

Recent Books on Papua New Guinea – Aug 2022

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Art

Portraits of Papua New Guinea / Nicolas Garnier
Glienicke, Germany: Galda Verlag, 2021
462p. ; 27.5×22.5cm.
9783962031398
\$ 195.00 / HB
2562gm.

Portraits of Papua New Guinea is a collection of over 200 pictures of its natives taken between 1997 to 2016. Each photograph tells a unique story. While the country has been portrayed as “the last unknown” or the “land of the unexpected”, the photographer Nicolas Garnier showed the opposite. The people appearing in the book are described with captions about their stories, their history, their hopes and expectations. Centered around individuals rather than anonymous tribal stereotypes, they all tell a sensible and moving history of the largest Pacific Island country.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=831710>

History

Introducing West New Guinea / Kal Muller
Glienicke, Germany: Galda Verlag, 2021
116p. ; 155×230mm.
Includes Bibliography
9783962031756
New Guinea Communications, Vol. 4
\$ 55.00/ PB
208gm.

West New Guinea, the Indonesian neighbour of Papua New Guinea is little known to both the academic and scientific, and indeed the world at large, as the Indonesian government jealously guards awarding permits to researchers and foreign journalists. Explorers and anthropologists wrote extensively about Dutch New Guinea. It is from these books and manuscripts, and newly published materials collected by Dr. Kal Muller, that we now have a concise document for anyone studying West New Guinea. A necessary primer, it gives an extensive overview—the formation of the island, its flora and fauna, peoples and cultures, early trade, and its history till the end of World War II.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=831711>

The Highlands of West New Guinea / Kal Muller
Glienicke, Germany: Galda Verlag, 2021
166p. ; 155×230mm.
Includes Bibliography
9783962031794

New Guinea Communications, Vol. 5

\$ 65.00 / PB
288gm.

A long broad stretch of real estate covers the central highlands spine of West New Guinea. This wide mountain range runs from the Paniai Lakes region and continues across the international border into the neighboring country of Papua New Guinea.

This book deals with the land and main language groups of the Indonesian side of the island, namely the Amungme, the Dani, the Lani, the Moni, the Me, the Yali, the Ok and the Mek. Most of the Papuan population lives in the highlands. This area was unknown until the 1930s. In the west, or the Dutch side of the island, the first government post of the highlands was located at Enarotali, bordering one of the Paniai Lakes. From there, American Evangelical missionaries pushed their way to the east, proselytizing the Papuan groups until they finally reached the Baliem Valley where the first post was open in 1954.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=831712>

The South Coast of West New Guinea / Kal Muller

Glienicke, Germany: Galda Verlag, 2021

140p. ; 155×230mm.

Includes Bibliography

9783962031855

New Guinea Communications, Vol. 6

\$ 65.00 / PB

246gm.

The South Coast of West New Guinea holds a number of well-known cultures, along with several other less researched ones. In the late 19th Century, the headhunting activities of the Marind operating in then-British New Guinea required the establishment of a Dutch military post at Merauke to stop the cross-border raids. A number of excellent ethnographic studies of the Marind have given us a rare understanding of this ethnolinguistic group in its pristine state.

The Asmat were the last major group to be brought under Dutch control. This did not occur until well into the 1950s. The young son of the then-governor of New York State, Nelson Rockefeller, died while collecting Asmat carvings – probably by drowning but possible by being killed by a group perhaps still practising head-hunting. Missionaries of the Roman Catholic Church in the Asmat area helped to preserve the artistic talents of this group and helped them to retain a measure of pride in their way of life.

The Kamoro also produced excellent woodcarvings. A portion of their land has been by the mining company, Freeport Indonesia in their lowlands infrastructure development. In return, the company offers various development programs to them (along with other Papuan groups) covering their economy, education and health necessities. Support for their woodcarving tradition is given through a locally-run foundation.

Our texts emphasize what is known of the traditional elements of the various South Coast cultures. Now that warfare, cannibalism and head-hunting have stopped, the groups are considerably less 'exotic' but still present a fascinating way of life.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=831713>

The North Coast of West New Guinea / Kal Muller

Glienicke, Germany: Galda Verlag, 2021

164p. ; 155×230mm.

9783962031879

New Guinea Communications, Vol. 7

\$ 65.00 / PB

282gm.

This volume is one of four covering The North Coast which makes up the bulk of West New Guinea. The other three are Introduction to West New Guinea, The Highlands of West New Guinea, and The South Coast of West New Guinea. The main purpose of these books is to give a summary of the history and cultures of the western half of the island of New Guinea. West New Guinea's north coast saw sail-bys and a few landings by various European ships, starting in the 16th Century. Biak Island hosted the most important traditional Papuan sailors (read: trader-warriors) in pre-colonial times. The island's inhabitants continue to hold a leading role today, thanks to the widespread educational facilities that produce many top civil servants. For most of the colonial period, the town of Manokwari was by far the most important urban area on the north coast. Christianity was introduced to West New Guinea from there starting in 1855 and the town was the center of commerce and government. That changed drastically during WWII, when American military engineers constructed a huge and efficient infrastructure around Jayapura and Sentani. After the war, the returning Dutch government made Jayapura the capital of West New Guinea, and Indonesian officials followed this example after 1963. The North Coast of West New Guinea covers a number of basic social topics such as kinship, social structure, and marriage, along with languages and the area's pre-contact material culture. Some aspects of the old cultures were still present until quite recently. Some of the major ethnic groups merit chapters of their own. However, this book is definitely not a complete volume about all the different Papuan groups in the area. Far more research needs to be done for a more complete picture, as many ancient traditions are fading from memory.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=831714>

A Life Committed to Papua New Guinea: Conversations with Christopher Owen – Filmmaker / Pascale Bonnemere
Glienicke, Germany: Galda Verlag, 2022
352p. ; 155x230mm.
9783962032197
New Guinea Communications, Vol. 8
\$ 120.00 / PB
776gm.

The 23 March 2018 issue of the Weekend Courier (PNG) pays tribute to Chris Owen in the following terms: "I do not know of one other culture whose children will inherit a film heritage such as the one Chris Owen has given to the people of Papua New Guinea."

Pascale Bonnemère has transcribed a series of long conversations she had with Chris Owen, between 2013 and 2017, which paint a vivid picture of the life and work of this dedicated author of the most famous films on the country (e.g. The Red Bowmen, Man without Pigs, Tukana and Bridewealth for a Goddess). Completed by contextual information and photographs from his archives, the present volume constitutes a valuable testimony on a key period in the history of Papua New Guinea as experienced by a committed left-wing expatriate who spent almost 40 years of his life there and became a child of the country.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=831715>
