

could also serve as an improvisational skill which “provides a person with the ability to face life’s challenges in a creative way” (p. 85). It may also be taken from the point of view of an existentialist which allows one to accept things and more evidently during tragic situations, the value of *Bahala Na* enables the Filipino to cope with the toughest times. Case in point: the most devastating typhoon in recent history—typhoon Ondoy, showcased the Filipinos’ resilience to practically the worst disaster that may come our way.

Through various media such as film, letters, oral exchanges, and casual encounters, De Guia weaves, in a very intricate way, everything and anything that makes up a Filipino. With the passion of our Filipino Culture-Bearers, we continue to take our bus ride as we search for our true identity as individuals, as a community, as a society, and as a nation. The book’s glossary at the end actually serves as a “cheat sheet” for all Filipinos to gauge their “I am a Filipino if I possess these” quiz (emphasis mine).

Good or bad, the set of values lengthily discussed in this book remains very much a part of our Filipino daily life significantly affecting our decisions and directions. At the back cover of the book is printed, in bold letters, a question that reaffirms the belief of many culture-bearers as De Guia poses: **“Why do some Filipinos like to stay in the Philippines even if they live a simple life and do not earn much?”** With fervour, I join De Guia in asking: *are you one of us?*

Postcolonialism and Local Politics in Southeast Asia

Toh Goda

2003. Quezon City, Philippines: New Day Publishers.

Review by Donna Arriola

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This work is Toh Goda’s second edited compilation in English also by New Day Publishers, the first being one of the five best books published in the Philippines, having been also translated into Vietnamese. This book focuses local political cultures arising from the process of decolonising Island Southeast Asia. The array of topics under this rather large theme gives its audience the opportunity for a comparative reading, which is one of the main strengths of this book. Goda’s research is mainly on contemporary social anthropology, being a faculty at Kobe University’s Intercultural Communication Division of its Intercultural Relations

Program. He has published ethnographies on the peoples of Northern Luzon, Philippines and has edited other books in Japanese as well on anthropology. From his previous book that came out in 1999 entitled *Political culture and ethnicity: an anthropological study in Southeast Asia* are some familiar names such as those of Endo, Mabuchi, Barbosa, and Tamaki. He has also worked with Keesing and Blust in the past. The logic behind this choice of topics comes to light when one discovers that the past two books are part of a joint research project on the "*Social Anthropology of Local Politics in Southeast Asia*" funded by Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research from the Japanese Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports.

The contributors are mainly Japanese but with two representatives from Southeast Asia. The sites where the authors conducted their research are Taiwan, Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia. It is interesting that Taiwan should be included in Southeast Asia, which is conventionally not the case. Although Taiwan is more politically and culturally related to China today, it shares past ties with Southeast Asia, especially in the context of the Ami people which is the subject of one of the contributions.

The editor introduces the book first by evaluating the potential of an anthropological approach to the study of local politics of Southeast Asia, an orientation to the theoretical point of view taken by the book as a unifying theme. Here, Goda talks about political anthropology, with neo-evolutionism and functional-structural approach as the two leading directions under this kind of anthropology. He also defined 'society' within the realm of political anthropology as closed and segregated, thereby criticising it because it neglects the concepts of contact and diffusion. He then addresses the emergence of interpretation, experiments and phenomenological anthropology, supporting Said's opposition to dichotomous thinking. Deconstruction is one the key ideas that pervade throughout this collection of anthropological studies. Though these theories are not new as well as his questions relating to colonialism, it is still significant in the sense that Japanese scholars are beginning to translate their work to reach a wider audience. However, this might also be seen as a sort of giving in to the current world order wherein English-speaking scholars in the West have a resistance to adapting or relating to other cultures, especially in terms of language. Nonetheless, Goda is committed to opening the eyes of his readers to the postcolonial condition and the modern forces that shape our nation, identity and daily grappling with what he described as our "historical entanglements," ideas that will

become his preoccupation even in his subsequent publications.

The first two chapters discuss the “Adat Perpatih” which is the matrilineal customary law in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. Dr. Shamsul discussed the role of “Adat Perpatih” in the ethnicity of postcolonial Malays wherein colonial knowledge has been of much significance. In the next chapter, Dr. Endo takes on a different angle, by looking at land disputes, especially in the case of customary land inheritance to examine the interaction between the colonised and coloniser. Also on Malaysia, Prof. Ishii studied the flexibility, another key theme in this book, and the intricacies of Kadayan identity.

Barbosa began the discourse on the Philippines, discussing factors that affect local leadership in the form of *barangay* captains and officials in Cabugayan, Leyte. He made suggestions on how national development can be achieved by starting small, while negotiating ‘Waray’ and ‘Bisaya’ identities among others within the context of a *barangay*. In the fifth chapter, the editor then talks about migrants in Baguio City within the notion of highland cities in Southeast Asia as products of colonisation. The different backgrounds of the immigrants create a diversified way of adapting to their new environment which is what Goda set to thresh out. In the same city, Takaoka questioned the concept of “street children” and the promise of an anthropological study of child welfare. These children have been portrayed negatively and have been depicted as homogenous. In this study, she shows that these children are multi-ethnic, presenting new ways on how to attend to this growing social problem. In Chapter Seven, Tamaki investigated Aetas in the Southern Tagalog Region, their process of integration while sorting out their identity. He tackles issues such as intermarriage, ‘forced primitivism,’ and subsistence strategies, claiming that they remain hunter-gatherers as herbal medicine vendors. Professor Nagasaka studied Ilocano migration and how town fiestas such as in the case of Sidiran can be a venue for local politicians to put the *balikbayans* or people who have returned to their homeland from abroad back into the social fabric of their communities. The choice of the research site is especially apt in that Ilocos has the highest population of migrants.

In the same vein as the phenomenon of Filipino migrants, Dr. Ito considered the case of the Indonesian *hajj* in South Sulawesi. He studied the *hajj* pilgrimages to Mecca, Saudi Arabia of the Bugis people and how this act has evolved and turned into an anti-consumerist act which is an act of subversion to the post-colonial world. Lastly, Professor Mabuchi chronicled the life history of a coastal ‘Ami under different political

systems. Ultimately, these papers show that coming to terms with the post-colonial is an ongoing process and event.

Social scientists who are studying Island Southeast Asia would find the topics relevant—issues that are either constantly in the news or things that Southeast Asians encounter in their day-to-day lives. It is clear how this kind of work has emerged as a response to an effort to understand the situation that Southeast Asians find themselves in. For scholars engaged in archaeology, the book may not seem to be directly related to the field but there are some salient points and problems that can be found useful. These are the use of postcolonialism to answer archaeological questions, and the practice of archaeology itself as a study on postcolonialism. The latter issue is hinged upon the notion that anthropology and archaeology are colonial enterprises wherein the colonised culture becomes an intellectual commodity. Nonetheless, the stories can also serve as resources for ethnographic analogy in the study of archaeology.

Looking through the collected studies, the book was successful in demonstrating that Southeast Asia is still coping with the after effects of colonisation. Though published seven years ago, the book is worth having in every archaeological institution's library.

Cordillera: Diversity in Culture Change
Social Anthropology of Hill People in Northern Luzon, Philippines

Toh Goda

2002. Quezon City, Philippines: New Day Publishers

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This work by Toh Goda belongs to an increasing body of academic work that engages the “oriental stagnation hypothesis,” which assumes the static social, economic, and cognitive dimensions of Southeast Asia prior to intervention/colonisation by the West. Goda presents the results of his longitudinal ethnographic fieldwork among the Bontok and Ifugao in the Cordillera region in northern Luzon which span almost three decades. He believes his Bontok and Ifugao data can demonstrate that pre-Contact societies in Southeast Asia were not “cold” or unchanged, but were rather “warm”—constantly entangled in a flux of culture change.