

us fresh insights on the Council of State and the Board of Control, two distinctive organs which strengthened the power of two eminent Filipino politicians, House Speaker Osmeña and Senate President Quezon (who directly confronted Governor-General Harrison). Chapters 9 and 10 show us the restoration of colonial control under the powerful commitment of Governor Wood that later led to the smooth transition to the Commonwealth government in 1935 as shown in chapter 11.

The strength and uniqueness of this book is in its deep analysis of the Council of State and the Board of Control by meticulous research using primary resources. Anastacio first traces the origin of the Council of State in the Malolos Constitution, drafted during the Philippine Revolution. In this sense the book shows the continuity of the Philippine legislative system from the time of the Philippine Revolution to the American period. Second, the author extensively discusses the roles and functions of the Board of Control and the Council of State, both of which emerged in 1918; but the former was abolished in 1927 after the Cabinet Crisis of 1923, while the latter changed in function under Governor-General Stimson.

As the book explains, 'the 1920s saw great changes', 'not only in American colonial personnel and policies, but also in Filipino leadership and strategies' (p. 195). It was through this political and legislative turmoil that Quezon consolidated his power over Osmeña and controlled the ruling Nationalista Party under American rule. Indeed, 'Philippine constitutional autocracy is as much American as it is Filipino' (p. 4). In this book Anastacio vigorously discloses the distinctive transformation of Filipino society under American rule by analysing its legal development and successfully lays the foundation for a legal historiography of the Philippines.

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Places for happiness: Community, self, and performance in the Philippines

By WILLIAM PETERSON

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One of many enigmas in the Philippines is that while a quarter of the population lives below the poverty line, the country consistently ranks among the happiest in the world. William Peterson presents a rich and ethnographically grounded analysis of how participation in localised, performance-based events in the Philippines provide and express culturally specific values that are uniquely Filipino, such as the way the self only exists in relation to others. He argues that celebrations and rituals (especially *Pasyon* theatrical activities that empathise with the martyrdom of Christ and various forms of street dancing) specifically link individuals not just to others in their community, but also to the larger Filipino nation in ways that contribute to happiness (p. 4).

Theoretically, the book relies on three primary and interlocking frames drawn from Filipino sociology, anthropology and linguistics, as well as the work of

psychology to explore the internal and embodied dynamics of what participation in communal dancing, theatre or singing conveys. The first frame focuses on Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's concept of 'flow' activities, which include play, art, pageantry, ritual and sports and whose primary function is to provide intensely enjoyable or gratifying feelings (p. 7). The second frame focuses on the Tagalog concept of *kapwa*, which stresses the shared or porousness of the identity of one's self with that of others (p. 9). The third framework focuses on the concept of *bayan*, or 'place'; it is a geographically transcendent term that can mean the local community, the nation or even the Filipino diaspora (p. 12). In that sense, *bayan* expresses both location and relationships to which identity is expressed. Though not a precise theoretical lens, William Peterson brings Philippine politics into his analysis by noting that the political-economic oligarchy's reputation is typically heightened or lowered through community performances owing to funding and connections between popular ceremonies, tourism revenue, religious overtones and the necessity of elite donations and sponsorship.

Peterson's fieldwork spans a decade during which he participated in and studied a variety of festivals in Luzon and the Visayas, including the Holy Week theatrical performances and dances associated with local fiestas. He describes the *sinakulo*, or passion plays, in two areas of Manila and one in Marinduque, which enable him to highlight the characteristics of traditional, civic-based, and activist forms of performance (p. 19). He also provides an in-depth examination of the popular *Moriones* festival in Marinduque, the *Ati-Atihan* festival in Kalibo, and the 2013 *Aliwan* Fiesta or national street dancing competition in Manila. He argues that dance is the most important way that Filipinos perform their relationship to local, national and international imaginaries, offering an insightful genealogy of dance that includes the history of how cultural dances became required primary school competencies and how the national dance troupe known as *Bayanihan* focused on five regional dance suites. He provides further analysis of the reasoning and meaning behind the performance of the 'Cordillera Suite' and the 'Muslim Suite' in their repertoire. The final chapter offers a slim historical review of how theatre has been used to agitate for political and economic change in the Philippines since the time of martial law under Ferdinand Marcos and continuing in 2018 with the performances of Juana Change (Mae Paner), a political satirist and activist.

Almost half of the book focuses on how the Pasyon re-enactments throughout the Philippines continue to provide an experiential set of activities that enable participants in these dramas to identify with the sufferings of Christ. Rather than focus on the headline-grabbing news depictions of Filipinos being nailed to the cross, Peterson relies on various scenarios to highlight his detailed descriptions of Holy Week activities in his three case studies. Pasyon in the Philippines is a hybrid form that plays out in practices that are highly localised and so are best understood as repertoires. Preparing for Pasyon takes weeks and months with local government units and elites sponsoring much of the materials needed for the productions, hence some of the most spectacular presentations are in areas of high unemployment or underemployment (p. 48). All participants in the traditional presentations say they participate in various roles in order to fulfil a vow, or *panata*. Common reasons given for undertaking a vow are to ensure future blessings, to offer thanks for blessings received, or to seek a cure

for themselves or a family member. Other reasons for participation are equally significant, including the pleasure that comes from working with other members of the community, being watched while wearing exciting costumes, and getting public recognition in the post-Pasyon period for having played a particular role (p. 37).

The strengths of this book consist in Peterson's careful linking of historical and contemporary sources with his own and his participants' reflections on their internal, communal feelings experienced during the busy and enthusiastic peaks of the performances. While the level of detail in some of his chapters may be too much for a non-specialist, this book is a remarkable contribution to Philippine studies and the ethnography of performance art.

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Singapore Indian Heritage

Edited by RAJESH RAI and A. MANI

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Asia's burgeoning museums, special exhibitions, and accompanying publications witnessed the launch of *Singapore Indian Heritage*, an inaugural volume by the Indian Heritage Centre, a diaspora museum which opened in 2015 in Singapore. Edited by Rajesh Rai and A. Mani, this book opens the concepts of 'diaspora' and 'heritage' to an array of disciplines: museum/curatorial/heritage studies, archaeology, art history, and sociology collaborate with their respective methodologies and sources to produce a wide and lucid arc of enquiry around Indian migrant communities in Singapore. What is largely rendered as a story of migration, settlement and formation of transnational communities in precolonial, colonial and post-national Singapore also weaves in and out of the history of material cultures, technologies, memories and ideas, to present a rhizomatic picture of tangible and intangible heritage.

The peerless archaeologist of Singapore, John Miksic, utilises texts, folklore, and epic traditions alongside architectural, numismatic, and epigraphic remains to survey the early interactions between Indic peoples and Southeast Asia. The scientific and stylistic analyses of these materials evidence the constant reappropriation of ideas and objects to suit local preferences on both sides. This cross-cultural appropriation is furthered in Gauri Krishnan's investigation of precolonial trade networks between South and Southeast Asia. Krishnan pays keen attention to textiles produced in Gujarat, Bengal and Coromandel for Southeast Asian markets. Numerous textile typologies based on specific materials, motifs, trademarks, and contexts of consumption are surveyed.

Nalina Gopal mobilises archival and oral history sources to chronicle voluntary and assisted migrations of South Asian people to colonial Singapore. Individual