



# **Pacific: Silicon Chips and Surfboards, Coral Reefs and Atom Bombs, Brutal Dictators and Fading Empires**

*Simon Winchester*

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**One of *Library Journal's* 10 Best Books of 2015**

Following his acclaimed *Atlantic* and *The Men Who United the States*, *New York Times* bestselling author Simon Winchester offers an enthralling biography of the Pacific Ocean and its role in the modern world, exploring our relationship with this imposing force of nature.

As the Mediterranean shaped the classical world, and the Atlantic connected Europe to the New World, the Pacific Ocean defines our tomorrow. With China on the rise, so, too, are the American cities of the West coast, including Seattle, San Francisco, and the long cluster of towns down the Silicon Valley.

Today, the Pacific is ascendant. Its geological history has long transformed us—tremendous earthquakes, volcanoes, and tsunamis—but its human history, from a Western perspective, is quite young, beginning with Magellan's sixteenth-century circumnavigation. It is a natural wonder whose most fascinating history is currently being made.

In telling the story of the Pacific, Simon Winchester takes us from the Bering Strait to Cape Horn, the Yangtze River to the Panama Canal, and to the many small islands and archipelagos that lie in between. He observes the fall of a dictator in Manila, visits aboriginals in northern Queensland, and is jailed in Tierra del Fuego, the land at the end of the world. His journey encompasses a trip down the Alaska Highway, a stop at the isolated Pitcairn Islands, a trek across South Korea and a glimpse of its mysterious northern neighbor.

Winchester's personal experience is vast and his storytelling second to none. And his historical understanding of the region is formidable, making *Pacific* a paean to this magnificent sea of beauty, myth, and imagination that is transforming our lives.

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#### **Nettie Powers:**

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