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Research Note

The Philippines and al-Andalus: Linking the Edges of the Classical Islamic World

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Research Note

ISAAC DONOSO

The Philippines and al-Andalus Linking the Edges of the Classical Islamic World

This research note offers a broad analysis of the central elements that constitute Islamic identity in the Philippines in a manner that reconciles Philippine Islam with the global history of Islamic civilization. The contact with the Spaniards and the legacy of Islamic Spain serve as essential elements in defining Islamicity in the Philippines. Hence, Islam in the Philippines can be appreciated as combining the richness of a cultural process that includes influences from the East as well as the West (al-Andalus), shaping the Philippines as the meeting place of both edges of the Islamic world.

KEYWORDS: ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION • PHILIPPINE ISLAM • AL-ANDALUS • MOROS • MORO-MORO • JĀWĪ

The history of Islam in the Philippines has been studied in isolation from the history of Islamic civilization worldwide. Because it has been framed as military history, Islam in the archipelago has troubled the national narrative; Islam as a pioneering cultural motor for the country thus has been eclipsed. Furthermore, scholarship has ignored the links of Philippine Islam with the rest of the Islamic world, especially with al-Andalus, a medieval Muslim cultural domain and territory that occupied at its peak most of what are today Spain and Portugal. However, Islam had unified the world from al-Andalus to the South China Sea for many centuries. And when Spaniards arrived on Philippine shores they brought not only Catholicism but the Andalusian legacy as well. This research note explores the connections between the two edges of the classical Islamic world—al-Andalus and the Philippine islands—in order to place Philippine Islam within the broader history of Islamic civilization.

The First Mestizo

The presence of Islam in the Philippine archipelago began as a consequence of the incorporation of the region into the Islamic world; Southeast Asia became part of the global commerce that encompassed the Islamic world and China.¹ Being initially a middle passage, Southeast Asia attracted international commerce as a mediator of trade. In so doing, Islam emerged as the political tool of legitimacy in an economic world dominated by Muslim traders. As the major political institution, the sultanate was incorporated into the Malay Peninsula, particularly in Malacca; this political form moved eastward in the maritime arena until it reached the easternmost edge of the classical world known as the *Oikoumene* (*Οἰκουμένη*, Ecumene)—the Philippine archipelago.²

From an Arabic perspective, the first datum of Islamic presence in what was deemed the most extreme part of the world was provided by the fanciful literature of maritime lore, the *akhbār* / أخبار or “accounts.”³ Because news from the East were brought by merchants and traders, who could have overstated the adventures or experienced real cultural shock, the scholars and geographers annotating these accounts were building one particular tradition, the “Literature of Marvels” or *‘ajā’ib* / عجائب. These books were based on travel accounts and maritime odysseys, which were related as real stories. In this sense, the easternmost lands were always surrounded by a foggy mystery that was propitious to legends.

In this literary form one can situate the voyages of *Sindbad*, which were presented in *Thousand and One Nights* (*Alf layla wa-layla* / ألف ليلة وليلة) (Gerhardt 1963) and in the more geographically valuable *Kitāb ‘Ajā’ib al-Hind* / كتاب عجائب الهند (*The Marvels of India*).⁴ It is also in this context that we have to place the story of “Women’s Island” (*Jazīrat al-Nisā’* / جزيرة النساء):

Thus came an innumerable multitude of women from the interior of the island that only God knows how many, a thousand or more for one man. The men were taken to the mountains to be the instrument of pleasure for women. The women fought to get the trophy: the strongest of the men. One after the other the men died of sexual exhaustion. Regardless of the stench of death the women endured. Only one survived, the sheikh from al-Andalus, hidden by a woman who brought him food every night and at dawn he remained near the seashore. The wind began to blow on the island in the direction leading ships to India, prompting the sheikh to take a so-called al-Filū and fill it during the night with goods and water supplies. She took him by the hand and led him to a place; they uncovered the earth and gold appeared. They sailed the boat and arrived in ten days in the country where the ship had left, narrating the story of their adventures. The woman remained with him forever, learned his language, was converted to Islam, and provided him with children. (Devic 1883–1886, 27–28, my translation)⁵

The account tells the arrival of several men on the shores of an island between China and Malānū Sea / ملانور after missing their way,⁶ and how a Southeast Asian woman and an Iberian man were engaged. The presence of an Andalusian in “Women’s Island” frames the actual connection between the two extremes of the world known by Islam. Although the narration is part of a marvel included in the *Kitāb ‘Ajā’ib al-Hind*, it may not be dismissed outright.⁷ Beyond the question of the tale’s authenticity, “Women’s Island” narrates to us that in the tenth century a Malay-Andalusian mestizo emerged (Donoso 2008, 9–35).

Ibn Baṭṭūṭa and the Legend of Urdujā

Although “Women’s Island” has been practically unknown in the historiography of the Philippines, another marvelous Arab tale has played a key role in Philippine modern history—Urdujā from Ṭawālīsī. The famous

Moroccan traveler Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (1304–c.1369) in his *Rihla* described a strange land beyond China that captivated the Arabic imagination for a long time.⁸ No other classical author but Ibn Baṭṭūṭa mentioned this account. Only in Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's work could one find a place named Ṭawālīsī with the fanciful story of Princess Urdujā. This account opened the gate to speculation:

This country [Ṭawālīsī] has been very variously, but not satisfactorily, identified. Candidates include Cambodia, Cochinchina, Champa, Tongking, Celebes (Sulawesi), Tawal island in the Moluccas, Brunei and Sulu. Yule, who suggested the last, admitted to 'a faint suspicion that Tawalisi is really to be looked for in that part of the atlas which contains the Marine Surveys of the late Captain Gulliver'. Professor Yamamoto would connect the name with the princely title *taval* in use in Champa. (Gibb and Beckingham 1994, 884)

The paradigm for interpreting this tale radically changed when José Rizal (1951, 50) located Ṭawālīsī in the province of Pangasinan in northwest Luzon:

[T]razando dos arcos, uno desde Cantón con un radio de 180 millas o leguas geográficas suponiendo que con un viento favorable recorriese 12 leguas diarias; y otro desde Kakula (entre Java y Sumatra) de 430 de radio, calculando que remando sólo conseguiesen una velocidad media, tendremos que la intersección de ambos arcos cae precisamente en la región norte de Filipinas.

Drawing two arcs, one from Canton with a radius of 180 miles or geographical leagues—assuming a favorable wind and 12 miles a day; and another from Kakula (between Java and Sumatra) of 430 radius—assuming an average speed by paddling—we have the intersection of both arcs falling precisely in the northern region of the Philippines.

This identification caused a major stir in Philippine historiography as it made the Philippines appear in a major historical book such as Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's; it appropriated Ṭawālīsī as a reputable pre-Spanish prosperous kingdom and transformed Urdujā into a modern woman governor. Paintings depicting

an invented Urdujā appeared everywhere, city halls were renamed, and monuments to glorify this modern princess immortalized in Arab literature were erected. It took Jaime C. de Veyra (1951) to analyze the historiographical construction of Princess Urdujā in the Philippines and expose the fallacy of her historicity.

But beyond 'ajā'ib, other sources testified positively to the presence of Andalusians in Asia, and this fact was the real astonishment for the former Andalusians (Spaniards as well as Portuguese) when they arrived in Asia. They found fellow Iberians in several places:

These questions [the 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. (Scott 1992, 35–36)⁹

Islamization of the Philippine Archipelago

The Philippine archipelago may have been part of Arab 'ajā'ib literature, but not of Arab history. The first factual Arabic historical data on the Philippine archipelago appeared very late, being featured in the sixth section of Ibn Mājid's *urjūza* (a kind of Arabic didactic poem) named *Ḥāwīyat al-ikhtiṣār fī uṣūl 'ilm al-biḥār* (Abridged Compendium of the Principles of Maritime Science) dated 1462.¹⁰ The belated mention suggests that the archipelago was not a main commercial destination in international trade, but it also indicates its relevance within the regional economy. Thus, numerous entrepôts formed the commercial network between al-Hind and al-Šīn—India and China—

نُشْرُفُصِدِ الْوَاقِعَ إِلَى مَلُوكِ ، وَتَرْفِي الْبَارِبِلَ شَكُوكِ ،
وَأَجْرِ فِي لِنَاقَةِ لُصُوكَ فَدَعَهُ . أَنْ عَلَيْهَا الْجَاءُ بِصُفُولِ أَرْبَعَةِ

Fig. 1. Excerpts from Ibn Mājid's *urjūza* named *Ḥāwīyat al-ikhtiṣār fī uṣūl 'ilm al-biḥār* dated 1462 mentioning the Sulu entrepôt

that eventually adopted Islam and spread it to inner lands. One of these entrepôts was Sulu (Şūluk / صولك) (fig. 1):

After going through <i>al-Wāqī'</i> [North-East] to Muluk [Moluccas]	ثم اقصد الواقع الى ملوك
and the bar of Burnī [Borneo] without hesitation	وبرني البار بلا شكوك
straight is achieved by <i>al-Nāqqa</i> [North North-East] Şūluk [Sulu]	واجر في الناقة لصولك فدعم
being 4 ^o the position of <i>al-Jāh</i> [North]. ¹¹	ان عليها الجاه يصفوا اربعة

Indeed the Philippine archipelago played a role in the process of spreading Islam, not only within Southeast Asia and the Malay world but also in connection with the great center of international commerce—Zaytūn / زيتون (Quanzhou). Within this context we have to locate the most important Philippine Islamic epigraphic relic, the so-called Tuan Maqbalu's tomb in Bud Datu, Jolo, which has clear resemblances with the Chinese Islamic style as stated by Majul (1999, 436) (fig. 2).¹²



Fig. 2. Tuan Maqbalu's tomb before (left) and after its destruction (right)

Source: Majul 1999, 204

In other words, Chinese Muslims must have played a key role in the Islamization of the area. Furthermore, it can be seen how one of the historical *makhdūmūn* / مخدومون ("masters") in the Sulu archipelago is known to have come from the Maghrib—the Islamic West (North Africa or al-Andalus), together with a Muslim Chinese companion, with the explicit name of Hui Hui Şīnī (صيني, "Chinese"):

Mohadum Aminullah is another Makhdum. He is buried in Bud Agad in Jolo island. He is the one often mentioned as being accompanied by 'Sini hoy hoys'. In fact, near his tomb is a tombstone with Chinese characters. Caretakers of the tomb of the Makhdum say that it was that of one of the Chinese companions or partners . . . Mohadum Aminullah Sayyidul Nikab is more correctly to be named as Sayyid ul-Naqīb Makhdum Aminullah . . . Some traditions say that he came from the West, that is, the Maghrib. (Majul n.d., 4)¹³

Southeast Asia was an important passageway for Islamization, but without doubt the vibrant southern Chinese commerce played a vital role in the cultural transformation of the Philippines. From the fourteenth century onward and due to the contact with Muslim preachers, missionaries, and traders in the sphere of Malacca, Brunei, and Zaytūn (Quanzhou) and with

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| (1) The Prophet said, upon him
be the peace: | (١) قال النبي عليه السلام |
| (2) Whoever dies in the distance
dies as 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) تهان مقبالو في التاريخ شهرالله |
| (5) Sacred of Rajab, God Almighty | (٥) الرمضان رجب عظيم الله |
| (6) blesses him the year 710. | (٦) رحمته سنة عشرة وسبعة مئة |

Fig. 3 Transcription and English translation of text embedded in Tuan Maqbalu's tomb in Bud Datu, Jolo

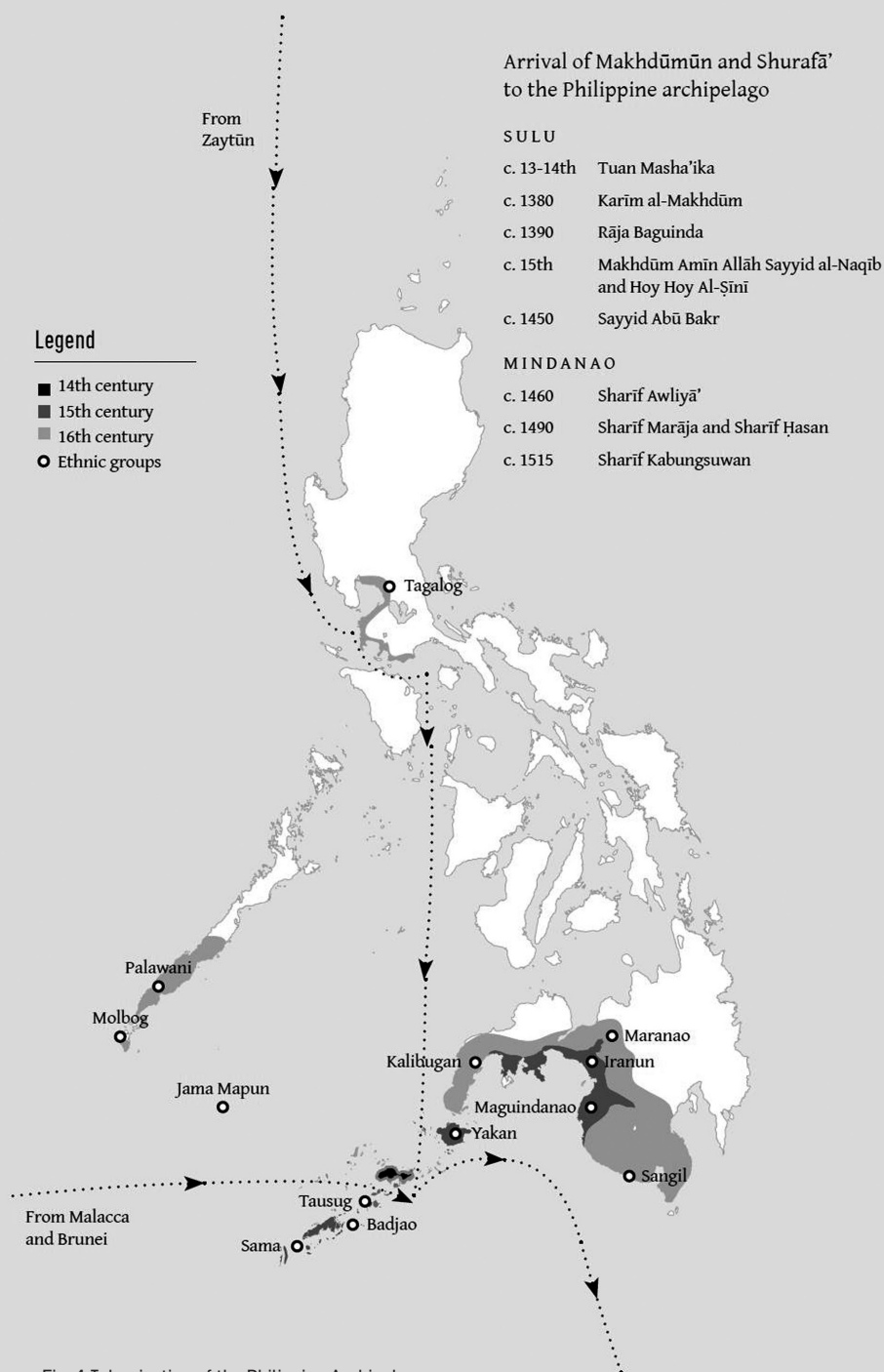


Fig. 4 Islamization of the Philippine Archipelago

Source: Donoso 2013a, 157

the visit of several makhdūmūn and *shurafā'* ("holy men"), the Philippine archipelago started a clear process of Islamization. Several Philippine ethnic groups started to be Islamized and their coastal towns transformed into maritime entrepôts as part of the Islamic sea routes, as figure 4 shows.

Specific Philippine ethnolinguistic groups adopted Muslim practices, but more importantly they adopted the sultanate as a political body, creating the Sultanate of Sulu and the Sultanate of Maguindanao. Accordingly, beyond the tribal division and the barangay, the sultanates were the first consistent political states in the archipelago. Moreover, the sultanates became the longest-surviving institutions in the history of the Philippines, lasting from the fifteenth century until the beginning of the twentieth century. Therefore, the historical sources created by the sultanates have given form to the traditional history of Muslims in the Philippines as the genealogy of the sultans, that is to say, the *tarsila*, from the Arabic *silila* / سلسلة (Majul 1999, 1–36; Tan 1999). These genealogies constitute the history of Muslims in the Philippines as the history of the sultans (Donoso 2010).

In addition to the history of the sultans, the tarsilas expose as well the traditional orality of Philippine Islamic narratives and their slow transformation into a written culture. The oral traditions of genealogical accounts regarding aristocratic families (datus, rajas, sultans) were written down probably around the eighteenth century.¹⁴ They illustrate the aristocratic and feudal nature of Philippine Islamic society and interestingly its cultural transformation too, namely, the hispanization of Mindanao's world as indicated by the tarsila of Zamboanga, which is written in Chabacano, and the modern proliferation of tarsilas in Lanao in various claims to ancestral domain (Donoso 2010, 2012b).

Moro: Conceptual Links between al-Andalus and the Philippines

The medieval Iberian Peninsula was divided between a Christian north and a Muslim south, with a mutable border that had dramatic consequences for Iberian inhabitants. The thirteenth century saw political confrontations to achieve and maintain hegemony on the peninsula. Since the eleventh century Andalusians had been under the rule of North African dynasties to whom the local authorities submitted.¹⁵ It was at this moment that Christian Iberians began to call Muslim Iberians "Moros," after Mauritania, the Roman name of North Africa. The people of al-Andalus were called

Maurus, which alienated them from the rest of the Iberian Peninsula. In the process, the southern Iberian Muslims—although indigenous to the land—were denigrated as “strangers” by the northern Iberian Christians who used two main ideological arguments: firstly, they assumed Christianity had been established throughout the peninsula before the advent of Islam; and, secondly, Islam arrived as a foreign invasion that subjugated the Christians in the Iberian south (González 2002).

This perception of Andalusians as aliens, which made the Iberian Muslims as the Other, supported the concept of *Reconquista* (Reconquest). Thus emerged the concept of *Maurus Africanus*, the Andalusian understood not as Iberian but as African—Moro: “In Spain, *Mauri* became *Moros*, and it was under this name that the inhabitants of the Peninsula designated the Muslim conquerors” (Lévi-Provençal 1986, 236). From here, a process of cultural disintegration would take place until the final expulsion of Muslims from Spain in 1609.

At around this period on the other side of the globe, Spanish ships arrived on Philippine shores and established a permanent political administration in Manila in 1571. From the first moment of the Spanish conquest, there were several views regarding Islam in the archipelago, with the conquistadors comparing Muslims in the Philippines with those in Spain (Donoso and Franco in press [a, b]). Significantly, al-Andalus figured as an argument that determined the process of Islamization in Southeast Asia. Because of the presence of the missing al-Andalus, the Islamic Far East was identified based on the realities of the Islamic Far West. Here can be located the transformation of *Maurus Africanus* into *Maurus Asiae*: “In the Philippines . . . [the] Spanish word *moro* designated the various Muslim population” (Lévi-Provençal 1986, 236).

As a matter of fact the Muslims became the Other in the Philippine archipelago, not because of religion but because they were competitors to the territory being claimed by Spain.¹⁶ Islamic mestizo families who had links across Southeast Asia ruled the Muslims in the Philippines. Imbued with an international commercial orientation, the Sulu, Brunei, Manila, and even Maguindanao sultanates engaged the maritime world as entrepôts (Wadi 2008a). Apart from political and commercial linkages, a very decisive inclusion of these entrepôts within the global Islamic network in Southeast Asia sustained the process of Islamization of the Philippines. People from the archipelago traded in Malacca, joined the Muslim army in the region, resold

Chinese products in local markets, had close activities with Borneans, and built Muslim entrepôts such as Sulu and Manila. Muslims in the Philippine archipelago were the first cultural group in the islands to undertake supra-tribal activities and, in doing so, establish authority even among non-Muslim populations.

This was the situation the Spaniards faced when they arrived in the islands. For the Spaniards to obtain the authority to rule over the archipelago, the *Maurus Asiae* had to become the Other. Spaniards conceptualized Filipino Muslims as *Moros*, albeit in a different context and with a different ethnicity. Indeed Filipino Muslims were not Iberians and the Reconquista’s argument was out of place in Southeast Asia. Yet in the end al-Andalus reached the Islamic Far East, not in legend but in reality.

Moro-Moro: Philippine Perceptions of Islam

Together with the importation of concepts from the history of Christian–Muslim relations in Spain, popular culture was imported as well. As an example of imported popular culture from Spain, the medieval dramas of *Moros y Cristianos* were introduced in the archipelago via Mexico. These dramas were theatrical performances that were formalized through the centuries and based on the ideological division between Muslims and Christians (Guastavino 1969). Ideological at first, in time they became plain drama or fiesta, in both Spain and America and in the Philippines too. Since there were Muslims in the Philippines, unlike in America, *Moros y Cristianos* could be deployed in an ideological battle in the archipelago (Cushner 1961). Yet, *Moros y Cristianos* in the Philippines rarely referred to encounters between Muslims and Christians in the archipelago; rather they referred to exotic lands, stories, and characters:

Los romances viejos históricos encontraron terreno propicio en el moro-moro ilocano. El tema está basado en la verdadera lucha entre los moros y árabes y los cristianos españoles de España. Pero se adoptó en el ambiente local. Los moros en el moro-moro ilocano vienen de África, Arabia, Turquía y a veces representan los musulimes filipinos. Los cristianos, en cambio, vienen de Europa y no sólo de España. . . . Las representaciones moro-moristas ilocanas . . . muestran la influencia de la literatura teatral medieval.

The ancient historical Romances encountered fertile ground in the Ilocano *Moro-Moro*. The topic is based on the true battles between Muslims and Arabs and the Christian Spaniards in Spain, but adapted to the local environment. The Muslims in the Ilocano *Moro-Moro* come from Africa, Arabia, Turkey, and sometimes they represented Filipino Muslims. The Christians, however, come from all over Europe and not only from Spain. . . . The *Moro-Morista* Ilocano performances . . . show the influence of medieval theatrical literature. (Gawaran 1979, i–v)

Moros y Cristianos were an imported cultural device from Spain and Mexico. Consequently these dramas depicted the Moro in the Philippines as the exotic Muslim from al-Andalus, Turkey, or Persia. It is difficult, if not impossible, to find a single Philippine metrical romance or drama with a plot set in Mindanao and Sulu (Eugenio 1987). Yet, one could rarely find a single romance or drama in which the character of the Moro did not appear, but this was the Moro from the other side of the Islamic world. Regardless of the place, the Moro appeared as an anachronism, that is, out of the historical context. In these dramatic representations Mindanao and Sulu also did not appear, as the settings were those of Arabia, Persia, Turkey, or Granada (Tiongson 1982, 1999).

Awit, *corrido*, and the Philippine romances based on the Hispanic *Romancero* are the roots of most *Moro-Moro* or *Komedya* (fig. 5). The anachronism revealed the medieval standardization of the plot. When the performances of Moros y Cristianos took root in the Philippines, the pattern had already been standardized. In other words, Philippine *Moro-Moro* did not concern Islam in the Philippines, but it had a standard theatrical plot where a *bida* (“protagonist”) faced a *contrabida* (“antagonist”).

As an example we can analyze the very famous Ilocano play *Gonzalo de Córdoba o la Conquista de Granada por los Reyes Católicos: Comedia en Ylocano* (1882).¹⁷ It supposedly narrates the conquest of the Islamic city of Granada by the Catholic Kings in 1492. However, together with historical characters such as King Fernando of Aragon and Queen Isabel of Castile, numerous Zegríes and Abencerrages appear, plus a long list of buffoons and kings, from Ethiopia, Numidia, Fez, and so on.

Nevertheless, there was a conscious attempt to introduce Moros y Cristianos as an ideological tool, at least initially. To celebrate Hurtado



Fig. 5. “Vigan. Moro-Moro artistas,” photograph by Alexander Schadenberg (1852–1896)
Photo courtesy of Fotosammlung des Museums für Völkerkunde Dresden (Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden) [Photo collection of the Museum of Ethnology Dresden, Dresden State Art Collections]

de Corcuera’s campaigns in the south, a komedya was staged in the city of Manila on 5 July 1637. This was probably the first, and perhaps the only, time that a *Moro-Moro* dealt explicitly with Muslims in the archipelago: *Gran comedia de la toma del pueblo de Corralat y conquista del Cerro* by Jerónimo Pérez (Retana 1909, 34–36). After this play, however, the Filipino fascination for the foreign Muslim, rather than the local one, became absolute. And what was ideological became entertainment and the tradition of the local town.

In sum, the Philippine perception of Islam was built on European medieval materials but developed with Asian textures. The relation between Catholic Filipinos and Moros was not the history of a cultural dichotomy, but the construction of an identity segregated from the rest of the Islamic or Islamized Southeast Asia because al-Andalus, by name or by fascination, was an overriding influence. Both Filipinos and Moros were exposed to the cultural elements imported from Spain, and this fact can be seen clearly in the history of Philippine Muslim writing.

Aljamiado Moro: Jāwī Tradition in the Philippines

The Islamization of large areas in Southeast Asia motivated the adoption of the Arabic script. Certainly Arabic script was successful in the transmission of numerous languages of the world, from Spain to China. Turkish, Persian, and Indian languages adopted effectively the Arabic alphabet. By using an *Aljamiado* system, even the Spanish language was written in Arabic by the last Spanish Muslims—the Mudéjares and the Moriscos.¹⁸

The Malay language also developed its own system of writing using the Arabic script, known as *Jāwī* / جوي, which replaced the local writing systems in the Malay-speaking world.¹⁹ This linguistic system was transmitted to Philippine languages, particularly in the areas with regular Muslim contact: the Sulu archipelago, the western coast of Mindanao, and the Manila Bay area, where Malay began to be employed as *lingua franca*.²⁰ This was how people from the Philippine archipelago joined the regional cultural innovations brought by Islam.

At the moment of the Spanish contact in Luzon the accounts said that some inhabitants who had converted to Islam were capable of reading the Qurʾān in Arabic. But the knowledge of the Arabic language and script was still rudimentary.²¹ The contact of local people with Islamized Malays certainly helped in the introduction of both Islam and the Arabic script. Consequently, it is possible to think that written documents in Tagalog using the Arabic alphabet existed.²²

In places where Islamic political structures emerged, the local languages took Arabic as their writing system. It is believed that the original tarsilas were codified in the Malay language using Arabic script, but these were eventually written in the local languages in Jāwī: Tausug in the Sulu archipelago and Maguindanao in the Río Grande de Mindanao.²³

After Spanish rule was established in the new entity called “the Philippines,” the sultanates needed to deal with diplomatic and political relations with the Spanish administrators. In consolidating their political status the sultanates used the Arabic script in its Jāwī variant as a remarkable tool. By having a written protocol, language determined a level of political autonomy. Jāwī defined a cultural, religious, and political identity linked with Islamic civilization, with a history of centuries and with a religious tradition. But Jāwī was not only Arabic script and Islamic religion, it was Malay identity and linguistic awareness too.²⁴ Eventually, from the sixteenth century onward, the Jāwī phenomenon in the Philippines consolidated a rich tradition and, most importantly, a huge corpus of documents.²⁵

Due to the diplomatic relations between the Spanish administration and the sultanates, the Jāwī corpora are enormously rich in both Tausug and Maguindanao languages; without doubt they represent the largest and most valuable Philippine Islamic sources (Donoso 2013b). These documents used to be featured in two versions, original Jāwī and Spanish translation. It is fascinating to note that the original Jāwī frequently contained Spanish words transcribed into Arabic script, a linguistic phenomenon similar to the one among the Spanish Moriscos (new Christians who converted from Islam) on the other side of the world. Accordingly, Spanish Moriscos used Arabic script to write the Spanish language. Astonishingly, on the other side of the Islamic world, Philippine Moros wrote Spanish words using Arabic script as well. See, for example, Figure 6.

Elsewhere I have shown the hispanization of Philippine Jāwī script, from the transcription of simple words to the use of whole sentences in Spanish, toward the creation of an *Aljamiado hispanofilipino* (Donoso 2012a, 175–98). This phenomenon took place during the nineteenth century in the southern areas from Zamboanga to Cotabato; as a result, it separated radically the Philippine Muslims from the Jāwī developed in other parts of Southeast Asia. This phenomenon shows that culture is something

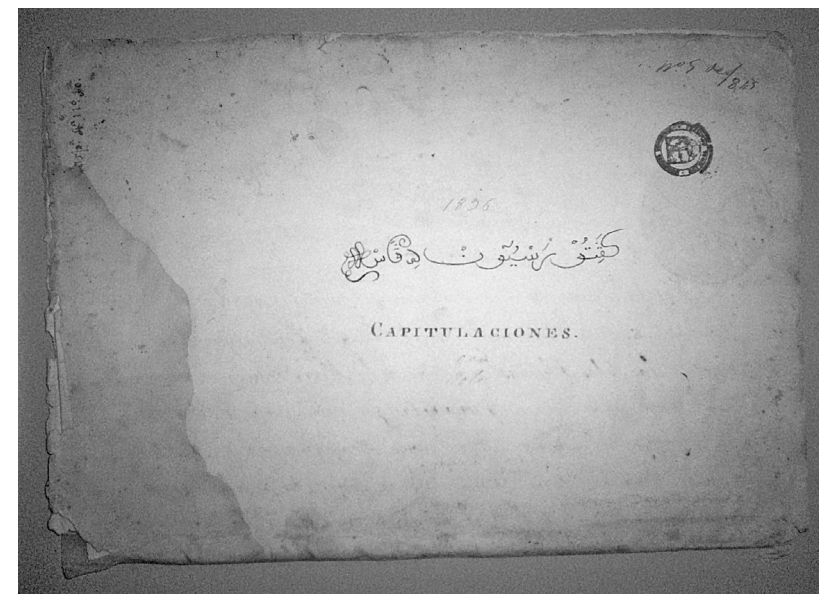


Fig. 6. كَيْتُورَ مَظِيُونْ دِفَاسْ / *Kapiturasyon di Pās* / *Capitulación de Paz* / Capitulation of Peace
Source: Sultan Mogamad-Diamalul-Quiram 1836; cf. Donoso 2012b, 182

movable and in constant transformation. Arabic script was used to write the Spanish language in Spain as well as on the other side of the Islamic world, the Philippines.

Furthermore, Arabic words were introduced to the Philippines directly or through Malay, and also through Spanish. Many Arabic words from the Arab Andalusian dialect passed to modern Spanish, and from there to Philippine languages. In Tagalog these words include: *alahas* (*alhaja*, *al-ḥāja*), *alkalde* (*alcalde*, *al-qāḍī*), *alkampor* (*alcanfor*, *al-kanfūr*), *alkansiya* (*alcancía*, *al-kanziyya*), *aldaba* (*aldaba*, *al-ḍabba*), *almires* (*almirez*, *al-mihrās*), *baryo* (*barrio*, *al-barrī*), *kapre* (*cafre*, *kāfir*), *kisame* (*zaquizamí*, *sāqf fāssamī*), and so on. Thus there are plenty of Filipino words that come from the Arabic language once spoken in Spain.

In sum, the Arabic spoken in the Malay-Indonesian world as well as the Arabic once spoken in Spain have penetrated Philippine languages, connecting both edges of the Islamic world in the Philippine archipelago (Potet 2013). The Jāwī documents serve as evidence of the pervasiveness of similar cultural phenomena the world over and of the creativity of culture as a way of human expression. By using Arabic script, Moros in the Philippines developed a workable political administration and system of diplomatic protocol; they also reconnected themselves, although unconsciously, with the legacy of al-Andalus.

History of Islam in the Philippines as Military History

The history of the Philippines—an archipelago of 7,000 islands in the crossroads between Asia and the Pacific—is a complex process in which different human groups tried (and are trying) to build unity by adapting and transforming the foreign within vernacular paradigms.²⁶ Consequently, as O. D. Corpuz (2005, 53–54, 58) argued, the postcolonial Philippines needed a historiography that could help create a national narrative (sometimes without expecting the consequences):

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 [the Spaniards] 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.

The constant erosion of similar historical and cultural trends, the fracture of the postcolonial Philippines, and the establishment of an official national culture based on Tagalog culture and local heroes did not help to create a discourse accepted by minorities in the second part of the twentieth century. From the academe came the discourse of endless struggle against colonizers, against the Other; in a word, against difference. For the glory of the postcolonial Philippines, Moros were deemed brothers and the first freedom fighters in the country. With this military vocabulary, the discourse became belligerent and aggressive; to build the future of the nation, it eroded its past. With very good intentions, Majul researched all available sources to write a coherent history of Muslims in the Philippines. Unfortunately, he did not fully transform the narrative of nineteenth-century Spanish reports and books written by Spanish militaries, materials that obviously focused on military history. In the end, “Moro Wars” were institutionalized, and the history of Muslims in the Philippines was primarily a military history—not a Marxist one, not a social one, not a cultural one, not even an Islamic one.²⁷

Since the message from the academe was intellectually conflictive, the immediate consequence was obvious—Moro redemption through military means. Within this discourse we have to locate the emergence of armed groups that have agitated the region in the past decades (Stern 2012; Santos 2001). The word “Moro” has become symbolic of Philippine Muslim history and has been regarded as carrier of Andalusian values.²⁸ In fact, al-Andalus has been used as a symbol in other modern Islamic regions, such as by Mahathir bin Mohamad in Malaysia, in creating a progressive socioeconomic nation based on Islamic history and values (Donoso 2006, 2009). But unlike the modern political use of al-Andalus as a leading nation in medieval Europe, the Moro concept in the Philippines has been connected with a history of struggle and conflict (unconsciously suitable, since it reflects the decadence of al-Andalus).

Tribal fragmentation, political instability, and social injustice forced young Muslims to claim a Moro redemption amid the turbulent ideologies of the Cold War, resulting in the emergence of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF, *Jabha al-Waṭaniyya li-Taḥrīr Mūrū* / جبهة الوطنية لتحرير مورو) and subsequently the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF, *Jabha Taḥrīr Mūrū al-Islāmiyya* / جبهة تحرير مورو الإسلامية). The Moro concept has been used to identify a supratribal and postsultanate society, expressed as the “Land of Moros,” “Moroland,” or “Republic of Bangsamoro” (جمهورية بانجسامورو).

Conclusion

Philippine Islamic identity has a conscious link with the rest of the Islamized Malay world, but only an unconscious link with al-Andalus. However, it was the Andalusian legacy that made the Philippine Muslim experience different from the rest of Southeast Asia. It was not only the Islamic East that shaped Moros and Philippine Muslims but the Islamic West as well. The responsibility nowadays is to provide a coherent history that can dignify the uniqueness of Philippine Islam, reconciling the past and building the future. For the twenty-first century, al-Andalus can be a model of progress, science, and advancement for Muslims in the Philippines.

Notes

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- 1 On the process of Islamization in Southeast Asia, see Hooker 1983; Federspiel 2007; McAmis 2002; De Graaf 1977; Tarling 1992, 330–34, 508–72; Fatimi 1963; Majul 1964; Meuleman 2005; Johns 1993.
- 2 On Islam in the Philippine archipelago, see Majul 1999, 1989; Abubakar 1983, 2005; Isidro and Saber 1968; Gowing and McAmis 1974; Gowing 1979; Sakili 2003; Mastura 1984a; Tan 1989; Rasul 2003; Donoso 2013a.
- 3 The classical work *Akhbār al-Ṣīn wa-l-Hind* (851) has a long historiography; see Renaudot 1718, 1733, 1845, 1922, 1948.
- 4 “The Book [*Kitāb ‘Ajā’ib al-Hind*] relates a number of very amusing and very strange stories concerning the adventures of the sailors in the islands of the East Indies and other parts of the Indian Ocean. . . . It seems that during this period [tenth century] there was a great demand for wonderful and amusing tales, which fact is borne out by the existence of several MSS in Arabic dealing with ‘*ajā’ib* literature” (Ahmad and Taeschner 1986, 583).

5 Original text:

فبينما هم كذلك اذ ورد عليه منسوان من داخل الجزيرة لا يحصى عددهم إلا الله تعالى فوقع على كل رجل منهم ألف امرأة أو أكثر فلم يلبثوا ان حملوهم إلى الجبال وكلّفوهم الاستمتاع بهن قال فليزوالوا على ذلك وكلّ من قويت على صاحباتهم اخذت الرجل منهن والرجال يتموتون من الاستقراغ أو لا فأولا وكلّ من مات منهم يتواقن عليه بالنّثن رايحته فلم يبق منهم سوى الشيخ الاندلسي فأنه جاءته واحدة فكانت تزوره في الليل فإذا اصبح اكّته في موضع قريب من البحر وجاءت له بشيء تقوته به فلم يزل كذلك إلى ان انقلب الريح من تلك الجزيرة إلى الجهة التي خرج المركب منها من الهند فاخذ الشيخ قارب المركب الذي يسمّى الفلو ورفع فيه في الليل ماء وزادا فلما فطنت به المرأة اخذت بيده وجاءت به إلى موضع فنتشت التراب بيديها عن معدن تبر فنقلت هي وهو منه ما صبر به القارب واخذا مع هو اسرى عن عشرة أيام وهو بالبلد التي خرج المركب منها فاخبرهم الخبر واقامت المرأة معه إلى ان تقصّحت واسلمت ورزق منها الاولاد

- 6 A Chinese source mentioned the sea of Malānū, Chou Ku-fei's *Ling Wai Tai Ta* (1178): “Dans la mer du sud-est, il y a le royaume de *Cha-houa-kong*. Les habitants vont souvent sur l'océan pour se livrer à la piraterie. Quand ils capturent des gens, ils les lient et les vendent au *Chō-p'o* [Java]. Plus au sud-est et près du pays de *Fo-che* se trouvent beaucoup d'îles sauvages. Des barbares voleurs les habitent; ils sont appelés [gens de] *Ma-lo-nou* [Malano, dans le Sarawak de Borneo]. Quand le vent chasse un navire marchand dans ce pays, ils se saisissent des gens, les rôtissent en les fixant à un gros bambou et les mangent. Les chefs de ces barbares se percent les dents et les garnissent d'or. Ils font des bols à manger avec des crânes d'hommes. Plus les îles sont lointaines plus ces brigands sont nombreux” (The people of the country of Sha-hua-kung are in the habit of going out on the high seas for plunder, and sell their prisoners to Sho-po [Java]. Again in the southeasterly direction . . . there are certain islands inhabited by savage robbers called Ma-la-nu. When traders are driven to this country, these savages assemble in large crowds and, having caught the shipwrecked, roast them over a fire with large bamboo pinchers and eat them. The chiefs of these robbers bore their teeth and plate them with yellow gold. They use human skulls as vessels for drinking and eating. The farther one penetrates among these islands, the worse the robbers are” (Wu 1959, 86; cited also in Ferrand 1913–1914, 649). Malānū / ملانو refers clearly to “Malanao” within the Philippine archipelago and North Borneo. Preliminary attempts to locate it are seen in Wu (1959, 86 n. 57) and Ferrand (1913–1914, 662 n. 1).
- 7 “These were apparently composed for the general reader and though mostly fantastic, they cannot be completely brushed aside as untrue and ignored in any serious study of Arab geography and exploration,” according to Ahmad and Taeschner (1986, 583). According to Ferrand (1913–1914, 1), “L'auteur du *Livre des merveilles de l'Inde*, le capitaine Bozorg, a voyagé en Inde et peut-être en Indonésie; mais la plupart des faits qu'il rapporte ont pour garants d'autres marins, inconnus par ailleurs” (The author of the Book of the *Wonders of India*, Captain Bozorg, traveled to India and perhaps to Indonesia; but most of the facts he relates are narrated by other unknown sailors).
- 8 See the full Arab text and English translation in Donoso 2013a, 252–56.
- 9 I have addressed this issue in detail in Donoso 2008.
- 10 Aḥmad ibn Mājīd (1421–c.1509). Cf. Shumovsky 1957, 1960; Khūrī 1970–1972; Sezgin 1992.

- 11 A facsimile of the manuscript 2292, which is available at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, is reproduced in Ferrand 1921–1928, 1:106 r., lines 4–5.
- 12 “Hence it is highly probable that Maqbalu’s tomb in Bud Dato was commissioned and carved in Quanzhou. Contemporaries of the deceased and, indeed, friends or associates of the deceased might have plied the route: Borneo—Sulu—Ma’i (the Mayyid of the Arabs, either Mindoro or Luzon)—Quanzhou” (Majul 1999, 437). On Mā’it, see Donoso 2013a, 129–35.
- 13 Cf. Wu 1959; Wang 1971; Rockhill 1915. On Sino-Suluan diplomatic relations, see Wang 1989; Hedjazi and Ututalum 2002; Reynolds 1967. In this sense, the difficulty of tracing the ethnic origin of the Chinese Muslim communities (Hui) and the historical contact with Sulu opened the gate to speculations that were certainly astonishing: “During the summer of 1989, while traveling across the eleven provinces of China, I interviewed many Chinese descendants of the East King of Sulu to collect material for my research. At that time, Wenxuan An, the sixteenth-generation grandson of the East King . . . revealed to me that ‘our ancestors are Moros of the Philippines and before they came to the Philippines, they were the Moors in Africa’. I just smiled in response, and I thought this was only a fantasy like ‘the Arabian Nights’” (Xu 1996, 21).
- 14 In spite of the variety and diversity of *tarsilas*, it seems that the primary codification was already done by Najeeb Mitry Saleeby (1905, 1908), a Lebanese at the service of the American administration, who at the start of the twentieth century compiled and translated the tarsilas from both Mindanao and Sulu. However, Saleeby neither reproduced nor analyzed the original sources, which are now missing. Thus what we have are English translations of supposedly lost originals and the modern exegesis of those translations, mainly done by Majul 1965a, 1965b, 1979/1981/1985. Other works have analyzed the role of the *datus*; see Rasul 1997; Mastura 1984b.
- 15 *Al-Murābiṭūn* / المرابطون (The Eremites, 1090–1145) and *al-Muwāḥḥidūn* / الموحدون (The Unitarians, 1145–1223).
- 16 Scott (1984a, 111–15) clearly limited the issue.
- 17 A copy is available at the Filipiniana Section of the University of the Philippines Main Library.
- 18 There are plenty of works on the Spanish *Aljamía* but Pons (1992) and Chejne (1983) are the main references. A general bibliography about Moriscos can be downloaded from the site: <http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/portal/LMM/estudios_y_biblio.shtml>. Arabic script was used by other Europeans, such as the Bosnians, Albanians, and other Muslims in the Balkans (Zakhos-Papazahariou 1972).
- 19 Mohammed Nor bin Nghah (1983, viii) states that “Jawi means ‘people of Java’ which also refers to ‘Malays’ because the Arabs in the past considered all the people in the Malay Archipelago as Javanese; therefore the Malay writing using Arabic characters is called Jawi script.”
- 20 When the Portuguese arrived in Malacca, people from Luzon island (*luções*) were part of the commercial activity of this port: “In terms of trade, they are very intelligent and clever people, and they normally deal with these nationalities: the Javanese, Siamese, Pegus, Bangalis, Quetis, Malabars, Gujeratis, Parsees [Persians], Arabs and many others, which has made them very wise, since they live there and the city is full of ships competing with them for trade, for which purpose the Chinese, Taiwanese, *luções* and other peoples also frequent it” (Garcia 2003, 62). This quotation is from Barros (1988–2001, dec. III, book. V, chap. IV, 135).

While the people of Luzon participated in international commerce, the port of Manila also started to consolidate a local aristocracy based on business, which caused cultural transformations: “Manila was a bilingual community at the time of the Spanish advent, its bourgeoisie speaking Malay as a second language even as their descendants were later to speak Spanish and English. . . . Malay was the *lingua franca* of Southeast Asian commerce at the time and had been for many years. . . . Indeed, it was probably the language which Sulu royalty spoke with a community of Chinese Muslims in a trading station on the Grand Canal in Shantung province in 1417 . . . and it is significant that the majority of them [foreign words] were already Malay borrowings from civilizations farther to the west at the time of their introduction into Tagalog” (Scott 1984b, 42–43).

- 21 “Verdad es que algunos que an 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 ubiere estado en Burney puede comer puerco, y esto yo se lo he oydo dezir á muchos dellos.” *Relación del descubrimiento y conquista de la isla de Luzón y Mindoro*, Manila, 1572, cited in Retana 1898, 29.
- 22 “The link between Islam and writing . . . is repeatedly documented” (Corpuz 2005, 39). “The chiefs of Manila were in written communication with the Sultan of Borneo. Writing, presumably, in the Arabic script, was linked to Islamic conversion in Manila and Batangas. . . . The native scripts were superseded by the Castilian alphabet in colonized Filipinas. In the Tagalog area the Arabic script, which might have displaced the native script at least among the chiefs, was also superseded by the Castilian” (ibid., 41–42). For more extensive references on Philippine history writing, see Donoso and Macahilig-Barceló 2012.
- 23 *Kirim* is the name given to *Jāwī* documents in Maguindanao, according to Tan 1999.
- 24 Together with language, political symbols within the chancelleries emerged (Gallop 2002).
- 25 For a general state of *Jāwī* documents in the Philippines, see Tan 2002; for the contemporary evolution, see Abubakar 2013.
- 26 “If the essence of the Filipino, as is often pointed out, is his uncanny ability to hold the extremes of polarity of East and West, the same surely may be said of his intellectual openness to both Islam and Christianity. The Filipino is Muslim; the Filipino is Christian; the Filipino is what he chooses to be” (Casiño 1977, 5).
- 27 Wadi (2008b) has made a complete analysis of the modern historiography of Muslims in the Philippines.
- 28 “The western world has likewise acknowledged its gratitude to the famous Moors. When Europe was in darkness, it was the Moors who were responsible for carrying the torch of knowledge” (Rasul 2003, 4).

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