UCLA

American Indian Culture and Research Journal

Title

Hopi Tales of Destruction. Collected, translated, and edited by Ekkehart Malotki.

Permalink

https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5j5734rv

Journal

American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 27(2)

ISSN

0161-6463

Author

Hieb, Louis A.

Publication Date

2003-03-01

DOI

10.17953

Copyright Information

This work is made available under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial License, available at https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

and the focus on NAGPRA in this particular text. In the Afterwards, the series editors suggest that "those . . . made largely powerless" by struggles such as NAGPRA "might well and productively root themselves within this differentiation, rather than seeking unity" (p. 196). This approach belies a certain posturing that undermines the very agency that might be credited with the passage of the law. Tribes as nations are capable of both strategically presenting a united front and simultaneously managing their own internal affairs. The fact that tribes do disagree among themselves and others in response to NAG-PRA (a situation described by Fine-Dare as "horrific" on page 170) should not justify advocating major policy changes along lines of differentiation or unity, for both can serve as productive strategic tools in obtaining justice.

Grave Injustice provides a useful account of the NAGPRA movement, a term Fine-Dare uses appropriately and contextualizes usefully. The problems due to passage of the law spelled out at length in chapter five, "NAGPRA as a Cultural and Legal Product," offer a clear outline that could be put to use as a tool in classroom discussion. The conclusion's "Summary of Key Points" also presents a succinct analysis of how this legislation might be considered within the context of international human rights efforts, with a history that offers a myriad of cultural and political meanings. The author's overall conclusion—that the treatment of American Indian bodies and sacred objects is a metaphor for the overall treatment of Native Americans in America since its inception—will certainly enhance the standing of this work in courses on American studies, legal studies, history, and anthropology.

Nancy Marie Mithlo Smith College

Hopi Tales of Destruction. Collected, translated, and edited by Ekkehart Malotki; narrated by Michael Lomatuway'ma, Lorena Lomatuway'ma, and Sidney Namingha Jr. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002. 230 pages. \$27.95 paper.

Hopi Tales of Destruction makes available the English language portion of the bilingual, English/Hopi publication Hopi Ruin Legends: Kiqotutuwutsi issued by the University of Nebraska Press in 1993. The work presents narratives collected from four Hopi consultants (one remains anonymous) concerning the destruction of seven Hopi ancestral villages, most notably Hisatongoopavi (Old Shungopavi), Sikyatki, and Awat'ovi. Malotki provides an introductory commentary for each narrative summarizing what is known archaeologically of each ruin. In addition, he provides detailed discussions of Paaloloqangwt (mythic Water Serpents), koyaanisqatsi (social chaos), and powaqa (witchcraft) as contexts for understanding the destructions of Hisatsongoopavi and Pivanhonkyapi and the abandonment of Huk'ovi. In a revised preface, Malotki describes recent archaeological research about the place of violence, warfare, and cannibalism in Puebloan prehistory. An extensive glossary provides background into many cultural elements mentioned in the narratives.

Reviews 127

Among the many Hopi narrative genres, a basic distinction is made between navoti (traditional knowledge) and tuutuwutsi (stories, tales, possible fictions). What linguist Malotki has gathered together and glossed as kigotutuwutsi-nin legends or ruin stories—are narratives that provide explanations for ancestral Hopi villages, prehistoric and historic, which are now unoccupied. Although ruin narratives exist as separate stories (as collected here), they are also found in clan migration narratives and in accounts describing the movement of the hostiles from Oraibi in 1906. A Hopi perspective defining the content and social meaning of kiqotutuwutsi was recorded by H. R. Voth in The Traditions of the Hopi (1905): "One time the children (people) of the chief in Oraibi were very bad and the chief concluded that he would punish them. So he went over to the warrior chief in Walpi. [There follows an account of a trick in which the people are lured out of Oraibi to attack Walpi and are killed on their return journey.] This is the way in which chiefs often punished their children (people) when they became 'bewitched.' That is one reason there are so many ruins all over the country" (pp. 255, 256). The existence of ruins provides a precedent for a paradigm of social causality that's expressed in more general form in the Hopi emergence narratives and prophecy.

The narratives recorded and translated by Malotki are about seven villages known archaeologically and, in the case of Awat'ovi, in historical records as well. Malotki's introduction to the narrative of "The Demise of Sikyatki" is typical of his approach, which brings together linguistic, archaeological, and historical evidence. Sikyatki is located about two and a half miles northeast of the well-known First Mesa village of Walpi and is known for its distinctive Jeddito Yellow Ware pottery. A more modern legend has it that Lesou (a Hopi man from Walpi whom Jesse Walter Fewkes hired to assist with excavations at the ruin in 1895) brought examples of the pottery to his wife, Nampeyo, a potter in the Tewa-speaking village of Hano, and that this played a significant role in the renaissance of Hopi ceramic art.

As Malotki points out, it's not known when Sikyatki was abandoned, although it was probably between A.D. 1500 and 1600, before the arrival of the Spaniards. Nor is it known why Sikyatki was abandoned. One theory proposes that the Jeddito pueblos east of First Mesa were not Hopi and that Sikyatki was one of this group. As Malotki notes, several other "ruin legends" regarding Sikyatki point to conflicts between Walpi and Sikyatki. Here, as elsewhere, Malotki reviews previously recorded narratives. He does not mention an account of the destruction of the "See-cat-kee Indians," published in 1881 by Jeremiah Sullivan, then agency physician who was living on First Mesa. In Sullivan's version, the Sikyatkis were a different tribe who farmed lands to the east of First Mesa while Walpians farmed to the west. The Sikyatkis controlled two springs and "a bank of the best pottery clay." In Sullivan's narrative, a woman from Walpi is attracted to the clay that she needs to finish a water jug, but once at the source of the clay she continues on to get a drink of water and is captured. Walpi pays a ransom and the woman is returned. However, the people of Walpi then meet in council with the Hopis of Mishongnovi and Oraibi and afterwards attack and destroy Sikyatki except for young girls who are captured and later become wives. For Sullivan, the destruction of Sikyatki was a "tale of envious warfare" and not clearly a narrative with moral implications. Sullivan had lived among the Hopi for only three months and was only beginning to learn Hopi when he published his account in the *Madison* [Indiana] *Daily Evening Star.*

In the preface to *Hopi Tales of Destruction*, Malotki presents a new context for understanding these narrative explanations of ruins. He finds in them confirmation from a Hopi viewpoint of recent archaeological evidence of a "climate of chronic violence and conflict" and "cannibalistic practices among the ancient Anasazi." And although the legends are "more fictitious than factual," Malotki regards them as culturally important because they "shed light not only on the Hopi past but also on the Hopi psyche." Having stated his thesis, Malotki disappoints us (perhaps) by not extending it as an analytic perspective throughout the text. But is this what the *kiqotutuwutsi* are about—either in form or content? These narratives are Hopi theories of the past, theories that affirm the importance of the past in shaping the present and the future. They set out a paradigm of social causality that is not unique to these "ruins narratives," but is found in Hopi emergence and clan migration narratives and in Hopi prophecy as well.

These "tales," to use Malotki's term, are narratives of the past. However, they do not report events of the past simply or unambiguously. The teller ("story rememberers") implicitly or explicity *liken* the circumstances of the past to those of the present. In "The Annihilation of Awat'ovi," Ta'palo, the chief of Awot'ovi, calls on other villages to destroy his own people who were "out of control." Ta'palo says, "The same thing took place when we still lived in the underworld. Now I want my village erased from the surface of the earth. It is to disappear completely" (p. 182).

Hopi Tales of Destruction presents a group of narratives that define what it is to be hopi (one who adheres to the Hopi way of life) by considering the consequences of behavior that is qahopi (bad behavior) or qahopqatsi (a bad way of life). The ordering of events in these narratives is not a linear, temporal chronology employing a year-indexical system, as are Western historical narratives. Rather, these "tales" are powerfully tied to ruins whose physical reality the narratives seek to explain. Malotki provides archaeological contexts but does not follow the lead given by Ta'palo, who likened the circumstances in Awat'ovi to those described in the Hopi emergence narratives. These ruins narratives are part of a chain of memories and, consequently, historically important, but they're also part of a body of knowledge in which the remembered past has ethical meaning for the present. Rather than seeking clues to cannibalism and chronic violence in the past, we would be better served by Malotki through a consideration of the community that defines and sustains these narratives in the present.

Louis A. Hieb University of Washington