



A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief: The Island Civilization of Ancient Hawai'i

Patrick Vinton Kirch

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Tracing the origins of the Hawaiians and other Polynesians back to the shores of the South China Sea, archaeologist Patrick Vinton Kirch follows their voyages of discovery across the Pacific in this fascinating history of Hawaiian culture from about one thousand years ago. Combining more than four decades of his own research with Native Hawaiian oral traditions and the evidence of archaeology, Kirch puts a human face on the gradual rise to power of the Hawaiian god-kings, who by the late eighteenth century were locked in a series of wars for ultimate control of the entire archipelago.

This lively, accessible chronicle works back from Captain James Cook's encounter with the pristine kingdom in 1778, when the British explorers encountered an island civilization governed by rulers who could not be gazed upon by common people. Interweaving anecdotes from his own widespread travel and extensive archaeological investigations into the broader historical narrative, Kirch shows how the early Polynesian settlers of Hawai'i adapted to this new island landscape and created highly productive agricultural systems.

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