

'Connecting Two Cultures: Australia and the Philippines'

Reserve your copy of this limited edition of a new book on Filipino-Australians by Renato Perdon.

As discussed in this book, the creation of two identities for Filipinos residing overseas like Australia came to the surface when succeeding generations of Filipinos, mainly overseas born Filipinos navigating in two worlds adopted dual identities for themselves. It seems no one among overseas Filipinos of the present time could claim singular allegiance to the Philippines as their sole country of origin.

Dual identities became an accepted norm or reality of modern Philippines. In fact, a strong link between Australia and the Philippines has been established. The relations and interaction that developed between the two countries from the time [1606] the last Spanish explorers of the southern land sighted *Terra Australis* or New Holland, the name given by the Dutch to this major island in the southern hemisphere, continue to prosper.

A new identity has appeared. It is called Filipino-Australians, now all calling Down Under as their home, and regarded the Philippines as a country they come to visit for nostalgic connections and reasons or historic sentiment.

The first part of the book discusses the final effort of the Spanish explorers in the 17th century to establish a foothold in the Pacific, then the only remaining 'undiscovered' land by European explorers. The subsequent event led to the establishment of a British colony in Australia. Spain, having already established its foothold in the Philippines as its colony in this part of the world, still continued to participate in exploring the southern part of the globe. The early part of the book provides information on the early movement of Filipinos towards the southern neighbouring areas like Indonesia and the Malayan settlement under the Dutch and the British hegemony.

The British invasion of Manila in 1760s confirmed such early linkage between Australia and the Philippines when British forces occupied Manila for a little less than two years in the middle of 18th century. The invasion was an offshoot of the Seven Years' War that was raging in Europe.

As the vibrant connections between Australia and the Philippines continues to undergo fine tuning, the strengthening of the two cultures, one basically from the orient, and the other based on Anglo-Celtic background, is being realised as proven by the narrative of events and experiences of the people of the two countries as discussed clearly in the early and subsequent parts of this book.

This book is not a scholarly dissertation discussing the subject such as the close relationship between Australia and the Philippines and how it developed through the years, but a simple way of telling the stories, through the eyes of the author, a Filipino-Australian, that took place between the two countries and its people.

This book is therefore taking the point of view of a Filipino-Australian who is enjoying the benefits of dual identities, navigating between two cultures, and continues to contribute further to the existing harmonious understanding between the two countries – Australia and the Philippines.

The following chapters in the book: *Australia and the Philippines; Australian-Filipino Colonial Links; The 1879 Sydney International Exposition; First Filipino Settlement; Racism Problems of Filipinos; A Filipino Pioneer Educator; Philippines: A Country of Contrasts; In Search of Filipino Identity; Diplomatic Relations; The Colombo Plan Scheme; Multiculturalism in Australia; Blacktown, a Filipino Frontier; Miss Saigon in Australia; Marriage Across Cultural Frontiers; A Triple Murder Case; Younger Generation of Fil-Australians; and Philippine Fiesta and Films.*

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