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Sommario/riassunto	The Pacific Islands began to appear in Western literature soon after European navigators made landfall there. From the first, there was seldom a statement of plain facts. Explorers brought their own viewpoints while editors, poets and novelists went on to interpret and moralise the first accounts. Portraying Pacific peoples as sensual, indolent, childlike and - frequently - wicked, such stories implied the duty of Europeans to rule and of the natives to be grateful. Modified though it sometimes was by the more accepting attitudes of

beachcombers, by the exploitative activities of traders, and

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