

ers. Margaret Mead was representative of anthropologists in that era, one in which Pacific Islanders and other indigenous peoples around the world were seen as relatively unchanged by time and useful as convenient laboratories for anthropological inquiry. The existing world order went unquestioned, and Mead and others in academia were comfortable to support the interests of the United States during the war and the immediate post-war years. The Vietnam War, and now the conflict in Iraq, have challenged the conscience of many Americans and brought US foreign policy under increased scrutiny and criticism. A greater number of anthropologists and other members of the academy today are more aware and concerned about the ethical issues inherent in research with their fellow human beings.

The volume will interest readers concerned about the nuclear dilemmas that face the people and nations of the world today, and it raises issues that are crucial to the practice of anthropology. The various chapters are diverse in content and style, but they are well organized and form a coherent whole. The main theme of the volume is captured in a quote from Edward Liebow, the author of the chapter on Hanford: “wherever a nuclear power glows on the world map, one can expect to find a marginalized region within its national boundaries or colonial territories with its very own bands of nuclear Natives” (145).

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Texts and Contexts: Reflections in Pacific Islands Historiography, edited by Doug Munro and Brij V Lal. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006. ISBN 978-0-8248-2942-1; 264 pages, notes, index. US\$47.00.

In *Texts and Contexts: Reflections in Pacific Islands Historiography*, editors Doug Munro and Brij V Lal present a series of essays that explore the rise of Pacific Islands history as a field of study from 1938 to 1992. While the temporal scope could have expanded to include older and more recent studies, this era was chosen because its authors generated what the editors call the “foundational texts” of the field (1). Sixteen contributors, comprising anthropologists and historians, thus examine thirty different authors whose texts initially shaped the meaning and direction of Pacific Islands history. To what degree contextual issues of audience response, disciplinary training, personal interest, and scholarly credibility actually informed these texts is a matter taken up by the contributors. As the editors note, “each contributor was asked to examine a particular text—in some cases, complementary texts—in the context of its/their inception, production, and intellectual influence on a particular field of research” (6). A few texts were produced by independent scholars and nonacademics, whose works might even be considered primary sources of the twentieth century. But the majority of these texts were histories written by former colonial officials, many of whom held academic positions in or professional affiliations with the Australian National University (ANU).

Interested in the exploits of Euro-

pean explorers and settlers, many officials-turned-historians clamored to write about these figures in an attempt to impose disciplinary uniformity in what was and continues to be a disparate field of study. The contexts, then, of colonial governance, individual curiosity, and university professionalism provided the means through which Pacific Islands history distinguished itself from the established history canons of Europe and North America, and from the emergent anthropology canons of the Pacific. In this respect, this anthology is less a critique of the ways in which historians write about the past, and more a nostalgic tribute to a generation of scholars and scholarship who once asserted themselves against and within these canon-making processes. Almost every contributor reaffirms this nostalgic sensibility for a field previously dominated and represented by colonial, patriarchal, and written histories. In fact, nostalgia saturates the entire volume, urging present-day historical readerships to take stock of the early disciplinary contributions to Pacific Islands history. While debates persist as to whether such disciplinary developments can be described as “dated” or “timely,” “rigorous” or “reductionist,” most of the contributors remain convinced about one point: the field of Pacific Islands history primarily arose out of the ANU school of history.

This anthology is separated into four parts, which explore the role of Canberra, under the guidance of the influential historian J W Davidson, in producing historical scholarship in and about the Pacific. As the contributors separately observe, many of the

authors received institutional support from Canberra to circulate their ideas, research their theses, or publish their monographs. Without the institutional endorsement of Canberra, and without the interdisciplinary vision of Davidson, the contributors generally concur that the texts that gave disciplinary form to Pacific Islands history would not have been produced. In part 1, titled “General/Regional,” the contributors open the volume by examining the influence of fatal impact, island-oriented, and periphery-centered approaches in the making of survey histories. The authors under consideration include K W Howe, P Morrell, Douglas Oliver, Deryck Scarr, and O H K Spate. In this section, the contributors discuss macro-histories of European beachcombers, labor recruiters, missionaries, planters, and sandalwood traders. Part 2, titled “Methodologies,” features histories written by Gavan Daws, David Lewis, Norma McArthur, Marshall D Sahlins, Andrew Sharp, Bernard Smith, and Francis West. In addressing these histories, the contributors examine how debates on epidemic diseases and depopulation, images of objects and peoples, indigenous social structures and voyaging techniques, and political and religious figures of authority further pushed the interdisciplinary makeup of Pacific Islands history. The contributors demonstrate that anthropological, demographical, psychoanalytical, and visual methods partly dictated the ways in which historians produced their texts, sometimes compelling them to consider “non-historical” approaches and topics. Aesthetic evaluations of colonial art, ethno-

graphic treatments of cross-cultural encounters, and psychoanalytical critiques of individual behavior evidence examples of once new, but not necessarily fully embraced, interdisciplinary directions in the field.

Another topic of contention was whether Pacific Islander perspectives should be included in what were essentially Eurocentric texts of the region. While the authors of these texts sometimes conceded to the need for privileging Pacific Islander views, little was done to situate Pacific Islander epistemologies and methodologies into the fold of the discipline. The exceptions were the rare publications of Pacific Islander cargo cult and missionary narratives, with the most notable example being *The Works of Ta'unga: Records of a Polynesian Traveler in the South Seas, 1833-1896* (Ron and Marjorie Crocombe, 1968). Acknowledging this shortcoming, the contributors proceed to explore histories of Christian proselytizing, conflict in Aotearoa/New Zealand, labor recruitment in Australia and Fiji, and Pacific trade networks in coconut oil, pork, and sandalwood. These issues are examined in part 3, titled "Activities," which foregrounds the texts of Peter Corris, Ron and Marjorie Crocombe, K L Gillion, Niel Gunson, Peter Lawrence, H E Maude, Dorothy Shineberg, Keith Sinclair, Ta'unga, Alan Ward, and Peter Worsley. In the final section, part 4, titled "Island Groups," the contributors examine histories of colonialism in the Caroline and Marshall Islands, decolonization in Sāmoa, European exploration in New Guinea, merchant and planter economies in Hawai'i, and

Te Enata survival in the Marquesas. In no order of significance, these histories were written by J W Davidson, Gavan Daws, Greg Dening, R P Gilson, Francis X Hezel, Ralph S Kuykendall, and Gavin Souter.

What, then, to make of this volume? In pedagogical terms, *Texts and Contexts* will be of great use to scholars interested in the study of the Pacific Islands region. The reviews of the texts are concise and readable, offering ample insight into the production, distribution, and reception of these early histories of the Pacific. The bibliography of each review also provides a reading list of related and sometimes contemporaneous works on a wide variety of subjects. In drafting their lesson plans, teachers may find these texts useful for what they say or, indeed, do not say. Researchers may also explore the texts for methods, sources, and viewpoints that may be of use to them. Indeed, new questions may be generated from old texts. Beyond such considerations, however, readers will have to look past 1992—the concluding period of this anthology—in order to address various forms of historical scholarship produced since that time. While *Texts and Contexts* may have waxed nostalgic about the colonial origins of Pacific Islands history, the field's future remains open for transformation in an era marked by increasing intellectual exchange across the Pacific.

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