

sociological and administrative phenomena. Much planning has gone awry in the past because of an ignorance of the delicate balance and interplay of these phenomena.

Reading what the author modestly calls "his essay" is an experience akin to eating a high vitamin biscuit. This publication is really a condensed book, rich in ideas. Professor Joiner has compressed an immense amount of material into a few pages; there are no less than 212 footnotes as well as an excellent bibliography. The discussion is on a high theoretical level, in clear lucid prose. Professor Joiner knows the right questions to ask to determine the effectiveness of a planning agency, and he lists those that must be answered in any analysis of such agencies.

This publication is a valuable addition to the social science literature, and should provide a guide to planners seeking to understand the structure of their own organization and the relationships between it and other bodies involved in the planning process.

The price of the publication is not mentioned on the cover or elsewhere in the book, nor is there any indication whether it is distributed free of charge.

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*Saints and Fireworks: Religion and Politics in Rural Malta.* Jeremy BOISEVAIN. London, London School of Economics Monographs on Social Anthropology No. 30, The Athlone Press, 1965, 154 pp., \$5.95.

This book is a sober and detailed description of contemporary life on the island of Malta. The author shows a clear grasp of the political power structure of Maltese institutions, and is concerned with the way these institutions influence village life.

In this small island the Catholic Church has had a long tradition of dominance, and in fact, until a generation or two ago appears to have been *the* dominant force in Maltese culture. There was, and still is, a highly ramified church structure, which in one of its many subdivisions includes every person in every village — often a person is a member of several subdivisions. The daily life of the people revolves around church observances. Village celebrations are primarily religious ones. The priest is the person of highest status in the village. Attendance at church is expected of every person in the village, and until very recently almost no one has dared to risk social ostracism by remaining at home on Sunday.

This book describes in elaborate detail the petty concerns that occupy the attention and energy of Maltese villagers as they go about their daily life.

It analyses the bitter factional splits that have riven most of the villages — factions aligned either with the patron saint of a village, or instead, with its secondary saint. The elaborate celebrations on saints' days, involving collecting of funds, decorating church and village, buying fireworks, all provide opportunities for intense group participation and make for group cohesion. Alas, they likewise make for intense rivalries between the opposing factions. In recent years the rivalries have spread to political affairs, as well. The author has shown that there is a tendency for the elite in the villages to align themselves with the party of the patron saint and with the conservative element politically. And there is a similar tendency toward an alignment of lower status people with the party of the secondary saint and with the labor party politically.

The cultural focus then that emerges from this study of Malta is a powerful Catholic Church organization, formerly the dominant force in the culture, but now losing some of its influence. The members of the labor party have recently been resisting the power of the church, and through this successful resistance have themselves become a powerful force. Caught in the struggles, the villagers have found it increasingly difficult to maintain a united front to the outside world — there is too much division among them now, arising not only from religious club affiliations, but more and more, from political affiliations as well. However, it is this very division that is maintaining the uneasy balance of the Maltese society, the author points out in his conclusion. For the people who are involved in the conflicts are trying to keep them from becoming more divisive, by maintaining their contacts with the discordant elements. How long will they be able to keep these conflicts under control?

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*La République malgache*. Roger PASCAL, Paris, Berger-Levrault, 1965, 202 pp., ill. 21 F.

Madagascar fait constamment l'objet de publications de valeur fort inégale malgré l'abondance et la richesse des illustrations de certaines d'entre elles.

Parmi les plus récents, les meilleurs et les plus importants par leur contenu, citons un livre qui ne comporte que 11 illustrations dont 3 graphiques et d'austères photographies de moments historiques récemment vécus par la grande Ile. C'est celui de Roger Pascal, "La République malgache Pacifique indépendance".

Comme son titre l'indique, l'ouvrage est d'actualité et manifeste en même temps un grand courage pour traiter d'un sujet aussi délicat, une grande lucidité et un souci délibéré d'éviter toute complaisance. C'est l'œuvre d'un juriste qui est aussi un historien engagé. Il a lui-même vécu les années de