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As a Polynesian historian I have written this review from a historian's viewpoint. This labeling may seem misguided and inappropriate, particularly since I consider anthropological data and interpretations essential to any understanding of Polynesian history, but I want to concentrate on the historical rather than the anthropological aspects of the book under review.

Making History is a significant contribution to the growing dialogue and interpenetration of the disciplines and methodologies of anthropology and history, especially in the field of Pacific studies. Borofsky's investigation of the nature and antecedents of the *Akatawa* on the atoll of Pukapuka provides Pacific specialists with another example of the

dialectic between past and present: of the re-creation and reinterpreta, tion of past tradition to explain, organize, and structure present realities. The subtleties, ambiguities, and complexities of Pukapukan social organization and beliefs are carefully highlighted to emphasize that, while one form of social organization may predominate over a given period of time, there are others known to older members of society that can quite legitimately be invoked if circumstances require. Borofsky does not fully investigate the causal conditions that gave rise to the 1976 "re-creation" of the *Akatawa,* but he reports many Pukapukans as saying that it was good for the young to know about the past (pp. 10, 132-134) and, by implication, for them to recognize that there were other forms of social organization.

Borofsky's recognition that most ethnographers have standardized and overgeneralized complex and conflicting bodies of data, and forced them into atemporal frameworks, is a welcome addition to a growing body of criticism on this subject. In the past most ethnographies and, even more so, most histories have been overdetermined—too structured and too homogeneous. No human society can be so succinctly encapsulated. Historians, however, have been more willing than anthropologists to recognize that there will be different interpretations of the same events both over time and by various investigators. Among anthropologists on the other hand the tendency has been to believe that conflicting data or interpretations meant one or the other anthropologist had got it wrong, rather than to recognize that different viewpoints and different points in time will inevitably influence both observation and interpretation.

Borofsky scrutinizes the work on Pukapuka of anthropologists Ernest and Pearl Beaglehole in the 1930s and Julia Hecht in the 1970s in an attempt to understand why none of them discovered or discussed the *Akatawa.* Mercifully no Freeman/Mead-type histrionics are indulged in; rather, Borofsky outlines the intellectual backgrounds and preconceptions that these anthropologists brought to their study of Pukapuka over a time interval of forty years. He recognizes that contextual factors are crucial components in the differing analyses each presents, although he is surprisingly blinkered or else reticent to mention the gender politics involved. He concentrates on the work of Ernest rather than Pearl Beaglehole, justifying his choice with the claim that Ernest collected most of the material, although he recognized that Pearl had done some outstandingly original work (p. 48). In the 1980s it is still extraordinarily difficult for the import of an accompanying wife's contribution to fieldwork and the resultant publications to be fully acknowledged: In

the 1930s it was probably unthinkable. Surely the patrilineal bias in Ernest Beaglehole's published ethnography of Pukapuka, which Borofsky later reveals (p. 53), can in part be traced to the androcentric milieu in which Ernest Beaglehole was trained and in which he operated? Similarly the fact that Julia Hecht is a woman and that her work was done in a period when many anthropologists were applying feminist critiques to the practice of anthropology has clearly influenced her approach and interpretation.

To date Pacific historians have been cavalier toward the history and experience of atoll dwellers. For obvious reasons they have concentrated on the high-island archipelagoes where the majority of Europeans visited, settled, and left documentary evidence of at least some of their activities. But as Pacific history becomes more truly island focused, the atolls can no longer be ignored. For this reason Borofsky's book will be of great value, not only for the material on Pukapuka, but also for his illumination of a number of problems historians must recognize and come to terms with. Pukapukans' desire to reach a consensus in public discussion can lead to silence on the part of participants who do not agree with the consensus that develops, while others sometimes become convinced of the correctness of the consensus point of view although earlier they had espoused very different positions (pp. 10-11). Borofsky also reveals that when a consensus could not be achieved the Pukapukans let a number of ambiguous interpretations remain unresolved rather than bring the matter to a conclusion (p. 147).

The problems these traits posed for Borofsky in dictionary work make fascinating reading (pp. 147-149). Borofsky also gives a telling account of how the Pukapukans themselves described the events surrounding the decision to terminate the *Akatawa.* The role of individuals, as Borofsky had observed it, was subordinated in the Pukapukan account, which emphasized the consensual nature of the discussion and decision. Integrating the atolls into the general history of the Pacific will not be easy. But it is crucial that any future, non-island historian be aware of these cultural characteristics and weigh all evidence from whatever source in the light of them, for otherwise the complexities and nuances of atoll dwellers' experience will be lost. Furthermore, historians would be most unwise to believe that the desire for consensus and the lack of closure over contentious issues were not important characteristics of many Pacific cultures.

The preface and opening chapter of *Making History* led me to believe that the book would be a further contribution to the growing literature on the invention of tradition and the anthropological interpretations of

history, which have been so excitingly developed in recent years by, among others, Sahlins, Clifford, Marcus, and Dening. In fact Borofsky presents very little further material in this genre. Even the antecedents, operations, and final demise of the *Akatawa* are not fully analyzed, Chapters 3 and 4 (of a total of five chapters) explore questions of cognitive anthropology—both Pukapukan and anthropological ways of knowing. It would be quite unfair of me to argue that Borofsky should have written a different sort of book, but there is a discrepancy between the theory of cultural invention in which he sets his work and what he finally offers in that mode. As a historian I am also critical of Borofsky's limited historical vision and interests. From his account only anthropologists and Pukapukans appear to influence the creation of Pukapukan knowledge, The presence of foreign missionaries and government agents, of traders and trading activities is fleetingly mentioned but none is recognized or acknowledged as having had any influence on the Pukapukans' past, or their knowledge or interpretation of that past.

The growing dialogue between Pacific anthropologists and historians has raised new questions and offered more complex and subtle interpretations of Pacific peoples, both past and present. *Making History* offers historians in particular much food for thought.