

on the responsibility for the political and infrastructural institutions already implemented, and on New Zealand's financial, military, and other future responsibilities for a self-governing Tokelau. Issues related to fear of a perceived loss of an established third-party appeal process (represented by New Zealand) became apparent in the communities. The seriousness of these concerns is illustrated by the proliferation of complicated cases in which village councils, especially when working in combination with the recently empowered offices of faipule (the village elected official responsible for external matters) and pulenuku (the village elected official responsible for internal matters), become powerful enough to occasionally overrule the judgments of local, and supposedly independent, representatives of the public service.

The problem of maintaining professional distance and neutrality in kinship-based communities of small population size points to very real challenges when it comes to maintaining satisfactory services in areas such as health and education, but also in the running of political and legal systems at present. The great achievement of this work is that it points out these and similar dilemmas. Solutions are not easily found, however, if pragmatism and cross-cultural cooperation are dismissed as viable ways of working.

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*We Fought the Navy and Won: Guam's Quest for Democracy*, by Doloris Coulter Cogan. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008. ISBN cloth, 978-0-8248-3089-2; paper, 978-0-8248-3216-2; xv + 244 pages, appendixes, notes, illustrations, maps, and index. Cloth, US\$45.00; paper, US\$24.00.

Doloris Cogan's *We Fought the Navy and Won* explores the battles waged at the highest levels of the federal government that preceded Guam's transition from a possession of the United States administered by the Navy to its current political status as an unincorporated, self-governing territory. Cogan focuses primarily on the period 1945–1950 when she was employed as a writer and editor for the monthly *News Letter* and *Guam Echo* at the Institute of Ethnic Affairs in Washington DC. She recounts the struggle to end military rule on Guam by both its native inhabitants and supporters on the US continent through her own experiences of chronicling and witnessing such events. Cogan concerns herself specifically with the incidents leading up to the famous Guam Congress Walkout of 1949—a central event that ultimately led to the signing of the Organic Act of Guam, which granted the island self-government and its residents US citizenship. She does so admittedly from a “Washington perspective,” providing a memoir that illustrates the ways that this pivotal event in Guam's history continues to be interpreted through American lenses.

Cogan's opening chapter provides a survey of Guam's history, using the island's first contact with the West as

its starting point. The author relies heavily on Robert Rogers' *Destiny's Landfall* (1995) to chronicle the island's colonial history. She embraces the typical Western historiography, which narrates Guam's past as a successive parade of colonial regimes, with the agency of its native Chamorros a distant afterthought or absent altogether.

The fourteen chapters that follow Cogan's somewhat slanted historical survey plot the development of the Institute of Ethnic Affairs and introduce the individuals whom the author situates at the heart of the debate concerning changes to Guam's political status. These chapters prove both useful and engaging in their intimate, behind-the-scenes look at notable Washington figures and the oftentimes-heated debates that ensued between them with regard to US colonialism in the Pacific. Cogan further outlines the establishment of the *Guam Echo* as a means of publicizing nationally all matters relating to Guam, as well as serving as an outlet for residents of the island to engage in the discussion of their political status in far-off Washington. Perhaps most useful are chapters 6–8 in which Cogan provides a detailed glimpse into the political maneuvering among those in support of civilian government for Guam and those with interests in maintaining military control over the island. It is here that Cogan provides a fluid and remarkable account (much of it firsthand) of the various ways in which both sides combated their opponents.

Chapters 10–12 make the transition from high-level Washington maneuvering to events centered on

Guam, especially initiatives by its residents aimed at achieving organic legislation for the island. Here, Cogan discusses the 1949 Guam Congress Walkout, the national media fury that ensued, and the pressure it placed on the US Congress to enact legislative action. Cogan further explores the contributions of Guam's own Francisco B Leon Guerrero, Carlos Taitano, Concepcion Cruz Barrett, B J Bordallo, Antonio B Won Pat, and Agueda Johnston, as well as many others, who contributed to the Chamorro cause in Washington. As the author points out, many of them made the long journey to the US capital at their own expense to be present at those discussions targeting Guam's political status. Emphasizing the political agency of Chamorro, chapters 10–12 lend a sense of balance to Cogan's Washington-based perspective. The remaining chapters focus on the signing of the Organic Act of Guam and the initial strides made toward civilian government that immediately followed.

*We Fought the Navy and Won* has certain shortcomings worthy of mention. Perhaps the most pronounced is Cogan's all-too-condescending attitude toward people on Guam and their efforts for political change for the island. Cogan makes continual reference to herself and other Washington officials as having provided guidance and validation to those on Guam, and attributes the island residents' political efforts to the example set by Americans. With regard to dissent on the island toward the US military, Cogan notes, "It was heartening to us that the Guamanians were learning to speak up" (118). Additionally, Cogan

seems swift to assert that Guam residents lacked political forthrightness. The volume's overall tone is imbued with her assumptions about the "usual Guamanian reticence" (125). Even more problematic is Cogan's tendency to describe the people of Guam as being unanimously in favor of US rule. It is important to point out that her conclusion is based on the perspectives of only a handful of socially, economically, and politically elite individuals from the island.

Cogan's unremitting use of the term "Guamanian" throughout the volume is also worthy of mention, as it is both inaccurate and disturbing—all the "Guamanians" she discusses are in fact indigenous Chamorros. Introduced by the US colonial administration, the term "Guamanian" simply refers to a resident of Guam without regard to indigeneity. In failing to identify individuals as Chamorro, she continues to define them on American terms, recognizing them not as indigenous actors in history, but merely as island residents. Cogan's use of antiquated and incorrect terminology occurs elsewhere, such as referring to Chuuk State, Federated States of Micronesia, by its colonial name "Truk." Perhaps Cogan's persistence in using the old and now-inappropriate colonial terms is indicative of the era in which her experience and expertise is situated. Still, their uncritical use in the present reeks of cultural, historical, and political insensitivity.

Cogan's overall interpretation of the signing of the Organic Act of Guam is problematic. As she asserts, the events leading to its passage and the publications she produced to chronicle them marked, to some extent, "the end of

twentieth-century colonialism" (xi). Cogan fails to consider in her volume the ways in which the Organic Act of Guam and the island's current political status continue to be interpreted by many on Guam and abroad as yet another form of US colonialism. One wonders whether she fails to recognize this fundamental counter to her major premise. Cogan's unwillingness to problematize continued US presence on Guam arises in her discussion of the United States' rehabilitation of the island following World War II, which she characterizes as "good news" despite the immense land seizures that occurred with little or no compensation. Cogan's overall assumptions about the relationship between the United States and Guam, then and now, are uncritical and one-sided in every sense.

Despite the notable shortcomings, it must be said that *We Fought the Navy and Won* does make a valid and much-needed contribution to the literature focusing on a particular period in Guam's history. The Washington perspective from which Cogan writes furthers the discussion of Guam's continued relationship by illustrating the ways that the nation has conceptualized Guam and deliberated on decisions concerning the island and its people. The publication also lends helpful insight into current political issues relating to the island. Cogan provides an intimate and passionate inside look at the events surrounding Guam's change in political status. Invaluable to specialist and novice alike is the inclusion in the appendixes of primary source materials such as speeches, letters, memoranda, newspaper clippings, and other documents

(some in their entirety) that Cogan used to enhance her memoir.

Although the “we” in *We Fought the Navy and Won* is at times unclear as to whether it refers primarily to Chamorros or outsiders in far-off Washington, Cogan drives home the important point that a battle was waged, and the subsequent victory constitutes an important part of understanding the complex and multifaceted past of one of the last remaining colonies in the world today.

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*Politics and State Building in Solomon Islands*, edited by Sinclair Dinnen and Stewart Firth. Canberra: ANU E Press and Asia Pacific Press, 2008. ISBN online, 978-1-921313-66-0; paper, 978-0-7315-3818-8; xvi + 294 pages, maps, tables, figures, appendixes, index. Available for free download at <http://epress.anu.edu.au/> or print on demand A\$32.00, GST inclusive.

The selection of a new prime minister in Solomon Islands on 18 April 2006 should have been a routine exercise. It came after the seventh national elections since independence and was the final stage in an electoral process that was, by then, very well established. The Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) was still in the country and, after nearly three years, had restored law and order and made a lot of progress in reviving government services following the serious breakdown that took place during the “ethnic tension” from 1998 to 2003. By 2006, no one

was expecting anything other than a properly constituted transfer of power. Ultimately that did happen, but not in the way anticipated and not before the most serious and destructive riots in Solomon Islands history.

The riots broke out when it was announced to the crowd waiting outside Parliament House that the new prime minister was Snyder Rini, a returning member and former deputy prime minister in the outgoing Kemakeza government. There had been a strong mood for change at the election, and disbelief when the old government was reinstated. That night and on the following day Honiara was set ablaze as rioting continued out of control. The main target was property owned by ethnic Chinese; Chinatown was almost completely destroyed and numerous other businesses and homes were attacked and burned. It was not until reinforcements were brought in from Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji that order was restored. Rini faced a motion of no confidence at the first sitting of Parliament, and he resigned before that could take place. Another prime ministerial ballot was held, and this time, one of Rini's opponents, Manasseh Sogavare, was successful. He also happened to be a fierce critic of RAMSI.

This book is one of the first to try to provide some explanation for the riots in 2006. It arises out of a conference that was called soon afterwards, in Canberra on 5 May 2006, by the State Society and Governance in Melanesia program and the Pacific Centre of the Australian National University. The authors of the book's ten chapters come from within and outside Solomon Islands. Most of them are