

ture in “Pacific 2020” or other policy documents emanating from Canberra or Washington, yet provide an important global backdrop for improved regional coordination.

Shaw highlights the resilience of Island cultures in the face of globalization, and outlines areas where Pacific voices have positively contributed to better global standards: the role of Fiji’s Satya Nandan in developing the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the International Seabed Authority; the creation of the Rarotonga treaty for a nuclear free zone at the height of the 1980s US-Soviet arms race; or AOSIS efforts to influence the current debate on climate change and environmental refugees.

Despite these gaps, *Redefining the Pacific?* provides valuable insights into recent efforts to build a stronger regional community, at a time when the Pacific Islands Forum is trying to implement the vision of the Pacific Plan.

NIC MACLELLAN
Melbourne, Australia

* * *

Strangers in the South Seas: The Idea of the Pacific in Western Thought; An Anthology, edited by Richard Lansdown. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2006. ISBN cloth, 978-0-8248-2902-5; paper, 978-0-8248-3042-7; xvii + 429 pages, tables, figures, maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, US\$55.00; paper, US\$24.00.

In recent years several anthologies have reached the bookshelves (most prominently *Exploration and*

Exchange: A South Sea Anthology, 1680–1900, edited by Jonathan Lamb, Vanessa Smith, and Nicholas Thomas [University of Chicago Press, 2000]), greatly empowering the reader’s interest in the Pacific, and condensing a seemingly endless flood of primary documents on Oceania’s pasts. Richard Lansdown’s collection is part of this tradition, with a notable difference: he limits his scope to Western representations of the Pacific from the early sixteenth century to contemporary times. His educated choice is clearly stated in his admirable introduction. While his concern remains with the outsider or Euro-American view of Oceania, his introduction reveals an intimate familiarity with the most pertinent issues in contemporary study of the Pacific. Lansdown reminds his readers that the Islands were settled long before Ferdinand Magellan’s arrival, and proceeds to discuss the most accepted theories regarding this nautical feat. Likewise, he chronicles how European attitudes toward the Pacific took shape several centuries before reaching this ocean, and investigates how ideas of “insularity” evolved during the early modern expansion. Deeply convinced that the Pacific’s vast seascapes isolated Oceania’s indigenous inhabitants from one other, Europeans often overlooked the numerous connections among Island societies, which frequently stretched over hundreds of miles of open sea. Last but not least, Lansdown engages the thorny subject of contact between Euro-American and indigenous societies, reminding his readers that issues of victimization and human agency are commonly interrelated and permeate the sources.

To facilitate the digestion of the ample material, Lansdown places his excerpts in nine larger sections that follow a traditional but accepted path through Pacific history. From the perception of the Pacific as harboring resource-rich islands and mythical continents, Lansdown quickly turns to Western perceptions of indigenous Oceanians as either noble or ignoble savages, the former influencing enlightened and romantic notions and the latter propelling the prominent mission frontier into the Pacific Ocean during the second half of the eighteenth century. The first section features prominent selections on the British South Sea Company—an innovative approach that unfortunately comes at the expense of numerous early Dutch and Spanish accounts. Sections 4, 5, and 7, respectively, are situated in the nineteenth and early twentieth century when the Pacific emerged as an evident link between the investigation of biological evolution and the understanding of Western conceptions of race and anthropology. These segments represent the most interesting and innovating part of Lansdown's work, situating the Pacific in a larger framework of Western intellectual and scientific thinking about the wider world. Sections 6, 8, and 9 are more chronological, introducing the reader to excerpts on imperialism, the Second World War, and the ostensibly inevitable Western disillusionment with the area. Each subdivision carries a separate introduction that underscores the most prominent issues in the excerpts. Moreover, an extensive and exhaustive list of suggested readings permits readers to venture well beyond the primary

sources listed in *Strangers in the South Seas*.

Lansdown's selection of source material clearly favors American, British, and French sources. Some of these are well-known renditions on the Pacific, ranging from the voices of Louis Antoine de Bougainville, James Cook, Charles Darwin, Paul Gauguin, and Jack London, to Margaret Mead. On occasion, Lansdown does not shy away from serving as the account's translator, as is the case with Philibert Commerson's "Postscript: On the Island of New Cythera or Tahiti" or J S C Dumont D'Urville's "The Islands of the Pacific." He also features a few voices that are not commonly heard in Pacific studies, most noticeably several comments on the South Sea Company in the early eighteenth century and Joseph-Marie Degérando's first stab at providing guidelines for the observation of indigenous people.

Overall, there is little doubt that British, French, and American actors deeply influenced Western thinking about the Pacific over the past three centuries. The author includes the important excerpts of Antonio Pigafetta's narrative of Ferdinand Magellan's circumnavigation and Pedro Fernandez de Quirós's memorial to the Spanish monarch. But one is left to wonder whether a more representative inclusion of Dutch, German, Portuguese, and Spanish sources might have supplied significant counterpoints to the Franco-British accounts featured so prominently in the work under review.

This last critique should not detract from the overall quality of Lansdown's book. After all, it is nearly impossible to include all the source material in

order to satisfy the taste of each and every Pacific expert. One needs to keep in mind that the author hardly seeks to appeal to an audience of specialists. Rather, Lansdown presents us with a work aimed at Pacific neophytes and as such it is immensely satisfying. While experts might want to keep the volume on their bookshelves as a reference work for prominent quotes uttered and written by Western observers on the Pacific, *Strangers in the South Seas* will ultimately find application in the classroom setting. In particular, the present work is most useful to burgeoning history and literature classes on the Pacific Ocean. The author's nine sections allow for easy inclusion in the instructional activity of additional sources, such as the missing indigenous voices. Likewise, the wealth of illustrations, thirty in all, enables class discussions to move beyond the textual document. In its attractively priced paperback edition, *Strangers in the South Seas* is destined to find a permanent place in Pacific instruction for some time to come.

RAINER F BUSCHMANN
*California State University,
 Channel Islands*

* * *

Island Affinities: Contemporary Art of Oceania. Art Galleries, California State University, Northridge. 29 January–1 March 2007. <http://www.csun.edu/~hfarto10/IslandAffinities>

Disparagingly told that Pacific Island art would never secure an exhibit at prestigious venues like the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, painter and multimedia artist Jewel

Castro responded by curating her own shows of diasporic Oceanic art. Castro's latest curatorial effort is "Island Affinities: Contemporary Art of Oceania," highlighting the work of fourteen Pacific Islander artists from island and diasporic locations like Papua New Guinea, London, and Orange County. It is the second significant art exhibit in Southern California in the past two years, following Castro's curatorial debut, "Turning Tides: Gender in Oceania Art," a smaller exhibit held at the University of California–San Diego (UCSD) Graduate Art Gallery in February 2006.

Unlike New Zealand/Aotearoa, Australia, or the United Kingdom, where Pacific Islanders have realized solo or group shows at private galleries and state-sponsored museums, the US continent has not afforded contemporary Pacific Island art significant visibility. Although 260,000 of the nation's one million Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders live in California (the second largest segment after Hawai'i), Pacific Islander artists working here face a "space and time" obstacle: they are perceived as being too far removed from the islands and as using aesthetic practices that are either too "modern" or too "traditional."

Yet Castro and other artists featured in this exhibit are concerned with reaching through time and space to reconcile Pacific Island artistic practices and forms with the realities and temporality of contemporary life, whether in American Sāmoa or Oakland, California. A granddaughter of the founder of the Samoan Congregational Church in San Diego, Castro's

Commerson's report has been reprinted in Richard Lansdown, ed., *Strangers in the South Seas: The Idea of the Pacific in Western Thought* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006). Google Scholar. For an excellent summary of Commerson's biography and his account on Tahiti, consult Harry Liebersohn, *The Travelers' World: Europe to the Pacific* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 20-32. CrossRef Google Scholar. Citation from Glyndwr Williams, "To make Discoveries of Countries hitherto Unknown: The Admiralty and Pacific Exploration in the Eighteenth Century" in Alan Frost and Jane Samson, eds, *Pacific Empires: Essays in Honour of Glyndwr Williams* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1999), 23. Google Scholar. 75.

Author: Lansdown, Richard. *Strangers in the South Seas*. Language: This book should contain text in eng. Pages: 496. Binding: PAP. Publication Date: 2006-04-30. Publisher: University of Hawai'i Press. ISBN/EAN: 9780824830427. Read full description. See details and exclusions - *Strangers in the South Seas*, Lansdown, Richard, Paperback. This book shows how the Great South Sea has been an irreplaceable distant mirror of the West and its intellectual obsessions since the Renaissance. Product Identifiers. Publisher. University Of Hawai'i Press. ISBN-10. 0824830423. ISBN-13. Comprehensively illustrated and annotated, this anthology will introduce readers to a region central to the development of modern Western ideas. Long before Magellan entered the Pacific in 1521, Westerners entertained ideas of undiscovered oceans, mighty continents, and paradisaal islands at the far ends of the earth. Such ideas would have a long life and a deep impact in both the Pacific and the West. With the discovery of Tahiti in 1767 another powerful myth was added to this collection: the noble savage. For the first time Westerners were confronted by a people who seemed happier than themselves. This revolution in the human sciences was accompanied by one in the natural sciences after Darwin's momentous visit to the Galapagos Islands. Edited by Richard Lansdown. Paperback: \$29.00. Long before Magellan entered the Pacific in 1521 Westerners entertained ideas of undiscovered oceans, mighty continents, and paradisaal islands at the far ends of the earth. First set down by Egyptian storytellers, Greek philosophers, and Latin poets, such ideas would have a long life and a deep impact in both the Pacific and the West. With the discovery of Tahiti in 1767 another powerful myth was added to this collection: the noble savage. Comprehensively illustrated and annotated, this anthology will introduce readers to a region central to the development of modern Western ideas. This is a carefully conceived anthology covering an excellent range of subjects.