

George S. Kanahale, ed. *Hawaiian Music and Musicians*. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1979. Pp. xxx, 543, illustrations, discography, bibliography, index. \$25.00.

Hawaiian Music and Musicians is a big book. As a work sponsored by the Hawaiian Music Foundation and published by the University Press, it exhibits impressive credentials. Its editor, George Kanahale, is a competent scholar and the contributors are, as far as this reviewer can say, known and accepted in circles which deal in Hawaiiana. The book represents a major contribution on the subject and is certainly the most complete attempt to date on Hawaiian music.

Almost every aspect of island music is given attention: over forty composers, performers and musical personalities are included; Hawaiian musical instruments, primitive and modern, are described; nearly fifty individual songs and compositions are considered; and, contests, plays, awards

and organizations are mentioned. In addition, major entries on stylistic, elements--falsetto singing, slack key, "pidgin english," and *hapa haole* (partly in English) songs--are written in. Captain Henry Berger, organizer and leader of the Royal Hawaiian Band and a major influence in the music of the islands, is given major coverage as are topics such as the *himeri*, the media, the *hula* and the traditional Hawaiian orchestra. An area hitherto largely neglected appears for the first time, that of island music abroad--the development of this genre in Canada, England, Japan, Scandinavia, and Southeast Asia.

A subject of wonder may be how the folk music of a smallish island group in the midst of a large ocean presumes such importance. It is much the same as country lore of the American West in that it exceeds in popularity its historical and geographical significance. Music in Hawai'i, whether ancient or modern, has always been one of the most visible elements of the culture. The sailors of Captain James Cook and also the earliest of Christian missionaries to arrive heard the native chant as almost their first experience. Today's visitors are assaulted by "Hawaiian music" from the moment they board their aircraft bound for Honolulu.

As the prediscovery culture was nonliterate, music and chant held a special place in the scheme of things in that it was the vehicle by which the lore of one generation was transmitted to the next. Many of the chants even contained instructions for the accomplishment of specific tasks though sometimes they were hidden in second meanings. Further, the chant was part of the religious observance performed in connection with every task and as such guaranteed serious intent and full attention to quality in the execution of the work.

The prominence of place for chant and music in the primitive culture combined with the importance of the hymnody of the missionaries who arrived from New England in 1820 to form a very effective bridge between the old and the new for the islanders. Reading, writing, and music were the elements of the culture brought by the missionaries which found the most ready acceptance among the Hawaiians. Religious and economic aspects of the American culture were more slow to take effect. In present day Hawai'i, the music of the Hawaiians has again become a vehicle through which they have begun to rediscover and reassert themselves. While the music of Waikiki continues to entertain the tourist, a movement has begun for the search among ancient ways for cultural elements which have value and use today. Considering music's place in both the old and new views in the islands, it seems appropriate that island music be the subject of a big book.

One of the more significant entries is that giving the history and an analysis of Hawaiian music. This section is well researched and organized though the periodization seems somewhat contrived. The description of

the primitive styles--the *hula* and the *oli*--is well done as is that of the music of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There seems to be some reluctance to find parallels between New England hymnody and the earlier of Hawaiian tunes in the western tradition. In the opinion of this reviewer, such parallels do exist in melodic intervals used in sequences, harmonic progressions and voice placements in the supporting harmonic structure. Many melodies in the Hawaiian repertoire are directly borrowed from the seventeenth century hymnals. There is a similar hesitancy in identifying the influences of the immigrant music of the Mexican cowboys and the Portuguese laborers. Perhaps the reviewer, though not uninformed, is simplistic while the scholar becomes increasingly tentative.

It would be difficult to overestimate the impress of Henry Berger on the music of the islands. Much of the bandmaster's quaint "line-a-day" journal has been available in the State Archives but new material is made available in this entry. Berger's influences include the notation of many Hawaiian melodies, the training of many who would become composers of Hawaiian music, the introduction of the melodic style of German Romanticism in music to the Hawaiian tradition and an almost unbelievable popularization of music generally throughout the kingdom.

American music's impact in Hawai'i seems to have been the greatest in the first three decades of the twentieth century. A whole generation of music in the islands reflects the melodic and rhythmic patterns of American Jazz of that period. This entry is supported by good research and excellent analysis and is well written. Also covered well and at length is the section on the internationalization of Hawaiian music--how it has fared abroad. A thorough job of research is represented here and, perhaps for the first time, public attention in Hawai'i is directed at those who have carried the island spirit away with them.

Another very significant contribution is the discography which is appended. It is undoubtedly one of the most complete in print and, in its turn, represents an awesome piece of work. It may not be too trite to say that this section alone is nearly worth the price of purchase. Space will not permit review of all of the major entries but it is sufficient to say that all of them represent authoritative treatment and extensive research.

A popular, illustrated history of Hawaiian music is a very appealing notion and, from the title, one could believe he has one in hand. It turns out, as explained in the introduction, that an encyclopedia of Hawaiian music was intended but that the task was beyond possibility. It remains encyclopedic only in the alphabetical arrangement of topics. Such a contribution is certainly valuable and much of the material, both print and photographic appears for the first time. The mere bulk of material accumulated and its diversity is enough to give the scholar pause. Of course,

three separate works might have been undertaken. The internationalization of Hawaiian music, obviously a favorite pursuit of the editor, would have made an interesting and scholarly paper. A popular history of Hawaiian music, as has been mentioned, has a strong appeal and such a book would be welcome. Illustrated, journalistic stories of the music of the islands have already been approached by Tony Todaro and Kieth Haugen.

The title suggestion of a history leads to a misapprehension which, though dispelled early on, remains to remind one of what might have been. *Hawaiian Music and Musicians* is a big book and a valuable contribution but it is not literally a history nor is it an encyclopedia. It is rather a kind of source book for the general reader and the aficionado of Hawaiian music and Hawaiiiana.

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