

One does not want to appear pedantic. These anomalies only catch the eye because of the generally outstanding professionalism of the Introduction. But it may also be apposite to remark that institutions of “ancestralship” are not found in the whole of Borneo society, in spite of the eclectic forms of the phenomenon which the book presents. Appleton’s chapter (4) on the Muslim Melanau does not seem to present Bornean “ancestralship” even in one of the forms foreshadowed by the editors, but deals with modern, Malay-style, syncretic use of medicine-men (*bomoh*) and the Sarawak medical services in face of a malignant breast cancer, followed, after the death, by graveyard rites in a Muslim cemetery. Appleton indeed keeps her distance from the old Melanau religion by saying that it is only still found in isolated pockets upstream; using Islamic labels for it such as “animism” or “free-thinking”; and apparently not aspiring to add to the work of the late H. Stephen Morris (*The Oya Melanau*. Sarawak, Malaysian Historical Society, 1997) on that antiquarian subject. Of course it is a good principle to include, in such a collection, glimpses of the changing face of ancestralship amid social upheaval. Yet Oesterheld’s chapter (6) on Iban warfare against the transmigrating, Muslim Madurese, which involved ancestral comradeship and the emergence of a *panglima burong* (Bird General) to lead an unprecedented pan-Iban alliance and symbolise a new identity predicated on an imagined shared genealogy, seems to fit the principle more authentically.

Roger Kershaw

EVA MARIA KERSHAW / ROGER KERSHAW (eds.), *Writing an Identity. Content and Conceptions of a Brunei-Dusun ‘Constitution’ of 1981*. (Borneo Research Council Monograph Series, 12). VI, 246 pages, US\$ 40.00. ISBN 1-929900-12-0

The Dusuns are a non-Muslim minority group within the sultanate of Negara Brunei Darussalam situated on the north-west coast of Borneo. They numbered around ten thousand persons at the time of the 1971 census. But, as the state-sponsored Islamisation wave proceeds, they form an increasingly endangered species: anybody who converts to Islam is automatically re-classified as a “Malay”. An *ethnie* which will never graduate to „nation“ status, their 1981 “Constitution” (*Adat Resam Puak Dusun Negeri Brunei*) may be characterised as an “inward-looking document” or as an “exercise in maintaining ethnic boundaries” (pp. 7–8). Produced in the run-up to national independence (achieved at the end of 1983), it is fairly short, taking up only pages 33–67 here.

The editors, a wife-and-husband team with complementary talents as ethnographer and political scientist/historian respectively, provide an introduction (pp. 1–32) and commentary (pp. 68–146), followed by extensive ethnographic appendices on birth, marriage and death (pp. 150 onwards). The “references”

section is rather oddly placed on pp. 147–9 rather than at the end of the book. Of the twenty-eight titles listed there, no fewer than ten are by our editors, either separately, jointly or pseudonymously. Given that most of the other works are general background reading relating either to nationalism or to the broader circumstances of NBD's history and current affairs, it becomes clear that the Kershaws have cornered a virtual monopoly on Dusun scholarship in the West; and yet further work is in the pipeline (p. 86).

The "Constitution" has three core sections, namely *adat awam* (general customs); *adat kahwin* (marriage customs); and *adat kematian* (death rites). The document was lent to the editors by a "Dusun teacher on an upgrading course" (p. 30). The original takes the form of a fifty-seven-page foolscap typescript, of which there are at most six extant copies (p. 9n); a printed version of the "covering letter", with a reference number, is shown (pp. 245–6).

The "Constitution" was produced by the *Jawatan Kuasa Penyusun Adat Resam Puak Dusun Negeri Brunei* or Committee for Compiling the Custom of the Dusun Community of the State of Brunei. This raises important questions in itself, because there are significant generational and geographical splits within the Dusun people, which casts doubt upon how far the "Constitution" actually spoke for them all. The editors also detect errors in the recording of Dusun custom. Indeed, the extensive commentary was necessitated by the Constitution's lack of comprehensiveness and accuracy (p. 31); "augmenting and corrective detail" had to be provided (p. 32); and the whole volume is intended to furnish a "comprehensive handbook".

The "Constitution" has many inadequacies. The document was shoddily produced (e.g. p. 113); it lacks "editorial coordination" (p. 133); and it betrays both deficient political judgement (pp. 69, 91) and "defective cultural self-consciousness" (p. 142). The "terseness tending to the cryptic" (p. 69) and "extreme taciturnity" (p. 115) of the Dusun compilers, along with their lack of clarity (pp. 116–17, 123–4, 124–5), are no aid to comprehension. The Committee did not provide any introduction stating, for example, the purpose of the compilation, whether it was to make a historical record of vanished custom or, alternatively, to propose a set of laws for reintroduction in the interests of ethnic autonomy (pp. 69, 70); they omitted to identify their informants or to state how many there were; they failed to ensure that their findings represented the views of all Dusuns in the sultanate (rather than from a specific part of Tutong District); they did not consult some highly knowledgeable people; and the script is written in Malay rather than in their own language, which is odd in a document purporting (presumably) to advance ethnic identity. Modern practice, under Malay influence, is presented as if it were Dusun tradition (pp. 122, 123). Many of the reputed offences were unlikely ever to be committed in practice (e.g. pp. 102–3, 105). The document has also been overtaken by the march of history as arranged marriages become a thing of the past and the younger generation achieve professional status, greater affluence and higher educational attainment, accompanied

by a corresponding diminution of parental control. In any the case, the government refused to adopt the “Constitution” on any terms (p. 19) and it sank without trace until resuscitated here some thirty years later.

The appendices afford ample space for the editors to expound their own data. In a bravura display of virtuosity, a unique compendium of knowledge about Dusun custom and ritual is provided. Fairly wide-ranging and often entertaining, these segments deal with the essence of what it is to be human, concentrating on matters such as birth, family, religion, social relations, marriage, sex, parenthood, health, education, work/livelihood, death and burial. There are useful sections on Dusun names and nicknames (pp. 160–2) and on marriage prospects for a disabled person (p. 177–8). Given the obstacles placed in the way of research in Negara Brunei Darussalam, the authors deserve the thanks and respect of anybody with a serious scholarly interest in the sultanate. The reviewer is also grateful for being introduced to the word “hlonipha”, not in the *OED* and not accepted by the spell-checker, but meaning “avoidance speech” (p. 84).

In short, the editors’ knowledge of the Dusuns of Negara Brunei Darussalam is unrivalled in the West; their commentary is authoritative and erudite; whilst original documentation of the sort printed here is rare indeed. Taken together, these factors mean that *Writing an Identity* amounts to another major achievement by Eva and Roger Kershaw, which may be added to what is already a substantial *oeuvre*.

A.V.M. Horton

NIKLAS REESE / RAINER WERNING (Hrsg.), *Handbuch Philippinen. Gesellschaft, Politik, Wirtschaft, Kultur*. Berlin: Horlemann Verlag, 2012. 495 Seiten, € 19,90. ISBN 978-3-89502-339-2

Im Oktober 2012 legte die philippinische Regierung mit einem Abkommen mit der bewaffneten Moro Islamic Liberation Front einen seit 40 Jahren tobenden Konflikt bei und stellte der muslimischen Minderheit auf der Insel Mindanao die Schaffung einer autonomen Provinz im Jahre 2016 in Aussicht. Darüber kann man im *Handbuch Philippinen* zwar nichts lesen, kam dieses doch wenige Wochen zuvor auf den Markt. Doch wer verstehen will, worum es bei diesem Konflikt ging und welche Geschichte dem blutigen Aufstand der Moros vorausging, ist gut beraten, die Kapitel „Der Süden“ und „Mindanao“ von Rainer Werning zu lesen.

Noch vor hundert Jahren war der Süden der Philippinen zu 98 Prozent von Muslimen bewohnt, die von der spanischen Kolonialverwaltung nie unterworfen werden konnten. Erst dem Kolonialregime der USA (ab 1898) gelang es, dank aggressiver Siedlungspolitik und straffer militärischer Verwaltung der großen Südinsel Mindanao die reichen Ressourcen des Südens für die Zentralregierung zu erschließen und den Einfluss der Moros zurückzudrängen. Die in-