

Eric Olmedo

# Identity at Work

Ethnicity, Food & Power in Malaysian  
Hospitality Industry

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*To Ferlynda, Mikhael, Adam and Remi:  
The four cardinal points of my personal  
compass.*





# Foreword

*Identity at Work* is a path-breaking book. It presents an exciting and innovative conceptual framework and an even more exciting set of empirical data rarely excavated by social anthropologists and ethnographers.

Conceptually, it is about the sociology of elites, anthropology of work and workplace, phenomenology of ethnic relations and boundaries, collision and collusion of culture and capital in a long-drawn and tired globalisation at the semi-periphery, and the rise and relevance of anthropotechnology as a new analytical tool. Methodologically, it is an interdisciplinary approach at its best.

Empirically, because the author is an experienced professional in the hospitality industry as well as a creative and thinking student of social anthropology, he is able to bring together and present a rich corpus of data, conversations and narratives, using the array of rich conceptual tools at his behest, and ultimately a thoroughly credible exciting story that is rarely told before, except in journalistic pieces, novels or short stories.

Dr Olmedo, through his sharp scholarly lens and rich analytical and multi-tasking skills he acquired as a professional, has written a book that is relevant and shall be referred to and respected for a long time by both his academic colleagues and those who have worked with him in the hospitality industry.

For those interested in Malaysians and Malaysian studies, this book is an indispensable addition on a subject Malaysians only dare to discuss at private functions or during management courses. Arguably, to the best of my knowledge, it surpasses all the “cultural guidebooks” in the market today on how to do business and understand Malaysian multiethnic cultures at work and workplace. It is a must-read.

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A.B. Shamsul



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