

ing the origins of clans, the sun and moon, stars, the day and night, the sea; of garden crops such as taro, yam, coconut, tobacco, and sago palm; of fish, mosquitoes, fire, dance, and earthenware pots. These texts are all classified as myths, and what are usually called legends and fairy tales by folklorists (and by the author) are carefully excluded.

Some myths are quite similar to those found in other parts of Papua New Guinea, some are not. Christian influences can be found in several texts. Since a comparative mythological study has yet to be carried out on a wide scale in New Guinea, this book may prove useful despite the varied sources of the texts, which were collected from a number of ethnic groups including both Papuans and Austronesians. The data on the manner of collection given at the beginning of each text help in locating the village of the original tape recording. As all the texts have been input into computers, however, comparative mythologists might have been happier if they had been offered in the form of floppy or compact disks. Printed texts are not easy to handle when computers are utilized for comparative analysis.

There is little more I can say about this book, for, as mentioned above, few analytical comments are added to the original texts. One point made by the author in his introductory remarks needs comment, however. According to Dr. Z'graggen, in these myths "little thought is given for the future of the creation, that is, the ultimate aim or the world to come . . . For Christianity this means there is a lack of eschatology" (xv). Needless to say, eschatology in the Christian sense cannot be found among most traditionally non-Christian or "pagan" peoples. This is why most anthropologists avoid the term "eschatology." Even if the term is used in ethnography (I know of several such cases), it is not used in the Christian sense but in a more neutral sense, such as when referring to a people's view of the afterlife. As far as I know, in all parts of New Guinea mythical texts can be found that tell of how the spirits of the dead interact with the living. In this neutral anthropological sense there is a great deal, not a lack, of eschatology among the New Guineans. As the author remarks, "Christian Melanesia should be aware of this." But rather than his suggestion that Christianity "should add [an eschatology] to round up the creation with an aim and goal," I feel it would be better if Christianity compared its eschatology with that of the native people and found out how the former could be on "good" terms with the latter. At least New Guineans have attempted this for a long time through their nativistic movements, usually labeled "cargo cults" by anthropologists.

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LEBRA, JOYCE CHAPMAN, Editor. *Women's Voices in Hawaii*. Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1991. xii+292 pages. Photographs, selected readings, index. Cloth US\$24.95; ISBN 0-87081-238-6.

Women's Voices in Hawaii is a collection of oral history interviews with older women living in Hawaii. The editor/interviewer herself, a specialist in Asian history who now teaches at a university on the North American mainland, was brought up in Hawaii before World War II and is thus quite familiar with the conditions experienced by the

interviewees in their own lives.

The forty-six women represented in the book were mostly in their upper seventies or their eighties and living on the islands of Oahu, Maui, Kauai, and the Big Island when the interviews took place in 1985. The women are grouped according to ethnic affiliation, and the respective ethnic categories presented in order according to the length of time they have been on the islands: Hawaiians/part-Hawaiians (7), Chinese (3), Scottish-English (5), Portuguese (5), Japanese (8), Okinawans (5), Koreans (4), Puerto Ricans (4), and Filipinas (5) (the numbers in parentheses represent the number of interviewees in each group). Those ethnic groups that immigrated after World War II, such as Samoans and Southeast Asians, are excluded, since the editor's interest is primarily in the long-term social history of Hawaii. Many of the interviewees were born in Hawaii, while some immigrated at a very early age with their parents. Lebra's questions and her subsequent editing were directed toward obtaining and presenting "information on immigration, childhood, education, food, clothing, language, religious beliefs, work experiences, courtship, marriage, children, and relations with other ethnic groups, as well as furnishing more personal data reflecting values, philosophy, and life experience" (x).

Some striking differences can be seen between the life experiences of the Scottish-English women and the women of the other ethnic groups, i.e., between the women of the dominant ethnic group and the nondominant groups. The socially elite *haole* women were sent either to Punahou or to mainland boarding schools (sometimes to both) and were married to rather wealthy husbands, while the other immigrant women and the Hawaiians struggled to get an education and make a living. Despite the paradisiacal image of Hawaii, its economy was built on the labor of the successive waves of hard-working immigrant peoples who labored in the pineapple and sugarcane plantations.

Lebra provides ample sociohistorical descriptions of a time when the family orientation was stronger and gender asymmetry hindered women from seeking higher education while simultaneously burdening them with jobs and housework. Many had to cut short their schooling in order to help their parents either by finding employment or by doing the domestic chores. In some cases older sisters helped their younger siblings to continue their educations. Nevertheless, in the patriarchal subcultures they lived in, many of the interviewees (as well as their mothers) had led matrifocal lives.

It is impressive that many were conscious of their children's schooling and proud of their educational achievements. They were patient and strong, and their experiences convey something of the atmosphere of the time when Hawaii was in the process of being interwoven into a multiethnic society with basic American socioeconomic arrangements.

The editor seems to have included within the volume every interview she recorded, probably because she wished to provide the greatest possible amount of data with the least possible modification in the makeup of the sampling. However, this policy was realized at the price of summarizing each text. Considering that each interview took more than an hour and a half and, in some cases, more than one sitting, the edited versions presented in this book are rather too short to convey the detailed information given by the interviewees. In this sense the book is less satisfying than works like *Hanahana, an Oral History Anthology of Hawaii's Working People* (1984), a product of a similar kind of oral history project. *Hanahana* presents only ten interviews, but each is extended and intensive. The lively interviews not only give detailed descriptions of events but also provide insights into the way of thinking and feeling of each interviewee. It is true that *Hanahana's* approach necessitated subjective decisions on the part of the

editors regarding which interviews they would include in the book. But it is an illusion to believe that such subjectivity can be avoided by including *all* interviews, as in *Women's Voices*, since the interviewer/editor must exercise subjectivity in selecting the people to be interviewed and in deciding the questions to be asked. An oral historian obviously cannot present data in the way that a sociologist can on the basis of the random sampling method in questionnaire research. The simple fact that there are quite a few teachers among the interviewees in *Women's Voices* indicates how difficult it is for an oral historian to present a completely balanced representation of an entire group. Since subjectivity is unavoidable anyway, I personally would have preferred to read selected interviews in their full length. I believe that the significance of oral history resides in the editor's perspective, not in his or her detachment from the texts.

In spite of this reservation, *Women's Voices* is a great contribution to our knowledge of the lives of women of the older generation in Hawaii. The strength of this book is its success in providing a rich store of information on a variety of topics: ethnic cultures, the attitudes of immigrant women towards work and education, inter-ethnic relations between women, etc. I sincerely believe that this type of project will enrich sociohistorical research on Hawaii.

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