

## BOOK REVIEWS

### *Authentic Though Not Exotic: Essays on Identity*

Fernando Nakpil Zialcita

2005. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

Review by Ma. Jasmina Liza R. Ceron

*Graduate student, Archaeological Studies Program, University of the Philippines*

A respected person, Dr. Fernando Nakpil Zialcita, heads the Cultural Heritage Studies Program and a professor at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the Ateneo de Manila University.

The content of the book is divided into three interesting parts. Part I: Construction of Community and Identity; Part II: A New Civil Culture Emerges; and Part III: Identity in the Global Village. With his (Zialcita) background, each phase was discussed and presented based on historical, anthropological (ethnographic), and philosophical (didactic) approach to answer the question about Filipino identity.

His recently published book is a significant piece that tries to understand our identity toward the value of culture and heritage. As we all know, the question of the Filipino identity has always been an issue and arguments have always materialised from it. This anthology of essays looks at the nuisances of colonisation by focusing on the experiences of Filipinos on their identity.

The book confers the changes in our culture from the time our country was colonised. The influences from the Spaniards and Americans had created dramatic transformation to the ways/patterns of life of early Filipinos that manifested up until now.

The author emphasised on the positive attributes of colonisation that shaped culture and the society. Moreover, he disproves several viewpoints by way of concentrating on the historical and cultural framework of societies' evolution of state and culture.

Dr. Zialcita also observes that other societies do not become aware of the lowland Christian Filipino are typecast and fits in the Western image hence we then are not *exotic* as Asian people. Nevertheless, the comparative analysis of Filipino identity and its culture presented in the book grounds in and are akin to Austronesian, Asian and Western

heritage (social, political, religious, economic aspect of culture).

The book is an omnibus of essays that is well researched and discussed. It was written predominantly for social scientists; however, this is not only for academicians, students and the like. I recommend the book to everyone who wants to know, learn, and understand who we (Filipinos) are and what we are as Filipinos. With this, we can establish a strong Filipino identity and not just relying on the paradox of "true" Filipinos. Because the identity of Filipinos is not a mixture of conflicting influences from other cultures rather a mixture of biological inherited traits (features) and the eclectic mix of borrowed, shared and adapted Western and Southeast Asian cultures.

***The Making of the Igorot: Contours of Cordillera Consciousness***

Gerald Finin

2005. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila Press

Review by Edwin A. Valientes

*Instructor, Department of Anthropology, University of the Philippines*

*Graduate student, Archaeological Studies Program, University of the Philippines*

In scholarship as well as in popular knowledge, the word *Igorot* refers to the so-called "unhispanised" and "tribal" people of the Cordillera in Northern Luzon and, who until the first three decades of the 20th century, still widely practiced headhunting. Etymologically, it came from the Ilocano word *gerret* which means to "cut off" or to "slice" (the head). Because of its initial association with relentless killings and cutting of heads, just hearing the word today still conjures up images of "savageness" and "primitiveness" to the general public. That is why even at present one can still hear parents, particularly in the lowland communities, scolding and threatening their children to behave properly, or else they will be given away to the Igorots. Despite this and all the other negative connotations that still cling to the word Igorot, the peoples of the Cordillera, by some twists of history, have ironically transformed it to become their proud identity (*Kaigorotan, Igorotlandia*) and a rallying point against the very notions in which the Igorot name was first conceived and put upon them by outside observers.

This transformation of meaning of Igorot into a pan-Cordillera identity and its subsequent ramification in political lives of the Cordillera