian to appeal to a broader Local audience.

Secondly, reciprocal relationships are the bedrock of many Indigenous worldviews (Wilson 2008:7), and Kanaka Maoli culture is no exception. As such, reciprocal relationships are important in Local culture. In Hawaiian culture, the notion of reciprocal relationships is encapsulated in the concept of *lōkahi*, which is often translated as “unity.” Nālani Wilson-Hokowhitu characterizes *lōkahi* as “connectedness” (2019:127). Daviana Pōmaika‘i McGregor describes it as “the kua‘āina way of life” (2007:12). Kua‘āina are

Kānaka Maoli who remained in rural communities, do not participate in the “mainstream of economic, political, and social change in the Islands,” and maintain a subsistence lifestyle

(4):

In tracing unbroken lineal descent from the original Native Hawaiians who had settled the districts, kua‘āina also claim ancestry not only with the ‘aumakua [family or personal gods], but also with the *‘uhane* or spirits of the land and resources where they live. Kua‘āina continue to acknowledge the presence of their spiritual ancestors in the surrounding land by maintaining respectful practices in the use of the land, streams, ponds, and ocean. These lands are treated with love and respect like a kūpuna [elder] of the ‘ohana. They regularly visit the various areas in the course of subsistence gathering...If a resource is declining they will observe a *kapu* or restriction on its use until it recovers. They may even replant sparse areas...As kua‘āina gather in their traditional area, they also renew their understanding of the landscape, the place-names, names of the winds and the rains, traditional legends, wahi pana [sacred places], historical cultural sites, and the location of various native plants and animals. An inherent aspect of these practices is conservation to ensure availability of natural resources for present and future generations (14)

In other words, kua‘āina treat all aspects of the ‘āina as relatives that they have the responsibility to care for in order to keep the world in balance.³ Lōkahi also extends to human relations (2007:15). In a Local context, lōkahi is often glossed as a “Local style” of living. Haunani-Kay Trask provides an illustrative snapshot of it in an article on resistance to development in then-rural Kalama Valley on O‘ahu in the 1970s:

While most of the Valley’s residents were certainly Hawaiian, many others were not. However, they all felt their way of life to be closer to a Hawaiian rather than a mainland-*haole* style of living. By this they meant not only the easy-going attitude of Valley people to living in close proximity with pigs, food gardens, auto repair shops and lots of kids and dogs, but a larger concern for people and their daily happiness rather than for money, status, and achievement. What Lyman called a ‘rural slum’ was to Valley people one of the last places left on O‘ahu where local people could enjoy a way of life not driven by the suburbanite’s desire for neat lawns, fancy houses[,] expensive cars, big fences, and unseen neighbors (1987:131)

This way of life is lōkai, encompassing the human and more-than-human realm. It is based on subsistence living and being in close relation with one’s close and extended family, neighbors, and community members. It involves focusing on one’s own happiness,

abundance, and well-being, rather than on capitalist productivity and white middle-class norms. Similarly, in the discussion of religious fasting in *Nānā I ke Kumu*, Mary Kawena Pukui contends that this concept was brought by missionaries and made no sense in the Kanaka Maoli context. Rather, “the body was to be fed, massaged, molded to beauty, taught the arts of love—and, in general, enjoyed” (1972:6). The case studies in this chapter demonstrate that aspects of lōkahi/the Local style are fundamental to the ways in which many reggae musicians behave in the scene.

Finally, mo‘okū‘auhau (genealogy) and connection to place are important to Hawaiian and Local culture. Beyond John P. Rosa’s assertion that place is fundamental to the Local, I argue that this connection to place has older roots in Kanaka Maoli genealogy. Mo‘okū‘auhau expands beyond humans and includes specific ‘āina (land/environment), and this is a foundational part of Kanaka Maoli identity (Wilson-Hokowhitu and Meyer 2019:1-2). Even establishing where you are from, which may not correlate with your genealogical origin, is important. Local people are affectively connected to such places because, typically, several generations of their family also grew up there (Rosa 2014:103-104). Simultaneously, Kanaka Maoli worldviews undergirding this phenomenon make place more important. In addition, asking where Local people are from and where they went to high school is not just about establishing class (see Rosa 2018:87),⁴ or, as non-Locals might argue, about casting them as Other and proving that they lack “proper” Local knowledge. Rather, these questions are primarily about forming relations (Sumida 1991:xvii; Rosa 2018:78). Much of the time, the result of these questions is that these two hypothetical Locals know or have heard of the same people associated with those places, or are actually related. If not, they can at least place each other somewhere and understand the other person

and their life more intimately. Like lōkahi, mo‘okū‘auhau and connection to place are fundamental to practices of some reggae musicians both within and beyond their music.

In the rest of this chapter, I exemplify the Kanaka Local through the music and activities of a band and an artist. Firstly, I discuss Kapena, one of the most successful and longest-lasting Hawaiian or island music bands. Secondly, I talk about Ryan “Jah Gumby” Murakami, who is the bass player for foundational underground roots band Ooklah the Moc, a producer under the label Father Psalms Studio, a selector, and a cornerstone of the underground roots scene. The difference between their expressions of the Kanaka Local have to do with history, context, and explicitness. Kapena is widely understood as a Hawaiian or island music band and is thus a part of the Local music scene rather than the “more traditional” Hawaiian music scene. However, the ways in which the band is Local are underpinned by lōkahi and “more traditional” Hawaiian music, exemplifying the Kanaka Local. On the other hand, the vast majority of Murakami’s musical activities are Jamaican and British reggae-based. Being Hawaiian or playing Hawaiian music are not his explicit goals. However, the Kanaka Local comes through in other moments in his activities, including his lōkahi lifestyle, the sorts of artists he supports, and the ways in which he thinks about Local and Hawaiian identity.

The DeLima Family

I had the great fortune to meet the members of Kapena (Captain), one of several reggae bands in Hawai‘i that has continued to perform regularly and command a high level of respect over the more than thirty years of their activity. Many people—musicians especially—that I talked to referenced them in our discussions and described them in

laudatory terms. Although Kapena is well-known for a diversity of repertoire, one of their signature styles is reggae—in fact, Kapena was one of the foundational Hawaiian bands that emerged in the mid-1980s. The band’s personnel has changed over the ensuing years and is currently a family band, made up of father Kelly “Kelly Boy” DeLima (lead vocals, ‘ukulele), son Kapena “Pena” DeLima (vocals, drums), and daughters Kalenakū “Kalena” DeLima (vocals, keyboard) and Lilo Tuala (vocals, bass). Their mother, Leolani “Leo” DeLima, also performs with them occasionally and is their manager. I will refer to Kelly Boy, Pena, Kalena, and Leo by their nicknames to avoid confusion as most of them have the same last name and Pena shares his name with their band.

I was introduced to them through Aaron Salā, an ethnomusicologist and well-known Hawaiian singer in the Hawai‘i music industry. I first met Kalena, Pena, and Lilo after their set at Duke’s Waikiki, a restaurant and bar in Waikīkī that exists in the Outrigger Waikiki Beach Resort. The bar and restaurant were packed with tourists. The band was playing outside, and I only managed to see them perform several Top 40 songs that spanned many decades. This included a lively rendition of “Rock Around the Clock” by Bill Haley and the Comets, accompanying a group of happy tourists dancing in pairs along with the music. I approached the band members after their performance was over and agreed to be in contact about setting up a time for an interview. A few weeks later, I got to interview Kelly Boy, Leo, and Kalena at their house. I also decided to follow them around to their gigs on O‘ahu the following week (beginning Monday, November 5, 2018). Additionally, I was able to sit in on a session at Pena’s studio, Bu Print Studios, where he worked on recording singer Alika Moon’s first album. The information on Kapena is derived from my interview with the band members, my observations at their many concerts, the encyclopedia *Hawaiian Music*

and Musicians edited by George Kanahale and John Berger, and from print and online journalistic articles.

The context in which the DeLima family is typically understood is in relation to the Jawaiian or island music scene, thus firmly planting them in the realm of Local music as opposed to Hawaiian music. However, the ways in which they are Local are very visibly and audibly undergirded by Kanaka Maoli worldviews, exemplifying the Kanaka Local. The band comes from a lineage of “more traditional” Hawaiian music and privileges it explicitly in comparison to many other Jawaiian/island music groups, which I highlight in a biographical profile of the band and in ethnographic description. The difference between their music and those performing “more traditional” Hawaiian music is that theirs is “less” traditional: that is, their music is a Hawaiian music that is more heavily influenced by global music forms, thus making it more “applicable” to non-Kānaka Maoli. That conceptualization works under the assumption that Kānaka Maoli are more likely to like “more traditional” Hawaiian music than other Locals. This is also clear from the band history and from their current gigs and repertoire. In fact, Kapena was one of several bands that started out in the 1980s by performing “more traditional” Hawaiian music and then transferred to reggae.⁵ Additionally, the ways in which the band members connect to their audience and other musicians exemplify the Kanaka Maoli practice of forming reciprocal relationships or lōkahi, which I discuss using my ethnographic fieldwork. They make a great deal of effort to make audiences feel happy and included, despite the sometimes opposing expectations of groups within an audience. The DeLima family members also go out of their way to share with and give to other musicians in the scene, forming relations with the knowledge that supporting others will also inspire them to support Kapena.

It is important to note that the ways that the members of Kapena talk about identity and music draw upon discourses that both relate to Kānaka Maoli worldviews and the ways in which Hawai‘i has been colonized. The contexts in which they are hired to perform often operate along colonial lines—for instance, hotel gigs tend to expect “more traditional” Hawaiian music, as Hawaiian music has been a commodified product that has been sold as part of the tourist experience in Hawai‘i throughout the twentieth century. The fact that they have to constantly perform small gigs is also a result of the limited size of the island market in which they are working; larger, more lucrative concerts do not happen often. Similarly, it is easy to consider their willingness to engage in “less traditional” Hawaiian music as a move to accommodate the diversity of settlers on the ‘āina. However, I argue that their motivation for engaging in these practices is also founded on Kanaka Maoli worldviews that foreground openness and reciprocal relations with others. Also, despite colonial influences, they choose to take Hawaiian music and worldviews as the basis of their thinking about music.

Similar to Bruddah Waltah Aipolani, Kelly Boy told me that he immediately took to reggae because it “hooked” him in and it fit into his reality (personal communication). He told me that the Bob Marley album *Babylon By Bus* (Bob Marley & The Wailers 1978) was his favorite album as a child and he recounted the ways in which the song “Concrete Jungle” from the album represented his life. Kelly Boy and his family lived in Waikīkī at the time and he understood it to also be just such a concrete jungle. Kelly Boy was also only raised by his father in a divorced household, so “going through hard times” allowed him to relate to Marley’s messages of resistance (personal communication).

The original members of Kapena were Kelly Boy on ‘ukulele and lead vocals, and the brothers Tivaini “Tiva” Tatofi on bass and Teimomi “Timo” Tatofi on guitar. Kelly Boy formed Kapena with the Tatofi brothers in high school in order to compete in the state-wide musical talent competition Brown Bags to Stardom in 1984.⁶ Although they advanced to the state finals but did not win the competition (they lost to Nā Leo Pilimehana), they realized that they enjoyed playing music and decided to go professional (ibid) (Berger 2012c:451). They initially decided to model their sound on Hui Ohana (Mossman 2015), which was one of the premier “more traditional” Hawaiian music bands that emerged during the Second Hawaiian Renaissance. Hui Ohana’s music is characterized by the leo ki’eki’e (falsetto) vocals of Dennis Pavao and the slack key guitar playing of Ledward Kaapana (Junker 2015c). However, after meeting Pavao, Kelly Boy decided that “they had other gifts to offer the listening public” (Mossman 2015). They started by performing at the Polynesian Pub at the Pacific Beach Hotel (now the ‘Alohilani Resort Waikiki Beach) on Waikīkī for tips. Later, they became regulars at Sparky’s Lounge, a nightclub somewhat nearby on Kapiolani Blvd. They also began experimenting with sounds “beyond the traditional Hawaiian genre, and developed a complex sound that mixed Polynesian songs with pop music and danceable, reggae-infused rhythms” (ibid). They very soon became “one of the hottest acts in town” (ibid). According to John Berger, Kelly Boy’s use of ‘ukulele as a lead instrument rather than part of the rhythm section contributed to making its sound appealing to young people (2012c:451). He also argues that it added a unique element to their sound, as did the “soulful” harmonies of the Tatofi brothers’ singing (ibid).

Kapena was eventually signed by Ken Kahanu Post, who, through his label Kahanu Records, recorded some of the most influential Hawaiian records of that time period (Jay

Junker, personal communication). According to Berger, their first album, *Satisfaction Guaranteed* (Kapena 1986), established them as a “major new local act” (2012c:452). The song “Red Red Wine,” their cover of UB40’s cover of a Neil Diamond song, became an early Hawaiian hit (ibid). Their second album for Kahanu Records was *Kapena* (Kapena 1987), which contained the famous “What You Talkin’ Bout” and “Never Gonna Give You Up.” This album and the band won two Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards in 1988: “Contemporary Hawaiian Album of the Year” and “Group of the Year.”

These albums, like Bruddah Waltah Aipolani’s *Hawaiian Reggae*, seem to represent the sort of set list the band would perform at any given gig. For instance, *Kapena* includes a deeply Hui Ohana-influenced rendition of “Makakilo,” “Ei Nei,” “Kaulana Kaneohe,” and “Leahi,” all of which Kelly Boy leads in an impressive leo ki‘eki‘e style. They also include the Tahitian song “Tipi Tipi,” “Act Naturally” by Johnny Russell (performed by Buck Owens and the Buckaroos, but subsequently covered by The Beatles), and “Baby Blue” by George Baker Selection. Finally, the album contains three reggae songs: “What You Talkin’ Bout” by Jamaican ska and reggae trombonist Rico Rodriguez, “Just One Look” by Doris Troy, and “Never Gonna Give You Up” by Musical Youth. Although “Just One Look” is an R&B song, the original has occasional emphasis on the offbeats, making the jump from this song to reggae very easy. Their adaptations of the reggae songs have a definitive skank played by Kelly Boy on the ‘ukulele, a one-drop pattern on the drums, as well as melodic basslines that are reminiscent of reggae. At the same time, the influence of “more traditional” Hawaiian music is strongly audible, especially because of the presence of the ‘ukulele. It is also evident in the style of the vocals. Kelly Boy has a particularly high and sweet voice (as does the rest of his family) and can also perform very effectively in a leo

ki'eki'e style (Stillman 1998:98). Supporting him are the harmonies provided by the deeper-voiced Tatofis. This sweet-sounding aesthetic exemplifies the nahenahe aesthetic that I described in the previous chapter.

Kahanu Records collapsed soon after the release of *Kapena*, so the band moved elsewhere. They recorded *New Horizons* (Kapena 1990a) for veteran promoter Tom Moffatt's Paradise Productions label, which also had influential songs like their cover of the Herbs's "Long Ago." However, after this recording, Kapena founded their own record company, KDE Records (Berger 2012c:453), which now owns all of their music. They have recorded other successful artists associated with Jawaiian or island music, including Willie K, Tropical Knights, and Koa'uka, and even a comedy album with Augie T. Soon after founding KDE Records, Kapena recorded the album *Stylin'* (Kapena 1990b). Most of the songs on their albums were covers, and, after some time, the group started to write more of their own music (ibid). One of the most famous of their later original songs is "Kalena Koo" from *Future Frontiers* (Kapena 1994), which was written in honor of Kalena, who was around four years old at the time (Berger 2012c:453). The group continued to put out albums and perform regularly throughout the 1990s, including compilation albums (ibid).⁷

In the early-2000s, the DeLima children began to play with the band regularly when each of them reached around 11 or 12 years old (Allen 2018), performing in Waikīkī around five nights a week. A public glimpse of this new direction occurred at the 2000 Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards show, when Pena joined Kapena on keyboards (Berger 2012c:453-454). Tiva officially retired in 2001 in order to take care of his sick daughter (Mossman 2015) and was replaced by Kainoa Delo (Berger 2012c:454). By 2005, Timo had moved back to Tonga, so Kapena stopped performing as their original trio and Pena, Kalena, and Tuala filled in for

the Tatofi brothers in every performance (Mossman 2015). Eventually, Kalena became the keyboard player and Pena became the drummer.

In 2015, the band announced that their personnel had changed. This shift was formalized with the release of their most recent album *Palena Ole (Without Limits)* (Kapena 2017), which Kalena has described as their “coming-out album of Kapena as a family band” (Allen 2018). In the same interview, Kelly Boy described the change as “going back to our original roots” because the original Kapena “just wanted to play Hawaiian music. That was our first love” (ibid). The album has been very successful, winning four Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards in 2018: “Group of the Year,” “Contemporary Album of the Year,” “Music Video of the Year” for Kalena’s performance on “When I Come Home,” and, most notably, “Album of the Year” (hawaiinewsnow.com 2018).

The DeLima children have also been featured in some of Kapena’s most recent work and successfully pursued projects independent of Kapena. Kalena and Tuala have been featured on tracks in albums with the full band, as well as in singles. The Hoku-winning song “When I Come Home” featuring Kalena from *Palena Ole* has been particularly successful. Pena has also had a great degree of success as a recording engineer with his company Bu Print Studios. He has recorded a number of well-known Local reggae and other Local artists, including Kapena, Josh Tatofi, The Vitals, Maoli, Eli-Mac, Bo Napoleon, and others. He has also recorded himself, most recently, for his solo album *Island Beyond the Stars* (Bu Rock Records 2019), which is heavily influenced by retro Local/Hawaiian music like hapa haole and exotica.

Although Kapena’s privileging of Hawaiian music was clear to me in the album and their concerts that I heard about and attended, they are still part of the current island music

scene. The majority of their most famous songs from the original Kapena were reggae songs. They are also one of the many island music bands associated with Hawaii's Finest, which is an enormously successful Local clothing company run by Paulele Alcon (see Chapter 2).

Most of the musicians that I interviewed brought up Kapena. They are very well-respected, and besides being well-known by the general public in Hawai'i, they are "musician's musicians." Consistently, other musicians and people in the industry brought up the fact that Kapena can play many different genres of music well, including reggae, "more traditional" Hawaiian music, the genres of mainstream pop, and genres from outside of the U.S. As with Bruddah Waltah, the variety is partially economically motivated—they need to appeal to club-goers and reach as broad an audience as possible. In addition, Kelly Boy and Leo told me that they purposefully chose to be based on O'ahu rather than be a touring band. Because their income comes primarily from being musicians and they do not tour all the time, they must perform constantly and in a wide variety of contexts. There are a limited number of places that a band can play, so being versatile is imperative (personal communication). When I interviewed them, they frequently played at hotels in Waikīkī in which "more traditional" Hawaiian music is often expected; Kalena performed regularly at Disney's Aulani (Disney's resort on O'ahu); they gig at different sorts of nightclubs and restaurants that specialize in a variety of musics including reggae; and they continually performed at a variety of private events.

Such a range of performance contexts comes with challenges. Kelly Boy asserted that the most difficult audiences to play for are those with a mix of tourists and Locals because the two groups respond dissimilarly to different musics. Tourists can come from

anywhere in the world, but they are likely to be from the U.S. continent, Japan, Australia, and China:

It's a hard thing too sometimes...when you get one mix of tourists and Locals, that's my hardest audience. Because we've play at Duke's...every Saturday for...14, 15 years—we played at Duke's from 4 to 6 like clockwork....And you get mostly tourists down there, so we get what we called the 'Duke's Set.' You know, we do like Santana to 'Hotel California' to Doobie Brothers to—all what we call haole music. We call it the tourist music. And there's sometimes, like when we played at the North Shore this past weekend at the Surfer Bar, it was a mix, now. It was a mix of tourists and there were a mix of Locals. Now, when you play 'Brown-Eyed Girl' and a Local is sitting over there, it's like [makes negative face]. Then, when you play island reggae music, the tourist is sitting there like [makes negative face]. I mean, it is a *struggle!* (personal communication)

However, Kapena has managed to connect to many different audiences, sometimes engaging audience members of widely divergent backgrounds, at the same time. It is a skill that the band members have cultivated over many years of performing together, as they described to me in our interview. Kelly Boy pointed out that they want Kapena to be known as a “variety band,” and that this has been their “gift” throughout the years that they’ve been active (personal communication). He said that their “passion” has always been Hawaiian music, and that their last manager, Ken Thompson, used to always tell them that playing only one genre locks you into it (ibid). Kelly Boy also said that he consciously exposed his children to a great variety of different types of music (ibid). For example, Kalena recounted a concert that the band had performed at the Aulani, in which Tuala sang the song “Ikaw,” which is in Tagalog. After the performance, a man from the Philippines approached Tuala and connected with the band members because they performed a song in his language. Kalena pointed out that this relation would not have been made in her family members’ everyday lives, and that the song “allows us to make these connections with people” (personal communication).

Their concerts that I attended also exemplified the band’s ability to connect with disparate audiences. Kapena performed at the Kani Ka Pila Grille at the Outrigger Reef Waikiki Resort in Waikīkī. This was the second hotel gig that I attended of theirs that week—the first was at the restaurant House Without a Key at the Halekulani hotel in Waikīkī, which is well-known for presenting “more traditional” Hawaiian music and was the focus of their performance. As the name of the Kani Ka Pila Grille might suggest, this venue regularly features live Hawaiian music. On November 7, 2018, I saw Leo, Tuala, and Kapena perform as the De Lima Ohana Trio. I sat at a table during the show with Kelly Boy and a number of his family members and friends, including his father (who has sadly passed away since then), Pena’s wife and children, and their friend Eikolani. Eikolani, who danced hula to several of the songs that night, also facilitated several of Kapena’s trips to Japan. Kalena was performing at the Aulani that night, where she was the MC of their show “Ka Wa‘a.”

The DeLima family’s fluency in disparate genres and ability to draw in different kinds of people into the performance was clear that night. They played famous “more traditional” Hawaiian songs, like “Pua ‘Olena” by Jimmy Kaholokula, “Wahine ‘Ilikea” by Rev. Dennis Kamakahi, and “Kanaka Waiwai” by John K. Almeida, as well as hapa haole songs like “Ta Ha Ua La” or “Hawaiian War Chant” by Alvin K. Isaacs and “Sophisticated Hula” by Sol Bright. In addition to these, they performed famous continental U.S. songs like “Unforgettable” by Nat King Cole and Natalie Cole, and a medley of country music that included “Take Me Home, Country Roads” by John Denver,⁸ “Folsom Prison Blues” by Johnny Cash, and “Joleen” by Dolly Parton. They also performed “Change the World” by Eric Clapton, and even “Como La Flor” by Selena. In addition, they performed a Tahitian

song, “Tiare Oe No Tahiti” or “Tiare Oe,” which they announced was specifically for the party from Tahiti sitting in the audience. One of the members of that group got up and danced to the song. They dedicated one of the later songs, “Koko Ni Sachi Ari” by Saburo Iida and Kikitaro Takahashi (huapala.org n.d.), to the table of elderly Japanese tourists near the stage who knew all of the words. Eikolani described to me that this song was “very old,” and it was a moving, nostalgic experience for her and the Japanese tourists, who sang along with the performance. The song seems to have been recorded in Hawai‘i and was a hit among Local Japanese people in the mid-twentieth century (komuso.com n.d.). The DeLimas closed the performance with a rendition of “Aloha ‘Oe,” which many people appeared to know, and the Tahitian dancer performed hula from the audience again. This performance clearly demonstrated the DeLima family’s virtuosic ability to ascertain the identities of audience members, know what music they would like, and connect to them.

Earlier that week, I attended Pena’s set at the Vintage Cave Café in the Ala Moana Mall. Kelly Boy, Kalena, and Tuala were originally billed to perform at the Sheraton Princess Kaiulani hotel, but they decided against it because the performance was to occur in the middle of a strike on Marriott International, Inc. (the company that owns the Princess Kaiulani). The performance took place on a Tuesday night (November 6, 2018). Vintage Cave Café is quite large and dark, is decorated in a quasi-Italian baroque style with chandeliers and big paintings on the walls, and has a very expensive pre-fixe Italian menu. Perhaps because it was a state holiday (Election Day) and it was a Tuesday, there were only two people in the restaurant besides me, so Pena seemed to approach this performance in a somewhat more casual style. He pointed out that his previous week’s performance there was “lit,” however. He asked the bartender and me if we had any requests, and the bartender said

that she was not familiar enough with Pena as a musician to be able to request something. Pena replied by saying that he has about 500 songs! He also was joined by Alikea Moon, the first artist that Pena signed to his record label, for some of the songs. Not long after I arrived, Pena sensed the vibe of the place and decided to do his entire set in the style of Billy Joel, reminiscent of “Piano Man.” He accompanied himself singing on the grand piano in front of the bar and also accompanied Moon while he sang, including a Bob Marley song. The two people in the audience, who were actually the manager and his partner, were smiling and looked like they enjoyed the performance.

A similar sort of audience engagement was clear in another concert of theirs that I attended on January 4, 2019 (this is the same concert that I described in my opening vignette; they followed PeniDean). This concert took place at Hawaiian Brian’s, which often hosts reggae concerts, unlike the Kani Ka Pila Grille and the Vintage Cave Café. The concert was produced by Hawaii’s Finest, so the crowd seemed to reflect the typically Hawaiian audience for their performances. Although there was not a large crowd of people at Kapena’s concert that night, the audience members in attendance were into the music. They also seemed fairly young and yet clearly knew Kapena’s older songs. In fact, the audience cheered loudly for classics like “What You Talkin’ Bout,” which is perhaps Kapena’s most famous song. Interestingly, they did not express as much enthusiasm for the band’s rendition of the Jamaican reggae classic “Night Nurse” by Gregory Isaacs. At one point near the beginning of their set, Kapena played a Sāmoan song, the name of which I did not catch. Spontaneously, an audience member started dancing in a style that looked Polynesian to me because her arm movements and general bodily comportment reminded me of hula. After

the song was over, Kelly Boy gave a shout-out to her and thanked her for her siva, which is a generic word for dance in the Sāmoan language.

In addition, the DeLima family's actions outside of their music reflect their commitment to forming relations. Besides being famous in the music industry in Hawai'i and very well-liked, they also have many strong relationships with other island music artists in the industry. Among the most well-known is their relationship with Tiva Tatofi's son, Josh Tatofi, a celebrated contemporary Hawaiian singer who began his career performing island music. For instance, Josh Tatofi recorded what is perhaps his most famous album, *Pua Kiele* (Josh Tatofi 2016), in Pena's studio. In my interview with the family, Kalena pointed out that there is "camaraderie" among the musicians who began their careers in the 1970s and 1980s and still perform today (personal communication). She noted that some of them have become very good friends with Kelly Boy, and that she and her siblings grew up with their children (ibid). For instance, Kelly Boy is good friends with Danny Kennedy of the Mana'o Company, and the DeLima children grew up with Kennedy's nephews JP Kennedy and Caleb Keolanui of The Green, as well as Keolanui's brother Micah G, another successful island music artist. Kalena also pointed out that they try to support each other's careers by performing for each other. She cited a long list of examples, including Kelly Boy doing Christmas shows with Willie K, Kapena performing in Robert Cazimero's May Day concert, Pena recording many of these artists in his studio, and Tuala playing bass on many of the artists' albums. She also noted the reciprocal nature of these sorts of relations: "...it's the sense of camaraderie that you help, and you get in return, help back from others, and that's what keeps it strong..." (personal communication).

The DeLima family have demonstrated the Kanaka Local on a number of levels. The first is through their repertoire and style, in which they foreground “more traditional” Hawaiian music and stylistic elements because of the members’ interest in the music. This trend is exemplified by the album *Kapena*, the reorientation of the band since the release of *Palena Ole*, and the songs and styles they chose in live performances. Hawaiian music is thus the foundation from which they work, and stylistic influence beyond it builds on top of the foundation. Despite the fact that they are often understood as a Hawaiian or island music band, and therefore in a Local milieu, they continue to maintain a grounding in “more traditional” Hawaiian music.

Additionally, the ways in which they incorporate non-Hawaiian styles in performance and the manners in which they interact with individuals in the music industry are based on *lōkahi* as it relates to human relationships. The fact that much of their repertoire is in different genres, language, or styles of music is what causes them to be considered island music, Hawaiian, or Local as opposed to Hawaiian music. However, I argue that this very quality is what makes them Hawaiian. Kalena’s story about the Filipino man at the Aulani, as well as the way they tailor to specific audiences in live performances by taking the time to learn diverse musics and recognizing when to perform them, exemplifies relation building. Other groups do this too, but, in my experience, *Kapena* reaches furthest. For instance, it is not unusual for a “more traditional” Hawaiian music group to perform songs in other Polynesian languages, country, rock, or Spanish-language music. It is also standard for many reggae groups to perform “more traditional” Hawaiian music, rock, or country music (as exemplified by *Bruddah Waltah*). However, it is *not* typical for a “more traditional” Hawaiian nor a reggae group to do Japanese and Filipinx musics. In addition, *Kapena*’s

success in this regard has been supported by the fact that they are particularly interested in forming relations with artists, audience members, and industry members. That desire is exemplified by Kalena's explanation of how they have helped other musicians with their careers and thus have received help in return. I also consider the fact that they were willing to significantly help me with my dissertation to be in line with such thinking. Kapena is a primary example of the Kanaka Local because although they are typically categorized as part of the Local island music scene, their approach to music is clearly based on lōkahi and "more traditional" Hawaiian music.

Ryan "Jah Gumby" Murakami

Ryan "Jah Gumby" Murakami has been a cornerstone in the underground roots scene since his band Ooklah the Moc rose to widespread popularity around 2000 (named after the sidekick character, Ookla the Mok, from the cartoon *Thundarr the Barbarian*). I have seen Murakami perform as a band member and as a solo artist. He is perhaps most well-known as the bassist in Ooklah the Moc. I saw him perform in that role several times in different venues, alongside Jawaiian or island music bands in concerts produced by Hawaii's Finest, opening for Ky-Mani Marley, and alongside other underground roots bands. I also saw Murakami perform as a selector (DJ in reggae parlance) during fieldwork. Additionally, he is the owner of Father Psalms Studio, which he uses primarily to create his own music, sometimes in collaboration with others. He is primarily a bassist, but he also plays guitar, keyboards, and drums. Murakami was a full-time musician when I met him, but then took a job as the main chef at a health food store in Honolulu while I was doing fieldwork. However, music is still his main career. I also thank Aaron Salā for facilitating my meeting

Murakami. I communicated with Murakami through Instagram and then met at a coffeeshop near his house in Pālolo Valley in Honolulu for an interview. Murakami graciously allowed me to interview him again—in all, four times—and allowed me to go to his house and hang out and interview his friends who are reggae musician and fans for my dissertation.

Murakami also recorded me playing the saxophone for some of his riddims. For this section, I used the interviews I conducted with Murakami, as well as an interview each with his friends and reggae singers Siate Apina and Curtis “Mr. 83” Helm. I also draw from observations of their concerts that I attended, several reggae websites that provided biographical information, journalistic articles, and the Father Psalms TV YouTube channel.

Murakami’s biographical information and my ethnographic description of his activities exemplify the Kanaka Local. Although Murakami does not perform overtly Hawaiian music, his activities and the activities of his friends demonstrate a centering of lōkahi and mo‘okū‘auhau. These activities include the role of place and Murakami’s house in the underground roots scene, Murakami’s relationship with food, the way he thinks about his own identity, his support of his friends who engage overtly Hawaiian sovereignty politics, and the community experience engendered at his concerts and in everyday life. I also provide some detailed biographical information for readers who are interested in Murakami and Ooklah the Moc's histories.

Murakami’s house is near the front of Pālolo Valley, one of the rainy valleys set into the southern end of the Ko‘olau Mountain range that are part of the city of Honolulu. One of the mo‘olelo (stories) of the area has to do with Ka‘au Crater (at the back of the valley). The demigod Māui formed it when he tried to draw the Hawaiian Islands together with his hook, and the hook fell after dropping the rock Pōhaku-o-Kaua‘i at Ka‘ena Point on the opposite

end of O‘ahu (Pukui, Elbert, and Mookini 1974:61). In the 1950s, the Palolo Valley Homes and Palolo Homes public housing complexes were built in the valley (Griffith 2012:38), which Haunani-Kay Trask notes “transform[ed it]...into ramshackle ghettos where drugs and crime stalked increasing numbers of unemployed youth” (1987:138). In one of our interviews, Murakami described Pālolo Valley as being much browner and poorer while he was growing up in the 1980s and 1990s, with many Sāmoan, Kānaka Maoli, Filipinx, Laotian, and some Japanese inhabitants, than it is now (personal communication). In the last several decades, the valley has become increasingly gentrified as prices have gone up and previous residents moved or passed away, although the housing projects remain (ibid).

Coincidentally, my mother and her siblings grew up on the adjacent “hill,” Maunalani Heights, and one of my aunties still lives there at the edge of this ridge. Having grown up visiting her, I have been peering down into Pālolo Valley for years, but going to Murakami’s place was the first time I had ventured there. Murakami lives in his family’s house with his mother and brother. His living situation is an example of John P. Rosa’s observation that Local people in Hawai‘i tend to live in the same place over several generations. His house is also near to the street corner immortalized on the album cover of the Ka‘au Crater Boy’s *The Best of the Ka‘au Crater Boys* (1998). The group was the duo of Ernie Cruz, Jr. and Troy Fernandez, who grew up in the Pālolo housing projects (Berger 1997). They were also one of the more successful island music groups during the 1990s and their music remains well-known today.

Murakami’s house also serves as a gathering place for many musicians and fans in the reggae scene. One of the rooms in his house is his studio, which is where he stores much of his vast reggae record, cassette, and CD collection. The walls and ceilings are covered

with reggae and Rastafari posters, and one wall contains his sprawling recording set-up. This is also the room in which he hangs out with his friends regularly. Like many participants in the underground scene, Murakami is also interested in food, particularly in Asian Indian food. He also grows food in his garden—he would give me curry leaves from his tree most of the times that I met him. One of two YouTube videos made by Father Psalms about the history of the project featured Murakami and Navales outside drinking awa, which also included shots of taro plants that were growing in the yard (fatherpsalmstv 2010b).

Murakami was first exposed to reggae when he was 12 (fatherpsalmstv 2010a) around 1990, through the young Sāmoan men who lived in his neighborhood. He started collecting music in the 1990s, first buying records and cassettes from record stores in Hawai‘i, and then later by ordering them from places like New York City, England, and Japan. He would frequently sneak in to see Local underground roots groups like Roots Natty Roots and Dread Ashanti when he was a teenager and would go to large reggae festival concerts like Sunsplash (Ryan Murakami, personal communication).

Murakami met most of the members of Ooklah the Moc when he was 15 and attending Kaimuki High School. At first, the band only played varieties of hardcore rock music. However, Murakami exposed them to reggae, decided that he was more interested in it than hardcore, and suggested that the band start playing it. The band members started incorporating dub rhythms into their sound, performing a mixture of hardcore and reggae. In 1999, Murakami met singer Nicholas Jon “Kali” Navales through a guitar class that they were both attending at Kapi‘olani Community College. Murakami eventually recruited Navales into the band. In 2000, the band members added Navales, singer Micky Huihui, and the horn players (Ryan Murakami, personal communication).

The famous Jamaican dub reggae artist Scientist (Hopeton Overton Brown) recorded their first album, *Ites Massive* (Ooklah the Moc 2000), suggesting that they add a keyboard player. For their second album, *Rearrange Your Positive* (Ooklah the Moc 2004), Brad Watanabe filled that role (Ryan Murakami, personal communication). Watanabe is currently the bass player in The Green, one of the most popular U.S.-based reggae bands.

In the early- to mid-1990s, the underground roots scene was not as popular as it later became. In fact, Ooklah the Moc became a catalyst for a strong wave of popularity of the underground roots scene in the early-2000s. They began to gain popularity around 2002 and later in 2004 when their album *Rearrange Your Positive* came out and were very active throughout the decade. Murakami stated that they were playing around three to four times a week, including every weekend. At this point, there was a great deal of live music in Hawai'i at bars, clubs, and dedicated music venues. They would also perform for backyard parties, as well as the reggae parties that took place in rural areas on the East Side of O'ahu in the 1990s and 2000s (Ryan Murakami, personal communication). They also have performed on Maui, Kaua'i, and Hawai'i Island (rootfire.net 2020). For years, they toured the west coast of the U.S., becoming very popular around 2005 in the local roots reggae scene of San Diego. They have also opened for artists like Michael Rose, many members of the Marley family, Gregory Isaacs, Wailing Souls, Aswad, and others (ibid). They still play regularly but not with nearly this frequency and do not tour anymore (Ryan Murakami, personal communication).

More recently, Murakami's sound system performances have been gaining popularity. Their rise in popularity is likely due to a more general decline in live music performance and venues in Hawai'i—it is cheaper for a venue to hire one person to run a

sound system rather than hire an entire band. At the same time, Murakami points out that reggae fans in Hawai‘i are becoming increasingly interested in record collecting and DJing (in the Jamaican sense). Murakami told me that being a selector has become more and more popular since around 2013 when he started doing monthly “rub-a-dub” nights at a venue in Chinatown (described in Chapter 2) (personal communication).

Very recently, Murakami has been touring with Nicholas “Kali” Navales and Navales’s hula halāu in Japan, performing “more traditional” Hawaiian music. He also performs in Tijuana and Mexico City, and he is working to build a studio in Tijuana to record vocals. Additionally, he fills in on bass for roots reggae bands in San Diego (personal communication).

Murakami formed Father Psalms Studio alongside Navales in 2003 (alohagotsoul.com 2020). Navales reported that after recording several albums, he and Murakami realized that recording is very expensive and that they could substantially cut their costs by recording themselves (fatherpsalmstv 2010b). Murakami noted that being the primary producer of music in this way allows him the freedom to pursue a particular vision. In these recordings, he performs all of the instruments except for the horns and vocals (personal communication).

Murakami regularly releases material through Father Psalms. He puts out solo albums as Jah Gumby, most recently *Humility: The Vibes of Jah G* (Jah Gumby 2018) through the Aloha Got Soul record label. He also records other artists, including visiting reggae musicians from outside Hawai‘i and his friends. Murakami has additionally recorded other artists based in Hawai‘i outside of the circles of Ooklah the Moc and Father Psalms, including the Mike Love album *Jah Will Never Leave I Alone* (2014) (not to be confused

with Mike Love of the Beach Boys), and the Eli-Mac (Ciara-Camile Roque Velasco) album *Tricky One – EP* (2017). Further, Murakami has accumulated quite a lot of unreleased material that he has recorded over the years. He stated to me that he is not interested in making hits and making money from his music, but rather prefers to produce music for himself and his friends to enjoy (personal communication).

In one of my interviews with Murkami, I asked him what the word island meant to him. I also asked if his description of island was the same as Local, and he said yes. He described island as being fundamentally influenced by the smallness of one's surroundings, which can be geographic but also dictate the sorts of activities that one engages in—he listed surfing, fishing, going to the beach, and skateboarding, as well as the influence of the disparate racial or ethnic groups of people on Local culture (personal communication).

In another one of my interviews with Murakami, he was joined by his friend and singer Siate Apina. They had a conversation about their experiences of growing up in Hawai'i:

Murkami: Middle class was an overstatement back in the day....At least here, there was nobody who was richer than the next person. We were all in the same kind of struggle, I guess.

Apina: That was the best!

Murakami: We could eat each other's house, you know what I mean? [in pidgin] Oh—whatcha doin' today? Nothin'. Whatcha eating fo dinner? Oh, you got macaroni salad? Shoots! Come ova! Oh ya hamburger helper? Shoots! You go back and forth, eat at his house, go to my other friend's house, eat and play marbles. Spend the day at the beach. No more money. Brah, we used to travel—we used to catch the bus and go places. These kids nowadays are getting ripped off—they're stuck at home on the computer. That's why I go bus. These kids getting ripped off—no can enjoy life.

Apina: Used to ride bike everywhere. That was the best. We used to catch cray fish from the river, go home, listen to Yellowman over and over and over again and eat cray fish with my friend in the backyard. Oh it was unreal. Sing verses (personal communication)

Later during this interview with Murakami, I noticed that he had mentioned that his grandfather was Hawaiian, but he never mentioned being Kanaka Maoli himself (personal communication). In our next interview, I asked him if he identifies or feels Hawaiian:

I think, more than that, I feel Local more. Because, to me, the way I grew up—that *is* Hawaiian. To me, I mean. ‘Cause if you look at it like—I mean—it wasn’t so racially based back then. Everybody—it’s like in Jamaica. All these races but everybody spoke the same, everybody spoke pidgin, everybody ate the same. Everybody ate plantation food—Hawaiian, Japanese food. So, I think, to me, the way I was raised and the people and just how this place was when I was a kid, that embodied Hawai‘i to me. Even Hawaiian was—because, for one, there was a lot of aloha. And you could go to one Japanese guy’s house, one Filipino guy’s house, one Chinese guy’s house, one Hawaiian, one Sāmoan guy—there wasn’t any difference between how the people acted. It was all the same. So I think, more than a race thing, it was more of a Local culture thing that I identify with as *Hawaiian*....I remember going to school up here, I mean. There was like only two haoles in the whole school. The whole school! Maybe four Japanese. And before, back then, we had a lot of races that you don’t see here anymore, like we had Laotian people... We had all kind of stuff. And you look at it—and I mean, aside from the two or three haoles, everybody was brown skin! So you know, we’d all just kept together. It wasn’t really a race thing at all. Because I think we all identified with—to some extent—with hey, maybe you’re not Hawaiian, but we’re all living in a similar manner. And I think that’s important (personal communication)

I then suggested to him that Local culture is based on Hawaiian culture:

I think so....And I also think that—not only that, but the Locals—culture is gonna side with the Hawaiian culture, you know what I mean? It’s not like they’re going to like [say] no, no. There’s no separation as far as I’m concerned. It’s one and the same to me (personal communication)

After this, Murakami went on to describe the impact of settler colonialism on the Kanaka Local. He argued that there were “two sides” of being Local—an “aloha” side and a “reality” side:

Maybe throughout all of that frustration...just—a loss of identity. I mean, there’s a lot of things that happened here in these islands—postcolonial or whatever that effected not only the Hawaiians, but the Local people that were born and raised here. ‘Cause we’re all kind of intertwined. We’re all kind of mixed up together, so I think the influence is—it’s not just for Hawaiian by blood people, or whatever. It’s just a Local, a island thing...So I think that when people are feeling that kind of frustration

and stuff, they need an outlet. And I think the reggae music provided a lot of that outlet, you know. ‘Cause you listen to the topics...dealing with oppression...with identity, dealing with your cultural roots. Dealing with your history. I mean, there’s a lot of correlation between the Hawaiians and the Black man....Lot of oppression...towards both (personal communication)

I asked him later why he thought that Kānaka Maoli liked reggae:

I think the Hawaiian people, always, a lot of them, that’s why they love the reggae so much...because they identify with the struggle...the same, similar struggle—it’s being like, oppressed in your own land...? And that’s—that’s the same thing the Jamaicans went through...colonized by the British...the exact same feeling (personal communication)

Murakami also brought up the fact that Jamaican reggae musicians were not being privileged in the global reggae scene today, even though they were the originators of the music (personal communication). Although though he points out that Locals who are not Kanaka Maoli also deal with the impacts of settler colonialism, he demonstrates the knowledge that wrongs were done to Kānaka Maoli particularly by naming them specifically.

Murakami’s support of his friends and other musicians in the underground roots scene also exemplifies the Kanaka Local. For instance, they gather at his house and they bodysurf with him at Sandy Beach in Hawaii Kai (Hawaii Kai is a residential area just east of Honolulu, technically called Maunalua). He mentioned to me that he supports messages in reggae that resist colonialism, specifically pointing to the band Kapu System and their lead singer Kanakamon (Kapono Zoller) as more recent Local examples (personal communication). He also supports Kanaka Maoli friends who are much more overtly involved with Hawaiian culture and worldviews, such as Nicholas Jon “Kali” Navales and Curtis “Mr. 83” Helm.

Navales has been a vocalist in Ooklah the Moc since 1999, and his reggae name was given to him by Murakami (fatherpsalmstv 2010a). Ooklah the Moc was Navales's favorite band in high school, and he met Murkamai in a guitar class that he took while attending Kapi'olani Community College. Navales performed the song "Hell Fire" for that class, which he had written previously (ibid) and is perhaps Ooklah the Moc's greatest hit. Murakami liked it and realized that a riddim that he had already written had the same chord progression as the song (ibid). Murakami then asked Navales if he wanted to play with the band and Navales decided to join (ibid). Before meeting Murakami, Navales had only listened to Jawaiian/island music on the radio, so he started learning about Jamaican and other global reggae through Murakami. Navales has also recorded a number of solo albums: four reggae albums with Murakami and one "more traditional" Hawaiian music album under the name Nicholas Jon Navales, singing leo ki'eki'e (falsetto). Additionally, Navales dances hula with the group Hālau I Ka Wēkiu, run by Karl Vito Baker and Michael Lanakila Casupong. Further, Navales and Murakami have provided musical accompaniment for the dancers on a number of occasions, including during tours to Japan (Ryan Murakami, personal communication). In 2018, Murakami had gone to Japan with the group four or five times by the time I interviewed him in December of that year. Navales is also interested in food and farming and lives on a farm at the back of Mānoa valley (Navales 2020).

Curtis "Mr. 83" Helm is the nephew of legendary Hawaiian sovereignty activist and musician George Helm. George Helm was active during the Second Hawaiian Renaissance and helped found the Protect Kaho'olawe Ohana group that stopped the U.S. Navy's practice bombing on the island of Kaho'olawe. Curtis Helm's sister, Raiatea Helm, is a very famous leo ki'eki'e singer who has been active since the early-2000s. Murakami has also

recorded a solo album for Helm, and the two often perform together. Helm grew up in Moloka‘i performing music in a backyard setting with his highly musical family. However, he wanted to do something different and was intimidated to pursue Hawaiian music because of the accomplishments of his family in the tradition. He has been a fan of reggae since childhood and started performing as a reggae singer later on—first on Maui and then on O‘ahu (personal communication).

Navales’s and Helm’s music reflects Hawaiian worldviews both in its aesthetics and political content. The pair have high, sweet, and falsetto voices that are reminiscent of a number of classic Jamaican reggae singers, like Jimmy Cliff, Johnny Clarke, Donald “Tabby” Shaw of The Mighty Diamonds, Horace Andy, Hugh Mundell, and Sugar Minott. Murakami compares Navales to H.R. (Paul D. Hudson) of Bad Brains (fatherpsalmstv 2010a), and his style is more rock-influenced, though it depends on the song. Helm’s music in particular deals with resistance against oppression, including Hawaiian sovereignty.

The concept of the Kanaka Local was clear to me when I attended a smaller performance that featured Murakami and his friends. Murakami was on bass, Navales was on rhythm guitar and vocals, Helm was on vocals, and Jimmy Funai was on lead guitar. The concert took place at Kona Brewing Co. bar and restaurant at the Koko Marina Center in Hawaii Kai. The area is built on a fishpond that was used in pre-contact Hawai‘i until the U.S. Army started dredging it in 1959 (Anchor QEA 2011:7, 37). This development also includes the Kalama Valley area, which is notorious for the Kalama Valley evictions in the 1970s. My familiarity with the area was pretty limited, even though my grandfather has lived there for decades and my grandmother lived there throughout the 1990s. This area is also known as a more upscale and haole area in the city of Honolulu.

The concert took place on a Sunday. The large bar area was crowded with haole and/or haole-passing people watching football on the numerous screens surrounding a bar. I was a little shocked because it felt strange to me—more like a sports bar on the continent than the venue for a Local reggae concert. I was disoriented for a second before spotting people that I knew in the corner of the room next to window at the back of the restaurant, and then I felt relieved. I really enjoyed Murakami, Navales, Helm, and Funai’s performance, and it felt familiar and comforting amidst the jarring surroundings. I could hear the jazz influence in Funai’s playing and Helm performed a really impressive falsetto that lasted for the majority of a song towards the end of the night.

I ended up spending much of this concert talking to some of the fans who had come to listen to the concert. I was introduced to Scotty, a fan who is approximately in his 50s and has been part of the underground roots scene for several decades. Scotty works at the farm with Bernice Helgenberger Musrasrik and Fiore Anderson and builds traditional Kanaka Maoli hale (houses) and lava rock walls. He bodysurfs with Murakami and his friends at Sandy Beach and takes guitar lessons from Funai. Scotty and I talked about his experience being an underground roots fan in the 1990s in rural areas on the East Side of the island and especially of the band Natural Vibrations. We also talked about approaches to the management of invasive species from a Kanaka Maoli perspective on forestry. As he put it, one should “love” them and give them “aloha,” not raze them. The challenge that faces Hawai’i is that it is home to an enormous number of endangered, endemic, and extremely vulnerable species—at the same time, Hawai’i provides a climate in which invasive species thrive. Scotty suggested that decimating them all at once causes more problems because they

may be playing a role in the greater environment, so taking them out a few a time while simultaneously planting native plants will cause much less damage in the long run.

My experience with Murakami and his friends, fellow musicians and fans, is representative of the Kanaka Local in a variety of ways. Firstly, Murakami's connection to place is an example of the Kanaka Local in the form of mo'okū'auhau. His family has lived in Pālolo Valley for several generations in the same house, and his house is the center of much of his musical activity. Not only is his house foundational to his everyday life as a Local/Hawaiian person, but it is key to the underground roots scene on O'ahu. It is where he records himself and others, hangs out with reggae musicians, and stores his vast record collection. I myself spent some time there interviewing him and others, and he even recorded me playing saxophone.⁹ The sticker that came with the vinyl version of his most recent solo album, *Humility*, points to the importance of this place: "Progressive dub reggae from the heart of Pālolo Valley, O'ahu, Hawai'i."

Secondly, Murakami's understanding of Local identity is exactly the Kanaka Local—"I think, more than that, I feel Local more. Because, to me, the way I grew up—that *is* Hawaiian." Further, Murakami's description of Local matches the culture described by Trask that portrays lōkahi: a culture in which people are living with an "easy-going attitude" in close proximity with food gardens, livestock, auto repair shops, children, and dogs, and, most importantly, privileging "people and their daily happiness" (1987:131) over capitalism, exploitation, and assimilation into white middle-class norms. Murakami and Apina describe the openness with which he and his friends would hang out at each other's houses and share food, fish, and ride the bus together. Murakami points out that "everyone," that is, Locals, seemed to be operating in the same Kanaka Local culture while growing up—a culture that

is also informed by being working-class. I do not want to characterize the working-class aspect of their lives as constraining because the ways in which Murakami and Apina spoke about their childhood throughout the interview, while nostalgic, privileged abundance and freedom. Additionally, Murakami points out that everyone in this context has had to suffer because of capitalism and colonialism—especially through missionization, the contract labor system, the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, and tourism—and that reggae has become a common outlet for that frustration.

Finally, the ways in which Murakami and his friends currently live and make music are also an example of the Kanaka Local and lōkahi. They are not particularly concerned with commercial success beyond attaining the financial security they need to live and enjoy themselves, although they do work very hard to get there. They bodysurf at Sandy Beach, hang out, play music, work, cook, farm, collect records, record, and tour sometimes. Murakami's friends are also particularly interested in Hawaiian sovereignty and fighting against colonialism, as evidenced by the music and activities of Helm and Navales. It is also clear from Murakami's fans. The example of my conversation with Scotty about invasive species is one example of this. In addition, my experience of the concert in Hawaii Kai felt like what Daviana Pōmaika'i McGregor and Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua call cultural kīpuka (McGregor 2007:7; Goodyear-Ka'ōpua 2013:2, 11). Kīpuka are swaths of forest that are left behind after a lava flow, from which seeds are blown and taken by animals to replenish the rest of the forest previously devastated by lava (McGregor 2007:7). McGregor argues that rural communities of kua'āina are cultural kīpuka, which bypassed colonialism to a great extent, and can help revitalize Hawaiian culture elsewhere in Hawai'i (8). This concert felt like a small kīpuka of Locals and Kanaka Maoli being themselves, within a corporate

franchise surrounded by haoles, and on top of land that has been violently emptied of its original inhabitants and drained. Although Hawaiian sovereignty or sonic signifiers of Hawaiian music are not topics with which Ooklah the Moc or Murkami as a solo artist engage, they are important components of the activities that surround and underpin Murakami's music and everyday life.

In this chapter, I identify the Kanaka Local as a significant identity formation in reggae in Hawai'i. The Kanaka Local is a more globalized type of Kanaka Maoli culture that is typically categorized as "Local." In other words, the Kanaka Local is too global to be "more traditional" Hawaiian culture. The Kanaka Local is usually considered Local in everyday parlance even though it centers Kanaka Maoli worldviews and is often driven by Kānaka Maoli. I focus on the Kanaka Local in three ways: as a basis in "more traditional" Hawaiian music, reciprocal relationships or lōkahi, and genealogical connection to place or mo'okū'auhau. I demonstrate the Kanaka Local through my discussions of PeniDean at Hawaiian Brian's, the music and activities of the DeLima family—Kelly Boy, Kalena, Pena, Lilo Tuala, and Leo—as well as those of Ryan Murakami and his friends and collaborators. The next chapter will address the third layer of my tripartite conceptualization: the global.

Chapter 5 *Global: Blackness and Circulation*

While I was doing fieldwork, there was a constant stream of global reggae artists performing in Hawai‘i on tour. I got to see well-known Jamaican and British artists like Sister Nancy, UB40, Tarrus Riley, Pato Banton, Morgan Heritage, Cocoa Tea, Clinton Fearon, and Jemere Morgan. I almost saw Ky-Mani Marley, one of Bob Marley’s sons, but unfortunately had to miss him. In fact, reggae in Hawai‘i and island reggae writ large has become so popular that Jamaican reggae artists have collaborated with them and released music targeting the Hawai‘i market. An early example is Ziggy Marley’s “Beach in Hawaii.” More recent ones include “Only Man In The World” by Anuhea featuring Tarrus Riley and “Pineapple Wine” by Morgan Heritage featuring Fiji and Common Kings.

In addition, other genres of reggae created outside of Jamaica and the U.K. have become popular on a global scale and made their way to Hawai‘i. One of these is reggae rock, also known as Cali reggae (sometimes caustically referred to as “white boy reggae”). Reggae rock emerged from Southern Californian alternative rock subcultures in the 1980s and 1990s and has since been influenced by reggae from Hawai‘i, where it has also become popular. During my fieldwork, I saw some of the most popular reggae rock bands at the time, including Rebelution, Tribal Seeds, Iration, Pepper, Stick Figure, and HIRIE. These bands have also collaborated with reggae bands from Hawai‘i and know members of the scene. Further, reggae rock is perhaps the most commercially successful reggae genre in the U.S. right now, with bands that perform it headlining major reggae festivals throughout the country.

Hawai‘i, then, is a significant node in the global circulation of reggae on a number of levels. That significance raises questions about the ethics and mechanics of how popular music travels. Reggae is a global phenomenon in which enormous numbers of non-Black Jamaicans are appropriating reggae and, in some instances, are profiting from it. In Hawai‘i, however, the fact that reggae is being performed by non-Black Jamaicans is not widely acknowledged. In fact, throughout my interviews, the topic came up organically only a handful of times. It was so obscured that I only recognized it after I was done with fieldwork, prompted by questions asked of me at conferences and other events. I believe that an important reason behind such non-acknowledgement is that reggae is so strongly associated with Local/Hawaiian identities. Additionally, even though Black people have immigrated to Hawai‘i from around the world for the past two hundred years, there are relatively few of them compared to people of other racial or ethnic groups (around 3% of the population). There is no cohesive diasporic community because Black immigrants to Hawai‘i often traveled as individuals and intermarried into Kanaka Maoli or other Local communities. In addition, there is a significant transient Black community, the members of which come to Hawai‘i as part of the U.S. military and only live there for several years at a time. As a result, Local Black people are rarely present in public consciousness.

In Chapter 5, I bring attention to this oft-overlooked dimension of reggae in Hawai‘i. I am not blaming individuals—rather, my point is to show how the process of adopting reggae exists in much larger structures of capitalism, racism, and settler colonialism in which we are all implicated. What are the forces that cause Kānaka Maoli and Locals to identify with expressions of Black Jamaican identity in reggae? How does the pervasive assumption of a Black/white binary in the culture and history of race in the U.S. (J. Perea

1997:1219) play out in Hawai‘i, where Black people are comparatively few in number and largely erased from public life? And how do non-Black people of color—not only Kanaka Maoli, but the many others involved in reggae—navigate U.S. continental and global music industries that often do not represent them because of the Black/white binary?

This chapter also explores issues of circulation. Reggae in Hawai‘i is not simply a local manifestation of a global musical form—it has also circulated elsewhere and influenced other localizations of reggae. I take as a case study the genre of reggae rock, which originated in California. Reggae from Hawai‘i was influential in the formation of reggae rock, and has, in turn, become popular in Hawai‘i.

My interest in reggae rock first began when I realized that the university where I am completing my Ph.D., the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), is an important node in the history of reggae rock. During my master’s thesis research, I discovered that a popular reggae band in Hawai‘i, Iration, was formed in Isla Vista (IV). IV is the unincorporated area of Santa Barbara County bordering UCSB and home to a large percentage of the student body. I started to connect the dots as I sat watching Rebelution perform in Honolulu early on in my fieldwork. I had no idea who they were, so I googled them and I learned that the band was also formed in IV. As I became more familiar with reggae on a global scale, I learned that Iration and Rebelution were major players in another genre of reggae, reggae rock, that is distinct from the island music/island reggae and the underground roots scene of Hawai‘i that I was studying. At the same time, it was clear to me that reggae rock overlaps with reggae from Hawai‘i. These bands perform in Hawai‘i often, and island music/island reggae bands also frequently perform in California and throughout the rest of the U.S. In fact, reggae artists from around the world and from other reggae

genres are constantly traveling and performing elsewhere. They can move even faster and more easily through the internet, especially through streaming platforms like Spotify and social media applications like Instagram. Thus I set out to answer an additional set of questions with this chapter: How does the meaning of reggae change as circulation compounds upon itself? What happens to reggae rock, a Californian reinterpretation of music from Jamaica and the U.K., once it travels to Hawai‘i? How has reggae rock itself been affected by reggae from Hawai‘i, where reggae has taken on a host of other meanings that were not present in the original versions?

In short, this chapter is about the human experience of globalization as manifest in reggae in Hawai‘i, and how such experience is shaped by capitalism, racism, and settler colonialism. I argue that the global in reggae in Hawai‘i is that which is “left out” of the Local and Hawaiian, yet is also a fundamental part of both those things.

The Global: Blackness in Hawai‘i

I tell the story about how my grandfather used to take me to the beach, and that’s where he’d go down there and play checkers. He’d drink beers, Primo Beer...that had King Kamehameha’s picture on the front of it. And the tourists would come up and they’d see me and they’d, you know—this is when I’m three, four, five years old. They’d say—is he Hawaiian? And my grandfather would say, yeah, he’s the grandson of King Kamehameha! And they’d be taking pictures. And you know, it’s a nice story in the sense of—my grandfather enjoyed pulling the wool over their eyes. But it’s also a story of the fact that I wasn’t easily identifiable. I felt like an outsider. There was visible proof that I wasn’t like everybody else...so you’ve got that base culture [Kanaka Maoli and Local] that’s beautiful and powerful, and I’m looking around as a kid, and none of them really look like me.

—President Barack Obama (Obama and Springsteen 2021)

President Barack Obama’s experience of growing up Black in Hawai‘i demonstrates some of the major points of this chapter—namely, that Obama is too global to be fully Local

because he is Black. In fact, Obama has had a famously global upbringing, having been born to a Kenyan father and white American mother who met at the University of Hawai‘i, Mānoa. He was primarily raised in Hawai‘i but also grew up for some time in Indonesia and briefly in the continental U.S. Such a global upbringing and the particular multiracial nature of his family were the critical factors in his sense of alienation in Hawai‘i. However, it is important to point out that some of the alienation that Obama felt in this story is not specific to Hawai‘i. In the continental U.S., multiracial people are often erased and confound widespread discourses of racial purity (and U.S. continental people are generally not familiar with the way Kānaka Maoli look). At the same time, Obama gestures toward the more specific feeling of being an outsider in Hawai‘i in his story: he did not recognize himself in the Local and Kanaka Maoli cultures around him. Obama also noted that he experienced racism on and off and recounted one instance that occurred when he was eleven or twelve. A tennis coach teased him for running his finger over a chart because he would “rub off” on it and “make it dirty” (Obama and Springsteen 2021). This event probably occurred at Punahou School, which was known as a prestigious “haole” institution at the time and was founded by missionaries in 1841. Both of the stories demonstrate an erasure of Blackness in Hawai‘i because it is too non-Local, and therefore too global, accompanied by undercurrents of anti-Black racism.

Obama’s experience is akin to that of Jamaican musicians in the reggae scene in Hawai‘i, for though they are conceptually central to the history of the music, they have historically been left out of the Local music industry. They are too global to be fully Local and they are also victims of anti-Black racism imported from the U.S. continent. I further argue that Blackness is fundamental to the meanings of reggae for Local people in Hawai‘i,

but it often does not move them to true solidarity. I do not believe that this was a consequence of malicious intent, whether individually or corporately. However, there is a pattern, and those who were left out were not Local on a number of levels, in an ironic reversal of the Black/white dichotomy so dominant on the continent.

This argument must also be understood in the context of three caveats. First, there are relatively few Black people in Hawai‘i compared to other groups. Second, historically, a significant portion of the Black population in Hawai‘i was associated with the military and therefore was transient. Black Caribbean musicians largely came to Hawai‘i through the military in the 1980s and therefore never spent enough time in Hawai‘i to become part of the Local music industry, an outcome they may not have even have desired. Third and finally, the Local music industry generally did not support *most* artists regardless of race or ethnicity performing in the style of roots reggae, the style in which most Black Jamaican artists were active, until approximately the mid-1990s. Previously, the industry only supported Hawaiian artists. In short, there are important reasons for a dearth of Black Jamaican participation in the Hawai‘i music industry. *However*, those facts do not negate the reality that Local Black Jamaican artists—and Local Black artists in general—have in the past not had success in the Local music industry. It is especially notable because of the wild popularity of reggae and other contemporary Black musics in Hawai‘i, which is disproportionate to their representation in the Hawai‘i music industry. Additionally, there is a long history of the popularity of Black or Black-influenced music in Hawai‘i. Minstrelsy was the most popular global form of entertainment in nineteenth-century Honolulu (Carr 2014:134), and jazz, rock, hip hop, and many other genres have also been extraordinarily popular.

As mentioned in previous chapters, the anti-colonial and anti-capitalist lyrics found in reggae created by Black musicians were what resonated with Kānaka Maoli and Locals who have experienced similar subjugation. Following that, there have been important moments, and sometimes structures, of solidarity with Black people in Hawai‘i. For example, Haunani-Kay Trask deliberately drew parallels between the civil rights movement and the Hawaiian sovereignty movement (Sharma 2018:131-132). She also pointed out that the civil rights movement had significant influence on the Hawaiian sovereignty movement, which also led to better conditions for Black people in Hawai‘i (ibid). The longstanding industrial support of international Jamaican reggae artists is another example of solidarity. The Local music industry has always supported Black Jamaican artists *from elsewhere*—specifically, those affiliated with transnational record companies that fall under the label of international roots reggae like Bob Marley and his sons. Such artists are exceedingly popular in Hawai‘i and are regularly featured in concerts there. They are considered to be the most authentic performers of the music and to be at the center of the genre. There are also somewhat regular points at which artists and promoters in both the island music/island reggae and underground roots scene feature or incorporate Black Jamaican reggae musicians into their performances in order to pay homage and support them. Members of the underground roots scene make it a point to teach Locals in Hawai‘i about the history of reggae through musical performances, and reggae’s Jamaican-ness is a key part of members’ conceptualizations of the music. However, *writ large*, the significance of Blackness to Locals does not coalesce into comprehensive solidarity. At the same time, in recent years, this tendency has decreased and Local Black artists have had more commercial success.

Black Jamaican artists in the reggae scene, and Black artists in Hawai‘i more generally, are categorized as not being fully Local for three interrelated reasons. Firstly, and most importantly, the artists are not considered Local if they did not grow up in Hawai‘i and moved there as adults—this point specifically is not related to race. There are, however, racial assumptions about who counts as Local—assumptions that Locals themselves are often not even aware that they are making. That leads to my second reason: Black artists struggle to obtain commercial success because Black people do not fit into the racial or ethnic assumptions of the Local. John P. Rosa categorizes Black people as “Others,” or racial/ethnic groups who can only be contingently Local in Hawai‘i (2018:82-83). As discussed in the previous chapter, Local typically refers to Kanaka Maoli, Asian, Portuguese, and Puerto Rican people. Black people are not included for several reasons. In Hawai‘i, Black people comprise only approximately 3% of the population of the state (Sharma 2018:122). That said, more Black people are moving to Hawai‘i, their proportion of the population having increased from 1.6% to 3% in just five years (ibid). Additionally, because of the ways in which Black people have come to Hawai‘i, there was never an established Black diasporic population. Rather, they came as individuals and intermarried into Local families (122-124). This public invisibility has led to the erasure of the history of Black migration in Hawai‘i, despite the fact that there has been Black presence on the islands for two hundred years, beginning with Cape Verdean whalers at the turn of the nineteenth century (122-123). However, numbers do not tell the full story. In comparison, the number of Black people in Hawai‘i actually exceeds the number of Sāmoan residents, who are much more present in public consciousness (ibid, at the time of writing).

Thirdly, Local people in Hawai‘i strongly associate Black people with the military whether or not individuals are enlisted. Additionally, Locals tend to be biased against military personnel without an understanding of individuals’ personal motivations for joining the military and the problematic structures that could lead them to make the decision. As described in the previous chapter, the Local is anti-military. In a perverse twist of colonial logic, I believe that sometimes Kanaka Maoli and other Locals target individual Black people in part because of their real and justified anger at the U.S. military.

Black people have moved to Hawai‘i as military personnel for at least the past hundred years: the first of them arrived in Hawai‘i with the all-Black 25th Infantry regiment in 1913 (Sharma 2018:126). In 1985, more than 85% of Black people in Hawai‘i were members of the military or their dependents (ibid). In fact, such is the power of the association of Blackness with the military that Nitasha Sharma—who interviewed around 60 multiracial Black Locals for her study—stated that all of her interviewees had to navigate the association (ibid). This is the case despite the fact that more recently, Black people who move to Hawai‘i from the continent tend to be educated professionals (117). Sharma’s interviews also reveal that the 1970s and 1980s, the crucial moment when reggae first took root in Hawai‘i, was a difficult time to be Black there. Negative associations with Blackness were rampant in Hawai‘i and Black people were especially isolated (128). At the time, the experience that most Local people had with Black culture was broadcast through mainstream U.S. continental television, film, and music (ibid). Fortunately, as Sharma describes, attitudes toward Black people in Hawai‘i started to change in the 1980s as global Black culture became increasingly popular—namely reggae and hip hop—and the Hawaiian sovereignty movement began to upset popular understandings of racial hierarchies with

haoles at the top (133). One example is the expansion of events related to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday (Lopa 2018:151).¹

Historically, attitudes towards Black people in Hawai‘i are shaped by settler colonialism and white supremacy imported from the continental U.S. Kānaka Maoli had no issue with Black people previously and actually thought that dark skin was sign of “strength and courage” (Sharma 2018:123). In fact, many Polynesian cultures, including Kanaka Maoli, believe that all life and existence come from Pō, a darkness that is chaotic yet generative (Warren 2017:1). Blackness in the Pacific is complicated, however. It involves a layering of the ways in which European colonizers ascribed Blackness to Pacific Islanders and people of African descent. As Maile Arvin argues, European colonizers split the Pacific islands into three groups that corresponded to racial “types”—Polynesian, Micronesian, and Melanesian (2019:3-4). They constructed Polynesians as almost but not quite white, and Melanesians—who include Solomon Islanders, Papua New Guineans, West Papuans, Fijians, and Aboriginal Australians—as Black. These racial classifications have had lasting consequences on how colonizers and Pacific Islanders view each other and themselves, and have inspired colonizers to enact white supremacy against Black Pacific Islanders in ways similar to their treatment of people of African descent (4). Arguably the worst form of such racism was blackbirding, where “opportunistic” pirates kidnapped Melanesians and Polynesians and sold them into slavery, a practice that persisted from 1863-1904 (Horne 2007:2). Driven by the freeing of enslaved people in the U.S. after the U.S. Civil War, colonizers and capitalists sought to replace U.S. southerners at the forefront of the lucrative cotton and sugar markets through blackbirding (2). Even some Kānaka Maoli were blackbirded (3), although Fiji and Queensland, Australia were the centers of bonded

plantation labor (2). Kānaka Maoli have historically distanced themselves from Blackness, not just because of racial hierarchies imported from the U.S. continent, but also because of historical racial constructions unique to the Pacific.

Anti-Black racism became more prevalent in Hawai‘i and even among Kānaka Maoli around the turn of the twentieth century. One of the earliest documented examples of such racism is the advice Prince Kūhiō gave to the members of his party when traveling on the continent in 1899: “speak Hawaiian” and “tell people you’re not Negroes” (Enomoto 2017). Probably Prince Kūhiō was motivated by the desire to protect the party from discrimination because there had been a history of the continental U.S. press and other individuals using racist Black stereotypes to depict the Hawaiian monarchy. However, the choice of Kanaka Maoli monarchs to distance themselves from Black people “had far reaching implications” (ibid). Very soon after, in 1900, anti-Black racism was actively practiced by members of the U.S. military and eventually became incorporated into Hawai‘i’s society more broadly (Sharma 2018:123-124).

Though it has had harmful effects, it should be noted that anti-Black racism in Hawai‘i is vastly less violent than its manifestations on the continent. Social worker Christopher Joseph Lopa, who is Black and Sāmoan, noted that his experience growing up in Hawai‘i has been of “general acceptance and goodwill,” and he never feared being profiled by the police or leaving his home for fear of being a victim of a racist hate crime (2018:144). On the other hand, Lopa felt scared of both of those possibilities when he lived in Washington, D.C. and Maryland (ibid). Lopa noted that, when he was young, being from particular areas in Hawai‘i (that do not neatly correlate with race) was far more likely to prompt a beating from one’s peers than being Black (ibid). President Barack Obama has

spoken of a similar experience of race, in which he had to learn about violent anti-Black racism on the continent from outside sources because his own experiences of racism in Hawai'i were far more minor in comparison (Obama and Springsteen 2021).

There are also two distinct groups among Black people in Hawai'i (Lopa 2018:139). The much larger constituency consists of transitory military personnel who come to Hawai'i in typically three year rotations (Sharma 2018:125). Such military personnel are largely isolated, not simply because they are new to Hawai'i. Military installations have resources like grocery stores and daycares, which make it convenient to stay on-base. Moreover, they are also designed to be difficult to leave (Lopa 2018:139; Sharma 2018:125). This military population was also important for the history of reggae in Hawai'i. As described in Chapter 2, an important part of the reggae scene on O'ahu in the early-1980s were the Black Jamaican nationals who served in the U.S. military.² A number of them attended Daniel Warner's show on KTUH "Daniel in the Lion's Den" and DJed live. Jay Junker described the scene as a "hermetically sealed world" that had little to no contact with Local musicians outside of Warner's radio show (Jay Junker, personal communication). Warner, Junker, and several of their non-military friends managed to attend several Jamaican military parties. They also listened to reggae with some of the military personnel at Warner's house in Wahiawa, at Junker's house, and on the roof of the UH art department (ibid; Daniel Warner, personal communication).

The much smaller Local Black population, on the other hand, is quite dispersed and does not possess the sense of a cohesive diasporic community (Lopa 2018:140). As stated previously, individual men moved to Hawai'i, married Kanaka Maoli or other Local women, and integrated into Kanaka Maoli and Local life (Sharma 2018:122-124). Lopa points out a

number of reasons that Local Black people do not interact with Black military personnel, including historical trauma related to the U.S. military's role in the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, tensions between Kānaka Maoli and Locals with the military, and military personnel's lack of knowledge about the issues (2018:140). In addition, Local Black people are typically isolated—sometimes because they come from a military family consisting of a Black father and Kanaka Maoli or non-white mother and they grow up in Hawai'i with only their mother's family (Sharma 2018:129). In less extreme circumstances, they may have a connection to Black identity and culture through teachings from their father or Black parent, but they are often the only Black person in the area (Lopa 2018:141-142). Additionally, there has historically been a severe lack of Black cultural resources in Hawai'i (Sharma 2018:130; Lopa 2018:140), so Black youth not connected to their Black family have no way of learning about their identity and taking pride in it. Multiracial Local Black people report being discriminated against by their own non-Black family as well as other Locals. This may have occurred despite being Kanaka Maoli or members of another “fully” Local race or ethnicity themselves, being born and raised in Hawai'i, and/or having the presence of their family in Hawai'i for generations (Lopa 2018:142-144; Sharma 2018:129; Stinton 2020).

The music industry reflects these prevailing understandings of Blackness in Hawai'i. Black Jamaican artists have historically not garnered commercial success because they could not be “fully Local” due to their race and the fact that they were not originally from Hawai'i. The idea that Black people would be left out of the industry is analogous to complaints I heard from non-Local white musicians, who were also left out because they were not from Hawai'i nor were from a “fully” Local racial group. The Hawai'i music industry is to some

degree the racial inverse of that of the continent, where, openly, whiteness is privileged and yet Blackness is centralized by being appropriated, referenced, or actually present. That being said, the racial hierarchy of white at the top and Black on the bottom is still an important structure in Hawai‘i more broadly, and it sometimes seeps into the music industry.

Historically, the situation has changed gradually. Perhaps the most famous Black artist right now is Kamakakēhau Fernandez, a renowned *leo ki‘eki‘e* singer. Fernandez is originally from Arkansas and was adopted at six weeks old by a Kanaka Maoli couple (khon2.com 2020; Hiraishi 2020). In the reggae scene, NomaD (Damon Elliott) is well-known. A son of legendary pop singer Dionne Warwick, he was a producer in Los Angeles where he worked substantially with P!nk, as well as with Beyoncé, Britney Spears, and others (islandstagemag.com 2017). He decided to move to Hawai‘i and around 2016, started to make his own island music/island reggae with the help of renowned island music/island reggae singer Fiji (George Veikoso) (ibid). Leslie Ludiazo, who also performs as a singer under his middle name Bimwala, is perhaps less well-known but has been far more influential on the scene. Originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo, he fled political instability in the region and eventually moved to Hawai‘i as a refugee. He has since become an important drummer and producer in the scene and has worked and performed with some of the most famous island music/island reggae bands—he was an important early member of The Green and currently plays with J Boog on tour. He has earned over fifty number one radio hits and over twenty Billboard reggae chart toppers (Sully Artist Services LLC 2020). Although NomaD and Ludiazo are not Local in many ways, they have been associated with important Local musicians in the industry, which likely help them attain success. JD DaMoan (Joe Daniels) of B.E.T., who is also Sāmoan, (Berger 2012a:399) and Irie Love

(Berger 1999b) are two other well-known Local Black artists who have been active since the 1990s.

As I have shown, although there are relatively few Black people in Hawai‘i, it is undeniable that the popularity of reggae there and non-Black use of it vastly exceeds the benefits that individual Black people in Hawai‘i have enjoyed from reggae’s popularity.³ Even though there is a general consensus that Jamaican or British reggae performed by Black artists is more authentic or is “real” reggae, this privileging is only sometimes supported in the Local commercial sphere. In other words, famous Jamaican reggae artists like Bob Marley’s sons have been commercially successful in their Local ventures, but Local Black reggae artists have not historically been as lucky (though the situation has improved over time). A general lack of knowledge about issues of anti-Black racism combined with the lack of visibility of Black people in Hawai‘i causes questions of appropriation in reggae to rarely be acknowledged, let alone discussed. By contrast, appropriation is a more pressing topic for reggae bands on the U.S. continent, something that came up more frequently when I interviewed members of the bands.

The Global: Reggae Rock in California

Having considered Blackness in Hawai‘i as it relates to issues of the Local and global in reggae, I want to turn to some of the mechanics by which reggae circulates in general. I will focus on how reggae from Hawai‘i has traveled and also continues to be influenced by the circulation of global reggae using the example of reggae rock from California. Reggae rock—which is sometimes called Cali reggae (or sometimes caustically, “white boy reggae”)—is a genre of reggae that is related to forms of alternative rock,

especially punk, in the 1980s and 1990s in Southern California. In Hawai‘i, I never heard people use the term reggae rock (rather, they used Cali reggae), but I chose to do so here because the members of reggae rock bands that I interviewed did not identify with the term Cali reggae. Rather, they referred to themselves as simply “reggae,” “reggae-influenced,” or “reggae rock.” Reggae rock is also the typical term used in journalism about the genre from the U.S. continent.

Compared to other genres of reggae, there is a stronger rock influence on the musical structure, groove, and vocal technique of reggae rock. In older bands, the music sounds like alternative rock with reggae influence added secondarily. Roots reggae is then one of several genres incorporated into reggae rock, others including ska and hip hop. More recent bands reverse the relationship between the stylistic elements of alternative rock and reggae: the reggae groove is foundational and the alternative rock traits are overlaid on top, most notably in the vocals. Lyrically, bands often eschew overtly anti-colonial and anti-capitalist messages and focus on love relationships, the beach, and partying. Reggae rock is a more “mainstream” variety of reggae, and it has attained commercial success. It is a scene separate from the nation-wide collection of “underground” roots reggae bands, whose goal is to more or less recreate roots reggae as it originated in Jamaica in the 1970s and 1980s with an original interpretation (see reggaemusic.us 2017). For my purposes, what is most significant about reggae rock is that it has been both influenced by reggae from Hawai‘i and has in turn started to impact the music of Hawai‘i.

Over the last ten years, some of the most popular reggae bands in the U.S. have come from Southern California. San Diego has historically had a large roots reggae scene, an important ska scene, and has been home to several significant bands in the reggae rock

scene. Other important nodes include Isla Vista (IV), Los Angeles, and Orange County, the latter two regions being important centers in older ska and reggae rock history. But the genre is not confined to one region. There are reggae rock bands across the continental U.S., including bands like SOJA from Arlington, Virginia, which has had considerable commercial success.

There is a widespread notion that people involved with reggae rock (and reggae in the U.S. in general) are only white (tribes.com n.d.). It is possible that this idea comes from the fact that reggae initially became popular in the U.K. and the continental U.S. largely through white listeners (Connolly 2002a; Connolly 2002b). This is an idea that I heard repeated anecdotally in casual conversation, as well as promulgated in some music journalism. The idea is widespread enough that the comedy group Lonely Island wrote a skit for *Saturday Night Live* called “Ras Trent” (thelonelyisland 2011[2008]), which lampoons privileged, white, college-age people appropriating Rastafari culture. However, reggae in the U.S. is not a white-only phenomenon today; nor has it been for some time. Although there are many white reggae rock fans and artists, I have found that a great number of participants in the scene are neither white nor Black. This diversity parallels the racial/ethnic trends that are present in Hawai‘i.

The history of reggae rock began with the commercial strategy of marketing reggae as a type of or genre adjacent to rock music. Chris Blackwell, the founder of Island Records, purposefully “repackaged” Bob Marley as a rock star to appeal to an “alternative,” white hippie audience in the U.K. and the U.S. (Connolly 2002b; Farley 2010:168-169). This brilliant marketing move catapulted Marley to international stardom. However, roots reggae was not the only type of reggae that circulated by appealing to an “alternative,” white rock

audience. Ska has long been popular in white working-class youth subcultures in the U.K., and reggae's popularity amongst subculture members was instrumental to the genre becoming widespread in a global context. Additionally, ska was an important influence on alternative rock bands in California, laying the groundwork for later interest in roots reggae. This association is still present today, and several interviewees pointed out to me that they only get to hear reggae on the radio in California in regular "reggae hours" on rock stations.

By the late-1980s, ska-influenced bands like Sublime and No Doubt were becoming popular in the U.S. mainstream, and by the mid-1990s had taken "the alternative music market by storm" (Cole 2019:82). Sublime and No Doubt were both from Orange County, California—the former from Anaheim and the latter from Long Beach. These bands' successes spawned a nation-wide revival of ska, called "third wave" by Orange County-based *Ska Parade* radio show hosts Albino Brown and Tazy Phyllipz (82-83). Ska had already become popular in the late-1970s and early-1980s in Southern California as a localized version of British 2 Tone culture. Nina Cole calls this movement "mod-ska" (2019:80-81) and points out that it was a diverse phenomenon that involved white, Black, Asian, Latinx, women, and queer youth (120, 123, 125). From the perspective of mod-ska participants, third wave ska seemed to disavow the history and sound of ska (83, 142). Third wave ska's sound combined punk, hardcore, pop, hip hop, ska, and roots reggae, though the sounds of rock predominated. Additionally, Daniel S. Traber points out that beyond commercially successful bands like Sublime and No Doubt, third wave ska incorporated a number of different approaches to the genre (2013:11). He also argues that although it was primarily popular in California, it additionally took off in the Midwest and Northeast. Traber notes that a significant number of these bands were multiracial (ibid).

The most influential band for shaping music associated with the rubric “reggae rock” was Sublime. Sublime emerged as a commercially successful third wave ska band that incorporated elements from the genre of roots reggae as well as ska. My interviewees in the reggae rock scene considered Sublime to be the originator of reggae rock. Sublime was founded in 1988 (sublimelbc.com 2021). The band members were originally interested in punk and existed in a multiracial punk scene that included Black, Asian, and Latinx members. Later, they started to become interested in reggae and ska after frontman Bradley Nowell learned about it on vacation in the Caribbean (Wilson, Ramirez, and Verdugo 2019). Bassist Eric Wilson was at first skeptical about combining punk with reggae, but changed his mind when he was introduced to the Black punk/hardcore band Bad Brains as well as the Los Angeles-based, Black ska-punk-funk band Fishbone, which played songs in both a punk and reggae style (ibid; Cole 2019:120). Wilson also noted that he thought that this combination made sense because both genres have a similar ethos. In the same vein as Fishbone, Sublime incorporated influences of reggae (writ large), punk, and hip hop. Sublime also formed its own record label, Skunk Records, in 1989 (sublimelbc.com 2021) because bigger recording companies did not want to sign them (Wilson, Ramirez, and Verdugo 2019).

Sublime was also influenced by reggae in Hawai‘i. The song “Smoke Two Joints” from their album *40 oz. to Freedom* (Sublime 1992), the album that broke Sublime into the mainstream, is a cover of a song by a reggae band from Hawai‘i. Norm Winter, owner of the record store Ideas in Honolulu (formerly known as Jelly’s) told me that this song was written by The Toyes, who were originally from O‘ahu (The Toyes 1983). I later learned that the

original version of the song is known and is sometimes played on rock radio stations in California, but listeners are often not aware of where the band is from.

The band broke into the mainstream in 1996, but unfortunately, Nowell had already died from a heroin overdose (ibid; Rose 2020). The remaining members of Sublime soon signed the reggae rock band Slightly Stoopid from San Diego to Skunk Records in the same year, who then became extremely popular (Dicker 2009; Rose 2020). Several other important reggae bands were formed at this time, like The Expendables and Pepper (originally formed in Kailua-Kona in 1997, but who have been San Diego-based since 1999) (reggaeriseupflorida.com 2021).

After becoming less visible in the early-2000s, the reggae rock scene grew in the middle of the decade when most of the bands that are currently well-known and active in the scene were created. These include Rebelution, Iration, Dirty Heads, Tribal Seeds, Stick Figure, and Fortunate Youth. These bands were either founded or are currently based in different places in Southern California. By 2010, reggae rock reemerged into more widespread popularity, in large part due to the success of the song “Lay Me Down” by Dirty Heads (Rose 2020; mozaart.com 2019). As Dirty Heads became more successful, Jeff Monser, an entrepreneur from Northern California, decided to capitalize on this popularity and founded the California Roots Music & Arts Festival in 2010 in Monterey, which is arguably the primary reggae festival for the reggae rock scene (Rose 2020). Monser was first inspired to focus on reggae rock after attending the now-defunct West Beach Music & Arts Festival in Santa Barbara that featured the music (Joseph 2014). Some argue that this festival paved the way for a spate of reggae festivals around the world that feature these bands (Rose 2020). More recent reggae rock bands include HIRIE, Through the Roots, and

the new version of Sublime called Sublime with Rome, which has existed in some form since 2009 (Martens 2009; Prince 2010).

Reggae artists from Hawai‘i regularly interact with members of the reggae rock scene. Many of the more famous reggae bands and artists from Hawai‘i tour in the continental U.S. for the majority of the year and have done so especially in the last decade. When I was doing fieldwork, bands like The Green and Eli Mac performed the vast majority of their concerts on the continent, and they were often billed alongside reggae rock bands. Interviewees from such reggae bands from Hawai‘i told me that performing on the continent was economically motivated. Typically, when bands perform larger concerts, their contracts include a radius clause. Radius clauses stipulate that bands are not allowed to perform at another venue within a certain distance of the original venue inside a prescribed amount of time—say, within 50 miles of the original venue for six months. Radius clauses exist to prevent a localized market from being oversaturated with a specific band. In other words, the clauses assume audience numbers would continually diminish for an artist if they performed constantly in the same location. Because Hawai‘i is so small, it is impossible to stay there full time and only perform large concerts. Granted, such radius clauses would make touring essential even for bands based on the continent. However, for bands based in Hawai‘i, touring on the continent is a much more significant and costly endeavor because Hawai‘i is much farther away and travel requires at least one plane ride. Continental bands may tour in Hawai‘i, but it is not essential for them to do so to create a comparable tour.

Reggae rock bands are popular in Hawai‘i, and there are also island music or island reggae bands that are based in California. They are played on the radio frequently alongside Local bands, tour in Hawai‘i consistently, and are often given top billing in large festivals

there. For instance, the headliner on the second day for the first large concert that I attended during fieldwork, MayJah RayJah in 2018, was Iration, a premiere reggae rock band. There are also several bands who exist in the island music/island reggae scene but are based in the U.S. continent, like Bo Napoleon and Leilani Wolfgramm. The most famous example of this is Common Kings, who, while being based in Orange County, California (commonkings.com 2020), are one of the most popular reggae bands in Hawai‘i. All of the members are Pacific Islander, and the lead singer, Sasualei “JR King” Malinga is Kanaka Maoli and Sāmoan (Puet 2017a). This connection to Hawai‘i is made even more obvious by their sound, and one interviewee characterized the band as an “isolate from the islands.”⁴ Another prominent example is J Boog (Jerry Afemata), a Sāmoan who was born in Long Beach and raised in Compton, California. His commercial success was initially launched in the mid-2000s by Fiji (George Veikoso), who has been extremely influential on the island music/island reggae scene (Deming 2021). J Boog moved to Hawai‘i soon after and has lived between Hawai‘i and California (jboogmusic.com 2021). He is one of the most famous artists from this scene and has been nominated for several Grammys in the reggae category.⁵

Paralleling the history of reggae in Hawai‘i, the history of reggae rock includes the significant presence of non-Black people of color. Even from the 1980s mod-ska scene, non-Black people of color were a major demographic. Although Sublime started out as all-white, it emerged from a multiracial punk scene, and in its current iteration as Sublime with Rome, two out of the three members are Latinx. Numerous Latinx musicians exist in many of these bands, including in bands like Tribal Seeds, and they make up a significant portion of the fan base. As I discuss below, the members of HIRIE that I interviewed pointed out that they have a significant number of Native American fans, and they have toured on reservations in

the southwestern U.S. To be clear, there are Black American fans, but they do not appear to be present to nearly as great an extent as other people of color. Historically, Black Americans have never been involved with reggae on a large scale, so it makes sense that this trend continues.

For the reggae rock fans that I interviewed, questions of appropriation were much more pressing than for reggae musicians in Hawai'i. They discussed being accused of appropriation—mainly by white people according to the band members—but this did not seem to affect the success of these bands. For example, Sublime in particular has covered or quoted and not officially credited a great number of reggae songs, like “54-46 Was My Number” by Toots & the Maytals on *40 oz. to Freedom* (Stamina! 2015; Ras_Adam 2015). On the other hand, some bands have attempted to bring awareness to and economically support Jamaican reggae artists. Eric Rachmany, the lead singer in Rebelution, told me that he has purposefully used his success to uplift Jamaican reggae musicians by featuring them on tracks and bringing them on tour with the band (personal communication).

Maacho

The career of Black Jamaican reggae artist Maacho illustrates how Blackness is left out but is still constitutive of the categories of Local and Hawaiian. I met Maacho through Marilyn Mick, an important promoter in the underground roots scene in the 1980s and 1990s. Mick helpfully put me in touch with several of the older underground roots musicians. She also provided me with a wealth of historical material, including pictures, posters, ticket stubs, and more. I met with Maacho at his garage where he works as an auto mechanic in the industrial part of Kalihi, a neighborhood of Honolulu. I was first confused

about where to meet him and ended up wasting about half an hour eating at a restaurant next to his garage before having the presence of mind to call him and ask where he was. The darkness of the garage was a total shift from the glaring brightness outside, and he led me through a room with cars to his office in the back. The area was where the paraphernalia and documentation from his reggae career is stored. The office is decorated with promotional posters, including one that features the first iteration of his band (complete with the J-cards of five of his original cassettes attached), and musical and amplification equipment are scattered around the space. Maacho very generously talked to me for nearly four hours. The case study is based on this interview, journalistic articles, Maacho's website, and a YouTube video that features Maacho's musical career.

Maacho is, from a Local perspective, too global to be fully accepted into Localness. His career is emblematic of the central place that other Jamaican reggae artists have in the imaginaries of Local reggae musicians. He is remembered and considered foundational to the history of the scene. However, throughout his career, Maacho never attained commercial success on the level of that enjoyed by many other "more" Local reggae artists who played alongside him. Primarily, it is because Maacho is not from Hawai'i: he is originally from Jamaica and moved to Hawai'i as an adult. More subtly, the fact that Maacho is Black underscores the notion that he is relatively "less" Local—in fact, Maacho first moved to Hawai'i because he was in the military. However, because Maacho is Jamaican and not Black American, he was more acceptable to Locals, but he also occasionally experienced racism in his daily life.

Maacho (eyes in Swahili) was one of the first musicians to start performing in reggae-only bands on O'ahu and was one of the very few Black Jamaican reggae musicians

to live and perform on the island. As far as I am aware, he is the only member of this small expatriate group to have remained in Hawai‘i and has had a long career that lasted from the early-1980s and into the 2010s. Maacho was born in Kingston, Jamaica, in the neighborhood of Mongoose Town (Maacho 2020). As a child, he was exposed to a diverse array of musics including ska, rocksteady, country, and church music (Chun 2002b; personal communication). As he describes it, Maacho first “liberated” his voice singing at church (Chun 2002b). In the 1960s, he and his family moved to London because of the unstable and dangerous political situation in Jamaica. He spent his teenage years there (ibid), and that was where he first encountered reggae in nightclubs and dancehalls. In these venues, he heard new music from Jamaica through sound systems. The music was not on the radio, so sound systems were the only way to hear it. Maacho remembered listening to “My Boy Lollipop” by Millie Small on the radio, which was one of the first reggae recordings to be heard globally. Maacho then started practicing and learning guitar, eventually becoming a DJ for the Danny King Hi Fi Sound System (Maacho 2020). Maacho also remembered seeing Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, and Sly and Robbie at a concert in London before Marley had become extremely famous. Someone from Desmond Dekker and Aces became interested in Maacho and got him in line for studio time, but by the time it was his turn to record, he and his family were leaving England (personal communication).

Maacho’s family then moved to Connecticut in the early-1970s, where he found work as a telephone installer and repairman (Chun 2002b). He remembers frequently hanging out at a Jamaican neighbor’s house (they moved from London with Maacho’s family). It was the only place where he could listen to reggae records because he could not play them at home since they offended his family’s Christian sensibilities (personal

communication). Eventually, he decided to move to the Bronx to improve his circumstances and “progress” (personal communication). Maacho started to perform reggae again. At this point, he decided to focus on fronting a band rather than DJing and became a member of the Sylvester Inc. Roots Band (personal communication; Maacho 2020). Ultimately, however, he decided that he wanted to leave because he did not relate to people on the east coast—and it was too cold. He also determined that he wanted to learn and needed a challenge, so he joined the U.S. Army (Chun 2002b). Given the choice to go to Germany or Hawai‘i, he chose Hawai‘i (ibid).

Maacho arrived there in 1975 and decided to stay after leaving the military. Hawai‘i was attractive because he found it similar to Jamaica in the nature of its people, culture, land, and climate (personal communication). In fact, like Hawai‘i, Jamaica has a multicultural population with people from all over the world. During the mid-1970s, Maacho was not aware of any Local reggae bands and did not hear much reggae music on the radio. The only reggae song he remembers hearing was a Loyal Garner cover of Bob Marley’s “Guava Jelly” on the radio (I have not been able to locate a recording of this). Because of this lacuna, he realized that he could “process” his work there (personal communication). Maacho also decided to work as a car mechanic, something he has continued to pursue to the present (ibid).

Maacho was a part of Cool Runnings at its inception in 1981. In the beginning, they practiced regularly at a house in Haleiwa (on the North Shore of O‘ahu), and this is where Maacho wrote his first song, “Jah Love,” which appears on his first album, *Reggae Music Reggae: Jamaica to Hawaii Haile Selassie I* (Maacho & Cool Connection n.d., likely 1985).

Around the same time, Maacho regularly attended Daniel Warner's radio show with other Jamaican artists and would DJ live on the air (personal communication).

After Cool Runnings ended, Maacho formed a new band, The Movers, with Butch Heleman. The Movers played regularly at Anna Bannana's in 1983, but split up soon after (personal communication). Maacho formed another band, Maacho and the Cool Connection, in 1985 (Paiva 2002). At this point, Maacho attempted to get as many gigs as he could and vied for the opening act in performances featuring famous reggae bands from when they came to O'ahu. Throughout the late-1980s, his band played regularly at The Backdoor. The nightclub was a luau venue owned by Chuck Machado, who allowed concerts associated with the promotion company Golden Voice to use the space.⁶ Maacho performed there numerous times with Hawaii Amplified Poetry Ensemble, as well as in a few bigger concerts. Machado eventually got Maacho a regularly gig at the Waikiki Beachcomber Hotel in the mid-1990s. Maacho's band's personnel changed then, as he incorporated a couple of members of a rock band that was about to break up, B.Y.K. (also known as BYK or Beat Your Kids). Maacho was also backed by the band Dubb Version on a few occasions in the early-1990s. The members of Dubb Version were big fans of Maacho's and had studied and learned his songs (personal communication). Maacho also released his first album through a commercial recording studio (Rendez-Vous Recording), *Cool People* (Maacho and the Cool Connection 1989).

Alongside that activity, Maacho performed in larger concerts. One of these was an event led by the groups Protect Kaho'olawe Ohana and Save Sandy Beach Initiative, which included Kanaka Maoli-led and other land and environmental rights organizations. The concert took place at Andrews Amphitheater on the University of Hawai'i, Mānoa campus.

Maacho performed alongside Kit Ebersbach's New Wave band, alternative rock band Melodious Thunk, contemporary Hawaiian band Olomana, Pagan Babies, the bluegrass group Kapakahi Jug Band, and Roland Sanchez's salsa band (Manuel 1990). Kū Kahakalau, a professor at UH at the time and an important Hawaiian sovereignty activist, commented that this group of bands was an "unreal mix" but that "a lot of these groups do have the same message" (ibid). Also in that year, Maacho opened for Alpha Blondy along with Lions International in April 1990. This was a major concert that took place in one of the larger venues on the island, the Neal S. Blaisdell Arena, and attracted a large audience.

Maacho opened for a number of other big concerts in the subsequent couple of years (see Maacho 2020), but then decided to pull back after that. He also recorded three albums for a Japanese recording company, Show-On, in the mid-1990s. *Hail Up* (Maacho 1993) is particularly interesting, as several of the songs have Hawaiian sonic or lyrical references. One of the most overt is the song "Ki Ho'alu Ray," which is presumably named after the renowned slack key guitarist Ray Kane, and several of the tracks highlight steel guitar. This album was also marketed as being the product of Jamaica and Hawai'i coming together. Unfortunately, according to Maacho, the album did not do well in Hawai'i and the other two albums he recorded for Show-On were only released in Europe (personal communication). For most of the rest of the decade, Maacho decided not to perform much because he did not believe that he had the ingredients to perform at a high enough caliber. He was also busy working on his albums for Show-On (personal communication). Despite this, in 1998, he won a Hawaii Music Award for Best Recording by a Rock Vocalist for the song "Transmutator" with Rommell Regulacion (Berger 1998a).⁷

Along with his performances in concert venues and hotels, Maacho also performed in numerous backyard parties across the island in the 1980s and 1990s. When new laws controlling alcohol consumption and noise were imposed toward the end of the 1990s, however, the vibrant reggae party scene that was concentrated on the East Side of the island was squashed (personal communication).

Maacho became much more active in the 2000s. He began to perform again live around 1999, playing at annual concerts on Bob Marley's birthday. By the early-2000s, newspapers that advertised his shows were calling him a "veteran" performer or "Local favorite," demonstrating his importance to the scene. He started to play more regularly at Anna Bannana's and toured and recorded with bands not based in Hawai'i. He performed at one of the largest reggae festivals in the U.S., Reggae on the River in Humboldt County, California, backed by the Fully Fullwood Band (Maacho 2020). At this time, Maacho also toured and recorded with the band State of Jefferson from Williams, Oregon at this time. In one particularly notable Hawai'i show, he was backed by the Wailers (First Triumphet 2005). The latter half of the decade saw him perform extended engagements: in 2005 at Don Ho's Island Grill, at the Wave Waikiki, at Bliss (later renamed Velvet), as well as at Jazz Minds from 2008-2009, where he would also schedule the bands that played alongside him. He slowed down after 2010 and since then has only appeared as the opener for larger acts three times.

Maacho's music generally sticks to the classic sounds of roots reggae and dub. His musical influences include the artists U-Roy, I-Roy, Dennis Alcapone, Dennis Brown, Delroy Wilson, Desmond Dekker, The Heptones, John Holt, Horace Andy, Ken Booth, Bob Marley, and Gregory Isaacs, and the sound system operator Duke Reid (Chun 2002b;

personal communication). He has occasionally forayed into different territory as he did in *Hail Up*, where he included “more traditional” Hawaiian sounds and lyrical content, but that album does not reflect his typical aesthetic choices. He is also a Rasta, and Rastafari ideologies are important to him and his music. In fact, the lyrics of reggae are perhaps the most significant aspect of the music to him (personal communication).

Although Maacho’s music and musical influences are in many ways similar to other global reggae and Local reggae musicians, he was consistently passed over in favor of “more” Local musicians. His music was never played on mainstream radio, he was never featured in larger shows—rather, he opened for them—and he watched other contemporaneous groups attain commercial success. This is a point that he brought up a number of times throughout our interview.

Maacho also talked to me about anti-Black racism that he experienced in his daily life in Hawai‘i. In particular, he told me about an incident that occurred in conjunction with a concert in the 1970s:

Maacho: It was anything could trigger somebody to create violence....But there was a lot of animosity going on...in the early-‘70s out here. Always fights....the people that sit down and drink beers together and the next thing you know, there’s a fight. Yeah. So it was—I said I got to beat this kind of situation, I gotta survive this. A lot of people didn’t survive. They all up into it.

SK: But wasn’t that during like—Hawaiian sovereignty movement, all that Renaissance—?

Maacho: Yeah. All that stuff was going on. I think it was before. It...wasn't that noticeable because I didn't know anything about that then....in the ‘90s, I heard about the sovereignty thing. But I could see the remnants of that back then. But I didn't know...what it was, why people got so edgy and ready to fight, trouble. I had a visitation where it could have been a fight, but until I open my mouth, he sees the all—everything [that Maacho was Black]....My response—my accent get me out of it. Because they never hear a Jamaican accent before—and now they’re intrigued. Whoever I might encounter though, because I could be passed off as...a Black American and this where the anger was aimed at, Black Americans....I didn't know

that I end up in the firing line....And then, when I open my mouth, it's like—brah, where you from, brah? Oh, you sound different brah, ah! Who you, brah? You know, so the interest starts and that's when I realize oh, there's a bar, there's a—that line here. So I chose who I hang out with very carefully after that, you know. I realize the sunshine is here, but the other things come through this [laughs].

SK: ...So was that really prevalent at that time? Like that kind of racism?

Maacho: ...Yeah, you just look at a Local and, boom—you might get knocked out. Brah, whatcha looking at?...that's how it starts. Why you looking over here, brah? You know. Wow, you say something? ...They were bad back then....But it was a Black American and a Local thing (personal communication)

Maacho contextualized this interaction for me by noting that tempers were flaring during the beginnings of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement of the 1970s. However, he pointed out that Black people were specifically targeted by Locals throughout Hawai'i. Later in the interview, Maacho also noted that there were numerous Black American soldiers from the continental U.S. in Hawai'i at that time (personal communication). The convergence of anti-military sentiment with anti-Black racism imported from the continent resulted in experiences like Maacho's.

Although Maacho remains foundational in the scene, he did not attain commercial success in the Local music industry because he is not fully Local. Maacho has remained a cornerstone within the reggae scene in Hawai'i, and the older musicians that I interviewed on both the Hawaiian and undergrounds roots sides all remembered him well. They were sure to list him as an important progenitor of the scene as well as one of the very few Jamaicans to actually participate in it. That newspaper articles mention Maacho in the 2000s label him as a “Local favorite” or “veteran” of the reggae scene attest to his historical importance. However, such significance did not translate into material success, which was not the case for those who were “more” Local around him

Most importantly, Maacho cannot be fully Local because he is not from Hawai‘i, but from Jamaica. Because the Local music industry has historically marketed its music to Local audiences, it privileges Local musicians who are originally from Hawai‘i. Secondly, because he is Black, he can only become conditionally Local according to unspoken assumptions regarding who counts as Local. Sonically and lyrically, Maacho’s music could easily be played alongside other famous Jamaican or global reggae artists and Local artists on Local radio stations. Paradoxically, the album in which Maacho’s music actually references Hawaiian musical elements and lyrical topics, *Hail Up*, was not commercially successful. Because many Locals consider Hawaiian to be the “most” Local of the different Local races and ethnicities, one would have expected including Hawaiian musical references to appeal. In fact, John Berger stated that he expected this gesture to strongly resonate with Local listeners in his review of the album (1994).

In addition, Maacho’s experiences of anti-Black racism in Hawai‘i more broadly reveal that Locals connect Blackness to the military. Maacho states that Local people would harass him and try to start fights with him because of his phenotype—he looked Black. In addition, this anti-Blackness is emboldened by anti-military sentiment. Locals’ rightful anger towards the military at large morphs into the targeting of Black individuals. However, the moment Maacho began speaking, his Jamaican accent would confound Locals’ understandings of Blackness vis a vis the military. As Maacho related, anger gave way to curiosity and questions about where he was from. I do not know if any of the Locals recognized Maacho’s accent as Jamaican and connected it with reggae, but it is a possibility. In any case, they realized that he was not Black American and thus not as strongly associated with the military, which meant that he was more acceptable on some level. Anti-

Black racism in Hawai'i more broadly has improved substantially since the incident that Maacho described, but, as with any place in the U.S. and elsewhere, things could be better still.

Rebelution and HIRIE

The global in reggae in Hawai'i also extends beyond its shores and can be seen in the reggae rock scene. The stories of Eric Rachmany, the lead singer and guitarist of Rebelution, as well as those of Patricia "Trish" Jetton, lead singer of HIRIE, and Chris del Camino (né Hampton), saxophonist in HIRIE, exemplify global circulation as related to reggae in Hawai'i. I was lucky to meet Camino through Lillie Gordon, who got her Ph.D. from the same doctoral program as me: the ethnomusicology program at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB). Camino attended UCSB in the mid-2000s and was in the UCSB Middle East Ensemble with Gordon. Camino then introduced me to Jetton and Rachmany. Rachmany also attended UCSB and Santa Barbara City College (SBCC).⁸ Camino and Rachmany lived in Isla Vista (IV), the unincorporated area of Santa Barbara County adjacent to UCSB's campus and the beach where most of the UCSB and SBCC students live. They participated in the very active live music scene in IV that consisted mainly of students from both schools. Rachmany's band, Rebelution, which is now one of the most popular U.S.-based reggae bands, was formed amongst students who attended SBCC and then UCSB. Jetton grew up in Hawai'i and eventually moved to San Diego where she formed HIRIE in 2013, and Camino was one of the original members of the band. Rachmany, Jetton, and Camino all exemplify the influence of reggae from Hawai'i on reggae rock as well as the popularity of the genre in Hawai'i. Additionally, reggae rock happens to parallel reggae in

Hawai'i in terms of race and ethnicity—contrary to the widespread assumption that only white people in the U.S. like reggae, it is particularly popular among non-Black people of color. This section is based on the interviews I conducted with Rachmany, Jetton, and Camino, and one of HIRIE's music videos. I interviewed Rachmany and Camino on the phone while sitting in my auntie's house on O'ahu. I interviewed Jetton on Kaimana Beach on Waikīkī while she hung out with her family and a couple of friends.

Eric Rachmany is originally from San Francisco and grew up traveling frequently to Santa Barbara to visit his family. His family is Persian Jewish—both of his parents are from Iran, and his father lived in Israel for some time before moving to the U.S. His father was an Israeli folk dance teacher and would play music from all over the Middle East at home while Rachmany was growing up, especially Persian music. His mother was also interested in world dance. This diverse musical background was further expanded by Rachmany's interests in progressive rock and oldies. Although he had heard Bob Marley passively from other sources, Rachmany was not particularly attracted to Marley's music. Rachmany eventually became interested in alternative rock when he was middle school in the mid- to late-1990s, started to play guitar, eventually went through a hip hop phase, and ultimately found reggae when he was 17. His older sister first exposed him to reggae apart from Bob Marley through the music of Don Carlos, towards which Rachmany “immediately gravitated” (personal communication). He and his sister saw Don Carlos perform in Berkeley around that time, and Rachmany fell in love with the genre (ibid).

He then attended SBCC, where he delved further into his musical interests. He met his original band members there and formed Rebelution in 2004. The members of the band eventually transferred to UCSB. Rebelution began as a cover band, performing locally in IV,

Goleta, and downtown Santa Barbara. They would occasionally range farther afield to places like Los Angeles (personal communication). At this time, IV had an extremely active night life—Rachmany and Camino lived there right after the peak of the intense partying for which IV has become notorious. Rachmany estimates that there could have been thousands of people roaming the streets on any given weekend night (personal communication). Playing in bands was popular amongst the student body, and these bands would take advantage of the ready-made audience. They would set up stages or simply play in their driveways on highly trafficked streets like Del Playa, which runs right above the beach and has historically hosted most of the partying (Eric Rachmany, personal communication; Chris del Camino, personal communication). About six months after the formation of the band, the members of Rebelution started to compose original music and eventually recorded a demo in 2005, which they sold out of their house in IV and at shows. Around 2006, they decided to record a full-length album over their winter break, *Courage to Grow* (Rebelution 2007) (Eric Rachmany, personal communication). Chris del Camino also remembers hearing Rebelution's music on the radio during this time, originally on the San Diego alternative rock station 91X and then on a broader level on other alternative rock stations (personal communication). Rachmany graduated in 2007, the last of the band members to do so, and the band started touring immediately. They did their first nation-wide tour in 2008. Rebelution has since recorded an album every year and a half or so and continue touring constantly (Eric Rachmany, personal communication).

Rachmany considers reggae from Hawai'i to be an important influence on Rebelution. He first remembers hearing this music in IV through the members of several other IV-based reggae bands who were from Hawai'i, most famously, Iration. In particular,

he remembers being introduced to the music of Ooklah the Moc and a number of other contemporaneous bands from Hawai‘i. He notes that the reggae musicians in IV were “completely aware” of what was going on in the Hawai‘i reggae scene (personal communication). Rachmany also remembers seeing a compilation of music videos by Dave Resin of Surf Roots TV and Surf Roots Radio that featured Ooklah the Moc. When Rebelution eventually started to get booked in venues farther away from IV, Los Angeles and San Diego for example, Rachmany recollects seeing a number of promoters from Hawai‘i at those events. Touring in Hawai‘i in subsequent years has also been influential on the band (personal communication). Early tours to Hawai‘i further reinforced the connection, as Rebelution members got to know Local reggae musicians and other reggae rock bands like Tribal Seeds that already had fan bases in Hawai‘i (personal communication).

In addition, Rebelution has been popular in Hawai‘i from the band’s beginnings and has influenced the scene there. Their first tour, which only had four stops, consisted solely of concerts in Hawai‘i. While they were on Hawai‘i Island (Big Island) during that tour, the band members discovered that one of their songs, “Safe and Sound,” had made it onto the radio. It had become a hit on the island without the band members’ knowledge. The success of the song was all the more surprising because they had only released their demo album at this point (Eric Rachmany, personal communication). “Safe and Sound” continues to be one of their most famous songs and was still regularly played on the reggae radio stations on O‘ahu while I was doing fieldwork. Rachmany said that the members have several theories about how it happened and offered one to me, courtesy of a fan Rebelution had met while playing at Uncle Mikey’s Nightclub (later called Uncle Mikey’s Video Dance Club) in Hilo.

The fan, Brady O’Rear, claimed responsibility for “Safe and Sound” getting on the radio. He had discovered the band’s MySpace page and sent it to the radio station, and then, soon after, the song suddenly became a hit. Years later, Rachmany learned that O’Rear is part of the San Diego-based reggae rock band Through the Roots. O’Rear also told Rachmany that Rebelution inspired him to become a keyboard player and perform reggae-inspired music (personal communication). Trish Jetton of HIRIE also told me that Rebelution was one of her major influences as a young person (personal communication).

Rebelution provides a good example of the significant engagement of non-Black people of color in reggae rock. As previously mentioned, Rachmany is Persian Jewish, and in fact, he argues that the music pertaining to his heritage has influenced Rebelution’s music (personal communication).⁹ For example, Rebelution has a song that features an ‘ud (oud) taqsim in the song “Life on the Line” from the album *Peace of Mind* (Rebelution 2012). A taqsim is an extended solo improvisation in urban or classical Middle Eastern music. Rachmany told me that he was inspired to include this taqsim by the Middle Eastern music he heard growing up (personal communication). The demographics of Rebelution’s audience also exemplifies the role of non-Black people of color in reggae rock. Rachmany told me that when he and his bandmates started Rebelution, their fans were primarily Latinx and white. As they became more popular, they started to gain fans of different races and ethnicities that were representative of the place that they were from—for instance, Rebelution gained Kānaka Maoli fans when the band became popular in Hawai‘i, and they have gained Chamorro fans after becoming popular in Guåhan (Guam). Rachmany also mentioned that they are starting to get international fans from places like Indonesia, the Philippines, and Brazil (personal communication).

San Diego-based reggae rock band HIRIE is also a good example of the reciprocal influence of reggae from Hawai'i and reggae rock, as well as the importance of non-Black people of color on the genre. In this section, I discuss the band through the experiences of Trish Jetton and Chris del Camino using the information gleaned from interviews with them. Jetton in particular has had a cosmopolitan life, having lived in many disparate places around the world and developing wide-ranging musical tastes. Although Camino's life is more localized than Jetton's, he travels along and is influenced by many of the same global circuits as Jetton through his involvement with reggae rock.

Jetton was born in the Philippines, and her mother is Filipina and her father is British and Spanish. Her father worked for the United Nations as an aquaculturist, and Jetton lived in Italy before moving to Kaneohe on O'ahu in 1998 when she was in the third grade (Trish Jetton, personal communication; Chris del Camino, personal communication). The music that she listened to growing up reflected the tastes of her parents and where she lived. It included Celine Dion, Whitney Huston, Gypsy Kings, Enya, Zucchero Fonaciari, Andrea Bocelli, and Luciano Pavarotti. When she moved to Hawai'i, she was introduced to island music and then roots reggae from Jamaica and elsewhere. This music was ubiquitous and was the music that all of her friends were listening to. She remembers hearing many bands on the radio, among them Natural Vibrations, SOJA, Rebelution, Tribal Seeds, Tanya Stephens, Slightly Stoopid, Steel Pulse, Gregory Isaacs, Don Carlos, Keahiwai, Kolohe Kai, Kapena, O-shen, Maoli, and Malino. Eventually, she decided that she needed a change, so she moved to Texas in 2009. Either in 2009 or 2010, she moved to San Diego and she eventually formed HIRIE. The move to the U.S. continent also affected her musical career:

it allowed her to perform less frequently for bigger audiences than would have been the case if she had remained in Hawai‘i full time (Trish Jetton, personal communication).

Chris del Camino is originally from San Diego, and he first got into reggae in the 1990s through ska. Camino eventually attended UCSB and participated in the small reggae scene in IV of which Eric Rachmany was a part, playing saxophone in a band called Fuzzy Logic. After graduating from UCSB, he kept living in IV for several years and continued to play saxophone in bands and accordion in the UCSB Middle East Ensemble. In 2012, he relocated to San Diego and signed up for the website bandmix.com, which he described as a specialized LinkedIn for musicians looking for jobs. Jetton contacted him through this website and formed the band Patricia Tacon (Jetton’s maiden name) with Camino (on keyboards) and Jetton singing. Camino described this band as "pop-centered with a side of reggae” and it lasted for eight to nine months. Not long after that, Jetton met Ian Young (also known as E.N. Young), the keyboardist in Tribal Seeds. Young helped her produce her first album, which was entirely reggae. Jetton disbanded Patricia Tacon and then created what later became named HIRIE in 2013 (Chris del Camino, personal communication).

Jetton was highly influenced by reggae in Hawai‘i, and she described it as “her favorite music living out here [in Hawai‘i]” (personal communication). When I asked her why, she said that the lyrics of this music “perfectly [depict my] childhood” as well as describe “the land that I was from and that I was raised” (ibid). During our interview, she quoted a line from the song “Windward Skies” by Ten Feet to illustrate her point—“The windward skies sing lullabies to me.” She said that this line seemed to be directed to her because she is from the windward side of O‘ahu. When I interviewed her, she lived in San Diego but traveled to Hawai‘i four or five times a year and considered Kaneohe to be her

home (personal communication). She moved back to Hawai‘i in 2021. Additionally, before moving to Texas, she worked at the Mai Tai Bar, which, before closing in February 2020, was probably the primary island music/island reggae venue on O‘ahu. Jetton mentioned that through working there, she was exposed to numerous great reggae bands. She also worked there at the time in which Anuhea was becoming popular, so having a strong female presence in a male-dominated genre inspired Jetton (personal communication).

During the interview, one of Jetton’s friends characterized her as being an “island vibe” that “infiltrated” the reggae rock scene (personal communication). In fact, some of Jetton’s songs explicitly reference Hawai‘i in some manner. The music video for “She Go” (HIRIE 2019) was filmed in Hawai‘i, although the lyrics do not specifically mention it. The video includes scenes featuring the Koko Crater Trail, which is on the East Side of O‘ahu somewhat near where Jetton is from. The video also features Ilima-Lei “The Iliminator” Mcfarlane, who is a mixed martial artist and a Bellator Women’s Flyweight World Champion, Kanaka Maoli, and from O‘ahu. HIRIE’s more recent song “I’m With You Again” (HIRIE 2020) more clearly references Hawai‘i. The song is about missing home, and its lyrics include such phrases as “Fresh cut gardenia/Sweet Maui rain.” The video was also filmed in Hawai‘i and features a hula dancer.

Moreover, HIRIE has had influence in Hawai‘i, which is exemplified in the video description and comments for “I’m With You Again.” As Jetton explains in the video description, she dedicates the song to “everyone missing home or Hawai‘i Nei” and the lyrics showcase Jetton’s longing for her own home. “I’m With You Again” was also released on Christmas Day. The date and the content of the video indicate that the intention for the song is to comfort people who could not go home during the holidays because of the

COVID-19 pandemic. A quick perusal of the YouTube comments for “I’m With You Again” reveal a number of people who appeared to be from Hawai‘i: “Man, I miss home so much...” and “Aloha ‘Aina! Absolutely beautiful Sis! Capturing the infinite beauty of Hawai‘i Nei...” (HIRIE 2020). This video, then, resonates with people likely from Hawai‘i—not only because they miss home but because they recognize Jetton’s specific connection to the islands.

HIRIE is also a good example of the importance of non-Black people of color in reggae rock. Jetton pointed out to me that her band has a substantial Latinx, Native American, Kānaka Maoli, and Polynesian following. She noted that the Native American following was facilitated by Tribal Seeds. They took HIRIE on tour with them throughout the southwest U.S. and performed at a number of reservations (Trish Jetton, personal communication). Camino said that they are some of HIRIE’s most dedicated fans and came out to support the band when they subsequently have performed in Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado (personal communication). The demographics of the band also speak to this, which Camino described to me. Camino himself is Mexican and white, the bassist is Mexican, the keyboardist is Chamorro, and the occasional second guitarist is Filipino (ibid).

The global influences and movements of Rachmany, Jetton, and Camino all demonstrate trends pertaining to reggae in Hawai‘i and its travels to and from California. Rachmany and Jetton both described to me the fundamental influence reggae from Hawai‘i had on various aspects of their music making. Rachmany and his bandmates’ interactions with the members of Iration and other bands from Hawai‘i introduced him to reggae from the islands, which he states was influential on their sound. His Hawai‘i fanbase was also key to becoming popular on a national and international level. For Jetton, living in Hawai‘i

during her formative years left an indelible mark on how she thinks about music and her notions of home. It also introduced her to reggae and worldviews of being connected to land that are very much in line with the Kanaka Local, as explained in my previous chapter. In return, HIRIE is also becoming increasingly popular in Hawai‘i, as fans are resonating with Jetton not just because she performs reggae, but because she includes references to Hawai‘i that make sense to Local people.

Both bands also demonstrate the importance of non-Black people of color in the reggae rock scene. Latinx, Native American, and Polynesian people in particular make up a significant part of the reggae rock audience. Members of the bands may also belong to these groups, as do Rachmany, Jetton, and Camino. In the case of Rachmany, the music of his heritage also influences his interpretation of reggae.

In this chapter, I discuss different iterations of the global in reggae in Hawai‘i. First, I discuss Blackness as the global. It is an identity formation that is not “fully” allowed into the Local and Hawaiian and yet is constitutive of both. Reggae from Hawai‘i has also been important to the reggae rock scene in California specifically, representing a node in the global circulation of reggae from the islands. Reggae from Hawai‘i has fundamentally influenced reggae rock, and Hawai‘i is now an important market and fanbase for the genre. Finally, even though reggae was created by Black people in Jamaica and reggae in the U.S. is often associated with white people, non-Black people of color have been a key demographic in the creation and popularity of reggae in the U.S. The examples of Maacho, Eric Rachmany, Trish Jetton, and Chris del Camino all demonstrate the many iterations of the global in reggae in Hawai‘i.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

On July 29, 2019, Damian Marley performed at the basecamp of *kia'i* (protectors) on Mauna a Wākea (Mauna Kea) on Hawai'i Island. Damian Marley is one of Bob Marley's most successful sons who also performs reggae. He happened to be in Hawai'i on that date because he was one of the headliners for that year's MayJah RayJah festival, which occurred the previous weekend. During his trip, he decided to travel to Hawai'i Island to support the *kia'i* who were protecting Mauna a Wākea from the proposed Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT), which would result in desecration and environmental destruction. Hawaiian activists have repeatedly said that the enormous response against the TMT by *Kānaka Maoli* has never been equaled by previous Hawaiian movements. Marley visited near the beginning of the most recent mobilization against the TMT, in which at least one thousand *kia'i* occupied the base of the road up Mauna a Wākea to prevent construction equipment from accessing the summit. Reggae artists from Hawai'i and the greater island reggae community also took a trip up the mauna to support the *ki'ai*, including Brother Noland, Common Kings, and The Green. Celebrities like Jason Momoa and Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson were also in attendance. The video taken from Marley's concert shows *Kānaka Maoli* audience members of all ages dancing, singing, and enjoying themselves as he sang his father's songs "Get Up Stand Up" and "Crazy Baldhead." While talking in between songs, he mentions that Hawai'i was one of the first places to "embrace" his music (Marley 2019).

This performance encapsulates many of the main arguments in my dissertation. *Kānaka Maoli* are being and enjoying themselves in the midst of their biggest political mobilization and embracing the music and message of an internationally renowned Black

Jamaican artist who had come to support them. Reggae, typically considered a Local phenomenon as opposed to Hawaiian, was being celebrated and embodied at the heart of Kanaka Maoli culture at that moment. The performance could also be considered an opportunity for Kānaka Maoli to give back. Though Marley seemed to frame his performance as a thank you for Hawaiians' past support, it could conceivably mark the beginning of a more equitable relationship between Kānaka Maoli and Black people in Hawai'i in the present day. Concluding with Marley's concert on Mauna a Wākea also brings my journey with reggae in Hawai'i full circle—I begin and end my dissertation with MayJah RayJah and hopefully finish with the festival as a jumping off point into a more decolonial future.

In this dissertation, I argue that Kanaka Maoli identity and culture are the basis for engagement with identity in reggae in Hawai'i. That is, Kanaka Maoli people and worldviews are the center of the music even though they might be obscured or not acknowledged. The categories of Local and global build on top of and are interrelated with the Hawaiian. In this way, I privilege Indigenous, Kanaka Maoli worldviews and give power and agency to Hawaiian people. Reggae in Hawai'i is a critical site in which to discuss Indigeneity more broadly because it is an excellent example of Stephanie Nohelani Teves's notion of "defiant Indigeneity" (2018:xiv): reggae in Hawai'i resists easy categorization into the colonial stereotypes of "traditional," "modern," "political," and "apolitical" that are typically forced onto Indigenous people. It is, instead, representative of a full spectrum of Indigenous humanity, of Indigenous people being and enjoying themselves in all of their complexity.

Chapter 1 provides historical context of Hawaiian music and Jamaican popular music. In Chapter 2, I situate reggae in Hawai‘i as bridging the categories of Hawaiian and Local “leisure-dance” music. I then describe how Kanaka Maoli and other Local musicians adopted reggae, its rise in popularity throughout the 1980s, the backlash against it in 1991, and, finally, its presence in Hawai‘i in the ensuing decades. In Chapter 3, I argue that reggae “fits” into Kanaka Maoli worldviews, both because it appeals to “more traditional” Hawaiian music aesthetics and because it was new and different. Much like islands and the ocean, Kānaka Maoli’s engagement with reggae is both rooted in place and fundamentally in motion. The examples of Bruddah Waltah Aipolani and roots reggae fans Bernice Helgenberger Musrasrik and Fiore Anderson demonstrate the ways in which reggae can fit into rooted Hawaiian musical aesthetics, political ideologies, and longer histories of adaptation of global musical forms. Chapter 4 deals with my notion of the “Kanaka Local,” a more globalized and “less traditional” type of Hawaiian culture that is usually glossed as Local. Many of the elements of reggae in Hawai‘i that are considered Local are actually based in Hawaiian culture and are often enacted by Kānaka Maoli. I discuss Kapena and Ryan “Jah Gumby” Murakami and show how their enactments of Local culture are actually the Kanaka Local—they are considered Local on the surface, but these Local elements are based in Hawaiian culture. Finally, Chapter 5 focuses on the global, the elements left out of the Hawaiian and the Local, and to do this, I consider Blackness and circulation. Black artists like Maacho who have moved to Hawai‘i have not achieved success within the Hawai‘i music industry because they are not considered fully Local on several levels. Reggae from Hawai‘i has circulated globally, influencing reggae rock from Southern

California, which has then made its way back to Hawai‘i. I demonstrate these global-Local influences through the bands Reblution and HIRIE.

There are several important topics that I could not adequately address in this dissertation, and I plan to include them in future research. Firstly, I was only able to speak to one of the Black musicians active in the reggae scene. I plan to seek out these artists to get their perspectives on their experiences as Black musicians performing reggae in Hawai‘i, which is something that is typically lacking in discourse on the subject. Secondly, I plan to research non-Kanaka Maoli Pacific Islander engagement with reggae in Hawai‘i. There are an increasing number of Sāmoan and Tongan musicians in the island music scene who are or were originally based in Hawai‘i, some of whom I have briefly described throughout my dissertation. Fiji is a foundational artist in this area, and he is additionally important because he has mentored a number of Pacific Islander reggae artists in Hawai‘i. The most famous of such artists are probably J Boog, the members of the band Common Kings, and Josh Tatofi (Tivaini Tatofi’s son). O-shen, a haole reggae musician who was raised in Papua New Guinea, should also be considered amongst these Pacific Islander artists. More recent Pacific Islander island reggae musicians include Fia and Tenelle. Thirdly, this dissertation is focused on O‘ahu and does not take the other islands of Hawai‘i into account as their own scenes of reggae in Hawai‘i. I only touch on that dimension of artists who were originally from other islands—Ho‘aikāne, Ekolu, Marty Dread, Ka‘ikena Scanlan, and Curtis “Mr. 83” Helm among them. Fourthly, I could not speak to a number of key musicians in the early Jawaiian and underground roots scenes and intend to do so. Fifthly, I plan to speak to more fans. The majority of my interviewees were musicians and I think that fans’ perspectives are incredibly important to the ways in which the scene operate. Finally, I only discussed gender

in passing. I asked almost all of my interviewees about the dearth of women in the scene, but could not adequately articulate how their answers fit into my Hawaiian-Local-global nexus at this time.

My dissertation research also transformed my relationship to my Kanaka Maoli identity. In the early days of research, I actively avoided engaging with my material. This tendency was motivated by my feelings of not being Hawaiian enough, which derived from growing up in the diaspora, being multiracial, and having limited involvement with Hawaiian culture while growing up. However, as I pressed on, it got easier. Living in Hawai‘i and actually engaging with Kānaka Maoli and Locals greatly helped to relieve my perception of a “lack” of Hawaiianness. Additionally, I realized that one of the reasons that people found me interesting was *because* I was different. Locals tended to be fascinated by my Indian heritage, likely because there are very few Indian people in Hawai‘i. It was a funny reversal from my experience growing up and going to school in California, where being Hawaiian is unusual. Being friends with other Indigenous students in graduate school has been hugely beneficial to me in a similar manner. Conversations with my friends also allowed me to see that my feelings of “lack” were the result of systemic oppression. They also made me realize that I had a lot of privilege and need to use it to help others. Being substantially more engaged with my Indigenous friends was also something I only had the confidence to do after conducting several years of work on my dissertation. I am now much more secure in my Hawaiianness, though becoming confident is a constant process.

In this dissertation, I want to demonstrate that Kānaka Maoli can purposefully and creatively make music in the present day while remaining rooted in our worldviews inherited from our kūpuna (elders). At the same time, I situate this in the currently

inescapable structures of capitalism and white supremacy. I hope that we can continue to insist on our presence (Stillman 2020a) while also uplifting those around us.

Notes

The title of this dissertation includes the name of the Ho‘aikāne song “Music is Here to Stay (Aloha Irie)” from their album *Bulletproof* (Ho‘aikāne 1993). This song encapsulates one of the primary messages of my dissertation: “I was born in this world and raised the Local way/It doesn’t matter what kind of music that you’d like me to play/I love Hawaiian music, country, rock, and reggae/Just as long as it comes from my heart and in a special way”; “I listen to all kinds of music in this world today/Rock ‘n’ roll, bop, and blues, rap from L.A./Gabby, Pops, Merle Haggard...”; and “It doesn’t matter/Music is here to be played/It doesn’t matter.../Music is here to stay.”

Introduction

1. Arguments over definitions of Hawaiian music broadly have often been power plays, typically over commercial success or lineages from specific teachers (Stillman 2020b; see also Fellezs 2019a:222 for other instances of this in Hawai‘i).
2. Further, in a global context, Hawaiian culture is the most unique and recognizably Local export from the islands. This phenomenon is not unique to Hawai‘i. Beverly Diamond notes that in a global context, uniquely “exotic” Indigenous sounds are the most “distinctive” because that is how the recording industry markets Indigeneity (2007:173).
3. To be clear, Hawaiians’ openness and affinity for the new and different should not be confused with colonial and tourist industry appropriations of the concept of aloha. Aloha has had a multitude of meanings from pre-contact Hawai‘i, including love, pity, compassion, kindness, sharing, and responsibility. However, aloha has since been appropriated and deployed by the settler state and tourist industry to naturalize their presence in Hawai‘i and sell it to outsiders (Teves 2018:25). The misuse of the term in these ways has been critiqued, expanded, and nuanced thoroughly (see Teves 2018; Desmond 1999; Imada 2012; Halualani 2002; Fellezs 2019a). Upon the arrival of Captain Cook in 1778, Europeans began to label Kānaka Maoli as inherently inviting and welcoming, thus naturalizing haole presence, and later their dominance, in Hawai‘i and over Hawaiians (Halualani 2002:22). This discourse eventually morphed into the idea that Hawai‘i was a multicultural “melting pot” where people from disparate races lived in harmony (36), as well as into the feminized and sexualized notion that Hawaiian land and people were “welcoming” and “inviting” to tourists (Desmond 1999:4-5; Trask 1999:136-7) and the military (Gonzalez 2013:144).
4. Recently, scholars have been using mo‘okū‘auhau (genealogy) in more expansive or metaphorical terms as a “consciousness” or a way to relate to the world. Scholars have used mo‘okū‘auhau to centralize “more traditional” Kanaka Maoli ways of relating to other people and more-than-human subjects, therefore prioritizing

humans' responsibilities to all subjects (Louis 2017; Meyer 2001). Scholars have also used mo'okū'auhau to describe being conscious of one's place in history or space/time (Kame'eleihiwa 1992; McDougall 2016; Silva 2017; Wilson-Hokowhita 2019). Here, I use it to talk about Kanaka Maoli identity specifically, rather than in these more expansive ways.

Chapter 2

1. Typically, kachi-kachi is performed by an ensemble of cuatro (ten-string, five course lead guitar), standard six-string guitar, gūiro, and vocalist (Solís 2005:76). Other instruments can include the bass and bongos (75). The dance genres that the ensemble performs can include the seis, vals, guaracha, bolero, and merengue.
2. Orrall went on to found the group Poi Dog Pondering, which became successful in the continental U.S.
3. The bands that performed that day were Brother Noland, 3 Scoops of Aloha, Iao Stream Band, Simplisity, Mililani Allen, Wendy Fitsimmons and Leioku, Keiki O Ka Aina, Na Meleana Kane, the Rockers, Rydimexpress, and Natural Blend.
4. Examples of these recordings are *Satisfaction Guaranteed* by Kapena (1986) and Ho'āikane's early recordings: *The Ho'aikanes Presents Nolan Hao Kī Hō'alu...On The Back Porch* (1986), *Pu'uanahulu* (1986), and *Ano Kua Aina* (1987).
5. Aloha Week, now called Aloha Festivals since 1991, is an annual event that is held to celebrate Hawaiian culture. Usually, there is a parade in Honolulu and a "royal court" of actors playing members of the Hawaiian monarchy. To me, the event seems like it is primarily put on for tourists, but Locals also participate.
6. KCCN's Birthday Bash concerts occurred every year from 1991 to 2012 and it returned briefly in 2017 and 2018. They were called Birthday Bashes until the third in 1993; the first and second Birthday Bashes were actually called Jawaiian Jams. After the backlash against Jawaiian in 1991, KCCN decided to rename Jawaiian Jam as Birthday Bash (Chun 1991b).
7. The Thirty Meter Telescope is a proposed telescope in the "extremely large" class that is set to be built on Mauna a Wākea, also known as Mauna Kea. Mauna a Wākea is a sacred site for Kānaka Maoli, who were never consulted when the organization building TMT (TIO) proposed it. This telescope will result in desecration and environmental destruction. Kānaka Maoli have opposed the TMT in numbers never before seen for any Hawaiian-related political movement. The most recent action against the TMT began in July 2019, in which at least one thousand kia'i occupied the base of the road up Mauna a Wākea to prevent construction equipment from accessing the summit.

8. See Chapter 6 of Fellezs 2019a for a thorough account of the controversy that led to the termination of the Grammy for Best Hawaiian Music Album.

Chapter 3

1. Scanlan and another group, Ka Hā, were the co-winners, and their songs were both recorded by The Vitals's record label, Bu Print Studios.
2. Also known as "Hāloa 'O Wākea," this mele is a genealogy of the Hawaiian Islands (huapala.org n.d.). It concerns Wākea the sky father and Papahānaumoku the earth mother, generally understood to be the originary beings who mated and gave birth to the Hawaiian Islands in Hawaiian cosmology (Kame'eiehiwa 1992:23).
3. This is not the same way that Dylan Robinson conceptualizes "fit," though we use related ideas. In his discussion of "fit," he argues that western art music that attempts to be multicultural "fits" Indigenous sounds/music into a western art music framework. Truly enacting redress would involve changing the structure to privilege or even accommodate Indigenous worldviews about sound/music (2020:6). Somewhat contrastingly, I argue that in the case of reggae in Hawai'i, reggae has shared elements with Kanaka Maoli understandings of music and thus "fits" into Kanaka Maoli worldviews.
4. "Ua mau ke ea o ka 'āina i ka pono" was originally spoken by King Kamehameha III after Hawaiian sovereignty was restored in 1843. Earlier that year, Lord George Paulet over-stepped his bounds and seized the Hawaiian governmental buildings in Honolulu. He then issued a proclamation annexing Hawai'i to Great Britain. Queen Victoria sent an envoy to restore the monarchy, and Kamehameha III uttered this phrase after the monarchy was restored ("Statement" 1972). The phrase was eventually incorporated into the seal of the Kingdom of Hawai'i, but it was then coopted by the Republic of Hawaii after the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy. It was later adopted as the seal of the State of Hawai'i (Saranillio 2015:287). The phrase has since been used in association with the Hawaiian sovereignty movement.
5. Aipolani's cover is in this way similar to the Fugees's cover of "No Woman No Cry." The Fugees make the song relevant to their audience by changing some of the lyrics to refer to the origin of hip hop in New York City, and they add a hip hop beat.
6. This sort of arranging is also fairly common throughout reggae's history, especially during the ska and rocksteady eras when numerous R&B and some country songs were arranged in a reggae style.
7. In general, most of the political or social justice-driven projects being done in Hawai'i relate to Kānaka Maoli. They are also generally the most visible. In contrast, there are not as many to advocate for oppressed minorities such as Micronesian, Filipinx, and Black people. There are notable exceptions, including KKV. Demiliza

Saramosing focuses on KKV's annual bike ride throughout Kalihi for boys and teenagers of immigrant parents, or boys who are immigrants themselves, from primarily Micronesia and the Philippines (Saramosing 2018). Another example is the non-profit The Pōpolo Project, which seeks to make Black people more visible in Hawai'i and form connections across communities. They produce educational and cultural events, host community gatherings, and create original media about the diversity of Blackness by Black people in Hawai'i (thepoloproject.com n.d.).

Chapter 4

1. In Hawai'i, tourism is a problematic industry. Orchestrated by descendants of haole plantation owners, they started the tourist industry in the early-twentieth century and grew it until it was the largest sector of the state's economy by the mid-twentieth century. The commercialization of Hawaiian music and culture is an important part of the way that capitalists sell Hawai'i to tourists, and such commodities perpetuate racist stereotypes. Also, resources are diverted towards tourism and away from Local people while driving up the cost of living in Hawai'i. Like any capitalist structure, tourism additionally exploits the labor of immigrant and otherwise precarious individuals. Kānaka Maoli have always been a part of the tourist industry to some extent, notably in the creation and performance of Hawaiian music and hula for tourist audiences. More recently, representations of Kānaka Maoli have improved as more Hawaiian people have become involved in the industry. There has also been a push to make tourism more sustainable regarding Hawaiian and Local peoples' quality of life, the environment, and its place in Hawai'i's economy—however, little structural change in those directions has occurred thus far.
2. In ethnomusicology and anthropology, the local has been an important concept (Massey 1993; Slobin 1993; Appadurai 1996; Basso 1996; Feld 1996; Erlmann 1998; Finnegan 2007; Guilbault 2006; Wolf 2009; Reily and Brucher 2018). The authors of this literature discuss the complexity of the connections and disconnections of specific localities to others, the national, and the global. They also consider how these relationships change when music and other culture from one location moves to another and how capitalism shapes these processes. In this chapter, I am choosing not to foreground such literature because the authors typically do not discuss Indigeneity as politically different from the local (the exceptions being Basso and Feld). They also do not typically account for the specific political relationships between Indigenous people and locals who do not live on their ancestral lands.
3. Ni'ihau, the westernmost Hawaiian island, is one such place where the culture McGregor describes has survived in a more widespread manner. However, Ni'ihau has been privately owned by the haole Robinson family since 1864 and hardly allows anyone to visit. Although Kanaka Maoli cultural preservation is strong there, the fact that the entire island is owned by a haole family and has control over the land is problematic.

4. Certain schools in Hawai‘i have had complicated histories with Kanaka Maoli students and also have class connotations. The Kamehameha Schools, which has campuses on O‘ahu, Hawai‘i Island, and Maui, was started by Bernice Pauahi Bishop in the late-nineteenth century for Kanaka Maoli children. The school was in some ways modeled after the Hampton Institute, a heavily militarized school that was supposed to make Black and Native students “fit” for American citizenship and is related to the history of Indian boarding schools (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua 2020). Teachers also actively stamped out Hawaiian language and culture at the Kamehameha Schools in the early-twentieth century, even teaching students eugenics (Szego 2010). In the last several decades, however, the school has become an important force in the perpetuation of Kanaka Maoli culture. Punahou School was founded in 1841 to educate missionaries’ children, and remained a “haole school” for most of its history. More recently, it has become more diverse and has a large Asian student population. It has also introduced classes on Kanaka Maoli culture. The divide between public and private schools is also clear. Schools like Kamehameha and Punahou are private and have more elite connotations than public schools.
5. Ho‘aikāne is perhaps a more obvious example of this. They started out with a “more traditional” Hawaiian and country-influenced sound, and they transferred into a roots reggae and dancehall style especially after Jamieson “Wongie” Wong joined the group (Chun 1990c). This change was made more dramatic after his son Jamin Wong joined, and is also evident in his career as a solo artist (Berger 1998b). Kapena’s change was not as obvious, but their albums recorded by Kahanu Records show an increasing variety of styles over time, and reggae is just one of many.
6. According to John Berger, *Brown Bags to Stardom* was perhaps the biggest and most visible talent contest at the end of the twentieth century (2012e:809). It was created by Bob “Kamasami Kong” Zix for the radio station KIKI, also known as “Hot I-94,” on O‘ahu. This talent contest was for high school students. They first went through a preliminary round to choose one band to represent the school. Then, the finalists competed in a televised performance at the Waikiki Shell. By the mid-1990s, the finals were combined with a concert by Local artists and U.S. continental acts (ibid).
7. From the early days of the band as the original Kapena, they began touring throughout the Pacific. The fact that the Tatofi brothers are from Tonga provided a bridge, and their music started to become popular throughout that area. Kelly Boy noted that they have performed in Tonga, Sāmoa, Tahiti, and throughout Micronesia in places like Guåhan (Guam), Pohnpei, Chuuk, Kosrae, Palau, and Saipan. They have also toured in Japan and on the west coast of the continental U.S. (personal communication).
8. The DeLimas performed a cover of the John Denver original that night, rather than the well-known adaptation “Take Me Home Country Road” by Israel Kamakawiwo‘ole. Kamakawiwo‘ole’s version differs significantly from the original. The choice to cover the original Denver version made sense as part of a country medley, but in a Hawaiian music context, I would have expected them to perform a

cover of the Kamakawiwo‘ole adaptation. However, their choice reflected the demographic they were trying to reach, which was a haole tourist family from Kentucky sitting near the stage.

9. Murakami does not play horns or sing, so when he records his own music, he asks friends and other artists to participate. When he found out that I play alto saxophone, he asked me to record. I spent three sessions of several hours each recording saxophone lines over riddims that Murakami had already created. This experience was really interesting to me because Murakami does not read music and plays by ear, which is the opposite of my western classical training. Trying to hear what was going on was a struggle for me and Murakami had to write out note names so that I knew what he wanted me to play. However, I am grateful that I got to help Murakami with naming complicated chords and figuring out harmonies because I have a background in music theory.

Chapter 5

1. Other examples include the founding of the non-profit The Pōpolo Project, and a nine-part series on the KHON 2 news channel on being Black in Hawai‘i in honor of Black History Month in 2020. Most recently, the Black Lives Matter protest in Honolulu on June 6, 2020 in the wake of the murder of George Floyd drew around 10,000 people (Lee 2020).
2. Permanent residents have been allowed to enlist in the U.S. military since the Revolutionary War (military.com 2021).
3. In general, many of the Jawaiian/island music/island reggae recordings and songs performed live, especially in the 1980s, were covers. There have been instances where Local artists have covered Jamaican or other global reggae music and the Local cover has become much more famous in Hawai‘i than the original. The fact that these songs are covers is practically unknown among listeners in Hawai‘i. I also want to point out that the benefiteres of these sorts of covers and the success of reggae in Hawai‘i was historically not the artists, but rather, has been for certain promoters or record labels, primarily in the Jawaiian scene. Many artists told me that this was a big problem in the 1980s and 1990s, and they told me stories of not being paid or being paid very little for successful performances.
4. Common Kings has also worked with Top 40 U.S. artists. Meghan Trainer cowrote the song “24/7” with the group. She is also featured on the Common Kings song “Before You Go.” Common Kings has also toured with Fifth Harmony and Justin Timberlake (Ashagre 2015; Cyclone 2016).
5. J Boog has also becoming known to some extent outside of reggae. He has collaborated with Snoop Dogg (on the song “No Pressure”), and his most famous song, “Let’s Do It Again,” was covered by Chamorro artist Pia Mia (Pia Mia Perez,

who was once close friends with Kylie Jenner). Both the original version and the Pia Mia cover became a viral TikTok dance around April 2020.

6. Interviewees in the underground roots scene at the time particularly and fondly remember Mari Matsuoka from this company, who was their main representative that worked with the bands. Now, Goldenvoice (the spelling changed) puts on some of the biggest music festivals in the country, including Coachella and Stagecoach. They even produce the One Love Cali Fest, one of the biggest reggae festivals in the U.S.
7. The Hawaii Music Awards were founded by Johnny Kai Lorance in 1996 (Burlingame 1996). The first award show was in 1996 and the last in 2010. Lorance founded these awards as an alternative to the Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards in order to showcase a broader range of genres, as the Hokus have historically heavily privileged Hawaiian music (ibid). Lorance also hoped that these awards would promote lesser-known artists both in Hawai‘i and outside of it, as he believed that the state of the Hawai‘i music industry at the time was poor enough to need revitalization (ibid).
8. The most famous artist from UCSB with a Hawai‘i connection is Jack Johnson, who attended the school in the mid-1990s. Johnson is from O‘ahu and lives there currently, and is known for his soft, acoustic rock. Although he had a great deal of mainstream Top 40 success in the mid-2000s, he also participates in the Hawai‘i music industry to some extent. He has frequently performed with Paula Fuga and has been listed as an influence on even some “more traditional” Hawaiian artists.
9. Rachmany pointed out to me that his vocals in particular are influenced by Middle Eastern music (personal communication). I agree. He sings with vocal ornamentation, which is uncharacteristic of Jamaican roots reggae but is in Persian and Middle Eastern music. Moreover, Don Carlos also sings with vocal ornamentation, and Rachmany’s singing style sounds highly influenced by Don Carlos to my ears. There is another quality of Rachmany’s singing that reminds of Middle Eastern and Persian music, which is quite subtle—his vocals float above the rest of the music. The energy of his voice keeps spinning on and on, stretching out vocal lines in a manner that obscures the beat to some extent, even when the melody may be broken up into small chunks. That is not to say that the beat is not apparent in Rachmany’s sung melody line—it is, and in fact, the way he sings highlights it. However, the spinning energy comes to the fore because he does not place great emphasis at the ends of melodic chunks, so the melodies do not feel like they end or resolve entirely. Typically, in reggae rock, Jamaican roots reggae, and rock in general, this is not the case—there are clear rhythmic endings often, so the beat is more easily audible. In Persian and Arab music, on the other hand, long melodic lines that often obscure and defy the beat is the norm. This quality is especially apparent in the song “Feeling Alright,” which is one of Rebelution’s most famous songs.

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Appendix

READ THIS FIRST: These years represent the earliest documentation that I could find for each band or the date that the band was formed. The start dates are represented in italics; they were either made public or a band member told it to me in an interview. The other dates are the earliest years that I saw the artist or band name in the newspaper or online, or represents the year that they released the earliest credited recording that I could find. Some of these bands primarily perform reggae, while others include reggae as one of numerous styles. This is an incomplete list. The bands and artists are listed in alphabetical order.

1980—Brother Noland

1981—*Butch Helemano & The Players of Instruments, Cool Runnings*

1982—Crucial Youth

1983—*Pagan Babies, The Movers, Wareka* (approximate), 3 Scoops of Aloha (also, Three Scoops of Aloha)

1984—Ilona Irvine (also, Princess Ilona), *Kapena, Simplisity*

1985—*Maacho and the Cool Connection, Shival Experience*

1986—Ho‘aikāne

1987—*Hawaii Amplified Poetry Ensemble, Wisdom Tree* (Stevie I-ton/Stevie Char’s band)

1988—*Nā Waiho ‘olu ‘u o ke Ānuenue* (also, Nā Wai), Ras Inando, Sundance

1989—*Bruddah Waltah & Island Afternoon, Jah Livity, Leahi, Mana ‘o Company, North American Bush Band*

Island Music 1990-2019

1990—*Ka ‘au Crater Boys*

1991—Diane and Da Boyz, Fiji, Hawaiian Style Band, Tropical Knights

1992—Island Rhythms, *Natural Vibrations* (also, Natty Vibes), Pacific Blu (also, Pacific Blue), Robi Kahakalau (also, Sister Robi)

1993—Hawaiian Time, Sean Na‘auao

1996—Damon Williams, Ka‘ala Boys, Sly Dog, Ten Feet

1997—Baba B, Ehukai, Ho‘onu‘a, Justin (later, Justin Kawika Young), Native Blend, Opihi Pickers

1998—B.E.T., *Chief Ragga* (Jamin Wong), Imua, Koa‘uka, Pohaku

1999—*Ekolu*, Cool Change, Irie Love, Ka‘u, Keahiwai, Pound 4 Pound, Reality, Soulfree, Typical Hawaiians

2000—Hot Rain, Inoa‘ole, Kupa‘āina, O-shen, Roots Odessey

2001—Backyard Pa‘ina, Kekai Boyz, Kohomua, Pati

2002—Kamau, Lahaina Grown, Laga Savea, One Drop, The Next Generation (also, Next G.)

2003—Simple Souls

2004—Camile Velasco (later, Eli-Mac around 2014), Kani Makou, Kawao, Ka‘ena, Malino, Nuff Sedd, Paula Fuga

2005—*Kimié Miner*, Mike Love

2006—Conscious Roots, Manali‘i, Rebel Souljahz, Soul Redemption

2007—*Anuhe*a, Beach 5, J Boog, Kailua Bay Buddies, Kaipo, Maoli, Micah G

2008—Inna Vision, Jah Maoli

2009—Breath of Fire, Kolohe Kai, Nesian Nine, *The Green*

2010—Jimmy Weeks Project, M.O.J.O (also, M.O.J.O. Circuit), Siaosi, The Steppas

2011—Common Kings, Local Uprising, Mahi (Mahi Crabbe)

2012—Bo Napoleon (approximate), Joseph Soul, Jai the Band, Po and the 4 Fathers, Simple Session

2013—Isle Five, So Roots, The Vitals

2014—Bamboo Cru(cial), Leilani Wolfgramm, One Rhythm, *PeniDean*, Remedy Vibes

2015—Ka‘ikena Scanlan

2016—Likkle Jordee (Jordan Ramierz), Johnny Suite, Landon McNamara, Mahkess

2017—Chardonnay

2018—Elijah Sky, Fia, Nu‘u

2019—Ana Vee

Note: The bands Mix Blend, Loco Moco Band, and Tropical Blend were active during the 1990s. To me, their names suggest that they could have been island music artists, but I could not find any recordings of them to confirm. This is also the case with the bands Island Magic, Island Storm, and Island Jam in the 2000s.

Underground Roots 1990-2019

1990—Dubb Version (also, Dub Version and Dub-Version), Lions International (Tony Gits’s band), Roots Natty Roots, Shakers

1991—Dread Ashanti

1993—Marty Dread, *Ooklah the Moc* (as Grain, became Ooklah the Moc several years later)

1995—Chilum, *Humble Soul* (Doug Bautista), THC (The Heartical Crew)

1997—Crazy Fingers

1998—Backyahd

1999—Red Degree

2000—Wicked Blend

2001—Shiloh Pa

2002—Irie Souls

2003—The Ionz

2004—Isouljahs

2005—Dubkoncious

2006—Jah Maoli Rasta, Lion Fiyah (as Lyon Fya)

2008—Rootikal Riddims

2010—Herbnculture, Kapu System, Mystikal VibeZ (also, M.V. Posse), U-Knighted
(formerly The Bikini Knights)

2012—Guidance Band, Rootie's Roots

2013—DRAS (Deep Roots Around Sound)

2016—Cultural Nation