sight into the elaborate obscurity of the drama itself, for indeed an inordinate number of its verses are *double entendres* (for which Wulff offers parallel translations). The fact that nearly everything in the *Vidagdhamādhava*, it seems, is to be understood on two levels takes on new significance when we realize that the author and his companions, in their own experience, constantly commuted between worlds—the dusty Braj country, in which they served as the venerable preceptors of a growing devotional community, and that other, luminous and vernal realm delineated with the inner eye, in which they rejoiced in the intimacies of a playful god.

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HAWAII

COLUM, PADRAIC. *Legends of Hawaii.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987 (First published 1937). Xvi+220 pages. Illustrations by Don Forrer. Cloth US$30.00; ISBN 0–300–00376–5. Paper US$9.95; ISBN 0–300–03923–9.

Although this is an old book, it is of continuing interest to those interested in Polynesian legends. For the most part it contains samples of the collections of Abraham Fornander, who once edited *The Polynesian*, lived in the islands for over forty years, and was acquainted with Hawaiian royalty and storytellers. The legends were collected over one hundred years ago by Fornander from various people and sources, but primarily from students at a mission school on the Island of Maui. The collection was later kept at the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum. Colum was invited to take any of the stories which were suitable for children and publish them separately. He found that they represented a wide representation of the Polynesian area, with motifs of romance in particular, with travels to alien, spiritual places by demigods.

Colum began his work in 1923, studying both Hawaiian and the Fornander Collection, but his stories are re-told versions based on a variety of sources and Polynesian areas, with most published elsewhere.

There are nineteen stories in *Legends*, each with a summary in the "Notes" section of the book. The reader would do well to compare the actual story given with the notes for there we learn to what degree Colum has restructured and condensed the stories. For example "The Princess and The Rainbow" is said to be reshaped to "bring out the fairy-tale elements that are in it" (207). Presumably this refers to the fabrication of events and powers surrounding the Princess's journey to find the Prince, for it has nothing to say about fairies.

There is a great deal of cultural symbolism in the tales: Canoe-Guiding Star,

strange fragrances of vine and leaf, mythical relationships with Sun and Moon, beautiful poetry about nature, sibling relationships and rivalry, monstrous dogs and other animals, bird messengers and signs, all depicted with an effort to help a reader sense what is true and mystical to the Polynesian.

Most of the *Legends* are rather severe condensations, without the literary or editorial finesse of a *Reader's Digest* version. "The Fire-Goddess," for example, was originally published in two hundred pages, but Colum squeezes it into twelve. The one hundred and seventy chants of the original are likewise restricted to seven.

Some appreciation of Polynesian tradition is given in a number of stories: "The Seven Great Deeds of Ma-ui," for example, tells of the Polynesian culture hero, the youngest brother who becomes leader, conquers the sun and the dragon, finds fire, and does other exploits befitting a god. The version by Colum combines New Zealand tradition with Hawaiian, but similar legends are found throughout Polynesia.

The legend "Me-ne-hu-na" is associated in Tahiti with the "lowest class of people" and as such is said to imply something about the earliest people in the Islands. Their strength was such that they could contend with the moon and the mountains and sing of forty thousand gods.

Other legends are more concerned with sharks and the shark-god (found in "The Boy Pu-nia and the King of the Sharks"), about taboos related to male-female relationships in romance (in "The Princess Kama"), and more practical matters like the "Owl and Rat and the Boy who was Good at Shooting Arrows."

There are many aspects of Hawaiian myths that are consistent with legends of the Pacific, in particular Papua New Guinea. These include the dynamic brother relationships, taboos, the importance and sacredness of one's name, animal and plant magic, origin stories from plants or man, and relationships to heavenly bodies and nature, such as the sun, moon, and sea. Missing are the obsession with sorcery, ancestral spirits, death, and the motifs of death and renewal in some other form. An excellent summary of the general types in PNG can be found in Z'Graggen (1983); for origin myths in particular, see McElhanon, ed. (1974, 1982); on a Highland group LeRoy (1985) gives a detailed and excellent analysis.

Overall, the collection allows us to flavor the beautiful symbolic figures of the Polynesian world. Had C. S. Lewis, that great chronicler of Narnia and space, specialized in Hawaiian legends, rather than the Norse or Greek, the lion Aslan might well have been the great shark Kau-hu-hu.

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