

The note, while recounting the challenges of *Third World Women's History* (the emphasis is mine), said: "It is important to avoid three common pitfalls: interpreting women as the exotic, women as victims, and women as anomalies" (xvii).

The book fulfills a gap long felt in teaching a general understanding of women's historic roles in Asia. The style is simple and free of jargon. Unlike most similar works, this one places glossaries, maps, and chronologies at the beginning and not the end, which makes the reading easy and smooth. In terms of time and span this study glides through centuries, from the earliest to the 1990s. It explores human experience as informed and shaped by a diverse terrain of concepts, philosophies and beliefs, ranging from the Vedic, Hindu, Buddhist, and Islamic patterns.

The volume falls into two sections. The first section, "Women in South and Southeast Asia" (1-141) is authored by Professor Barbara Ramusack and the second one, "Women in China, Japan, and Korea" (143-2540), is by Professor Sharon Sievers. Both these sections have extensive bibliographies including only secondary sources written in the non-indigenous languages by researchers and authors either from outside the regions or by those trained at and informed by non-indigenous institutions. This is by no means a reflection on the credibility of the authors' research tools and methodology. What it does, however, is change the focus of events and analysis of roles and thus create a perspective different from a woman's.

Let me give an example to illustrate what I mean by this oversight of a selective use of sources for restoring women to history. Ramusack's narrative of women in South Asia has overlooked even a simple inclusion of the name of Chand Bibi, who challenged the power of the mightiest Mughal, Emperor Akbar, in the seventeenth century of the Christian era. Similarly amazing is the lack of knowledge of the role of Begum Hazrat Mahal, who led the armies of both Hindu and Muslim male stalwarts against the British colonialists in the first War of Independence in 1857. Ramusack does mention the role of Rani Lakshmi Bai, another charismatic leader and Hazrat Mahal's contemporary by

saying: "For the next four years the Rani tried to secure the rights of her adopted son, and eventually she *joined the revolt of Indian troops in 1857*" (emphasis is mine). A slight twist of the words and phrases changes the whole role of Indian women leaders in the First War of Independence of 1857. Later, however, the narrative brings up women's activism both in the reform and the nationalist movement of the twentieth century. All of this discussion heavily relies on non-Indian sources.

In her second narrative of "Women's History in South East Asia," Ramusack guides the reader to Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines. Once again, the task of recreating women's roles from 1500 BCE to the most recent is a challenging one, and the information is drawn from historical writings in the English language, so that the author's arguments tend to emphasise outside influences on local ideas and movements. Overall, however, the work is a commendable addition to the scarce writings on South East Asian women's history.

Sharon Sievers covers a similarly wide area in terms of space and chronology in her section on "Women in East Asia" which reconstructs the history of China, Japan, and Korea for us. With the help of diligently prepared maps, chronologies and bibliographies, Sievers in her study analyses the impact of Confucianism, Neo-Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, and other philosophies and beliefs on women's lives and experiences. The author has finely dealt with the issue of footbinding custom in China (182-84) and how it should be examined in classroom teachings.

Women in Asia successfully reconstructs women's history for the use of classroom teaching in the colleges in the West. At the same time, it sets out the possibilities of further research with the help of well-prepared bibliographies.

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Feminist Locations: Global and Local, Theory and Practice. Marianne Dekoven, editor. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press,

2001; viii + 345 pages; index; ISBN 0-8135-2923-9; \$25.00US.

Feminist Locations, like many such collections, is eclectic and held together as much by elastic as by logic. But unlike many such collections, it is not based on a single conference, but on the lectures delivered from 1995 to 1998 in several different series organised by the Institute for Research on Women at Rutgers University while Marianne Dekoven was the Director. She clearly did a great job in attracting some notable "names" to the Institute - Charlotte Bunch, Ann Kaplan, and Lynne Segal to name just a few. Each of the articles makes a serious and interesting contribution to feminist debate and knowledge.

The problem, of course, is that it is very difficult to do justice to all the "diversity along all relevant axes of difference, including - in addition to diversity of race, ethnicity, sexuality and geographical location - disciplinary diversity and diversity of orientation toward scholarship and activism" (vii) and remain a coherent collection. We know something about the problem in *Atlantis: A Women's Studies Journal*, which, like all feminist journals, tries to represent the widest possible diversity in Canadian feminist "knowledge." We fail, of course, but there is always a "next time" with a journal, which there is not with an anthology such as this.

I had a particular moment of disappointment because I read the title as having something to do with the theme of this issue - Women and Development. But it isn't, except in a few cases, and those somewhat coincidentally. Charlotte Bunch's paper on women's Human Rights in the context of global feminism, for example, addresses the critical issue of whether there are universal values and rights that all women, in all their diverse situations, can identify with. Bunch points to the success and extent of women's Human Rights networking globally to show not only that there are such universal values, but that the best way to acknowledge and negotiate diversity is in the framework of a shared feminist enterprise. Debra Liebowitz takes up similar themes in her discussion of the feminist activism that grew up in resistance to the NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement). She discusses the way in which different anti-NAFTA

movements grew up (and later, together) in Canada, Mexico and USA, giving full credit to the leading role played by Canadian groups. These groups were not only different to one another, but also contained potentially divisive differences within themselves. Commonality and difference were in constant tension, although Liebowitz remains convinced that "issue-focused transnational advocacy networking" represents a strategy for organising across difference - provided that "attention to difference is a fundamental part of working conversations and strategy building" (186).

I have picked out these two papers because they have the most direct relevance to the theme of this issue of *Atlantis*, but there is much good reading in the other twelve papers. This collection does, in my view, manage to represent a good deal of some of the best in the diversity in current feminist thinking - and that is no mean achievement.

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Sketches of Labrador Life. Lydia Campbell, with an introduction by the Rev. Arthur Waghorne and a forward by Doris Saunders. St. John's, Newfoundland: Killick Press, 2000; x + 53 pages; ISBN 1-894294-27-0. \$19.95. Illustrated with many reproductions of original black and white photographs and colour photographs of contemporary Inuit art work.

This book is an act of love. It is a re-printing of Lydia Campbell's account of her life as a woman of Labrador in the late nineteenth century. But it is much more than that. It is a re-presenting of this energetic and feisty woman to a new generation; it is testimonial to Lydia's descendants, who include her great, great granddaughter, Doris Saunders, who has done so much to make Labrador life and culture visible; and it is an exhibition of the variety, skill and beauty of Labrador art today. It is an art book, but not a "coffee table" book. It is affordable, and