



Village on the Edge: Changing Times in Papua New Guinea

Michael French Smith

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Kragur village lies on the rugged north shore of Kairiru, a steep volcanic island just off the north coast of Papua New Guinea. In 1998 the village looked much as it had some twenty-two years earlier when author Michael French Smith first visited. But he soon found that changing circumstances were shaking things up. Village on the Edge weaves together the story of Kragur villagers' struggle to find their own path toward the future with the story of Papua New Guinea's travails in the post-independence era. Smith writes of his own experiences as well, living and working in Papua New Guinea and trying to understand the complexities of an unfamiliar way of life. To tell all these stories, he delves into ghosts, magic, myths, ancestors, bookkeeping, tourism, the World Bank, the Holy Spirits, and the meaning of progress and development. Village on the Edge draws on the insights of cultural anthropology but is written for anyone interested in Papua New Guinea.

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