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BOOK REVIEW

Rudolf von Benningsen, *The German Take-Over of the Caroline, Palau & Mariana Islands*. Translated, annotated and introduced by Dirk H.R. Spennemann. *Division of Historic Preservation Occasional Historical Papers Series No. 6*. Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands: Division of Historic Preservation. xxx, 73pp. ISBN 1-878453-60-2

reviewed by

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This small volume, just 66 pages including notes and references, is an account by the German officer in charge of taking possession of these former Spanish Islands of Micronesia following the Spanish-American war. It consists of an account of each of the stops of the ship *Kudat*, which was accompanied by the naval vessel *Jaguar*. Originally titled *Report of the Imperial Governor von Benningsen on His Trip on the Occasion of the Establishment of German rule in the Island Territory of the Carolines, Palau and the Marianas*, it is his diary describing each of the stops along the way and the official ceremonies transferring the authority of the Spanish garrisons to the German administrators.

Starting in the Jaluit region of the Marshalls where Germany had been operating for almost 50 years already, the diary is a brief account of the stops in Kosrae, Pohnpei, Chuuk, Palau, Yap, Rota, Tinian and Saipan. The actual written account consists of only 46 pages but, as with all of Dr. Spennemann's works, the small volume is replete with introductory material explaining historical context, biodata on the first governors dropped off at each of the

district headquarters and an overall look at the islands the Germans received from the Spanish. In addition, it's notes and index account for 15 pages or so and goes into great detail explaining various aspects of the descriptions by von Benningsen in their German context.

While not breaking new ground in its contribution to scholarship covering the brief of German administration of Micronesia, this book will give a very personalized account of the German intentions and early encounters with their new Micronesian changes. This was the beginning of era which, however short, which would have major impacts on the cultures, economics and administration of the islands.

It is available in limited quantities at the Division of Historic Preservation, Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, Saipan, MP 96950 and the price is five dollars plus shipping.

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