

## Book Review

### Culture and History: Prelude to Workplace Cultural Change

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*Culture and History* by National Artist for Literature Nick Joaquin is an excellent book that delves deeply into Filipino identity and the complex interplay between our natural roots and the effects of Western culture and colonialism. Joaquin's work focuses on how these factors have shaped Philippine society. Joaquin encourages us Filipinos to accept our distinct yet multifaceted past and to take pleasure in the depth it has developed as a result of centuries of cultural interchanges by providing a thought-provoking interpretation of history.

The book immediately draws the reader in with a compelling introduction and challenges conventional assumptions about the nature of individuals. According to Joaquin, Filipinos should be proud of their cultural heritage while also acknowledging the contributions of Western cultures and colonialists to the development of the country. This daring point of view provides us with a fresh perspective on our history, one that considers the intricacies and fluidity of our cultural evolution.

Joaquin suggests that we ought to take pride in the mingling of cultures resulting from colonization rather than being upset about it. He argues that the idealized notion of an authentic, indigenous Filipino culture is incorrect, as such a civilization runs the risk of becoming reclusive and unchanging throughout time. We as Filipinos have grown, altered, and developed a distinct identity that is just as rich and lively as that of our Asian neighbors resulting from the adoption of Western cultural influences.

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*Culture and History*, authored by Nick Joaquin, published by Anvil Publishing Inc. (2004 and 2017).

As I read *Culture and History*, I found myself deeply moved by the author's perspective on the world. His comments call into question the conventional narrative of being a victim, which is frequently told whenever colonialism is discussed. He encourages us to accept the murky aspects of our history and to recognize the many ways in which other cultural influences have contributed to our success. It is a rallying cry for us, encouraging us to take pride in our lengthy history and capacity to persevere in the face of adversity.

A most interesting and thought-provoking aspect of the book is on how beaterios worked to promote women's equality and racial integration. Beaterios, not typically discussed in standard history, were highly significant in shaping our society into what it is now. Joaquin's in-depth research and vivid descriptions shed light on their significance and demonstrate how they preached progressive views at a time when such concepts were uncommon. Because of this, I felt a sense of pride in what our predecessors had accomplished. I understood how vital it is to preserve and display our rich history.

Throughout the entirety of the book, Joaquin writes in a manner that is both intelligent and comprehensive, painting a vivid image of the social environment he is analyzing. His talent as a storyteller enables him to weave together interesting historical details, anecdotes from his own life, and thought-provoking observations into a captivating narrative that had my attention from beginning to end. Indeed, *Culture and History* is a book everyone interested in Philippine culture and its development should read.

*Culture and History* was written in the Philippines and first published in the United States. It is an essential work that pays tribute to the strength of the Filipino identity. It questions prevalent assumptions about the Filipino identity and encourages us to be proud of our diverse history. It serves as a call to accept our ancestry with self-assurance and pride.

The book educated me on the fact that our society does not put emphasis on being a victim or seek a perfect past. Rather, it highlights how well we have been able to adapt and integrate a wide variety of cultural influences into our lives. Our aboriginal predecessors as well as Western colonialists contributed significantly to the formation of our legacy. We have every reason to be proud of our heritage.

The insights provided in *Culture and History* have significant implications in the science and professional practice of organization development (OD). Joaquin's in-depth knowledge of Filipino culture provides a solid foundation for transformative change in workplaces. Recognizing and addressing the prevalent victim mindset in our society can pave the way for a more open and receptive attitude toward cultural change in work organizations.

The book emphasizes the transformative power of accepting diverse cultural influences with the *beaterios* as example. These institutions, initially a foreign concept, successfully advocated progressive ideas, such as gender equality and racial integration, at a time when such ideas were considered revolutionary. This remarkable feat demonstrates the Filipino people's ingenuity and adaptability.

The lessons learned from this historical example emphasize that there are no limits to what Filipinos can achieve in the realm of organizational transformation. We can use our strong sense of cultural identity to revolutionize work organizations by celebrating our unique heritage, incorporating diverse perspectives, and fostering an inclusive environment. Joaquin's book serves as a reminder that cultural diversity should be viewed as a source of innovation and growth rather than a barrier. The book is definitely a must-read for OD practitioners.