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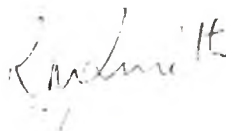
CONVERSION AND CONTINUITY:
Response to Missionization in the Papua New Guinea Highlands

by

Robert Millard Smith

A thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy of
the Australian National University. 1981

All information presented in this thesis is derived from my own research unless otherwise stipulated and listed at the end of the work.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "R. Millard Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with some loops and flourishes.

Robert Millard Smith

10.3.81

Abstract

The thesis deals with missionization in the Papua New Guinea Highlands and particularly with the Lutheran impact in the Eastern Highlands. Based partly on fieldwork research undertaken between 1976-78 at Kiseveloka in the Lufa District, Eastern Highlands Province, Papua New Guinea, the study sets the mission impact against the history of contact between Highlanders and Europeans in the 1930s. The Lutheran impact at Kiseveloka and elsewhere in the Highlands is examined, focussing on two issues: the nature of indigenous response to contact and evangelization, and the role of New Guinean mission workers in the rapid conversion of Highland populations during the 1950s and 1960s. Conversion and related change in village society is considered in terms of the interaction between older political and economic processes in Highland societies and the impositions of missions and government. In the light of this, the following issues are considered at length: the nature of Lutheran evangelistic policy and practice; changes in village leadership; the nature of congregational leadership in the current setting of post-conversion decline in mission support; and, finally, the factors underlying this decline and village rejection of Christianity.

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