

The Iberian Qur'an

The European Qur'an



Edited by
Mercedes García-Arenal, Jan Loop,
John Tolan and Roberto Tottoli

Volume 3

The Iberian Qur'an



From the Middle Ages to Modern Times

Edited by

Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard A. Wieggers

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Isaac Donoso

The Qur'an in the Spanish Philippines

1 The Global Islamic Word

While Moriscos produced and circulated Qur'ans in the Iberian Peninsula under the Habsburg monarchs, on the other side of the globe the Catholic empire encountered the easternmost expansion of Islam. It was a natural extension towards Southeast Asia that, by the end of the sixteenth century, was entering the Pacific region. When Luis Váez de Torres discovered the strait that bears his name in New Guinea in 1606, he found Muslims preaching Islam to the Papuans:

Observations were made of the water throughout this land of New Guinea as far as the Moluccas, and the compass was set to fall on the Meridian of the Isles of the Thieves [Guam] with the Philippine Islands: at the end of this land we found Moros dressed with ready artillery, such as small cannons [*falcones*] and *berzos*, arquebuses and swords: they are conquering these people who are called Papuans, and they preach the sect of Muḥammad to them: these Moros made trade agreements with us.¹

Since ancient times, Arabs had connected Mediterranean products with the Indian Ocean and China. As early as 651 A.D. / 30 H. the expansion of the new Arab religion reached China.² The legend narrates that the caliph 'Uthmān sent a diplomatic mission that year to the court of the Tang dynasty.³ Khānfū (Canton) became a commercial entrepôt for Muslims in China until the Guangzhou Massacre in 878–79.⁴ After that, Zaytūn (Quanzhou) emerged as a commer-

1 Pedro Fernández de Quirós, *Descubrimiento de las regiones australes*, ed. Roberto Ferrando (Madrid: Historia 16, 1986), 325. Spanish original: "Hízose observación del Agua por toda esta tierra de la nueva Guinea hasta las Molucas, por todo esto fixa la Aguja que viene a caer en el Meridiano de las Islas de los Ladrones con las Islas Filipinas: al remate desta tierra hallamos Moros vestidos, con artillería de servicio, como son falcones y berzos, arcabuces y armas blancas: estos van conquistando esta gente que dicen de los Papúes y les predicán la Secta de Mahoma: tuvieron estos Moros con nosotros contratación."

2 George Fadlo Hourani, "Direct Sailing between the Persian Gulf and China in Pre-Islamic Times," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 2 (1947).

3 Barbara L. K. Pillsbury, "Muslim History in China: A 1300-Year Chronology," *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs* 3, no. 2 (1981).

4 C. E. Bosworth, M. Hartmann, R. Israeli, "China," *Encyclopaedia of Islam II* (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 843.

cial and cultural center for Islam in eastern Asia, influencing decisively the Islamization of neighboring regions.⁵

Accordingly, the world was connected from al-Andalus to China —as Ibn Khaldūn records⁶— and Andalusians were not absent from this global *oikoumene*. We can mention two narratives: the legendary tenth-century seaman from Cádiz who survived Women’s Island near Borneo in the *Kitāb ‘Ajā’ib al-Hind*, and the more realistic twelfth-century story of Sa’d al-Khayr al-Balansī al-Šinī, a Valencian trader who spent time in China and was known as “the Chinese.”⁷

Arabic sources describe the route towards eastern Asia⁸ as far as Korea (al-Silā)⁹ and Japan.¹⁰ In the process of commercial expansion, the people of the ancient Golden Chersonese (the Malay Peninsula) assumed agency and adopted Islam so as to be part of this lucrative market.¹¹ In consequence, Malay polities

5 See Billy K. L. So, *Prosperity, Region, and Institutions in Maritime China: the South Fukien Pattern, 946–1368* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2000); Angela Schottenhammer, *The Emporium of the World: Maritime Quanzhou, 1000–1400* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), and especially John W. Chaffee, *The Muslim Merchants of Premodern China: The History of a Maritime Asian Trade Diaspora, 750–1400* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

6 “And this was considered in the Islamic State of the Arabs, which originally extended from al-Andalus to India and China”: Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddimah* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 1999), vol. I, 294; (Tunis: Sildām, 2006), 451.

7 Isaac Donoso, “Viajeros y aventureros andalusíes en Asia oriental,” *eHumanista/IVITRA* 3 (2013); and Donoso “El viaje andalusí al Extremo Oriente: peregrinación, comercio y diáspora,” *Unterwegs im Namen der Religion II / On the Road in the Name of Religion II. Wege und Ziele in vergleichender Perspektive*, ed. Klaus Herbers and Hans Christian Lehner (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2016).

8 See Gerald Randall Tibbetts, *A Study of the Arabic Texts Containing Material on South-East Asia* (Leiden: Brill, 1979), and Isaac Donoso, *Islamic Far East: Ethnogenesis of Philippine Islam* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 2013).

9 Hee-Soo Lee, “Early Korea-Arabic Maritime Relations Based on Muslim Sources,” *Korea Journal* 31, no. 2 (1991).

10 Some initial references to al-Wāqwāq perhaps referred to Japan, after the Japanese *wokou* sea raiders. Gabriel Ferrand already inquired about it: “Le Wākūk est-il le Japon?” *Journal Asiatique* 20 (1932).

11 Paul Wheatley, *The Golden Chersonese* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1961). “In view of the existence of maritime commercial relations between the Middle East and China since before the birth of the new religion, it is very probable that the coastal zones of Southeast Asia have had some contact with Muslims from the very first period of Islam [...] Many adherents both of the early Arab origin theory and of the later Indian origin standpoint indicated international maritime trade as the main mechanism,” in Johan H. Meuleman, “The History of Islam in Southeast Asia: Some Questions and Debates,” *Islam in Southeast Asia. Political, Social and Strategic Challenges for the 21st Century*, ed. K.S. Nathan and Mohammad Hashim Kamali (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2005), 25.

developed the Islamic sultanate as a model for regional supremacy. When Ibn Baṭṭūṭah arrived in northeastern Sumatra in 1345, sultan Malik al-Zāhir was promoting theological discussion and qur'anic reading, the call to jihad and payment of the *jizya*:

This is Sultan al-Malik al-Zāhir, one of the most illustrious and generous kings. He follows the *shāfi'ī* school and is a lover of the *alfaquis*, who attend his meetings to read the Qur'an and engage in theological discussions. He makes many *razzias* and expeditions against the infidels, and as a humble man, he walks to the Friday prayer. The Sumatran people are all *shāfi'īs* and like jihad, for which they volunteer. They have thus succeeded in subduing the infidels bordering on their territory, who, according to the peace treaty, pay capitation tribute.¹²

Several sultanates emerged in Southeast Asia in the fifteenth century, especially around the thalassocracies of Malacca in the Malay Peninsula and Brunei in northern Borneo.¹³ Therefore, to sustain the legitimacy of the sultanates and to apply Islamic law, a more sophisticated conduct of policies was needed in administrative and juridical matters. Muslim preachers known as *makhdūms* introduced a new writing system and the holy word of God, together with theological discussions. Thus, while the Portuguese were bombarding Malacca in 1511, the sultan discussed mystical lessons with his *makhdūm*:

And the king went forth onto the bridge and stood there amid a hail of bullets. But Makh-dum Sadar Jahan, clasping the pannier with both hands, cried out to Sultan Ahmad Shah, "Sultan, this is no place to study the Unity of God, let us go home!" Sultan Ahmad smiled and returned to the palace. And the Franks shouted from their ships, "Take warning, you men of Malaka, tomorrow we land!" And the men of Malaka answered, "Very Well!"¹⁴

The History of Malacca, *Sejarah Melayu* (ca.1612), testifies that the sultan conversed about the concept of *wujūdiyyah* following the Andalusian Ibn 'Arabī.¹⁵ Malay Muslim thinkers emerged in Aceh between the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries from this milieu, among them Ḥamzah al-Fanṣūrī (d.

¹² Our translation from Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, *Rihlah* (Beirut: Dār Bayrūt li-l-ṭabā'a wa-l-nashr, 1985), 618.

¹³ For a general introduction see Peter G. Riddell, "The Implanting of Islam in Southeast Asia," in *More Islamic than We Admit. Philippine Islamic Cultural History*, ed. by I. Donoso (Quezon City: Vibal Foundation, 2017).

¹⁴ C. C. Brown, *Sējarah Mēlayu or Malay Annals* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1970), 162.

¹⁵ Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *Ranīr and the Wujūdiyyah of the 17th Century Aceh* (Singapore: Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1966).

1590) and Shams al-Dīn al-Sūmaṭrānī. These first thinkers founded the study of Islamic mysticism,¹⁶ Qur’anic exegesis¹⁷ and Arabic literature.¹⁸

In the end, the model of Malacca as a cultural medina and commercial empire was exported to other areas of Southeast Asia. The old entrepôt became a city-state under the authority of a sultan. Thus, in addition to the religious preaching, international scholars and officials settled in the new Malay Islamic courts during the Early Modern era, and it seems that Andalusians were also part of these developments. In fact, when Vasco de Gama arrived in India, a Morisco from Tunis addressed him in Spanish:

Just arrived to Calicut [...], they [the Portuguese] meet Monçaide (*El-Mas’ud*), a Muslim from Tunis, who welcomes them in a mixture of Spanish and Portuguese:

E veio con ele un daqueles mouros, o qual, tanto que foi em os navios, começou de dizer estas palavras:

—Buena ventura! Buena ventura! Muitos rubis, muitas esmeraldas! Muitas graças debéis de dar a Deus por vos trazer a terra onde há tanta riqueza!

Era para nós isto de tanto espanto, que o ouvíamos falar e não o críamos—que homem houvesse tão longe de Portugal que nos entendesse nossa fala!

What Monçaide spoke was not Portuguese, but a corrupt form of Spanish. Despite this, finding the familiar in the unknown had a very strong effect on the seamen.¹⁹

William Henry Scott has questioned how so many people, from Granada to Manila, were able to speak Spanish when the Iberian polities entered Southeast Asia, since the sources describe many Muslim individuals able to communicate with the newcomers.²⁰ What Scott called “the Mediterranean connection” is in fact

16 Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1970).

17 Peter G. Riddell, *Malay Court Religion, Culture and Language: Interpreting the Qur’ān in 17th Century Aceh* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2017).

18 Vladimir Braginsky, *The Heritage of Traditional Malay Literature: A Historical Survey of Genres, Writings and Literary Views* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2004).

19 Elena Losada Soler, “The Encounter of Languages: Reflections on the Language of the Other in *Roteiro da Primeira Viagem de Vasco da Gama*,” in *Vasco da Gama and the Linking of Europe and Asia*, ed. by Anthony Disney and Emily Booth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 207–8.

20 “These questions [usual presence of Spanish-speaking people in the Indian Ocean] suggest that the presence of a Spanish-speaking slave on the Luzon caracoa may not have been an isolated phenomenon. Perhaps further research on the Mediterranean connection will provide the final explanation by exploring the question of just how many people between Granada and Manila could speak Spanish in 1521.” William Henry Scott, *Looking for the Prehispanic Filipinos and Other Essays in Philippine History* (Quezon City: New Day, 1992), 35–36.

a testimony to the Andalusian diaspora to the Far East. Perhaps the *lenguas* (interpreters) who interpreted the “Paces del Maluco” during Magellan-Elcano’s expedition were also part of this diaspora.²¹ For instance, a Muslim taken in Luzon was the interpreter in the treaty with Tuan Muhammad, lord of Palawan and vassal of Brunei, because *entendía algo el castellano*:

With the lord of Palawan, a Muslim, on Monday 30 September 21 in the ship Vitoria, holding as captives the said lord of the said island and a brother and son of his and others who came with them in a junk from the city of Brunei [bound] for the said island of Palawan. His name was Tuan Muhammad, vassal of the King of Brunei, with whom peace was made while the Trinidad and Vitoria were anchored in the Brunei channel [...] It was carried out by interpretation of a Muslim who was taken on the island of the King of Luzon who understood some Castilian. The brother was named Guantail, and the son Tuan Muhammad, aged about eighteen. On the first of October the Spaniards swore to keep the peace by taking a crucifix in their hands for God and Holy Mary, and [making] the sign of the cross. Tuan Muhammad and his brother and son put their fingers in their mouths and then on their heads.²²

It is interesting to note the way the Muslim rulers of Palawan—a long, narrow island in the western Philippines—swore to the agreement. They “put their fingers in their mouths and then on their heads,” most probably because they did not have a material copy of the Qur’an over which conduct the oath properly. The ritual conducted by other Muslim rulers in the region did involve the holy book:

Then, to assure us against any suspicion we might have of his good faith, he ordered his Qur’an to be brought to him; he kissed it devoutly and placed it on his head four or five times, mumbling between his teeth certain words which were an invocation called *zambe-*

21 *Libro de las pazes y amistades que se an hecho con los Reyes y Señores de las yslas y tierras donde hemos llegado, siendo los capitanes Gonçalo Gómez Despinosa y Juan Sevastián del Cano, y el maestre Juan Batista, gobernadores del Armada quel Emperador nuestro señor envía al descubrimiento del Espeçiería, y yo, Martín Méndez, contador della.* Archivo General de Indias, Seville, INDIFERENTE, 1528, N.1.

22 “Con el señor de Poluan [Palawan], moro, en lunes 30 Setiembre 21 en la nao Vitoria, teniendo captivos á dicho señor de dicha isla y á un hermano é hijo suyo y otros que con ellos venían en un junco de la ciudad de Burney para dicha isla de Poluan. Llamábase el señor Tuan Mahamud, vasallo del rey de Burney, con quien se hicieron paces estando la Trinidad y Vitoria surtas en la canal de Burney [...]. Tratose por lengua de un moro que se tomó en la isla del rey de Lozon [Luzón] que entendia algo el castellano. Llamábase el hermano señor Guantail, el hijo Tuan Mahamed, de diez y ocho años poco más o menos. En 1.^o Octubre juran de guardar las paces los dichos españoles tomando un crucifijo en las manos por Dios é Santa María é la señal de la cruz. Tuan Mahamud y su hermano é hijo poniendo el dedo en la boca é luego en la cabeza.” Martín Fernández de Navarrete, *Colección de los viajes y descubrimientos que hicieron por mar los españoles desde fines del siglo XV* (Madrid: Imprenta Nacional, 1837), 4: 296.

han. He then said aloud, in the presence of all, that he swore by Allāh (God) and by the Qur'an, which he held in his hand, that he would always be a faithful friend of the King of Spain.²³

The invocation sounds like *Subhān Allāh*, but is more properly the Malay *sembahyang*,²⁴ also found in Tagalog—in the adoration (*simba*) and the place for worship (*simbahan*):²⁵

The *Ramasan* or *Ramadan* of the Mohammedans is called *Sambayang*, a word that seems to be related to *Simbahan* or *simba* of the Christian Indians of the Philippines. During the *sambayang* (which lasts seven days) they all maintain rigorous fasting; after this time they all purify themselves with a general bath and celebrate the feast.²⁶

Regardless of whether *Subhān Allāh* and *Sambayang* are etymologically related or not, they are the same thing: a prayer over the holy word, in speech and thought and, if possible, over the manuscript as well. Therefore, these are factual testimonies in European sources of the circulation of the Qur'an as a material object around the Philippine archipelago during the first circumnavigation of the globe, testifying that the Qur'an had already made the complete journey in the opposite direction than the conquistadores.²⁷

23 “Entonces, para asegurarnos contra toda sospecha que pudiéramos tener de su buena fe, mandó que le llevasen su alcorán; le besó devotamente y púsole sobre su cabeza cuatro o cinco veces, mascullando entre dientes ciertas palabras que eran una invocación llamada *zambehan*. Después dijo en voz alta, en presencia de todos, que juraba por Alá (Dios) y por el Corán, que tenía en la mano, que sería siempre un fiel amigo del rey de España,” in Antonio Pigafetta, *Primer viaje alrededor del mundo*, ed. Federico Ruiz Morcuende (Madrid: Calpe, 1922), 159–60.

24 Annabel Teh Gallop, “Qur'an Manuscripts from Mindanao: Collecting Histories, Art and Materiality,” *South East Asia Research* (2021), 3.

25 See Pedro de San Buenaventura, *Vocabulario de la lengua tagala* (Pila: Tomás Pinpin, 1613), 570.

26 “Al *Ramasan* ó *Ramadan* de los mahometanos lo llaman *Sambayang*, palabra que parece tener parentesco con *Simbahan* ó *simba* de los indios cristianos de Filipinas. Durante el *sambayang* (que dura siete días) permanecen todos en riguroso ayuno; pasado este tiempo se purifican todos con un baño general y celebran la fiesta,” in Fernando Blumentritt, “Los maguindanaos. Estudio etnográfico,” *Boletín de la Sociedad Geográfica* 35 (1893), 281.

27 “And then Çuratan Mançor king of the said island of Tidore ordered to bring from the land to the said ship a Qur'an and put his hand over and under the Qur'an and made his oath as Muslim”: our translation from Pablo Pastells, *El descubrimiento del estrecho de Magallanes en conmemoración del IV Centenario* (Madrid: Sucesores de Rivadeneyra, 1920), 129.

2 The Islamic Mission in the Philippines and the Written Holy Word

Preachers and missionaries “from above the winds” changed the spiritual and political life of the Malay world. Numerous missionaries, traders, and adventurers, *makhdūmūn*, *shurafā'* and *awliyā'*, are recorded in shrines, traditions and local *silsilas* (*tarsilas* in the Philippine case). Trade, mission, and conquest were the forces that Islamized coastal areas of maritime Southeast Asia, but interracial marriages between foreign Muslims and local aristocracies were also important. Afterwards a political institution was organized under the power of a sultan, as a central government or as a coalition of parties.

The Sulu Sultanate was founded as a political institution, approximately during the mid-fifteenth century, around the settlement of Jolo, populated by local communities and exiles from Butuan who imported a Hindu-Buddhist tradition. Its main source of prosperity was the exploitation of the pearl trade. In fact, the Philippine entrepôt attracted Southeast Asians, Chinese from Quanzhou, and other Muslim merchants (Arabs, Persians, and Indians) at least from the fourteenth century, as proven by Tuan Maqbalu's tombstone, dated 1310. This inscription begins with a hadith that blesses those who have died far away; therefore it must be inferred that the deceased was a Muslim buried far from his home. In the last line a date is indicated: Rajab 710 A.H., corresponding to November-December 1310 A.D. Majul noticed the great similarities between the form of this tombstone and others from Quanzhou.²⁸

(1) The Prophet said, upon him be peace:	(١) قال النبي عليه السلام
(2) Whoever dies in the distance dies as a martyr	(٢) من مات غربا فقد مات شهيدا
(3) In memory of the blessed martyr	(٣) وفي المرحوم السعيد الشهيد
(4) Tuhān Maqbālū in the month of God	(٤) اللههان مقبالو في التاريخ شهرا
(5) Sacred of Rajab, God Almighty	(٥) الرمضان رجب عظيم الله
(6) blesses him [in] the year 710.	(٦) رحمته سنة عشرة وسبعة منة

Ibn Mājid mentions the port of Şūluk (Sulu) in 1462, so commercial prosperity would certainly have been well established by that time.²⁹ After the arrival of sev-

²⁸ César Adib Majul, *Muslims in the Philippines* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1999), 437. For the transcription see Donoso, *Islamic Far East*, 258–59.

²⁹ Donoso, *Islamic Far East*, 258.

eral *makhdūmūn* (Tuan Masha'ika, Karīm al-Makhdūm, Hoy Hoy al-Şīnī, and Raja Baguinda of Minangkabau), it was Sayyid Abū Bakr of Palembang who adopted the title of Sultan of Sulu around 1450 as Sharīf al-Hāshim.³⁰ During this *longue durée* it is feasible that the Qur'an circulated as a principal tool in the process of Islamization.

Similar activity took place on the western coast of the island of Mindanao. Sharīf Awliyā' was the first to teach Islam on the island, according to the *tarsilas* of Maguindanao.³¹ Sharīf Awliyā' travelled to the end of the world in search of the garden of the Paradise —Jannah al-Firdaws—, and found it in Mindanao:

The land of paradise was brought by the angels from the west (Arabia) to Mindanao. Later the angels moved paradise to Madinat, but the earth did not balance and tipped on the side of Mindanao. Then they measured the earth to find its center, but it had none. Then the angels took paradise and carried it to Mecca, but a part of it remained in Mindanao. Sharif Awliya knew that and came to Mindanao to search for it.³²

This narrative is interesting indeed. It assumes the same Semitic tradition about the location of Paradise in the confines of the eastern world, the confines reached by the Qur'anic Prophet Dhū l-Qarnayn ("The Two-horned one"):

[18:88] But as for him who believes (in Allāh 's Oneness) and works righteousness, he shall have the best reward (Paradise), and we (Dhul-Qarnain) shall speak until him mild words"
 [18:89] Then he followed another way
 [18:90] Until, when he came to the rising place of the sun, he found it rising on a people for whom We (Allāh) had provided no shelter against the sun
 [18:91] So (it was)! And We knew all about Dhul-Qarnain.³³

Although historiography has questioned the link between Alexander the Great and Dhū l-Qarnayn, for Southeast Asia the character is undoubtedly Iskandar. Al-Mas'ūdī offers a valuable text that appears at the beginning of his *Kitāb al-tanbīh wa-l-ishrāf* in the section "on the earth and its form." Here the connections

30 For details on the standard historiography of the Islamization, following Majul, see Donoso, *Islamic Far East*, 136–48. A revision of the process in Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *Historical Fact and Fiction* (Kuala Lumpur: Universiti Teknologi Malaysia Press, 2011), 96–105.

31 Najeeb M. Saleeby, *Studies in Moro History, Law and Religion by Najeeb M. Saleeby and The Island of Mindanao by Antonio Martel de Gayangos*, ed. César Adib Majul (Manila: The Filipiniana Book Guild, 1976), 52.

32 Saleeby, *Studies*, 24.

33 All Qur'anic translations from Muhammad Taqī-ud-Din al-Hilālī, and Muhammad Muhsin Khān, *Translation of the Meaning of the Noble Qur'an in the English Language* (Medina: King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an, 1417 H.)

between Dhū l-Qarnayn's mission, Alexander/Iskandar, and the wall raised from Korea across the Chinese border against Gog and Magog can be clearly understood:

On the edge of the inhabited world in the far east towards the limits of China and Sila [Korea] is the wall of Gog and Magog that was built by al-Iskandar, to protect the earth from their chaos.³⁴

Indeed, Iskandar Dhū l-Qarnayn became of first magnitude in justifying the expansion of Islam in eastern Asia. Mention of him as the first messenger to the confines of the Far East was *conditio sine qua non* in the adoption of Islamic politics in the region. The sultanate of Samudra-Pasai in the thirteenth century, and then the sultanate of Malacca in the fifteenth, mentioned Iskandar Dhū l-Qarnayn in the genesis of the process of Islamization. In the end, the presence of Alexander the Great in Moro sources goes further than a mere anecdote:

The Iskandar (Alexander the Great) legend which figures prominently in the *Sejarah Melayu* (Malay Annals) is not found in the Sulu Genealogy. However, Alexander the Great is found in various oral traditions in Sulu either as having come to Sulu or to have sent there some of the first inhabitants. There has been no serious attempt to link Alexander the Great to any of the Sulu sultans. As it is, with the elaborate ancestry claimed for the Sulu sultans, one more Greek on the list would have been superfluous.³⁵

Sharif Muḥammad Kabungsuwan from Johore launched a military campaign in the eastern coast of Mindanao in 1515 that lasted twenty-five years. Afterwards a sultanate was established along the river Pulangi, with political centers in Sibugay, Tamontaca and Buayan. A part of the Sibugay branch eventually swore loyalty to Spain and became the Spanish Zamboanga. A silsila written in a creolized Spanish narrates this progress from indigenous and Islamic to Hispanic rule.³⁶

The people of the island of Luzon participated as well in the activities of the region from Malacca to Brunei. The entrepôt of Manila consolidated a local

³⁴ Our translation from *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum, edidit M. J. de Goeje. Pars octava. Kitāb at-Tanbīh wa'l-Ischrāf, auctore al-Masūdī* (Leiden: Brill, 1894).

³⁵ Majul, *Muslims*, 7.

³⁶ Isaac Donoso, "Muḥammad Anwār al-Dīn," in *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History Volume 16. North America, South-East Asia, China, Japan and Australasia (1800–1914)*, ed. David Thomas and John Chesworth (Leiden: Brill, 2020).

Malay aristocracy in the sixteenth century.³⁷ Because of international trade, Tagalog society from Manila Bay and southern Luzon adopted Islamic practice. Spaniards noticed the Islamization of the Tagalogs and called them Moros. The sources mention people capable of reading the Qur'an in Arabic:

It is true that some people who have been in Brunei understand a little, and can read some words of the Qur'an, but these are very few. They consider among themselves that if a person has not been in Brunei he can freely eat pork. I have heard many of them say this.³⁸

In parallel with the acculturation that came from commercial ties, Muslim preachers may have taught in Manila Bay and other areas of the archipelago, altering the literacy of the people. *Baybayin*, a Brahmic-oriented local script, probably was starting to be replaced by the Arabic script in writing Tagalog.³⁹ In other words, the written word transcended from an earthly activity to a metaphysical means of accessing the holy message —the Qur'an.

Important parts of the Philippine archipelago were under the dominion of Brunei: Palawan, Mindoro, Sulu, Manila, Balayan and Bombon. Consequently, Brunei kept sending preachers to these areas even after the founding of the Spanish settlement in Manila in 1571.⁴⁰ Governor Francisco de Sande (1575–80) decided to invade Brunei Sultanate and created a *casus belli*. Magachina, a Tagalog Moro from Balayan, testified to a general Islamic conspiracy:

Asked where he learned the religion of Muḥammad and who taught it to him, this witness said that in his town of Balayan people from Brunei taught it to him, and he also learned it when traders from Brunei came to him, for their ancestors were natives of Mecca, so far as he knew. Hence the people from Balayan, Bombon, Manila and Mindoro have learned that religion from the Borneans, because they did not know it before. And consequently they all,

37 See José Manuel García, *As Filipinas na Historiografia Portuguesa do Século XVI. Philippines in the Portuguese XVIIth Century Historiography* (Porto: Centro Português de Estudos do Sudoeste Asiático, 2003).

38 *Relación del descubrimiento y conquista de la isla de Luzón y Mindoro*, Manila, 1572, in Wenceslao E. Retana, *Archivo del bibliófilo filipino. Recopilación de documentos históricos, científicos, literarios y políticos y Estudios bibliográficos* (Madrid: Librería General de Victoriano Suárez, 1898), IV: 29. Original text: “Verdad es que algunos que han estado en Burney, entienden alguna cosa, y saben leer algunas palabras del Alcorán; empero estos son muy pocos y tienen entre ellos opinión que el que no hubiere estado en Burney puede comer puerco, y esto yo se lo he oído decir a muchos dellos.”

39 Isaac Donoso, “*Letra de Meca*. Jawi Script in the Tagalog Region in the 16th Century,” *Journal of al-Tamaddun* 14, no. 1 (2019).

40 See Julkipli M. Wadi, “Rajah Sulayman, Spain, and the Transformation of Islamic Manila,” in *More Hispanic than We Admit. Insights into Philippine Cultural History*, ed. by Isaac Donoso (Quezon City: Vibal Foundation, 2008).

and this witness, are Muslims now, since their ancestors learned the religion from the Borneans. Thus the writing and language that they hear and speak are from Mecca. The natives of Siam and Patani also have their Qur'ans, which is the law and sect of Mohammed. From the written book of the Qur'an he has seen, and also heard it preached, that they are the enemies of the Christians. They find it also in other books read by the *catip*, their best preacher and others; through them they believe in the religion of Mohammed and hold fast to it, saying that the Christian faith is bad and theirs is good. It is well known that in the last year, seventy-four, the king of Brunei tried to come to Manila and defeat the Spaniards who live there. To that end he prepared a navy of one hundred galleys and one hundred small boats. [...] He knows, since it is public and notorious, that the king of Brunei had sent many Muslims to preach Islam to Mindanao, Manila, Bombon, Balayan, Mindoro and other places.⁴¹

The report gave Sande a suitable reason to declare war against Brunei. Besides sending Muslim preachers, Brunei was encouraging Manila's rulers to revolt against the Spaniards. What is important for us is that this information is transmitted by a Moro from Balayan, a Muslim from Southern Luzon whose ancestors were Islamized by people from Borneo. Furthermore, the southern Tagalog Muslims declares that his writing and language (*letra y lengua*) is from Mecca, and they have Qur'ans too. That is to say, this person from Balayan represents at least the second or third generation of Muslims in Southern Luzon, since he clearly says that "his ancestors were Islamized by Borneans" (*al presente son moros por haber sus antepasados deprendido la dixa secta de los borneyes*). In consequence, the Islamization took place some time before the Spanish con-

41 Our translation from Archivo General de Indias, Seville: *Jornadas a Borneo, Joló, Mindanao, en Filipinas (1578)*, PATRONATO, 24, R.48, 3v-4v. Original text: "[...] preguntado dónde deprendió este testigo la secta de Mahoma y quién se la mostró dixo que en su pueblo de Balayán se la mostraron borneyes y también viniéndole a contratar borneyes la deprendió que es porque los antepasados de los borneyes eran naturales de Meca a lo que este testigo supo y así los de Balayán, Bonbón y Manila y Mindoro han deprendido la dixa secta de los borneyes porque ellos no la sabían y así todos ellos y este testigo son al presente moros por haber sus antepasados deprendido la dixa secta de los borneyes y así la letra y lengua que oyen y hablan es de Meca y los naturales de Siam y Patan tiene asimismo sus alcoranes que es la ley y secta de Mahoma y que el libro que tienen escrito del alcorán que este ha visto y oído predicar oyen que son enemigos de los cristianos y también lo delatan en otros libros en que leen por su *catip* que es su mejor predicador y estos con semejantes con los cuales creen la dixa secta de Mahoma para que la guarden y en ella declaran ser la fe de los cristianos mala y la suya buena y que cosa notoria es que el año pasado de setenta y cuatro el Rey de Borney quiso venir sobre Manila y conquistar los españoles que en ella residen y para ello tuvo una armada de cien galeras y cien navíos pequeños [...] y que sabe por público y notorio que el Rey de Borney había mandado muchos moros a Mindanao, Manila, Bonbón y Balayán, Mindoro y otros lugares a que prediquen la secta."

quest, together with the process of cultural transformation. And it is here that we must place the introduction of *Letra de Meca*, the use of Arabic script by Tagalog people, and the circulation of Qur'ans in Manila.

3 The Pandita

The idea of a general “Islamic conspiracy” was still present within a sector of the colonial administration of Manila during the first period. *Oidor* Melchor de Ávalos sent the King two apologetic letters against Tagalog Muslims in 1585. After the pertinent legal arguments against the Qur'an, he defended the destruction of Brunei by Governor Sande in 1578 and the persecution and punishment of Muslim preachers in the Philippines:

While Governor, Doctor Francisco de Sande issued bans and punishments against the alfaquíes who had come here to dogmatize and teach the sect, and this was the reason and occasion for the war that he waged against Borneo.⁴²

This testimony is of utmost importance, since it demonstrates an official Spanish campaign to eradicate Islam in Luzon, which involved persecuting Muslim preachers and, certainly, Arabic writings and Qur'ans used by Tagalogs. In fact, the sources reveal a long list of names related to Islamic preachers and their roles: *sayc* (*shaykh*), *catip* (*khatib*), *kali* (*qāḍī*). The *Boxer Codex*, a Spanish-language manuscript containing Chinese drawings of nations and regions of sixteenth-century Asia, includes a very interesting description of how the initial Islamic mission took place among Tagalogs, whom the manuscript calls “Moros”:

When their ancestors had news of this god which they hold as their highest, it was through some male prophets whose names they no longer know, because as they have neither writings nor those to teach them, they have forgotten the very names of these prophets, aside from what they know of those who in their tongue are called *tagapagbasa*, *nansulatana*

⁴² Francisco Franco-Sánchez and Isaac Donoso, “Moriscos peninsulares, moros filipinos y el islam en el extremo oriental del imperio español: 2. Edición de la *Primera carta para la S.C.M.R acerca de los mahometanos de las Philipinas* de Melchor de Ávalos (1585),” *Sharq al-Andalus. Estudios Mudéjares y Moriscos* 21 (2014–16), 159. Original: “El doctor Francisco de Sande, siendo gobernador, hizo proçesos y justicia contra los dichos alfaquíes que aquí halló haver venido a dogmatizar y enseñar la secta, y de aquí tomó fundamento y ocaasión la jornada que el dicho doctor Sande hizo a Bornei.”

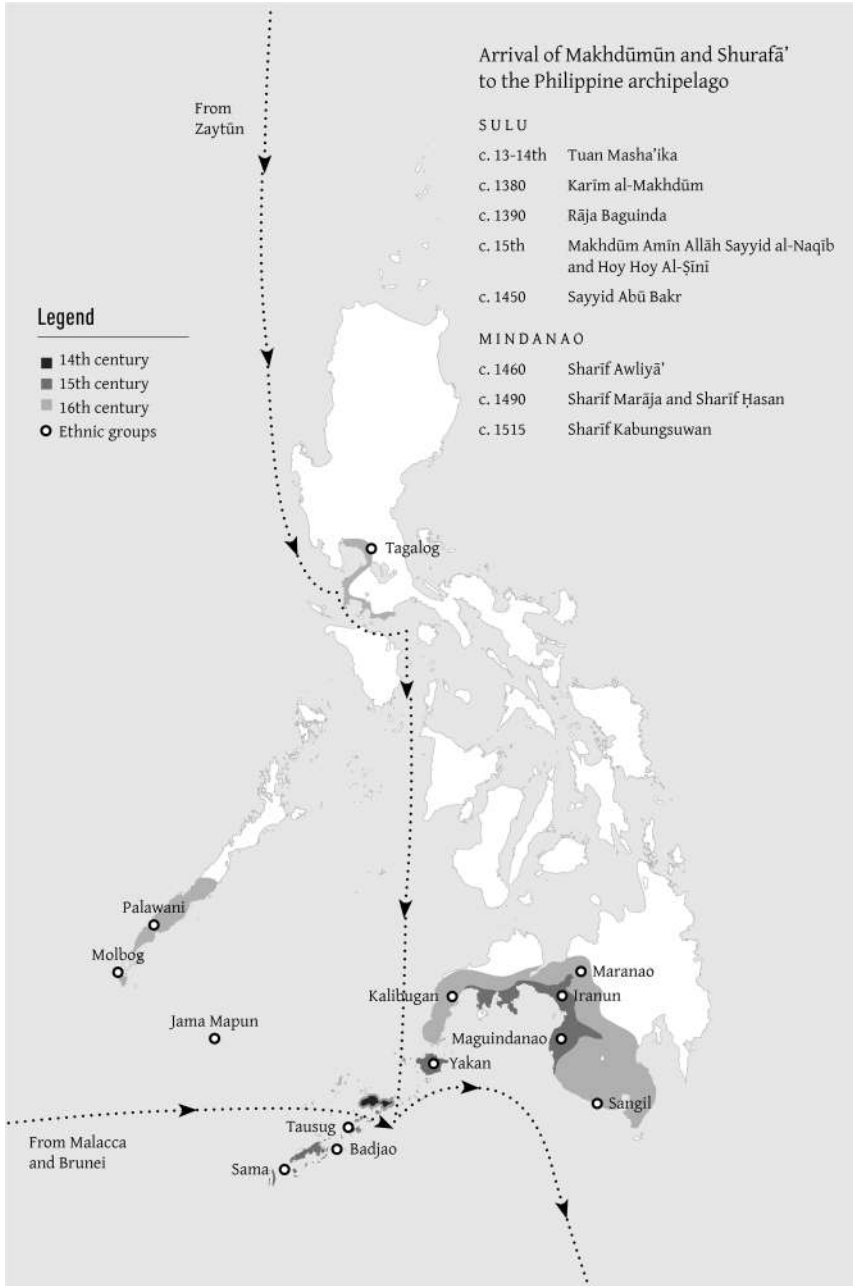


Fig. 1: Islamization of the Philippine Archipelago.
 Source: Donoso, *Islamic Far East*, 157.

dios —which means readers of the writings of god— from whom they have learned about this god.⁴³

The Tagalog have “characters that serve as letters, which they use to write whatever they want, different from any script known by us [the Spaniards]” (*Tienen ciertos caracteres que les sirven de letras, con los cuales escriben lo que quieren. Son de muy diferente hechura de los demás que sabemos*). In matters of religion “they do not have a text to read” (*porque como no tienen escritura que se lo enseñe*), only “those who read the word of God,” called *tagapagbasa nansulatana dios*, or in Spanish *declaradores de los escritos de dios*. This notion reveals that religious preachers —*makhdūmūn* and *shurafāʾ*, or other names used in the sources: *catip*, *gazi*, *pandita*, etc.— read, taught and spread the qur’anic message to the masses. We must remember again what Magachina said: “they have the Qur’an and other books which they read through their *catip*, their best preacher” (*tienen escrito del Alcorán [...] y también lo delatan en otros libros en que leen por su catip que es su mejor predicador*). Therefore, the *catip* (*khaṭīb*) read the qur’anic word to the people.

In parallel, the *Letra de Meca* was being introduced and Arabic *cartillas* (readers, primers) circulated as well:

There are in this island [Manila] and in that of Tondo many Mohammedans, to whom the sect had become attached through the contract they had in Borneo. They married in the islands and settled here, and had them adhere [to Islam] by giving them primers, ceremonies, and the the manner of keeping them. In this way many from the island [of Luzon] began to be Moros, practicing circumcision and taking Moorish names; and the cancer spread so quickly that if the arrival of the Spaniards had been delayed, all would be Muslims today, as are already all the islanders who are not in the government of the Philippines. These have been worked on by *gacizes* and other *moravitos* who come to preach to them by way of the Strait of Mecca and the Red Sea.⁴⁴

43 *Boxer Codex: A Modern Spanish Transcription and English Translation of 16th-Century Exploration Accounts of East and Southeast Asia and the Pacific*, transcription and edition by Isaac Donoso, translation and annotations by María Luisa García, Carlos Quirino and Mauro García (Quezon City: Vibal Foundation, 2016), 65.

44 Juan de Grijalva, *Crónica de la orden de nuestro padre san Agustín en las provincias de Nueva España* (Mexico: Porrúa, 1985), 492. Original: “Hay en esta isla [Manila] y en la de Tondo muchos mahometanos, a quienes se les había pegado la secta por la contratación que tenían en Borneo. Los cuales, habiéndose casado en las islas, y avecindándose en ellas, se la habían pegado, y enseñado, dándoles cartillas, ceremonias y forma de guardarlas. Y así muchos de la isla [de Luzón] comenzaban a ser moros retajándose y poniéndose nombres de moros; y cundía el cáncer tan de prisa que a tardarse más la llegada de los españoles todos fueran hoy moros, como lo

Consequently, all the elements of an Islamic milieu can be found in early modern Manila, and certainly to a greater extent in the southern Philippines.

Beyond the initial Islamic roles that emerge in the historical sources, the *pandita* had capital importance. He was the spiritual leader of a community: the alfaquí, imam, *guro* (teacher), ulama, legal adviser, even ambassador. In any diplomatic negotiation with the Spanish administration, notarial agreement, or embassy, the *pandita* was always present as witness and legal guarantor. The word *pandita* was repeated constantly in the Spanish historiography to the point that Wenceslao Retana proposed to include it in the dictionary of the Spanish academy:

PANDITA. m. Among the Malay Mohammedans, Priest: "Next, the Most Excellent Sultan [of Jolo] Harun, placing his hands on the Qur'an, with his Pandita Tuan Mustafa officiating, the Hon. Governor General swore him in..." – Minutes of the oath taken in Manila, September 24, 1886.⁴⁵

Across the centuries, the application of Islamic law in the Philippine sultanates was carried out by a supreme *qāḍī* (the 'datu Kali,' a post normally held by a foreign Muslim: Turkish, Afghan, Indian or Arab). Panditas worked at the local level (in the so-called *rancherías*) as *fuqahā'*.⁴⁶

4 Historical Qur'ans in the Philippines

A general idea of how the Islamic administration functioned in the sultanates during the modern period can be seen in the following text:

In each *ranchería* there is a *pandita* or priest. His costume and turban are white. The occupation of the *pandita* is limited to reading the Qur'an, copies of which they hold in high esteem. Some of them date from the sixteenth century and are true bibliographic jewels. Almost all *panditas* make the pilgrimage to Mecca. The *pandita* has a voice and vote when the council discusses matters of interest or importance, and also takes an active part in campaigns. Among the sultans and dattos, there are quite intelligent ones, most

son ya todos los isleños que no están en el gobierno de Filipinas, a los cuales tienen muy industriados gacizes y otros moravitos que les vienen a predicar por el estrecho de Meca y Mar Rojo."

⁴⁵ Wenceslao Emilio Retana, "Diccionario de Filipinismos," *Revue Hispanique* 51 (1921), 143–44.

⁴⁶ Saleeby, *Studies*, 68.

of them replacing a lack of solid instruction with their extraordinary sagacity and sharpness. They are enthusiastic admirers of personal courage.⁴⁷

Juan Salcedo, a military official, reveals in this quotation the bibliographic value of some Qur'ans preserved in the Philippines, "*verdaderas joyas bibliográficas*" from the sixteenth century. The text also notes the "*gran estima*" with which copies of the Qur'an were preserved. We have already mentioned that oaths and treaties were sworn over the physical book, and therefore the material Qur'an played a role in the most powerful and solemn political acts. In addition, each Qur'an had its own proper name, at least in Lanao at the end of the nineteenth century.⁴⁸

Disertación histórico-política en que se trata de la extensión del Mahometismo en las Islas Filipinas is a political dissertation in a literary style about the history of Muslims in the Philippines, written by the Franciscan José Torrubia and originally published in Madrid in 1736. This eighteenth-century literary dialogue is the first general account of the spread of Islam in the Philippine islands, and gives us some clues to the circulation of Qur'ans in the archipelago:

Since our entrance into this land the number of Muslims has increased greatly, through the regular traffic with the Macassars and because holy men from Mecca, leaving the strait, come as far as Sumatra, and from there by its strait pass to our islanders with a sectarian spirit; they bring Qur'ans in Arabic to instruct them: a great portion of these books were taken in the Sabanilla, and I saw them in Manila in the hands of Sergeant Major Ponce in the year 1724.⁴⁹

Torrubia mentions that *shurafā'* from Mecca introduced Qur'ans into the islands. The Franciscan confessed that he saw many of them in Manila in 1724, seized in the southern fort of La Sabanilla (still extant) and transferred to the capital. Ac-

47 Juan Salcedo y Mantilla de los Ríos, *Proyectos de dominación y colonización de Mindanao y Joló*, (Gerona: [s.n.], 1891), 28–29. Original text: "En cada ranchería hay un pandita o sacerdote. Su traje y turbante es blanco. La ocupación del pandita se reduce a leer el Corán, cuyos ejemplares tienen en gran estima. Algunos datan del siglo XVI, constituyendo verdaderas joyas bibliográficas. Casi todos los panditas verifican la peregrinación a la Meca. El pandita tiene voz y voto cuando el consejo ventila asuntos de interés o gravedad, y también toma parte activa en campaña. Entre los sultanes y dattos, los hay bastante inteligentes supliendo en los más, su extraordinaria sagacidad y agudeza a la falta de instrucción sólida. Son admiradores entusiastas del valor personal."

48 Annabel Teh Gallop, "Islamic Manuscript Art of the Philippines," *The Qur'an and Islamic Manuscripts of Mindanao*, ed. by Midori Kawashima (Tokyo: Sophia University, 2012), 94.

49 José Torrubia, *Disertación histórico-política en que se trata de la extensión del Mahometismo en las Islas Filipinas* (Madrid: [n.p.], 1736), 1–2.

cordingly, these books were not destroyed, at least not deliberately, but secured in Manila. Destruction of materials could have taken place during the sixteenth century, as Ávalos narrated, but it is anachronistic to believe that the whole three centuries of colonial government were based on systematic religious intolerance.⁵⁰ Certainly intolerance does not explain the current limited existence of primary sources, since regions free from colonial rule, such as Brunei, manifest a similarly poor written heritage. Scarcity of paper could be one reason:

The fact that this aspect [reparation of paper] is more pronounced in Mindanao than in other parts of the Malay world may in part be interpreted as reflecting the relative rarity of books in the society. The supply of paper might also have been a factor, for although locally made paper was available it was coarse, and we do not know how easy it was to make in quantity. Certainly there does not seem to have been the same easy access in Muslim regions of Mindanao to Italian and other European papers on which, for example, nearly all Aceh manuscripts are written.⁵¹

Arabic paper declined in the modern era⁵² and was practically replaced by European manufactures in the eighteenth century.⁵³ Therefore, many Southeast Asian Islamic manuscripts were written on European paper, and for the Philippine case the studies of Midori Kawashima prove the use of *papel catalán* for many of them.⁵⁴ Obviously Chinese paper was accessible as well, and interestingly local handmade paper too. In any case, we are still in a very initial stage regarding the culture of the book in the Islamic Philippines, and current research in public and private repositories still needs to recover more sources to obtain a clear picture of the real scope of this heritage.

In his *Bibliografía de Mindanao* (1894) Wenceslao Retana mentioned some samples: “Número 167: Alcorán. – En moro de Mindanao – Ms. Fue de un pandita. Está escrito en papel muy ordinario. Parece ser copia de la segunda mitad

50 Gallop, “Qur’an manuscripts from Mindanao,” 5.

51 Gallop, “Qur’an manuscripts from Mindanao,” 31.

52 See Jonathan M. Bloom, *Paper Before Print: The History and Impact of Paper in the Islamic World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

53 See Terence Walz, “The Paper Trade of Egypt and the Sudan in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” in *Modernization in the Sudan*, ed. by M.W. Daly (New York: Lilian Berber Press, 1988), 29–48.

54 Midori Kawashima, “Papers and Covers in the Manuscripts Comprising the Sheik Muhammad Said Collection in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, Philippines,” *The Library of an Islamic Scholar of Mindanao: The Collection of Sheik Muhammad Said bin Imam sa Bayang at the Al-Imam As-Sadiq (A.S.) Library, Marawi City, Philippines: An Annotated Catalogue with Essays*, ed. by Midori Kawashima (Tokyo: Sophia University, 2019), 179.

del presente siglo.”⁵⁵ However, many materials from the Colección de la Compañía General de Tabacos de Filipinas were destroyed during World War II. We located some items from Medina’s catalogue in the National Library of the Philippines (numbers 1643, 1645a and 1645b),⁵⁶ but what we found were printed Indian mawlids (a matter that deserves further research). Similarly, an item catalogued as Qur’an in the Archivo Franciscano Ibero-Oriental in Madrid is in fact a Malay compilation.⁵⁷ The Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid secured another Malay compilation,⁵⁸ but none of the Qur’ans preserved there are described as having originated in Southeast Asia.⁵⁹ In the Archivo General de Indias in Seville some important documents can be found—for example, the only identified letter in the Arabic language issued by a Philippine sultanate,⁶⁰ and one of the earliest Jawi manuscript preserved from the Malay world—⁶¹ but not examples of the Qur’an. Finally, we can point to the reproduction of Sura al-Kāfirūn among the materials used by a Jesuit in his mission in Sulu, from the Arxiu Històric de la Companyia de Jesús a Catalunya in Barcelona.⁶² In sum, there is no doubt that a very important part of the Philippine Islamic heritage remains in Spain, but more exhaustive research is needed.

55 W. E. Retana, *Bibliografía de Mindanao (Epítome)* (Madrid: Minuesa de los Ríos, 1894), 59.

56 Isagani R. Medina, *Filipiniana Materials in the National Library* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1971), 199. A separate issue is the almost two hundred letters that we have located in the National Archives of the Philippines, whose catalogue will appear soon. See Isaac Donoso, “Islamic Manuscripts in the National Archives of the Philippines,” *Journal of Islamic Manuscripts* 7 (2016).

57 AFIO: Caja 1014, folder 5. “Alcorán de los moros de Mindanao y Joló, en caracteres árabes, a dos tintas. 87 h. en 4. (Este ejemplar fue recogido por nuestros misioneros de Samar a los moros piratas que aflúan a las costas de dicha isla de Filipinas).” We thank Regalado Trota José for the reference.

58 The document was reviewed by Ph. S. van Ronkel, “L’unique manuscrit en langue indonésienne dans la péninsule Ibérique,” *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 101, no. 4 (1942). The BNE has informed us that it is currently inaccessible.

59 Perhaps a full analysis of the material features of some of the Qur’ans digitalized in the Biblioteca Digital Hispánica can provide elements from Southeast Asia.

60 Isaac Donoso and Mourad Kacimi, “A Royal Letter, in Arabic, by Sultan ‘Azīm al-Dīn I of Sulu (1747),” *Journal of Islamic Manuscripts* 10 (2019).

61 Isaac Donoso, “Philippine Islamic Manuscripts and Western Historiography,” *Manuscripta Orientalia* 16, no. 2 (2010).

62 See the study of this bundle, with translation of other Arabic material used by the Jesuit missionary, in Mourad Kacimi, “Un manuscrito jesuita de Filipinas con ‘La fábula del León y su corte’ en lengua árabe: Edición, traducción y estudio,” *Revista del Instituto Egipcio de Estudios Islámicos* 47 (2019).

Some Qur'ans produced during the Spanish period found their way to American repositories and have been brilliantly studied by Annabel Teh Gallop.⁶³ In short, all the Philippine qur'anic examples located so far come from Mindanao, and none from Sulu.⁶⁴ Their materiality is similar to that of other examples from Southeast Asia —sometimes with paper locally made —, displaying the typical frames enclosing the text, with the initial sura illuminated. The decoration follows Malay schemes, sometimes with Tausug *ukkil* or Maranao *okir* designs.⁶⁵ The most important singular copy is the Qur'an of Bayang, called “Maradika” and held by the Philippine National Museum.⁶⁶

6 The Qur'an and the Moro

Standard historiography on Moros has focused its lens on political struggle and national understanding. Yet beyond the traditional ethnographic descriptions, limited attention has been given to the philology and cultural history of Muslims in the Philippines. Samuel Tan did pioneer a new scholarship by recovering and studying indigenous sources.⁶⁷ The recent publication of the catalogue of the Sheik Muhammad Said Collection in Marawi, directed by Midori Kawashima,

63 Puzzled by some Dagestani Qur'ans sold in the British auction houses as originating in the Philippines, she spent time attending to this matter: “However I would argue that the final group of enhanced manuscripts –Daghistani Qur'ans with added colophons relating to Brunei and the southern Philippines– are in a different category. Here I would not recoil from using the word ‘fake’ in relation to these added textual elements, and would also wish to highlight the great potential damage that can be caused to scholarship, and the distortion of our understanding of the cultural history of the region, by such embellishments seeking to maximise the commercial value of the manuscripts”: A. T. Gallop, “Fakes or Fancies? Some ‘Problematic’ Islamic Manuscripts from South East Asia,” *Manuscript Cultures* 10 (2017).

64 Gallop, “Qur'an manuscripts from Mindanao,” 33.

65 See Abraham P. Sakili, “Philippine Muslim Arts. Affirming Their Space in History and Islam and Asserting a Place for Muslim Figurative Arts,” in *More Islamic than We Admit. Philippine Islamic Cultural History*, ed. by Isaac Donoso (Quezon City: Vibal Foundation, 2017). Also Ligaya Fernando-Amilbangsa, *Ukkil: Visual Arts of the Sulu Archipelago* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2008).

66 The years-long efforts of Midori Kawashima achieved the restoration of this manuscript as a national treasure. Details and images of the document can be seen in *The Qur'an and Islamic Manuscripts of Mindanao*, downloadable through her personal website: <https://kawashimamidori.jp/>

67 From his first *Filipino Muslim Perceptions of Their History and Culture as Seen Through Indigenous Sources* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 2003).

has proved decisive in opening a door to the study of Moro Islamic intellectual activity within Southeast Asian thought.⁶⁸

Thus, within this new scenario the studies done by Peter Riddell on *Tafsir Jalālayn* and the early Malay qur'anic exegesis by 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Singkili (c. 1615–1693)⁶⁹ make sense from a Philippine point of view. Many references to these works can be seen in the index of the Marawi collection.⁷⁰ The same can be said of the pioneering works on Malay tafsir by Anthony H. Johns,⁷¹ since it is now clear that Moros consumed Malay qur'anic exegesis and theology from the main intellectual centers of Southeast Asia: Aceh, Pattani, Banten, Cirebon, Palembang... to the point that practically all the relevant Malay Islamic intellectuals are present in the Marawi repository: al-Faṣṣūrī, al-Sūmaṭrānī, al-Rānīrī, al-Faṭānī, al-Makassārī, al-Bantanī, al-Banjārī and al-Palembānī:

The content of the manuscripts also shows us that in the intellectual tradition of the Malays in Mindanao not only works from Middle Eastern scholars are quoted, but also texts from Southeast Asian scholars that were written in the 17th and 18th centuries. This not only underlines the importance of these scholars but also suggests that the development of an Islamic intellectual tradition and its integration into the Malay world came rather late in the 19th century.⁷²

In Riddell's groundbreaking volume *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World* no single Philippine Islamic author was mentioned.⁷³ Yet Moro ulama are now starting to be recovered: 'Abd al-Majīd al-Mindanāwī (c. eighteenth century), author of an *ash'arī* compendium of theology in Arabic and Malay written in Aceh;⁷⁴ Sayyidnā Muḥammad Sa'īd from Binidayan, who wrote a *riḥla* to Mecca in

68 Kawashima, *The Library of an Islamic Scholar of Mindanao*.

69 Riddell, *Malay Court Religion*.

70 Kawashima, *The Library of an Islamic Scholar of Mindanao*, p. 439 for al-Singkili and p. 458 for *Tafsir Jalālayn*.

71 A.H. Johns, "Islam in the Malay World: An Exploratory Survey with Some Reference to Qur'anic Exegesis," in *Islam in Asia*, ed. by R. Israeli & A.H. Johns (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1984).

72 Oman Fathurahman, "A New Light on the Sufi Network of Mindanao (Philippines), *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 47–137 (2019):121.

73 Peter G. Riddell, *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World. Transmission and Responses* (Singapore: Horizon Books, 2003).

74 Description of this manuscript —preserved at the National Library of Indonesia— in Midori Kawashima and Oman Fathurahman, "Islamic Manuscripts of Southern Philippines: A Research Note with Description of Three Manuscripts," *The Journal of Sophia Asian Studies* 29 (2011).

Malay in the nineteenth century and other religious texts;⁷⁵ and probably Muhammad Sharif 'Āli from Tongkil, author of the Malay *Kitāb suatu al-qima* held at the AFIO.

However, beyond the intellectual use of the Qur'an as a primary source of knowledge and speculation, of exegesis and mysticism, the holy word reached the common Moro through popular belief. Indeed, Islamic intellectual activity was limited in the whole Malay world to *pesantren* or *pondok*,⁷⁶ religious madrasas, courts and chanceries of the sultanates, and those individuals who travelled to Mecca. Religious books —afterwards printed on yellow paper and known as *kitab kuning*⁷⁷— circulated, but many of the more common materials were prayers, treatises, admonitions, calendars, diagrams of *ilm al-ḥurūf*, esoterism, calligraphy, talismans, or texts on *ilmu tabaruk* (the science of seeking blessings). Certainly, folk Islam was shaping the ethos of Muslims in the Philippines, just as folk Christianity was adopted by Christian Filipinos to create new meanings, as the pervasive reading, representing, and living of the Passion of Jesus Christ-shows:

The masses' experience of Holy Week fundamentally shaped the style of peasant brotherhoods and uprisings during the Spanish and American colonial periods. Instead of glorifying the ancient rituals of the *babaylanes* (native priests) as evocative of the true native spirit, the fact has to be accepted that the majority of the lowland Filipinos were converted to Spanish Catholicism. But like other regions of Southeast Asia which "domesticated" Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian, and Islamic influences, the Philippines, despite the fact that Catholicism was more often than not imposed on it by Spanish missionaries, creatively evolved its own brand of folk Christianity from which was drawn much of the language of anticolonialism in the late nineteenth century.⁷⁸

The use of talismans is a common practice among many Filipino ethnic groups. The so-called *anting-anting* has many inner significances and ways to represent protection. Latin words and images of angels and saints are engraved on small metal amulets hung around the neck. Moros were familiar with other symbology,

75 Midori Kawashima, "The Journeys of Two Mindanao Ulama in the Late Eighteenth Century to the Early Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Philippine Local History & Heritage* 3, no. 1 (2017).

76 A very interesting reference in this sense is Hasan Madmarn, *The Pondok & Madrasah in Patani* (Bangi: Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 2002).

77 Martin van Bruinessen, "Kitab kuning: Books in Arabic Script Used in the Pesantren Milieu; Comments on a new collection in the KITLV Library," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde* 146, no. 2–3 (1990).

78 Reynaldo Clemeña Ilet, *Pasyon and Revolution. Popular Movements in the Philippines, 1840–1910* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2003), 11–12.

for instance the “Three fish with one head” or the “Ring of Solomon.”⁷⁹ But invariably the holy word was present in the manufacture of Islamic talismans. Perhaps the most interesting one is the *pis siyulatan*:

A square piece of yellow or white cloth [...] the most potent expressions or symbols are placed at the center and at the four corners of the cloth. The expressions do not always convey logical sense, although in many cases qur’anic verses are distinguishable from a mixture of Arabic and Malay language expressions.⁸⁰

The *pis siyulatan* —as a handkerchief on the forehead— was an important element in performing *parang sabil*, when the Moro in older times followed the steps *fī sabil Allāh* towards jihad. Spaniards called him the *juramentado*:

JURAMENTADO: (From *juramentar*, 2nd meaning) m. It is said of the Moro of the Philippines who is sworn to kill Christians, in hand-to-hand fighting, until he dies. It is widely used, and has been used more [in the past], always in the masculine form, since *juramentadas* are unknown [...] The juramentados have been the nightmare of our garrisons in Mindanao and Jolo. Many times it has happened that an oath-taker would enter the fort, slashing with a blade to left and right, until he was killed. But he sold his life dearly, because before losing it he caused as many misfortunes as he could.⁸¹

César Majul clarified also the extra-Islamic sense of the *juramentado*, beyond the *mujāhid*:

There is no doubt that non-Islamic elements might have entered in the institution of the original *juramentado*. The use of certain kinds of amulets as well as the shaving of the eyebrows do not appear to have similarities to those warriors of Islam in Spain who were charged with the protection of the frontiers. Although the *mujāhid*’s action was sanctioned in Islam, the manner the system evolved in the Philippines reveals that it was partly associated with a code of honor that might have been pre-Islamic in character. Its emphasis was

⁷⁹ See the excellent analysis by Annabel Teh Gallop, “Cultural Interactions in Islamic Manuscript Art: A Scholar’s Library from Mindanao,” in *The Library of an Islamic Scholar of Mindanao*, ed. by Midori Kawashima.

⁸⁰ Abraham P. Sakili, *Space and Identity: Expressions in the Culture, Arts and Society of the Muslims in the Philippines* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 2003), 226–27.

⁸¹ Retana, “Diccionario,” 171. Original: “JURAMENTADO: (De *juramentar*, 2^a acep.) m. Dícese del moro de Filipinas que se juramenta para matar cristianos, en lucha cuerpo a cuerpo, hasta morir él. Se usa mucho, y se ha usado más, siempre en masculino, pues no se sabe de *juramentadas* [...] Los juramentados han sido la pesadilla de nuestras guarniciones en Mindanao y Joló. Muchas veces se ha dado el caso de penetrar en la plaza un juramentado repartiendo campilanazos a diestro y siniestro, hasta que lo mataban. Pero vendía cara la vida, porque antes de perderla causaba cuantas desgracias podía.”

on some of these non-Islamic elements that made a few Muslim visitors deny that the juramentado system had an Islamic basis. The fact was that the system of the original juramentado had degenerated to purely criminal acts.⁸²

The Malay *amok* and the Acehnese *perang sabil* are obviously related to the ritual of the Moro *juramentado* or *parang sabil*, but in Philippine Christian areas similar practices have been observed historically. As Majul pointed out, the origin of this social phenomenon predates the adoption of international religions.

In sum, like the passion of Christ for Christianized Filipinos, the Qur'an was similarly incorporated into the ethos and cosmovision of the Moro, to the utmost level, the level of feeling protection and transcendental hope by living the holy word.

7 Spaniards and the Philippine Qur'an

Spanish penetration into Eastern Asia challenged centuries of Islamic trade and missions. War against Muslims moved the Christian Iberian kingdoms from the Middle Ages to the monarchic union between Castile and Aragon. After the fall of Granada, Isabel's will was to extend the war into North Africa and reach as far as Jerusalem. Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros epitomized the policy by publicly burning thousands of Qur'ans and Arabic books in Granada⁸³ and leading the conquest of Oran in 1509. The spirit of religious crusade undoubtedly led Spanish policy makers, and justified war as a major legitimator of the crown.

The conquest of the Philippines took place half a century later, but traditional historiography has taken note of the extension of the *Reconquista* to the other side of the world:

The coming of two of the great world religions to the archipelago is an epic story. Islam came from the southwest [...] Christianity came from far across the oceans to the east [...] The Muslim-Christian confrontation in the archipelago was part of a long conflict played out on a global scale [...] The Moorish occupation was to last for almost eight hundred years, and finally ended with the reconquest of Granada in 1492 [...] When they [the Span-

⁸² Majul, *Muslims*, 426.

⁸³ A fact —the proscription and destruction of Arabic religious books in early modern Granada — that historiography has not yet been able to deny despite some conjectural efforts, as in Nicasio Salvador Miguel, “Cisneros en Granada y la quema de libros islámicos,” in *La Biblia Poliglota Complutense en su contexto*, ed. Antonio Alvar Ezquerra (Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá, 2016).

iards] crossed the Pacific Ocean and arrived in the archipelago, they again met their ancient enemy, halfway around the world from the arena of their earlier conflict [...] The old war from across the world was resumed in the archipelago.⁸⁴

This argument was rightly targeted by Scott, who recalled the commercial goals of the European expansion.⁸⁵ However, it is a fact that the Spanish settling of Manila halted the natural development of Islam in the region.⁸⁶

In this context, Philippine historiography has centered on the possible destruction of pre-Hispanic relics and written testimonies in *Baybayin*, the vernacular script. Yet we have argued the opposite, that is to say: *Baybayin* was promoted by the first Christian missionaries in Manila as a way of blocking the emerging introduction of Arabic script and the Qur'an among Tagalogs.⁸⁷ Melchor de Ávalos mentioned Sande's policy against Bornean missionaries in the Philippines, to the extent that he conquered the Sultanate of Brunei in 1578. At this early moment, destruction of Islamic materials could have been taking place, including that of the main mosque of Brunei and the golden plate with the *Silsilah* of Brunei.⁸⁸ Nevertheless, the campaign of Philippine governor Francisco de Sande was more a private venture than a metropolitan mandate. In fact the Spanish monarch was not aware of his campaign, and the Synod of Manila condemned the illegality of the attack and the destruction of the mosque.⁸⁹

Although Islam vanished abruptly in Luzon, the next centuries saw a permanent relation between the Spanish administration and Muslim materials in the region. We have testimonies of the circulation and existence of Islamic books, sometimes seized by the Spaniards, as Torrubia mentioned; in that case the collection was transferred from La Sabanilla in Zamboanga to Manila. It is under-

84 Onofre D. Corpuz, *The Roots of the Filipino Nation* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 2005), vol. I, 53–58.

85 William Henry Scott, "Crusade or Commerce? Spanish-Moro Relations in the 16th Century," *Kinaadman, A Journal of the Southern Philippines* 6, no. 1 (1984).

86 "The Spanish arrived in time to halt the Islam expansion; therefore, Spain was responsible for stopping the Muslims in Asia. In dealing with the Muslims, Spain did not follow the peaceful policy that it applied in the other parts of the Philippines. The Spanish policy for the Moros was to conquer first and convert afterwards [...] This was looked upon by the Spanish as a continuation of the 'holy war' they had fought against the Muslims in their homeland for over seven centuries": Robert Day McAmis, *Malay Muslims. The History and Challenge of Resurgent Islam in South-east Asia* (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2002), 33.

87 Donoso, "Letra de Meca."

88 *Boxer Codex*, ed. by Donoso, 116–17.

89 Domingo de Salazar, *Sínodo de Manila de 1582*, estudio introductorio, glosa y transcripción de los textos sinodales por José Luis Porras Camúñez (Madrid: CSIC, 1988), 232–33.

standable that if an effort was made to transport those items, the purpose was preservation and not destruction.

The establishment of a permanent settlement in Zamboanga in 1718 created a constant necessity for translators and communications with the sultanates. Moro chancelleries were provided with Spanish-speaking secretaries, usually from Zamboanga, and many letters from the sultans' offices were written directly in Spanish or in bilingual versions.⁹⁰ Eventually this relation produced a growing process of *aljamiado*,⁹¹ and the role of the *sikritaryū* (secretary) changed the habitus. The letters began to be introduced (as a kind of *basmala*) by the formula “Excelentísimo Señor,” *Īksirintisimu Siñūr* (Very Honourable Sir):

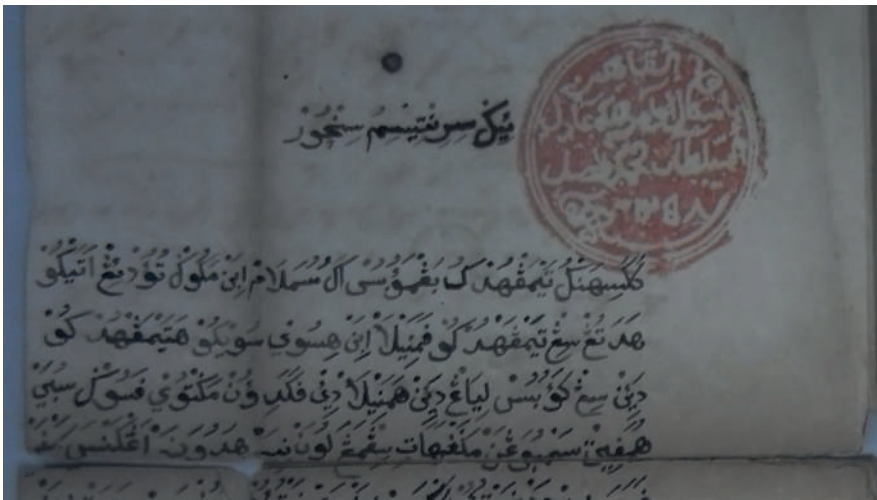


Fig. 2: NAP: *Petición del Sultán de Joló para tener el monopolio del anfiñon*, December 22, 1855, Mindanao y Sulú, SDS 9330 (1860–1896), Exp. 34, S. 414.

Names like Cipriano Enrile, Pedro Ortuoste, Plácido Alberto de Saavedra, Vicente Narciso and, above all, Alejo Álvarez, appeared constantly in official documents from both the Philippine government and the sultanates. They worked as official translators in the office of “Interpretación del idioma moro de Mindanao.”⁹² In-

⁹⁰ Donoso, “Islamic Manuscripts in the National Archives of the Philippines.”

⁹¹ Isaac Donoso, “Aljamiado Hispanofilipino: Spanish Language in Philippine Jawi Script,” *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 66, no.1 (2018).

⁹² See National Archives of the Philippines (NAP): *Cuadernillo con la lista de intérpretes*. Intérpretes, SDS 2498, Libro 1, S. 217–225; NAP: *Dos informes de la sección de la interpretación del idioma moro de Mindanao, firmado por Alejo Álvarez, al Gobernador General de Filipinas, ponien-*

deed, interest in and care for the materiality, features and composition of the Moro letter was consolidated among the Spanish administration, to the extent that official letters were issued in Jawi as well.⁹³

For our current concern, we can mention as sample the four pages on brown paper (probably locally made) of Sura al-Tawba, preserved in the Spanish Biblioteca Nacional. They are accompanied by a letter to the Governor General in Maguindanao, in the Tausug language and Jawi script, dated 1275 H. by Datu Muḥammad ‘Abnān. On a sheet neatly folded as an envelope, the addressee appears as: Sinyur Kūbirnadur Kumandantī Hi’niral ha-Sambuwangana; this is to say: *Señor Gobernador Comandante en Zamboanga*. The sentence shows the use of Spanish in Jawi script, but incorporating the Tausug preposition *ha-* (meaning ‘in’):

These documents are collected as *Documentos arábigos cojidos [sic] en la Sultanía de Matuguy, en la expedición de Davao, marzo de 1863*, Arabic documents taken from the Sultanate of Matugay, in the expedition to Davao in March 1863. The Sura al-Tawba that accompanies the letter is reproduced on a single piece of paper folded in half to form four pages. Each page has 17 lines of black ink text of vocalized Arabic, and the sura heading is in red ink. There is no clear separation between ayas and the text is continuous, by a proficient scribe without excessive adornment.

We note that a letter was called *sulat* in Tagalog, Tausug⁹⁴ and Maguindanao; however, it always appears as *sura* in the Philippine Jawi documents preserved, in both Tausug and Maguindanao. Pedro de San Buenaventura, in his 1613 *Vocabulario de la lengua tagala*, included the entry *sulat* as “Billete o papel escrito.”⁹⁵ Since we know that texts in *Baybayin* were written on pieces of bark and leaves, most probably texts on paper (containing single suras) were introduced by Muslim missionaries in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Accordingly, the word *sulat* originated in Arabic suras written on single sheets of paper, as this Sura al-Tawba preserved in the BNE exemplifies.⁹⁶

do en su conocimiento noticias importantes sobre la situación del comercio en Joló, etc. (1875). Mindanao y Sulú, SDS 9259, Exp. 58, fol. 598–615.

⁹³ NAP: *Expediente de la moneda*, August 9, 1896. Mindanao y Joló, SDS 9287 (1839–1899), S. 1330. Letter in the Tausug language and Jawi script signed and sealed with the Spanish coat of arms and motto “*Gobierno Político Militar de Joló*” letter. Heading in the Spanish language written in Jawi: “*Don Luis Huerta y Urrutia, General de Brigada, Gobernador Político Militar.*”

⁹⁴ Hamsali S. Jawali, *Ta’u-Sug-English Dictionary* (Manila: National Book Store, 2006), 423.

⁹⁵ San Buenaventura, *Vocabulario*, 149.

⁹⁶ Jean-Paul G. Potet does not agree that Philippine and Malay *sulat/ surat* comes from the suras of the Qur’an, and considers it of Austronesian rather than Arabic origin. See *Arabic and Persian Loanwords in Tagalog* (Raleigh: Lulu Press, 2013), 214.

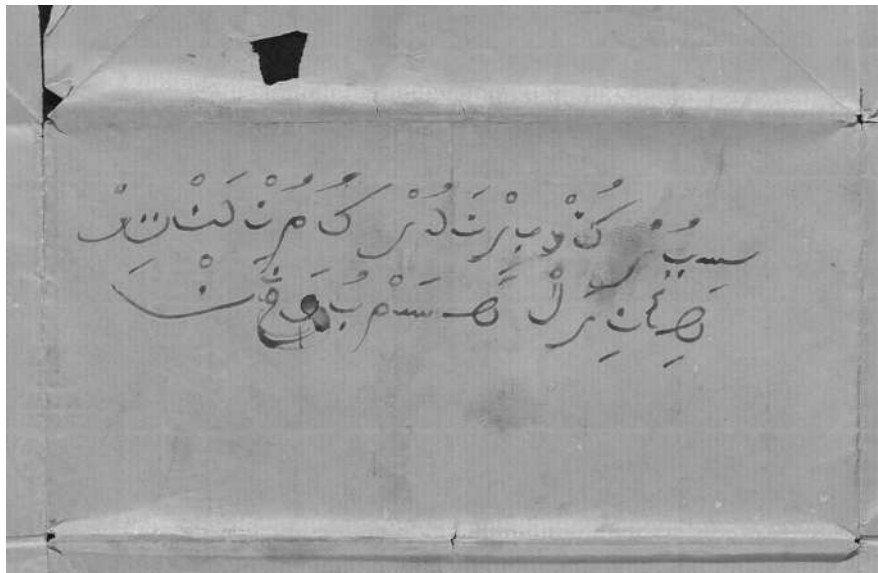


Fig. 3: BNE, *Documentos arábigos cojidos [sic] en la Sultanía de Matuguy, en la expedición de Davao, marzo de 1863, Yslas Filipinas*. SG.MSS/21/14. Image from the Biblioteca Nacional de España's collection.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the cultural construction of new modern identities affected even the Spaniards. As we have already indicated, the Moros were not the only agents writing in Jawi; Spanish people in Sulu and Mindanao started to use the script as well. At this moment in time written culture was at the centre of modern education, and the key factor of development was 'to be literate.' *Cartillas*, *catones* and *silabarios* emerged to answer the needs of literacy, and in Muslim areas they could only be in Jawi. This is how *Aljamiado hispanofilipino* came to be expressed in the astonishing *Cartilla moro-castellana para los maguindanaos* (Manila: Imprenta y Litografía de M. Pérez hijo, 1887). Its unnamed author was the Catalan Jesuit Jacinto Juanmartí (1833–97).

Juanmartí started by working with the Tiruray tribe, learning the language and rescuing slaves. Tamontaca became the central point in the region, and eventually Cotabato became the capital of all of Mindanao. In this strategic town Juanmartí created schools for girls and boys, together with residences for rescued children, from 1874 until his death more than twenty years later.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ María Aguilera Fernández, "Literatura misional y hagiografía en el siglo XIX: Jacinto Juanmartí, un misionero jesuita en Filipinas (1833–1897)," *Hispania sacra* 70, no. 141 (2018).

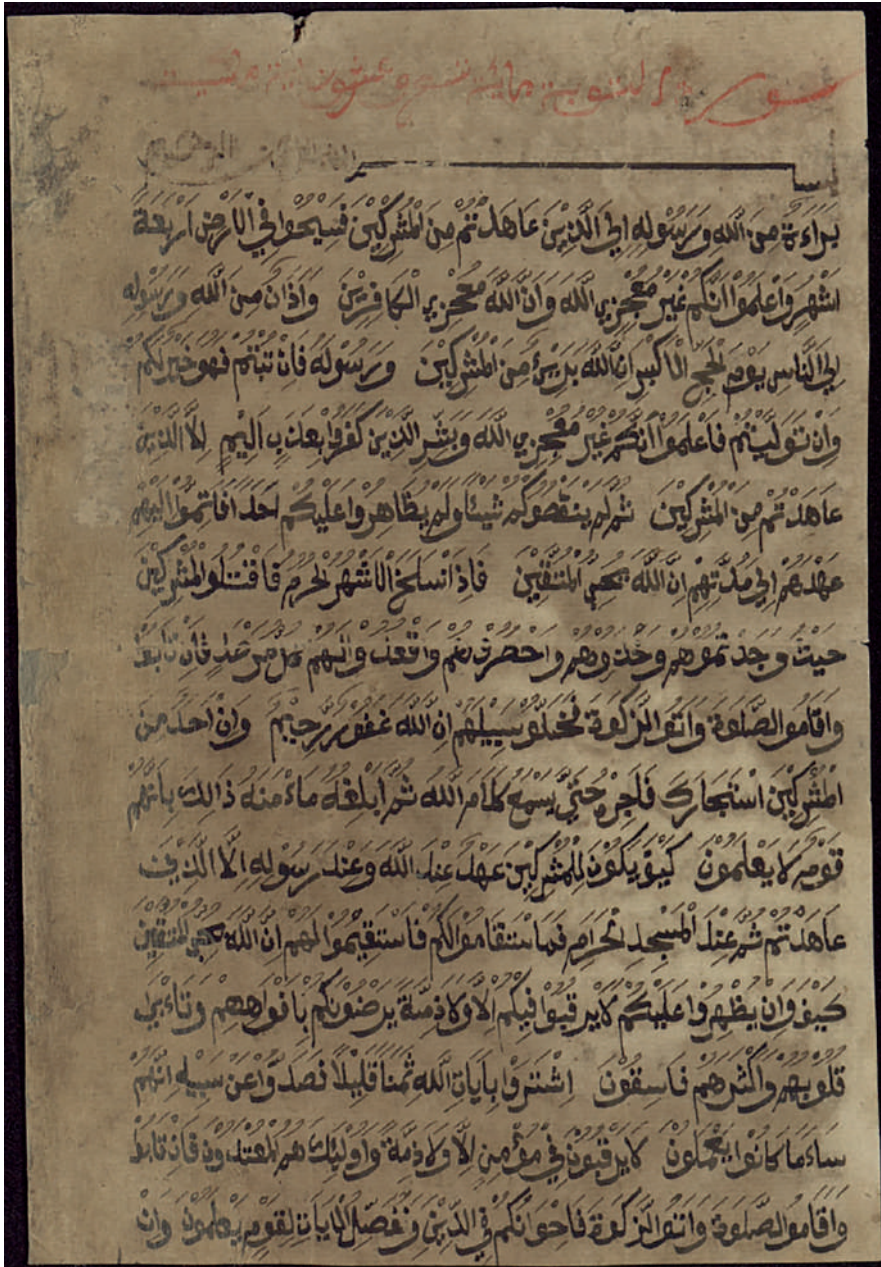


Fig. 4: Sura al-Tawba from BNE, *Documentos arábigos cojidos [sic] en la Sultanía de Matugay, en la expedición de Davao, marzo de 1863, Yslas Filipinas*. SG.MSS/21/14. Image from the Biblioteca Nacional de España's collection.

Using new missionary methods, Jacinto Juanmartí devoted himself to the study of the Maguindanao language and Moro culture. He wanted to provide a way to preach Christianity without altering the vernacular cosmos, and the process was to learn, teach and preach in the vernacular idiom. Accordingly, he became the pioneer of Moro philology through the study of the language, writing, grammar and lexicography of Maguindanao. Interestingly, in his *Cartilla moro-castellana*, together with the study of the Jawi script and transcriptions of Spanish words into Jawi, he also reproduced qur'anic suras. The purpose was to read in Jawi first, to be literate, and then to have access to Spanish and the Christian doctrine.

To that end, Juanmartí included in his *Cartilla* qur'anic ayas for the Maguindanao students. For instance, Lesson 9 is the beginning of Sura *al-Fātiḥa*, in Arabic with a translation into Spanish written in Aljamiado. After the first four ayas the fifth is given only in Spanish, to introduce the first of the Ten Commandments in Maguindanao with a Spanish translation in Jawi. Lesson 12 is the *Fātiḥa* in Arabic and Maguindanao, and Lesson 13 is the first nine ayas of Sura *al-Baqarā* in Spanish with Roman script, with reproduction of only the first four ayas in Arabic.

In sum, if some Spaniards during the sixteenth century were concerned about the spread of Islam in the Philippines and the circulation of qur'anic materials, by the end of the nineteenth even Jesuits wrote qur'anic suras, including Spanish translations in both Roman and Jawi scripts. While the Qur'an was important for Moros it also proved important in the end for Spaniards too, as they rendered and preserved its contents.

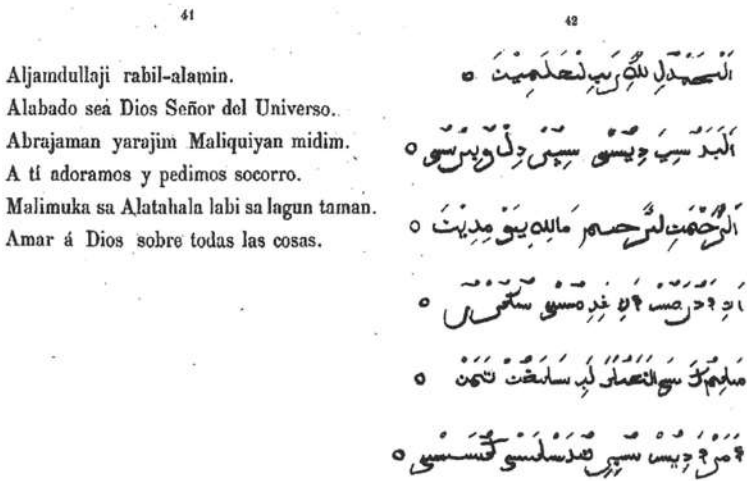


Fig. 5: *Cartilla moro-castellana para los maguindanaos* (Manila: Imprenta y Litografía de M. Pérez hijo, 1887), 41–42.

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