

Bob Krauss, *Keneti: South Seas Adventures of Kenneth Emory*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988. Pp. 472, illus., index. US\$35.00.

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Having previously never written any book reviews for this journal, I was quite surprised when I received a request a little while ago to put down on paper what I think about Bob Krauss's biography of the grand old man of Pacific science, professor Kenneth Emory. But it soon appeared to me that the book review editor of *Pacific Studies* must be aware of my close association with Keneti, as he is called by Pacific islanders, over the past forty years.

In 1949-1951, when I was doing my first fieldwork in Polynesia, he became my faithful correspondent and mentor. While preparing my notes for publication in Honolulu in 1952-1953, he kindly gave me free access to his own field notes from the Tuamotu islands, where he had undertaken pioneering studies twenty years earlier. Subsequently he saw to it that I was appointed a British Museum honorary associate in anthropology, which meant that my link with him became permanent. After my French wife, Marie-Thérèse, and I had settled for good in Tahiti in 1954, Kenneth and his French-Tahitian wife, Marguerite, were frequent guests in our Papehue home. Alternatively, we stayed with them in their home in historic Nuuanu Valley on many occasions, during which they told us fascinating stories about their life. From 1962 on, I often assisted Kenneth and his favorite pupil, Yosi Sinoto, during their annual diggings in the Society Islands, which resulted in a long series of epoch-making archaeological discoveries. Last but not least, I spent much time in 1967 gathering material and interviewing people

about Kenneth's career to comply with a request by Bishop Museum trustees to write the introductory biographical chapter for a festschrift presented to Emory on his seventieth birthday.

These must be the reasons, I conclude, for asking me to pass judgment on this book, and I must confess that I feel quite qualified to do so. My first reaction is to say that since my friend Kenneth has never felt compelled to write down his own memoirs, despite much encouragement to do so, we must all be extremely grateful to Bob Krauss for having undertaken this task in close cooperation with him and in such congenial manner that the reader almost has the feeling that this is an autobiography. Nevertheless, it is better, I think, that the narrator is not Kenneth, for his extraordinary modesty would have made him reluctant, if he had been the author, to give himself full credit for all his pioneering work and to appear as the hero he often was in the numerous battles he has been involved in. Incidentally, it is not at all surprising to us, his friends, who have always admired him for his almost saintly devotion to the cause of science, that in his youth he toyed with the idea of becoming a missionary--in the Pacific, of course.

As all authors and readers of biographies will admit, it is practically impossible to write a four hundred-page book that contains no factual errors, but this is what Bob Krauss has managed to do. His achievement is the more remarkable considering that the story he is telling spans ninety years and the whole Pacific. Once more I base this judgment on personal experience, that is, the way in which Krauss used the information I supplied during several long interviews. Most important, however, is the skill with which he has managed throughout to concentrate on and emphasize the crucial events and facts, without neglecting to sprinkle his narrative, as a good writer should, with amusing anecdotes. To sum up, the author has produced a splendid book of great documentary value that will be used and read for pleasure by professionals and amateurs alike interested in the Pacific islanders, their history, and their culture. It is moreover illustrated with well-chosen old photographs.

If we want to assess Emory's achievements correctly, the best approach in my opinion--obviously shared by Krauss--is to compare them to those of his contemporary colleagues Peter Buck, Raymond Firth, Craighill Handy, and Herbert Gregory. What makes him *primus inter pares* is no doubt his enormous versatility, since he has been in turn or at the same time an ethnohistorian, a social anthropologist, a linguist, an artifact specialist, and an archaeologist. His most amazing achievement is, of course, his metamorphosis in 1950 into a first-rate archaeologist, who discovered in the Kuliouou cave on Oahu rich

deposits that yielded the first Polynesian carbon date. This gave the impetus to the numerous later diggings elsewhere in the Pacific, which made it possible to reconstruct the prehistory of the islanders with an accuracy never attained by the sort of comparative studies based on the diffusion of cultural elements that had been prevalent during the first half of this century. Because Emory has constantly been the precursor who has set the trend, his life story offers the additional attraction that it is likewise a general history of all scientific work undertaken in the cultural field by the whole body of Pacific scholars.

My last remarks, this time highly critical, concern the peculiar lack of appreciation Emory has sometimes encountered. For instance, how does it come, we must ask, that an eminent American scientist like him has had to endure all his life such an incredible poverty and spend so much of his valuable time trying to raise money for his epoch-making field trips? Having often met him in remote islands in the South Pacific, I have each time been appalled by the sort of beachcomber or Robinson Crusoe life he has been forced to lead for lack of funds--of course, without ever complaining. Strangely enough, Keneti has not been more gallantly treated by the government officials in the *patrie* of his wife, French Polynesia, where he has carried out over a period of fifty years the major anthropological, linguistic, and archaeological investigations that form the basis for the present educational work, tourist shows, and politically motivated search for their roots by the lost generation of Polynesian youths. Yet, Kenneth Emory's tremendous contributions are never praised or even mentioned in official speeches and publications, no street in Papeete is named after him and no commemorative plaques have been installed. Let us hope that this unfair neglect will, to some extent, be remedied by the prompt translation of Krauss's outstanding and highly readable biography into French.