



# Prehistoric Philippines

*Ambeth R. Ocampo*

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## **Prehistoric Philippines** Ambeth R. Ocampo

"This compilation of essays strays from my 19th century comfort zone. In this book we go back to a time before written records, to a time before history. It is a reminder of Manuel's challenging remark: 'where History ends, Anthropology begins.'" --- From the Introduction by the author

## **Prehistoric Philippines Details**

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Author : Ambeth R. Ocampo

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## From Reader Review Prehistoric Philippines for online ebook

### Anna says

good

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### Katrina says

Guy could use a (better) proofreader.

Also, a lot of the essays were 70% pre-ramble, 30% the stuff the essay was supposed to be about. Bitin.

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### Crocifixio says

Too short for something so huge. Looks like it came out just for the sake having something to publish. Admittedly not ARO's bread and butter, still, I was expecting more Pre-colonial material from him. The amount of what he gave out here was like something from a hobbyist, not a renowned historian like he is.

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### Reylan Garcia says

Philippine Prehistory should be given as much importance as Colonial history too. I'm glad I got to know the likes of a lakatuna and why the Manunggul jar should have been kept as a part of the new currency design.

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### Cesarcucio\_saveearth says

The book was great.

Rate: 3. Why? It was tooooooo thin, and the price for it was about 20-50 pesos high.

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### Ric says

To use the word of a colleague, "Ambeth Ocampo is ze bomb."

The author is a historical revisionist who cares for the truth instead of the traditions and emotions attached to them as evident in the "Been there, done that" chapter about the wooden posts of the supposed first mosque in the Philippines. Tradition dictates that they were from 1380 AD but this was actually not yet confirmed by carbon dating.

He also recognizes that not all pre-Spanish traditions should be kept compared to what some ultra-nationalists decrees. For example, the culture of "slave raiding" has survived to present day kidnapping and

Ocampo postulates that studying its history can help us provide a basis for the solution. ("Isang Bansa, Isang Diwa?" chapter)

Ocampo often chooses to present many hypothesis as questions instead of putting forth the most probable assumption as a statement which can be misinterpreted as the accepted truth. Thus, after reading this book, I would say that he is a freethinker among historians; not accepting traditions or the "nakagisanan" as the truth.

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Some negative feedback about the editing of the book:

\* It could use a better proofreader who has a better grasp of context and punctuation. Example: The word "attached" was used instead of "attacked" twice. It is easy to mistake the two without context but with context, they are so different.

\* The contents could have been organized better. This book seems like a collection of Ocampo's essays and not much thought has been given on how to arrange them in a more cohesive manner.

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### **Anne says**

I love Prof. Ocampo's way of telling history like he's just conversing with the reader in the most casual way possible. I also like how this book presents more questions--as what he said about continuing to ask and learn even if we think we know the subject already. Prof. Ocampo makes history relatable to people from all walks of life, and his articles spark interest in Philippine prehistory. I certainly enjoyed this book, though I wish it wasn't so short and bitin!

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### **Earl says**

There is always something about pre-historic societies that makes us curious. Thankfully, Ambeth Ocampo already provides us with a starting point.

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### **Ralph Marion Victa says**

Interesting. Includes some but not the latest of archaeological discoveries. The books refers to secondary sources. For popular audience.

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### **Irene says**

*"In pre-spanish times we were a people who lived on and by water, our lives were not hampered by the lack of wheel , the lack of roads and bridges. Many people who describe Philippines as an archipelago separated by water should look further back to a time when we were a people connected by, rather than separated by water."*

Back then thousands of years ago before the Spanish came, we were artisans, master craftsmen, and we were

skilled, ferocious warriors. Our society had a structure: We had our own system of government, laws, religion and beliefs; We had our own system of writing; We'd traded with our neighbors.

In other words, we were "indio-geniuses."

I didn't know there are so much we don't know about our history before the Spanish came. I used to envy other countries for their rich history and culture. But I was merely an ignorant student of my own nation's history. It is not that we lack history, we simply haven't figured out many things yet.

The next time I visit our National Museum, I could look at our treasures with keener interest.

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### **Michael Gerald says**

Reading this book makes me recall my visits to the National Museum of the Filipino People. It's in relatively good condition, but it still needs more support from the President, Congress, and the public, instead of wasting money on dole-outs that only encourage laziness, mendicancy, patronage, and corruption.

And more people should make at least one or two visits to the National Museum, and not just because it's part of field trips during primary school. Heck, there should be less temples of crass materialism called shopping malls and more support for educational and cultural institutions like libraries, museums and the like. Culture may not fill an empty stomach or clothe people's bodies, but it stimulates the mind and the soul.

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### **Eric Elegado says**

I love history. I love Philippine history further. While I may not very fond of pre-Spanish Philippines, this book just presented to me a whole new perspective to appreciate the country's origin without its Western influence. I was surprised to learn about the surrounding evidences of how much culture and civilization we had even before Ferdinand Magellan sat foot in the 16th century. Also, it made me sad that we know very little of such period. That was our golden age right there, and got small tangibles to take us back to that period. Thank you Sir Ambet Ocampo for the hours of labor for this research. And may this be a challenge to historians, especially from the Philippines, to take this quest in understanding more about the Islands. There's more to dig out there, just waiting to be found.

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### **K.D. Absolutely says**

If there is one thing that this book has proven, it is the fact that Spain should not claim to be the one that civilized the Philippines. Or that America was the one who cuddled and nourished us Filipinos through their benevolent assimilation. Like any foreign conquerors, all they were looking for was anything to their advantage particularly on how to plunder the country's natural resources.

Philippines has been civilized since the Han Dynasty (206 B.C. to 220 A.D.). The finding of jars and plates buried inside the Philippine soil was proof enough that there was commerce in the Philippines during this dynasty's Silk Road. The skull of an early man with golden teeth, for me, is proof enough that we Filipinos were not like monkeys when the Spaniards and Americans came that they taught us how to handle chopsticks

or spoon and fork to eat.

I liked this last (so far) book in the Looking Back series. It is thin and *bitin* (wanting) but it has more new information than the earlier five. It also made me sad because the excavated treasures and fossils are mostly missing because of people's greed and insensitivity. Anyone who steals historical items or manuscripts should be hanged in public. Why? Because these thieves are stealing people's history. Our history defines who we are as a nation and it is part of our soul. We learn from them. History is our compass in the future and what is a nation without a future?

Thank you, Ambeth Ocampo for writing all these six wonderful small books. May your tribe increase, sir.

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