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Patricia Grimshaw's history of the American women who first went as Protestant missionaries to Hawaii is a fascinating account, full of poignant ironies. Grimshaw restores to these women their full measure of humanity and active agency, while also showing how constrained and insulated they were by the very belief system that motivated them to transport their lives halfway around the globe.

Refusing the assumption that the eighty female missionaries who traveled to Hawaii between 1820 and 1850 were simply useful tagalongs, Grimshaw succeeds very well in her aim to establish the independent ambition of these daughters of New England, who were driven as fervently as their pious husbands to become Christian educators, to "be up and doing" in the mission field. Both the force of their piety and of the sexual division of labor in antebellum New England are conveyed in the opening discussion of the hasty marriages of convenience made--to total strangers--in order to join the venture to evangelize the islanders, since the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions would send no one out unmarried. Just as interesting, and worth pondering, is the evidence Grimshaw finds that these marriages of convenience were by and large solid, loving, and long-lasting--testimony not only to the conjugal intimacy enforced by leaving family and friends for an alien terrain, but also to the basic similarity in values and expectations of those young men and women who felt the motivation to go.

Besides their own zeal for the effort, Grimshaw wants also to make plain the missionary women's central role in what was accomplished, which is a trickier matter. She does not slight the reality that the missionary board and supporting churches presumed male superiority and preeminence in the evangelical endeavor and an auxiliary role for the wives. But she claims with apparent warrant that the presence of women missionaries was crucial in establishing a foothold in a society that was (to the missionaries' surprise) ruled by a female regent. As much as she can show that female missionaries' educative ploys turned the Christian tide with certain female chiefs (who shared power with elite males) and star pupils of both sexes in Hawaii, she also acknowledges--indeed makes the underlying counterpoint to her major theme --the time-consuming and mind-occupying labors of wifehood, motherhood, and housekeeping, which diverted them from their ostensible mission.

Much of the book is devoted to a sensitive portrayal of the mental

conflicts and emotional as well as physical burdens felt by these well-meaning if stilted women, who intended to show the natives by example as well as by precept the superior civilization and salvation to be gained by well-ordered monogamous households, three cooked meals a day, elaborate clothing, book learning, and faith in a Christian god. Scared of the ocean, unable to appreciate the alien natural beauty around them, on the Hawaiian islands these women attempted to set up households like the ones they had known in New England towns and to bear and rear their own numerous children as if in sight of a white painted church steeple. They had set themselves down in a society where people gathered their food from the sea and the trees without farming or cooking, where near-nakedness was the norm, leisure was abundant, the body was celebrated, and what the missionaries called adultery, polygamy, fornication, and divorce were neither horrors nor sins. As Grimshaw reveals, the effort to keep their own offspring free of the natives' sexual expressiveness and play became as major a goal for the missionary wives as the effort to convert the Hawaiians to Christian faith and habits. The conversion effort became itself a mission to establish family domesticity. Oblivious to the fact that European- and American-borne diseases were depopulating the islands (although distressed at losing some of their "best" converts), missionary women claimed small victories: native couples walking arm-in-arm to church, adults clothed (the women wearing all-important *hats*), sleeping mats of adults separated from those of children in thatched-roof cottages, native servants obedient and apparently Christian.

What seems perhaps most amazing, in the perspective that Grimshaw's study provides, is the extent of missionary success in gaining Christian conversion. It remains amazing--or, rather, puzzling--because Grimshaw gives us little enlightenment from the Hawaiian side. The book leaves the reader curious as to what incentive Hawaiians felt, what reward they saw in adherence to Christian behavior. Why would they put aside the traditional and functional ways of their island paradise? To missionaries the explanation was self-evident: once understanding of the Christian eschatology was achieved, adherence would follow. But to a present-day nonbeliever, this cause-and-effect is not self-evident. No doubt, Grimshaw found no Hawaiian sources equivalent and comparable to the extensive personal documents from which she drew her analysis of the missionaries' outlooks and experiences; but are there no sources--later memoirs, perhaps, or even more inquisitive or creative use of missionaries' own accounts--from which she could delineate a firmer picture of Hawaiians' experience on the receiving end? In a

more recent book, which treats the submission of the Pueblo Indians to Catholicism at the hands of Spanish Franciscan friars in New Mexico about 1600, Ramon Gutierrez provides a model for such interactive study of evangelical missions, utilizing the friars' reports and ethnologists and anthropologists' later studies of the worldview of the traditional Pueblos. Pueblo nakedness and patterns of expressive sexuality resembled the Hawaiians', stimulating in the friars the same kind of fascinated repugnance and urgency for drastic change that Protestant missionaries in Hawaii felt. In this work, *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1991), Gutierrez's revelation of the friars' calculated use of Pueblo cosmology, and their deployment of sacred drama to insinuate their Catholic worldview, enables US to understand their methods of inspiring fear and devotion and the Native Americans' response to force and charisma. Despite the obvious difference between Catholic and Protestant aims, between Spain's imperialism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and America's in the nineteenth, and between male friars and married women missionaries, what stands out in juxtaposing these two studies is the overriding similarity of the habits and practices that missionaries in both cases attempted to impose on New World natives by means of Christian force and belief.

Grimshaw's book has appeared just as a priority for studies exploring the interaction of women of different ethnic, class, or racial groups has superseded an earlier historiographical focus on white middle-class women's experiences. (The recent publication of an anthology of articles, *Unequal Sisters: A Multicultural Reader in U.S. Women's History,* edited by Ellen DuBois and Vicki Ruiz [N.Y.: Routledge, 1990], may be taken as a benchmark in this development.) Grimshaw's study is situated to enable this sort of intercultural investigation, but rather than making that a principal goal, she has persisted with the earlier model, which is in keeping with her major point that the missionaries fended off and refused to be influenced by Hawaiian modes of living. Her creditable inclusion of some discussion of Hawaiians' lives and incidents of interaction with individual missionary women whets the appetite of the reader for a more fully intercultural history, one that would devote (or at least attempt to devote) the same psychological attention to the Hawaiians' minds as to the missionaries'.

In more than one way, comparative perspectives would have enhanced the value and force of Grimshaw's book. Although two major histories with similar intent have preceded hers--Patricia Hill's *The*

World Their Household: The American Women's Foreign Mission Movement and Cultural Transformation, 1870-1920 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1985), and Jane Hunter's *The Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984)--Grimshaw does not even cite the former and does not use the latter to any comparative purpose, which it might well serve since its documentary sources and approach are parallel, although setting and generation differ. The paradoxes of Hawaii missionary wives' lives joined them with, as much as they separated them from, the lives of their contemporaries back at home, as Grimshaw knows; equally true, the aims and burdens of those in Hawaii were not unique amid the missionary endeavors of American women. By placing them in the comparative context of their "sisters," Grimshaw might have illuminated their particularities even better. The plainest comparison in Grimshaw's book is that between husbands and wives, between male missionaries and female, but even here, the comparison is often by implication, an intensive examination of the women's outlook premised on the tacit assumption that their husbands' differed. Do we know, however, that husbands felt any differently about their successes and failures, without comparative investigation? The juxtaposition of Gutierrez's book on Catholic missions among the Pueblos with Grimshaw's study of Protestant missions to the Hawaiians strongly suggests that the aims and momentum of Christianization overwhelmed significant male-female differences in the implementation of it. A concerted focus on the male-female axis of comparison would have placed Grimshaw's study more squarely within the upcoming trend to remake the field of women's history into the history of gender relations.