

Night is a Sharkskin Drum are literally overwhelming—they have to be. The beat of the drum is loud and alive here, and not muted as the sharkskin drums I recently saw behind glass in a museum. By drawing on a strength of her culture—the hula as embodied in the drum—Trask strengthens that culture and reminds us of the multiple ties that bind it together, while adding a new tie through her poetry.

Trask's strength reminds me of the Russian poets Osip Mandelstam and Marina Tsvetaeva. The allusions to Pele are in themselves revolutionary—they are an act of defiant memory. The assertive Hawaiian voice of the poems is in contrast to the economic coercion of the tourist culture Trask criticizes: "Every tourist, a camera / to capture us Natives" ("At Punalu'u," 31); "Even prostitutes know / their profession, but natives?" ("Dispossessions of Empire, III," 35).

The voice also strongly counters the American presence in Hawai'i, from the time of the missionaries to the present: "for our dead, / then stand / with the *lāhui* / and burn / their American / flag" ("Pūowaina: Flag Day," 28).

This is the bold and uncompromising voice of a poet.

Trask speaks to many Polynesians. Albert Wendt, Witi Ihimaera, Epeli Hau'ofa, Reina Whaitiri, and Sia Figiel all have contributed impressive praise for the front page and back cover of the book, and rightly so. On the back cover, Figiel gives us an insight to the inner workings of the poems: "despite the ugliness she has seen, the ugliness that has pierced her, stabbed her, wounded her, scarred her and her people, there is beauty still."

Let me not only celebrate the political and cultural levels of this book. On reading some of these poems I found the same delight in particulars as in reading Pablo Neruda's *Mare-moto Seaquake* (1993). In the shallows of Waimānalo, Trask finds "caves / filled with / cooled lava / and little / sparkling fish" ("The Shallows," 52). In "Run into the Sea," we're immersed in "foam and plume," and "spume salting the wind" (55). She conjures the soul's leaping place for Hawaiians' ancestral Kahiki (Tahiti). It is here, in the poem's setting, that I wish to leave this review, in the homeland of eastern Polynesia, a paradise extolled as Rangiatea (also within the Tahitian group) by Māori, a place where at least our souls are sovereign:

"Blue, now gold / a great *honu* follows. / Beyond the leaping / point, our souls / depart. / More beautiful still" ("Together," 59).

Stroke the words, dance in the light, join the circle of gods and people of this very fine and thought-provoking book.

ROBERT SULLIVAN

University of Hawai'i, Mānoa

* * *

When the Shark Bites, by Rodney Morales. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002. ISBN 0-8248-2565-9, viii + 360 pages. US\$17.00.

The publication of Rodney Morales's novel *When the Shark Bites* extends his already significant contributions to the literature of Hawai'i and the Pacific, his short story collection *Speed of Darkness* (1988) and his edited

volume *Ho'i Ho'i Hou: A Tribute to George Helm and Kimo Mitchell* (1984). In *Ho'i Ho'i Hou*, Morales and his contributors memorialized the struggle of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana (PKO) and its charismatic leader, George Helm, and attempted to piece together the details of Helm's last days before his and Kimo Mitchell's mysterious disappearance. Morales's collection *Speed* includes his short story "Daybreak over Haleakala/Heartbreak Memories," which is in many ways a memorial to poet and activist Wayne Westlake after his tragic death in a car accident on Maui. Morales's first novel, *When the Shark Bites*, is an extension of this earlier work in both its fictionalization of the events following Helm's disappearance and in Morales's deft interweaving of history, colonial resistance movements, popular culture, and native Hawaiian tradition. Told through the oral recountings of various characters, including the four members of the Rivera family—parents Kanani and Henry, and sons Mākena and 'Analu—Morales's novel asks readers to consider the fluid and complex nature of history as told by the Riveras to the historian Alika. Their tellings indicate varying degrees of proximity, which produce a kind of deferred and shifting historical "reality." Kanani's and Henry's stories include Alika's more "public" tape-recorded testimonies as well as dialogue and recollection "off the record," after the tape recorder has been turned off.

And yet the entire story of Helm's disappearance and its larger political implications, while unfolding in dramatic fashion, are not completely

revealed to us. Rather, what is revealed more fully is a perspective on understanding the resistance and struggle of everyday people in Hawai'i. The connections between the US military, foreign and multinational investment, elite corruption, and the syndicate are revealed by implication and through Mākena's changing relationship with the mysterious lifeguard and surfer, Manny. Like Morales's adolescent characters in *Speed*, Mākena comes to a deeper understanding of what drives politics and the economy in the islands and what resistance to these forces entails. His initial fascination and fear of the tattooed Manny turns upon the meaning behind the novel's title, the ballad "Mack the Knife," popularized by singers such as Bobby Darin and Frank Sinatra, and initially made famous in Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill's *Threepenny Opera*, which details the life of the criminal Mackie or MacHeath. As a ballad about a gangster, "Mack the Knife" articulates one of the many ways in which the shark signifies in Morales's text: as predatory "land sharks" or land speculators, the US military "grunts" who rape a local woman and attempt to kill Manny, and gangsters and syndicate lords who pull the strings of state policymakers. Mākena's initial perception of Manny as a "shark man" shifts steadily throughout the story as Manny reveals his own involvement in investigating the syndicate's actions. Here, the novel's evocation of the ballad and hard-boiled detective aesthetic fits perfectly with Morales's critique.

There is much to admire about Morales's first novel. The voices of

Kanani, Henry, and their children are beautifully and sensitively rendered. Passages that stay with this reader include the young 'Analu's story of Grampa Wong and the lovebird, Mākena's account of the surf party in "The Runner-up," and the small-time criminal Sparkey Lopez's harrowing account of his betrayal by the gangster Harley Evans. Lopez's voice in "The Ultimate Salesman" recounts how his own high-school antics—his dumping fundraiser sweetbread and paper flowers at Bellows Beach—return in his adulthood in ironic ways, with his having to dispose of a dead body for Harley Evans. Like Mackie who dumps a corpse in the river, Sparkey dumps the body weighed down by a bag of cement in a pond near the Nu'uaniu Pali. In these chapters Morales stuns the reader with his keen ear for pidgin, its inflections, rhythms, and variations across a range of ages and personalities. He convincingly conveys Mākena's earnest and perceptive observations of human nature, 'Analu's innocent knowing, and Sparkey's fearful hysteria, his degradation, and ironic humor.

Readers may find that Morales's depictions of women in the novel are perhaps less than ideal. For example, the strongest female character, Kanani, is rendered in less overtly political ways—as bearer of Keoni's child—and her significance diminishes as the novel progresses into the more contemporary moment of Henry's love affair, Mākena's car accident, and the resolution of the gangster narrative. Nevertheless, Kanani's voice and her stories of other women (such as her neighbor Beth, whose Waikiki home is destroyed by arson) are

significant presences. Perhaps the overtly masculine nature of the topic (eg, Helm's disappearance, the syndicate, the world of surfing) makes for a rather masculine text, not to mention the highly gendered nature of detective fiction in general. As in *Speed*, the strength of this novel is its perspective on class politics, and it is Kanani, after all, who voices this significant critique (96). All in all, Morales's *When the Shark Bites* is definitely worth reading and reading again.

SUSAN Y NAJITA
*University of Michigan,
 Ann Arbor*

* * *

Handle With Care: Ownership and Control of Ethnographic Materials, edited by Sjoerd R Jaarsma. Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania Monograph Series. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002. ISBN 0-8229-5777-9; x + 264 pages, tables, map, photographs, notes, bibliography, index. Paper, US\$16.95.

This is a valuable and fascinating collection of papers discussing the ownership and repatriation of field notes and field materials. It is the product of sessions run at Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania conferences and bears the imprint of these discussions in useful cross-referencing between chapters. The contributions are short and clear and include writings from ethnographers, archivists, and ethnomusicologists. The issues addressed are highly charged in terms of ethics, morality, and politics, and