

# philippine studies

Ateneo de Manila University • Loyola Heights, Quezon City • 1108 Philippines

---

**Fine Description: Ethnographic and Linguistic Essays**  
**by Harold C. Conklin**  
**Editors: Joel Kuipers and Ray McDermott**

## **Book Notes**

*Philippine Studies* vol. 57, no. 1 (2009): 141–142

Copyright © Ateneo de Manila University

---

Philippine Studies is published by the Ateneo de Manila University. Contents may not be copied or sent via email or other means to multiple sites and posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's written permission. Users may download and print articles for individual, noncommercial use only. However, unless prior permission has been obtained, you may not download an entire issue of a journal, or download multiple copies of articles.

Please contact the publisher for any further use of this work at [philstudies@admu.edu.ph](mailto:philstudies@admu.edu.ph).

<http://www.philippinestudies.net>

CAMAGAY, MA. LUISA, ED.

## **Encuentro: Philippine-Spanish Friendship Day**

Manila: Spanish Program for Cultural Cooperation, 2007. 233 pages.

This volume is a selection of papers presented during a conference commemorating the first Philippine-Spanish Friendship Day. The conference was supported by the Spanish Program for Cultural Cooperation and was jointly sponsored by the University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University, and De La Salle University. It aimed to assess the impact of the Spanish occupation on Philippine life from various perspectives and academic disciplines. The fifteen papers included in the compendium deal with the political, economic, cultural, and religious institutions established during the Spanish occupation. The topics covered include colonial art and architecture, language and literature, poetry, religious orders, historical archives, and local history. A significant number of chapters also deal with historiographic issues focused on historical documentation, archival preservation, and the interpretation of sources. Moreover, some papers that are grounded in local historical research posit significant issues that deal with cultural identity construction, modernity and modernism, interethnic relations, and issues associated with applying categories both in historical and contemporary discourse. As indicated in the editor's foreword, the collection is an attempt to reexamine, review, and reevaluate Spanish-Philippine relations through various lenses.

CONKLIN, HAROLD C.

KUIPERS, JOEL AND RAY MCDERMOTT, EDS.

## **Fine Description: Ethnographic and Linguistic Essays**

Monograph 56. New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 2007. xvii + 511 pages.

This collection gathers nineteen classic papers by Harold C. Conklin that are grouped according to eight themes: fieldwork, ethnographic knowledge, lexicographical approach, kinds of color, the world of plants, modes of communication, orientation, and agriculture. Each set of papers is accompanied

by an appreciative commentary, and the commentators themselves form a who's who in anthropology, the lead being Clifford Geertz. The volume's title, *Fine Description*, comes from the paper of Charles O. Frake given at the American Anthropological Association meetings held in November 1991 on the occasion of Conklin's retirement, which is reproduced in this volume. The attention to detail in Conklin's ethnography is "fine" in the twin senses of fine detail and fine art: "meticulous in construction, but it is also grand in design" (x). Thus, despite the changing concerns of anthropology as a discipline and the pitfalls of ethnography, Conklin's detailed, rigorous, and respectful ethnographic writings have imparted to us a lasting knowledge of how the Hanunóo and Ifugao he lived with talked, worked, thought, played, and looked at the world. In their introduction, Joel Kuipers and Ray McDermott distill five principles from Conklin's work to guide ethnographic description in a responsible and principled direction. The commentators note how Conklin's work anticipates and subtly addresses many of the issues that ethnographers would grapple with in the late twentieth century. The volume ends with Conklin's reflections on his introduction to anthropology, which appeared originally in 1998.

DE VIANA, AUGUSTO V.

## **In the Far Islands: The Role of Natives from the Philippines in the Conquest, Colonization and Repopulation of the Mariana Islands, 1668–1903**

Manila: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 2004. 305 pages.

From a former "province" of the Spanish Philippines, which loomed large in the imagination of *ilustrados* in the late nineteenth century, the Mariana Islands have been expunged from the collective memory of Filipinos. Augusto V. de Viana's book, based on his Ph.D. dissertation, helps recall the intimate ties between Luzon and the Visayas and this group of Pacific islands. It narrates the early encounters of the Spanish with what Magellan called the Ladrões and discusses the belated (1660s) Spanish conquest and missions, and the resistance of the indigenous Chamorro population. The forcible relocation of the population to Guam and the emptying of other islands such as Saipan, plus epidemics, revolts, and suicides, diminished the