

Clergy in/and Politics?

Which, Why, How to do Politics
(in PNG contexts)

Politics in General

- * **Which ‘politics’?** (plurality of power relations/ hierarchies/ asymmetries)
- * **Why ‘electoral politics’?** (mainstream democracies)
- * **Other ‘politics’?** (alternative processes/ engagements)

Which Politics

- * **locating 'power'** → political arena, political accountability, power relations
question of domain → *wanem hap (not just peles)?*
- * **'power' fields** → **'power relations'** (agency & structures)
→ **disguised** (*M. Foucault, surveillance; P. Bourdieu, dominance, J. Ferguson, development failures*)
→ **muddled, misplaced, mystified** → causality, accountability, culpability (structural/institutional/political)
→ **de-politicization**
- * **'politics of'..... (practically anything)?**
→ **'politics behind/underlying'** → **re-politicization**

Separation of Spheres (Domains)

- * **Church and State** (Religion and Politics) → **autonomy or dichotomy?**
 - **religious freedom** → freedom & equality of religion (*even not to have religion*)
 - **separation** but not necessarily a **divide** → **'Sacred and Secular'**, **'Spiritual and Profane'**
 - **spectrum of positions vis-à-vis church – state relations** (plurality of Christian stance)
 - : advocacy → activism → ambivalence → acquiescence → avoidance (*R. Eves*)
 - **'spiritual warfare'?** (*Religious/ Christian Fundamentalism*) (*Eves & Haley*)
 - **clergy order** → religious/ non-diocesan & secular/diocesan → order- dis/order?
- * **State** → **separation of State powers/ branches**
 - **check & balance** → **Executive, Legislative, Judiciary**
- * **Triangle of 'power relations'** → **Church** → **State** → **Market** → **Western Contact/ Impact**
 - **Christianity** → **Colonialism** → **Capitalism**
- * **PNG contexts** → **'gavman', 'lotu', 'kastom'** → **colonial institutionalization**
(from **'pasin'** to **'lo'**) (*C.Filer*)

Interaction Points (nexus of interface)

- * **State & Civil Society** → **Church as a sector & stakeholder** (*tax payers not just prayers*) → **'Critical Citizenship'** → participatory governance, critical collaboration, 'conscience' of society → **'governance'** 'not just **'government'** → issue of **'governmentality'**
- * **Church as faith community** → **politicians as members** of church (*not just of parliament*) → PNG as **Christian country** (constitutional declaration) → projection as **'God-fearing'** Christians?
- * **Clan & Nation-State** → **sense of Nationalism vis-à-vis Nativism** (National Unity & Identity?) → profound impact of **Christianity** as a **'nationalizing factor'** as traditionalized State Religion (*B. Douglas*) (pluralism, which version of Christianity)? → **'politics of representation'** (PNG – **ethno/micro-nationalism**) → **'access & accountability'** for State resources (Nation's coffers)?

Church's Prophetic/ Evangelical Stance

- * **Vows as 'evangelical counsels'**
(more than 'taboos')
- * **Poverty** → beyond engaging in business (**Market**) (e.g. challenging 'land markets'?)
- * **Celibacy** → beyond marrying (**Marriage**)
- * **Obedience** → beyond running for electoral positions (**Politics**)

Why 'Electoral Politics'

- * 'open politics' not just 'open electorates'?
- * Politics beyond 'electoral politics'? → 'non-partisan' vs. 'partisan' politics
- * but Why 'electoral politics'?

Melanesian Contexts

- * **Integrated & relational worldviews** → ‘bio-cosmic’ (E. Mantovanni), ‘socio-cosmic’ (D. de Coppet) worldviews → no clear-cut domain divide → ‘dividual’ over ‘individual’, partible/ fractual persons (M. Strathern)
- * **Inherent & intact kinship/ clan system** (identity, loyalty, accountability based on reciprocity) → politics of ‘give and take’ (‘gift exchange’) to ‘patronage politics’ → but ‘land-based’ & ‘landed’ (customary tenure)
- * **Contentious/ contested democracy** → ‘disorderly democracy’ (R. May), ‘dysfunctional democracy’ (W. Standish) → still **uninterrupted democracy** (amidst ‘electoral hiccups’) → **weak/ failing State** (S. Dinnen)?
 - * → **politicization** of public service → tyranny of executive over the legislature → subverting independence of the judiciary → **dilemma of decentralization**
 - * → dubious/bogus **political party systems** → pseudo/ fictitious ‘dynamic opposition’ → compromised/ spurious legitimacy of ‘democratic mandate’/ majority
 - * → **parliamentary representation** → site of **participation or patronage?** (M. Morgan) → from ‘money politics’ to ‘pork barrel politics’

Cultural Dynamics

Processuality vs. Essentialism → ‘rot/ pasin’ vs. ‘lo’ (C. Filer) → de facto vs. de jure → customary (modified) vs. common (codified, commodified) → oral/unwritten vs. written

Cultural Audit/ Revaluating → ‘cultural resource’/asset vs. ‘cultural stressors’/liability → ‘Kastom’, ‘Melanesian Way’ (B. Nairokobi) and Colonial contact/ ‘Western impact’ (‘anti-colonial’ discourse? → Q. of ‘cultural competence’ → colonial triangle/ tryad (‘gavman’, ‘lotu’, ‘kastom’)

Finding the ‘golden mean’ (middle ground) → avoiding ‘romanticizing’ (over-glorifying), essentializing, or ‘blaming’ (condemning) KASTOM → **which Kastom?**

Cultural Dynamics

- * **Traditional leadership** → spectrum of **'Great Men'** (M. Godelier) not just **'Big Man – Chief'** (Melanesia-Polynesia) **divide** (M. Sahlins) → fluidity over rigidity (A. McLeod)
- * **Evolution of leadership** → **colonial contact** → emerging fame as **'big sots'** → avoiding shame as **'rabisman'** (wide spectrum in between) → *bisnisman, maniman, gavman?*
- * **'Big Man' Politics?** In post-colonial contexts

Cultural Dynamics

- * **Traditional ‘religious’ leadership?** → **diffused** roles or **defined** ‘career’? → part-time or full-time specialists? → **‘magico-religious’ realm** (*B. Malinowski, G. Senft, D. Van Hekeeren*)
- * **Post-contact evolution** → **Mission factor** → **‘catechist’ career?** → **‘missionary’ / ‘miseneri’ identity?** (*G. Senft*) → indigenous **‘priest’ status?**
- * **Indigenous ‘religious’ movements?**
 - Christianity giving rise to grassroots social movements
 - totalizing ‘cargo cult bias’? or alternative ‘grassroots social movements’?

Mission Factor/ Impact

- * **Colonial vestiges** → Westminster '**Idiosyncrasy**' → **no separation of Church & State** → Monarchy/ Queen as 'Head of both the Church & Secular State' → still 'Head of State' in post-colonial Commonwealth (represented by Governor General) → **Q. sovereignty?** (*B. Nairokobi*)
- * **Colonial 'outsourcing'** → services outsourced to the Missions → early successes in indigenizing governance (church becoming primary means of local governance in failing state) (*G.White*) → present-day government-church partnership schemes
- * **Post-colonial Christianity** → profound impact, penetrating 'clan barriers' → as '**Nationalizing Identity**' as traditionalized state religion (*B.Douglas*), indigenized Christianity as symbol of National Unity in fragmented PNG (ethno/micro-nationalism)? → Which version of Christianity (Bible enthroned in Parliament House) → Q. of religious freedom
- * **Leadership Gaps in the Church** → '**Localization**' thrust
 - 'open' politics (servant-leadership) or 'open' electorates
 - 'non-partisan' or 'partisan politics'?
 - 'ethical' leadership

Alternative 'Politics'

- * **participatory governance** → not 'conspiracy' or just 'collusion' or 'coalition' government
- * **critical collaboration** → 'non-partisan partnership' not 'partisanship' ('partisan patronage')
- * **grassroots democracy** → 'political consciousness' for 'dynamic' not 'dysfunctional' and 'disorderly' democracy

Salamat Po

