navigating BOUNDARIES
The Asian Diaspora in Torres Strait

EDITORS
Anna Shnukal, Guy Ramsay and Yuriko Nagata
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Typeset in Goudy 11pt on 14pt and printed by Elect Printing, Canberra

National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication entry

Navigating boundaries: the Asian diaspora in the Torres Strait
   Includes index.
   ISBN 1 74076 089 1

305.895016476

Editorial inquiries please contact Pandanus Books on 02 6125 3269

www.pandanusbooks.com.au

Published by Pandanus Books, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies,
The Australian National University, Canberra  ACT  0200 Australia

Pandanus Books are distributed by UNIREPS, University of New South Wales,
Sydney  NSW  2052 Telephone 02 9664 0999 Fax 02 9664 5420

Index compiled by Suzanne Ridley, Australian Writers Services

Production: Ian Templeman, Duncan Beard and Emily Brissenden
Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge the support we have been given over many years by the people of Torres Strait and we dedicate this book to them. We are also grateful for financial support from the Australian Research Council, the University of Queensland and the School of Languages and Comparative Cultural Studies at the University of Queensland. We thank all the contributors to this volume and gratefully acknowledge the assistance given to us by the staff of the Queensland State Archives, John Oxley Library, National Archives of Australia, National Library of Australia, Australian War Memorial Library, Noel Butlin Archives Centre (Australian National University), Royal Historical Society of Queensland Library; and by Judith Ramsay, Colin Sheehan, Michael Stubbins, Rodney Sullivan and Evelyn Suzuki.
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Biographies
Navigating Boundaries belongs to a new generation of Asian-Australian historical studies. The essays presented here draw on an extensive, widely dispersed body of information, including much unpublished material, in order to narrate stories of the Asian diaspora communities of Torres Strait, north Queensland.

Early chapters give an overview of Torres Strait Islander/Asian/European interaction, documenting the experiences of people from the five major Asian communities in the Torres Strait: Chinese, Filipino, Indonesian, Japanese and Sri Lankan. Later chapters inspect the early authorities of Torres Strait, including the former Resident Magistrate, Hon. John Douglas (who admired Torres Strait and Pacific Islanders but was a strong supporter of the White Australia Policy), and the Protector of Aboriginals (who sought to prevent contact between Asian and Indigenous people). Other chapters examine the contributions to Torres Strait culture made by Asian communities, from ethnic identity, clothing and cuisine to religion, funeral and burial practices, and with a strong focus on the rich musical culture of Torres Strait Islanders.

In the final chapter of the book, a variety of local voices narrate stories of Torres Strait people of Asian ancestry, providing a deeply personal insight into the Asian experience in Torres Strait. In this way, Navigating Boundaries brings together a range of voices to examine the history and socio-cultural dynamics of the major Asian communities in Torres Strait and, in so doing, brings light to bear on the multiculturalism of mainland Australia.

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