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**COMMON THREADS THROUGH THE PATCHWORK QUILT
MAJOR CAUSES OF INSTABILITY ACROSS THE SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
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ABSTRACT

Violent internal conflict has occurred in a number of South-west Pacific countries in the last two decades. This thesis examines four of these, Timor-Leste, the Bougainville province of Papua New Guinea, the Solomons Islands and Tonga and tries to determine if there are common factors at the root of the instability that has plagued each one. It provides a short narrative of the history of the recent internal clashes of each and examines the major drivers in each individual case. It concludes that the major factors contributing to instability across these four are clashes of identity, weak central governments and state institutions, and poor economic management.

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