

advance on “law and order” studies of the past—but cannot entirely balance his three perspectives in each case study and thus over the book as a whole. The gang surrender, and the author’s degree of involvement, lends itself to anthropological and sociological interpretation, reflected in the predominance of the materialist and “culturalist” perspectives in the discussion section of the chapter. In contrast, the matter of mining security, strategically driven by the state, the police, and the mining industry (though hampered by local community interests), is most amenable to the institutionalist perspective. Election violence, manifesting the clash between the political understandings and agendas of the state and those of local communities, offers itself more equitably to the three perspectives, although the substance of the narrative does not have the discursive fertility of the surrender narrative.

A final chapter, “From Disintegration to Reintegration?” draws the analytic threads of the case studies together, toward an affirmation of the resilience, rather than disappearance under modernizing influences, of the styles of leadership and of gift economy that anthropological literature has traditionally represented as typifying Melanesian societies. The author argues that the permeation of the postcolonial state by indigenous sociality has been a disintegrative influence, so far as conventional ideals of “modernization” are concerned, and at present “a distinctive Papua New Guinean deliberative democracy is not dead but has been seriously weakened” (200). He suggests that democracy could recover if institutions of civil society are brought into play, as

parts of the narratives on gang surrender and negotiations between mining companies and local communities imply, but there is a bleak cast to the concluding paragraphs.

While the combination of three analytic perspectives leads to some unevenness, the strength of this book lies in its synthesis of a number of themes that have hitherto been dispersed among different disciplinary approaches. In particular Dinnen has drawn more extensively on anthropological and sociological insights than previous commentators who have attempted an overview of national issues of law and order. In this respect the book is exemplary interdisciplinary scholarship, and will be an important resource for anyone in the human sciences with an interest not only in “law and order” but more generally in the complex integration of state and society in Papua New Guinea.

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Governance in Samoa: Pulega i Samoa, edited by Elise Huffer and Asofou So’o. Canberra: Asia Pacific Press, Australian National University and Suva: Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, 2000. ISBN 0-7315-3651-7, xiv + 222 pages, glossary, map, notes, bibliography, index. Paper, US\$31.

“Good governance” is probably *the* major theme among World Bank development experts and aid donors when it comes to advising third world countries on how to conduct their public affairs, and how to ensure that

aid flows keep on flowing. While the official statements coming from the World Bank and other institutions of global economic governance often make it seem simple, the implementation of good governance agendas usually runs into a myriad of difficulties, large and small. Many of these stem from unrealistic expectations, inappropriate perspectives, and lack of understanding of local issues on the part of international agencies and their consultants, advisers, and managers. But the stumbling blocks are just as often strewn on the local landscape as well, as the contributors to this book illustrate.

The eleven chapters cover a variety of themes and problems ranging from the general subject of governance to more detailed coverage of issues in Sāmoa. The first, by Michael Goldsmith, provides an interesting discussion of the meaning of governance and some astute observations on the political, ideological, and moral dimensions of various meanings and applications of the term. He notes that the “whole issue of governance circles around what might be called the locus of control”—illustrated by the concern to devolve responsibility for certain functions to the private sector and nongovernment organizations wherever possible. He goes on to ask whether the “current fascination with governance doctrines in the Pacific is an expression of the wider confusions of late modernity.” Unfortunately, he doesn’t attempt to answer to this question, because the chapter stops right there, after just seven pages—and just when it was getting interesting. However, similarly critical themes are taken up in the second chapter by

Cluny Macpherson and La‘avasa Macpherson, who discuss the theory, practice, and limits of good governance. While the empirical focus is largely on Sāmoa, especially in terms of cultural factors, the analysis and critique of some of the assumptions underlying the governance agenda provide a more general point of departure and contribute to the wider international debate.

Next, Elise Huffer and Alfred Schuster provide further detailed insights into governance as understood within Sāmoa. The analysis is based on extensive interview material selected from a cross section of people. One of the more interesting points to emerge from this material is the extent to which public participation is “stifled by the lack of space for dissent.” Moreover, their findings indicate a lack of desire among a good many people to do much other than simply be governed by those “who know what’s best for us.” They find that in Sāmoa, the “good governance agenda” does little to enhance democracy, especially in terms of encouraging participation, which could lead to greater transparency, responsibility, and accountability. A number of the other chapters pick up on themes concerning the influence of tradition and governance in the contemporary period. The notion of *fa’a Sāmoa* in relation to civil society is discussed by Iati Iati, while Serge Tcherkézoff discusses the particular role of the *matai* and the changing dynamics of chiefly authority.

The chapters by Donovan Storey on urban governance in Apia, Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop on women’s nongovernment organizations, Unasa L F Va’a

on local government, and Morgan Tuimaleali'ifano on village governance each explore various tensions and contradictions in how governance issues and agendas are pursued in specific contexts. Tuimaleali'ifano's analysis also links specifically with other critical analyses of how traditional authority is wielded in contemporary politics to the detriment of genuinely participatory processes. Aspects of this theme are further explored in Asofou So'o's discussion of civil and political liberties which he explores through an examination of several court cases. Although these show that the courts are operating as they should to uphold civil and political rights, problems remain at the village level, where political action is tightly controlled. The final chapter by Mālama Meleiseā raises, very briefly, some of general issues surrounding the "politics of tradition" debate and, looking at Sāmoa, states (as others have before him) that "rural people see *fa'a Sāmoa* as another word for oppression." He concludes that defense of certain elements of traditional culture "has come to be seen as virtuous, and questioning them is seen as an attack on Samoans' integrity as a people." This attitude, he continues, "has retarded the evolution of a sense of citizenship, severely damaging governance in the country."

Two major critical themes run through the book. The first is very much focused on how institutions like the World Bank construct a certain meaning for "governance" and invest it with a normative bias that emphasizes rationality, efficiency, and, not least, the downsizing of the public sector to allow more private initiative

to weave its magic. It is highly appropriate to question such assumptions, especially in light of the many apposite critiques of the tendency for "western" experts and donors to impose their ethnocentrically laden values, beliefs, and practices on "nonwestern" people(s). On the other hand, the second major theme concerns the manipulations of traditional (or neotraditional) power and authority in situations where it seems to be increasingly anachronistic at best, and severely dysfunctional to "good governance" at worst, as Meleiseā's parting shot clearly states. How are these two themes to be reconciled or synthesized? By and large, the contributors have not taken up this challenge. Nonetheless, collectively they provide some interesting and stimulating insights into issues and problems of governance in Sāmoa and contribute to an important debate in the contemporary Pacific.

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Property Rights and Economic Development: Land and Natural Resources in Southeast Asia and Oceania, edited by Toon van Meijl and Franz von Benda-Beckmann. New York: Kegan Paul International, 1999. ISBN 0-7103-0641-5; 295 pages, tables, maps, notes, bibliography. US\$110.

A recent protest in Port Moresby ended tragically with the death of three students. The protestors were responding in part to government proposals for property reform, including the demarcation, registration, and