

Preface and Acknowledgements

This book presents my views of landscapes as complex natural-cultural systems that have evolved over long periods of time. Over several years of research, eventually I compiled enough information to feel confident about portraying landscape evolution in liberal interdisciplinary terms, centred around archaeology, while drawing on diverse lines of evidence. Surely more could be added as investigations will continue, and I hope to encourage further work.

While preparing this book, I wanted to focus on one geographic area as a convenient illustrative example of the general-global applicability of landscape evolution studies. My research in the Mariana Islands very clearly offered the best candidate for developing this book's main narrative. The Mariana Islands case explicitly is situated in a larger Asia-Pacific regional context, and furthermore the key research principles are presented with the purpose of broader relevance.

Several people have improved my work as presented here. Regarding general approaches to environmental studies linked with archaeology, I am grateful to Steve Athens, Bill Dickinson, Patrick Nunn and John Peterson for their advice and collaborations. Peter Bellwood, Hsiao-chun Hung and Glenn Summerhayes broadened my cross-regional knowledge. Jim Bayman, Hiro Kurashina, Barry Rolett and Rebecca Stephenson encouraged for me to enhance my skills in research and writing. Numerous individuals, too many to mention, have supported my research over the years in Guam and in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, but I want especially to express my gratitude to Vic April, Lufo Babauta, Rosanna Barcinas, Laura Beauregard, Lon Bulgrin, Matt Brown, Diego Camacho, John Castro, Jeremy Cepeda, Gabe Cruz, Tommy Deleon Guerrero, Boyd Dixon, Don Farrell, LaVonne Guerrero Meno, Leonard Iriarte, Mertie Kani, Andy Laguana, Brian Leon Guerrero, Patrick Lujan, Kelly Marsh Taitano, Al Masga, Rita Nauta, John Palacios, Joe Quinata, Dick Randall, Spencer Rearden, Ronnie Rogers, Scott Russell, Emily Sablan, Carmen Sanchez, Joe Schwagerl, Monique Storie, Herman Tudela, Robert Underwood and Eric West. I wish that I could name everyone who has played a role in the developments toward making this book, and I hope that I can be forgiven for this abbreviated list.

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