I am not sure that the proximate-ultimate dichotomy is necessary to illustrate the narrative of culture change sketched by Kirch. Human decisions and innovations—agency—can accumulate, sometimes over centuries and millennia, to change culture. Such decisions can change selective pressures, constrain development and provide opportunities. The process of human agency is intertwined with other external and internal processes. Because of how intertwined these internal (i.e., agency) and external (i.e., population growth and environmental change) processes are, and because both human agency and what are called ultimate causes have long- and short-term effects, I am uncertain whether this dichotomy adds to our understanding of Hawaiian culture change. It may be more useful to examine the political system as one of several interacting complex cultural systems. In such a view factors described as both ultimate and proximate interact in positive feedback loops to constantly create change. In any case, Kirch captures the complexity and intricacies of culture change well in his narrative.

This book is one of the best on Pacific prehistory in recent years and has recently won the 2013 Society for American Archaeology “Popular Book Award”. The topic, which is interesting in its own right, is masterfully presented by Kirch and his analysis of the Hawaiian case is a significant work of scholarship. Though I would recommend the academic reader search for original published material on various topics in the book, referred to by Kirch and conveniently listed at the end of the book, the narrative is well worth the read and the arguments provided at the end are compelling. While Kirch has published prolifically over his long career, I am confident that this publication will endure as one of his best. The book should be a mainstay on the shelves of all students, Pacific anthropologists, and those interested in the development of socio-political systems in any area of the world.


ERICA NEWMAN
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Lansdown has produced a book that provides the reader with European observations of the Pacific, including their disdains, appreciations and desires. This book is exactly what the title claims; it is about strangers in the South Seas and what their thoughts were of the Pacific. There is no pretence within this book of understanding the indigenous peoples of the Pacific, which is refreshing. The excerpts that Lansdown has selected allow the reader to experience the adventures of these strangers through their own words.

The introduction of this book gives an excellent broad overview of the Pacific. Lansdown has described the origins and settlement by the indigenous peoples and follows on with the European expansion and later colonisation. This is executed very
well and would provide any person who sought a broad overview of the history of how the Pacific was colonised with an excellent starting point. As with all the chapters in this book, Lansdown finishes the introduction with an extensive list of further sources should the reader desire to explore further.

The overall format is the same across each chapter, beginning with an introduction providing an academic overview and explanation of the topic theme, followed by a selection of excerpts from various Western writers, including a brief introduction about the author. These writings are transposed verbatim; therefore, there are a number of areas that need clarification to be understood. Lansdown effectively does this through the use of very clear footnotes. Although Lansdown only includes a selection of excerpts he concludes each chapter with a comprehensive selection of further readings to explore, making this book a valuable resource for any researcher. The excerpts that Lansdown uses come from the journals and writings of well-known explorers, missionaries, scientists, historians, anthropologists and novelists, as well as some lesser known commentators, giving the reader a wide range of perceptions.

Writings are not all non-fiction; he has incorporated excerpts from novels and poems about the Pacific that are based on the experiences of the European authors.

There are nine chapters in this book, each following a specific, yet common topic, which flow in chronological order. Each topic covers clichéd Western thoughts of the Pacific. Chapter One looks at early Western exploration beginning with the idea of the Pacific being a version of Eldorado which was ripe for the exploitation of natural resources. Lansdown explains how the need for exploration into the South Seas was to find and exploit natural resources. He provides excerpts describing the explorer’s findings as well as their plans for extracting the resources. Lansdown then moves on to Chapter Two where he discusses how indigenous peoples of the Pacific have for a long time been placed in categories of “savage” or “noble savage”. Here he explores where these terms came from and why indigenous peoples were perceived as either being “savage” or “noble savage”, and his examples provide insight into the Western thoughts of these terms.

In Chapter Three Lansdown relies on the journals, letters and crew recollections from the voyage of the *Duff*. This was one of the most important London Missionary Society voyages which had significant influence on the expansion of Christianity in the Pacific. Chapter Four discusses voyages into the Pacific by botanists and scientists who were intrigued with the different, and similar, flora and fauna of the Pacific. Through his own introduction, he explains how botanists and scientists believed that the South Pacific would complete the gap in the evolution theory of that time through collecting, cataloguing and geographical description of the islands. The excerpts Lansdown has used include scientists and botanists, such as Joseph Banks and Charles Darwin, who recorded their thoughts on the process of evolution based on their findings from these islands. This leads to Chapter Five and an explanation of the way indigenous peoples were characterised according to the hierarchy of civilised peoples with Caucasians at the top. Within this chapter Lansdown explores the beginning of scientific sources of racial differences. The excerpts provided describe how early European scientists evaluated or categorised the other, in this instance, the Pacific other.

This book then shifts to the settlement and colonisation of the Pacific, predominantly by Britain, France or America. Europeans sought to find a place for new beginnings,
either by choice or as convicts or escapees, and colonies were soon established throughout the Pacific. Colonial rule would soon follow as the new settlers, and some indigenous people, requested annexation from the dominant settler group. It is within Chapter Six that Lansdown discusses and provides excerpts relating to the establishment of these new colonies. In Chapter Seven Lansdown discusses anthropology as a new ethnographic form of study. Within his introduction to this chapter, Lansdown describes the history of anthropology and the field of social anthropology within the Pacific. The excerpts included are from the observations of a selection of anthropologists, giving the reader a view of what they saw and how they interpreted their findings.

The final part of this book explores a more contemporary view of the Pacific. At the time of the Second World War the majority of the Pacific was under colonial rule by the English, the French and the Americans. Many of the islands within the Pacific were deeply involved in the war, as were the indigenous people who lived there. In Chapter Eight Lansdown discusses the role of the Pacific during the Second World War. The letters and excerpts he has selected for this chapter provide the reader with the thoughts of those Europeans who either took part in the war or were living in the Pacific at that time. Chapter Nine, the final chapter, begins in the late 1800s with a discussion about the influential legacy of Paul Gauguin who provided the world with perspectives of the Pacific, in particular Tahiti, through his paintings and his journal *Noa Noa*. It is this chapter that provides the contemporary view of the Pacific as utopia, a place of paradise. Lansdown discusses significant changes within Pacific societies such as the introduction of capitalism, decolonisation and tourism. He also provides discussion on how the West saw the Pacific as a vast, empty space ideal for weapons testing.

This book is an excellent resource for anyone who is interested in exploring the early Western perspectives of the Pacific. The introduction gives a very good overview of how the Pacific became colonised and the interactions which followed with European expansion and later colonisation. Each chapter is clear and excerpts are carefully selected with ambiguous text explained clearly and with careful detail. *Strangers in the South Seas* is an excellent academic text for first year University programmes exploring the Pacific such as History, Anthropology, Geography, Pacific Studies and Indigenous Studies.


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This monumental dictionary is a fitting tribute to those who first began work on it during the 1960s but never had the chance to see the final printed product. The latter include three of those named on the cover—Bulmer, Gi, and Majnep—along with