

James G. Peoples, *Island in Trust: Culture Change and Dependence in a Micronesian Economy*. Westview Special Studies. Boulder: Westview Press, 1985. Pp. xii, 187, 15 tables, 3 figures, 4 maps, 9 appendices, bibliography, index. \$22.00 paper.

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Over the last decade, a number of anthropologists have struggled to apply dependency theory and related concepts to contemporary cultural transformations in the Pacific. This effort has sought to go beyond notions of "modernization" while gaining a clearer appreciation of both the external and internal influences affecting the processes by which Pacific island communities have become part of the world political and economic system. Sessions on "Dependency" and on "World Systems" held at meetings of the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania

have led to a mixed variety of papers and shorter publications. No real consensus appears to have emerged from this effort except perhaps the view that classic "dependency" models need to be modified to fit the Pacific data, at least in the case of the American flag territories where strategic denial rather than economic exploitation has been the colonial power's goal.

Peoples's *Island in Trust* rests squarely in this tradition. It is a balanced, rather than polemical, application of dependency methodology in a detailed economic study of Lelu, Kosrae. This volume is valuable because it derives from dissertation fieldwork designed explicitly to test the dependency approach at the local level. It develops estimates of household incomes and expenditures in an attempt to interpret the impact of external subsidies on subsistence output, labor allocations, and ceremonial consumption. Peoples's choice of Kosrae (formerly Kusaie) is an apt one since Kosrae is a volcanic island in the Eastern Carolines with an adequate subsistence base that has been transformed by the American administration from an administratively isolated island to a subdistrict center and then a state within the Federated States of Micronesia. At the time of Peoples's fieldwork in 1975-1976, the dramatic increase in subsidies that caused this transformation was well under way.

Peoples begins with a brief discussion of dependency theory as an alternative to modernization approaches and summarizes a portion of the relevant literature. He treats dependency as a methodology that should lead one to focus on local historical conditions as well as external forces and to analyze how the interaction (others have used the concept of linkage here) of these forces explains existing economic choices and patterns.

This is followed by a clearly written summary of the rise in wage income in the Trust Territory associated with increasing U.S. subsidies and planned political "development." Peoples estimates that consumption increased 1,000 percent between 1962 and 1977! He presents territory-wide economic data to show that the private sector of the economy represents a form of indirect dependence in a "top-heavy" economy with a declining productive sector and a service sector tied to and dependent upon government employment levels.

The rest of the book shifts to a community-level analysis of Lelu, Kosrae, to show how these general economic patterns interact with the particular historical and cultural conditions in Lelu. Chapter three summarizes what can be reconstructed of the aboriginal political system and shows how the impact of the Christian church led to a more equali-

tarian ethic. Chapter four describes the contemporary economy and cultural practices of Kosraean church-centered culture. Two chapters summarize agricultural production, showing that while land is available and subsistence labor inputs are relatively small, at least one-third of the food supply is imported. Nearly a third of all cash is spent on imported foods. A more detailed analysis of the expenditures of a small sample of job-holding and jobless households focuses on labor allocations using time budget analysis. Peoples provisionally concludes that the availability of men's labor time influences consumption patterns so that food imports are substituted for preferred local foods. This is hardly surprising, yet Peoples provides us with a careful argument and supporting data. The next three chapters focus on participation in church affairs and the obligations of kinship, community organizations, and various ceremonials.

Peoples concludes with the argument that the expansion of government-funded services and wage labor has been a "conditioning situation" in which the external inputs interact with the historically created concrete local conditions of kinship obligations, church participation, and ceremonial exchanges to readjust subsistence production and divert much of the cash income into religious and ceremonial expenditure. For Peoples, the utility of the dependency approach lies in its focus on interaction between such local-level conditions and external influences.

Island in Trust is a revised version of Peoples's dissertation and the book is structured in that format. Some reviewers might choose to quibble with the size of samples, the extrapolation of income and expenditure estimates, or the admitted lack of landholding data. I was impressed with the amount of detailed economic data presented and with the generally careful and, where necessary, qualified analyses. I found the volume to be a solid contribution to Pacific anthropology and a useful addition to the dependency debate.