
REVIEWS

Bruce Carrad, David A. M. Lea, and Kundapen K. Talyaga, eds., *Enga: Foundations for Development*. Volume 3 of *Enga Yaaka Lasemana*. Armidale, N.S.W.: University of New England, Department of Geography, for the Enga Provincial Government and the National Planning Office, Papua New Guinea, 1982. Pp. xii, 381, figures, tables, references, appendixes.

Papua New Guinea became an independent nation little more than a century after its effective colonization by Europeans. Obviously, change has been rapid in "the land that time forgot," and nowhere is this more evident than in the far western highlands, where people who only learned of the existence of the modern world in the 1930s are now a part of it as residents of Enga Province, established as an administrative unit in 1974.

Development has not kept pace with change, however, as is clear from this volume, a collection of "background papers" prepared to assist the planners and implementers of the Enga Provincial Development Programme, 1982-1985 and now published for the use of a wider audience. The twenty-six authors of seventeen chapters and four appendixes are mainly concerned with either surveying development efforts since the late 1930s or assessing the region's potential and the obstacles that constrain options for the future. The result is an uneven mix of papers: some display careful scholarship and are likely to be of lasting value to students of Papua New Guinea societies as well as to those individuals who will help shape their futures; others, however, are little more than superficial surveys that, by and large, leave a gloomy impression regarding both accomplishments and prospects.

In the first category are original contributions on the history of the province and its administration (by R. Lacey, N. Scott & K. Pitzz, and M. J. Meggitt), demography (D. Lea & N. Gray), the physical environment (C. Pain, J. Smith & D. Lea), subsistence horticulture and land potential (M. Bourke & D. Lea, G. Scott & C. Pain, and B. Allen), and the resurgence of tribal warfare (B. Allen & R. Giddings, and R. Gordon & A. Kipilan).

Less satisfying are the surveys of various aspects of "modern day Enga society" (e.g., the economy, infrastructure, education, and health). These chapters are replete with tables and statistics, but cautionary notes scat-

tered throughout the volume make one question the significance of these tabulations when the admitted inadequacies and incompleteness of the data bases are taken into account. Most of the surveys rely on information obtained from only a few well-studied or administratively-prominent locations, but generalizations are framed in terms of much larger units. Perhaps this presentation strategy is preferred by administrators and planners, but it obscures the striking diversity--environmental, social, cultural, and linguistic--that characterizes the province and that emerges so clearly from the first group of papers referred to above.

Enga Province, after all, encompasses a wide range of physical environments and climates in over twelve thousand square kilometers of land, and a population of nearly two hundred thousand people who speak a total of nine dialects of Enga and six other vernacular languages as well, with considerable accompanying social and cultural variation. "Up to only seven years ago [i.e., 1974] the people had never thought of themselves as a political or administrative entity. Nor for that matter had the government staff" (Scott & Pitzz, pp. 276-77). Given this state of affairs, it is at least misleading for Enga Province to be "the only province of the nation in which the provincial title is synonymous with a particular culture" (Brennan, p. 199).

A fairly comprehensive bibliography (pp. 369-81) provides assurance that those who guide the ambitious Enga Provincial Development Programme have far more, and better, resources available than are contained in this limited collection of papers. Moreover, this volume is only one of four in a series; the others, available only as limited circulation documents, may provide much of the detail that the survey chapters miss. One hopes, then, that the rich cultural diversity of the province will be appreciated and that the Programme will not perpetuate the problem of generating "services . . . planned to a national [or provincial] design, often with a minimum of local content" (Carrad, p. 7).

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