

own distinctiveness from other groups.<sup>31</sup>

Yet, despite the identities of an ethnic group (*i.e.*, language, culture, religion) that may prove quite durable, ethnicity is a complex social phenomenon acceptable to changes through the centuries. Such changes can occur through the following factors:

1. emigration or changes in political boundaries;
2. subjugation by conquest;
3. assimilation (whether voluntary or involuntary).<sup>32</sup>

Ethnic "identity" is a product of the adaptation of social morals and values of these forces.

Thomas McKeena argues that Muslim activities in an *inged* (Muslim locality) are not all distinctly "Muslim" or "Islamic".<sup>33</sup> The Bangsamoro people (Muslims in Mindanao) accommodate other cultures. Their self-recognition as an inclusive Moro people joined by Islam is no less than their other social identities – that of being a Maguindanaoan, Tausog, or Maranao. However, such complex identity became a target of intense politicization. Hence, Muslim separatist leaders attempted to draw a distinctive picture of a Philippine Muslim identity to purge themselves of the complexities which this history engendered. These nationalist ideas were then emphasized, altering customs that are seen as un-Islamic while promoting thoughts of a transcendent Muslim identity.

Kingsley de Silva in his recent exposition on ethnicity and nationalism explains that an awareness of a common identity can best be understood in these elements:

First is the vital importance of the past, wherein ethnic identities often bring along "memories of historical enmities that has very deep roots."<sup>34</sup> Hence, tensions and hostilities inevitably result in the attempts to redress the historical grievances.

Second, is the "politicization of the ethnicity", a process wherein ethnic groups emphasize their singularity but "facilitates their modernization by transforming them into a political conflict group for the modern political arena."<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> According to the anthropologist Charles Keyes as quoted in *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 112.

<sup>33</sup> Thomas McKeena, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels: Everyday Politics and Armed Separatism in the Southern Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*