

legal basis for this exception is due to expire in a few years and it is to be hoped that the Philippine government will be able at that time to resist nationalistic pressure for cultural uniformity and to continue to recognize the dangers of attempting to regiment peoples whose cultural ethos is drastically different from the majority group.

Cotabato has started out on the type of approach by which groups of different cultural backgrounds may be expected to live in harmony. The province is not a "melting pot" in which different groups are forced into a common mold, but a place in which peoples of different viewpoints live together in good will and tolerance. The present problems of inter-group relations are identical with the problems of community development. If the community forges ahead, inter-group tensions may be expected to diminish, but the failure to solve economic and governmental problems would aggravate ethnic irritations. Other areas of mixed population may observe the experience of Cotabato with profit and, if present trends continue this pioneer area may truly be a "land of promise."

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FELICIA SECURITIES, INC.

FELIX Z. TIONGCO

President

Manila

Philippines

Vol V - no. 1

SOME PROBLEMS OF MORO HISTORY AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

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As students of Philippine culture and society focus their attention more closely on the island of Mindanao, a great many problems and questions concerning the Islamized inhabitants of the island achieve an almost preemptive significance. Certainly no history of the island, no description of its cultures, and no analysis of its societies can be made without reference to the people whose raiding, trading, and political organization were felt by almost every indigenous group in the southern Philippines.

Yet, despite their importance, the Moros are probably the least known major group on Mindanao. While there are numerous references to them in histories, legends, and travelers' reports, there is only one work which is a detailed description of a Moro group, Orosa's 1923 *The Sulu Archipelago and its People*. It is the purpose of this paper to summarize some of the scattered data concerning Moro society, sketch some problems and considerations concerning Moro studies, and suggest a few ways in which Moro studies may be related to more general problems in Mindanao and the Philippines.

Until 50 years ago, the Moros were the major cultural influence in the southern Philippines. Because of their geographic position, they were both the recipients and bearers of the great cultures of southeast and eastern Asia. The mouth of the Cotabato River and the Sulu archipelago early became important in Malaysian trade. Jolo, lying midway between Mindanao and Borneo, and the Celebes and Sulu Seas, was the gateway to the Philippines for ships coming out of the East Indies, and the gateway to the Spice Islands for ships going south from China. The mouth of the Cotabato River was also of strategic importance because it offered access to the interior of Mindanao and settlements here became trading centers.

As a result of these commercial contacts, the Moros themselves were extremely active in trade. Moro boats carried trade goods into the northern islands of the Philippines, as well as ranging as far west as the Persian Gulf and as far south as New Guinea. Moro traders penetrated the interior of various islands in the Philippines, and where they could, extended their political domination in order to achieve trade monopolies (cf. Christie, 1909). It is because of these contacts and their effects, not only on the Moros but on the people with whom they traded, that the Islamized areas of Mindanao become of interest to the cultural historian. Other parts of the Philippines were also affected by the great Asiatic civilizations, but these effects have been eliminated or submerged in the now Christian areas. The Islamized area, on the other hand, still retains these influences, in perhaps the sharpest form in which they occurred in the Philippines, and so makes at least this part of the mosaic of Philippine pre-history amenable to first-hand study.

The Moro area also holds interest for those concerned with indigenous Philippine society. Unlike any other non-Christian group in the islands.

the Moros exhibit a formal system of political organization, and although some elements of this system were undoubtedly imported, the base into which they were worked was Filipino. Thus, the Moros offer to students of society a combination of kinship and political structure, and a possible end point, at least for the Philippines, of what can be accomplished in the building of political units on the basis of bilateral kinship. Here too, there is a historical dimension. Evidence exists that indicates that the concept of the "state" had taken root in other parts of the Philippines before the coming of the Spaniards. While it cannot be said that contemporary Moro social and political organization offers a direct example of these early "states," it appears to be the only existing system organized along the similar lines. Thus on the basis of our knowledge of Moro social organization it may be possible to gain some insights into the pre-contact structure of places such as Manila, Butuan, and Cebu.

These are but a few of the directions in which Moro studies may lead. But if they are to take any direction at all, there is need to point out and perhaps clear away some of the confusions which fog the path. One of the chief confusions stems from the use of the term "Moro" to signify both a people and a set of beliefs. This term implies the existence of a single group of people with a uniform language, territory, set of beliefs, and way of life. In point of fact, however, the term "Moro" includes a number of different peoples whose relationship to each other often seems tenuous, at best.

There are at the present time ten different ethno-linguistic groups which are known as Moro.* All speak different, and in some cases mutually unintelligible dialects of the Philippine group of languages. Each population is more or less concentrated in a separate area whose terrain ranges from coral reefs to upland plateaus, and from volcanic islands to lowland plains. The subsistence base for each group may differ. The Maranao and inland Magindanao are predominantly agricultural, but while the former are an upland rice and corn raising people, the latter practice wet-rice agriculture along the flood plains of the Cotabato River. The Yakan are also an upland rice people, but are shifting cultivators. The Taw-Sug and coastal Magindanao had some agriculture, but relied mainly on fishing in conjunction with trading and piracy. The Samal seem to dispense almost entirely with agriculture, while the Bajao carry reliance on the sea to a point where they seldom come ashore.

The various groups also differ in size of population and density, as well as settlement pattern. Four of the groups, the Taw-Sug, Maranao, Magindanao, and Samal constitute 92% of the present-day Muslim population, and always were the largest. A fifth group, the Yakan, numbered

* There is some disagreement on the number of distinct Muslim groups. The Jesuit ethnographic map of 1887 names only 6 Moro groups, Beyer lists 7, while Kuder (1945) counts 10 groups. However, there is general agreement on the main groups. These are 1) the Taw-Sug of Jolo, Siasi, and Tawi-Tawi in the Sulu archipelago; 2) the Samal, of Sibitu and the Sulu archipelago; 3) the Magindanao of Cotabato; 4) the Maranao of Lanao and Cotabato. To these are usually added 5) the Sangil of Cotabato and Davao; 6) the Yakan of Basilan and Zamboanga. There is disagreement over whether 7) the Bajao are a group distinct from the samals and whether 8) the Palawani are sufficiently distinct from the Tagbanawa to warrant being given a separate name. Kuder also adds as separate Moro groups two small island peoples, 9) the Jama Mapun of Cagayan de Sulu and 10) the Melebuganonon of Balabac Island.

30,000 in the 1939 census, while the other five groups each had less than 6,000 persons each. It is impossible to know what the population densities were in former times, but it seems reasonable to conclude that places such as Jolo and the mouth of the Cotabato River had relatively high densities just as they do today, and that the density in outlying regions was variable. Settlement pattern ranges from a few scattered houses along a coral reef to a large city such as Jolo, and from communities scattered along a river's edge to settlements huddled near a fort.

The history of each of these groups differs. Taking just the large groups: the Taw-Sug have a long history of direct contact with Borneo, Malaya, and Indonesia, and more remotely with India and China; the Magindanao had much the same kinds of contacts although probably not quite as intense; there is no evidence that the Maranao or Samal ever had a similarly wide range of contact, and most extra-Philippine influences upon them were more indirect.

These are a few of the differences which are submerged when the term "Moro" is used to denote a people. That such variation exists comes as no surprise, unless we assume that Islamization presupposes a certain kind of environment, culture, etc. The peoples who became Moslem had their separate cultures and ways of life before they adopted Islam, and, by and large, much of the "separateness" seems to have persisted. This is not to argue that conversion to Islam produced no changes or had no levelling effects. But those changes which did follow do not seem to have had the magnitude of those introduced by the Spanish and Christian missionaries in the Northern and Central Philippines. Since it is not known just what traits shared by the various Moslem groups are "Moro" (as distinct from being Philippine) it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to speak of Moro except in general terms.

The application of the term "Moro" to beliefs and religious practices of Muslim Filipinos is perhaps more legitimate, but only slightly more precise. Although no detailed study has even been made of Moro religion, it seems likely that this, too, will show a high degree of inter-group variation. Islam is exceedingly syncretistic, and elsewhere in Malaysia has had little difficulty in accommodating Hindu, Buddhist, and pagan elements (Wilkinson, 1906). Since each present Muslim group had its own particular belief system before conversion, it must be assumed that the pattern of combination with Islam differed from group to group. In some cases, such as the Maranao and Magindanao, the differences may be small both because the earlier belief systems were closely related and because pressures toward orthodoxy and standardization were strong. On the other hand, groups which stem from more distinctly different cultural streams such as the Yakan, Palawani, and Samal may show a wider divergence both from any orthodox standard and from the practice of other Moro groups. In short, the range of divergence and variation is probably sufficient to make it unlikely that there are many beliefs and practices which can be said to be characteristic of all Moslem Filipinos.

While all of this does not rule out the belief system as a criterion for distinguishing Moros from other Filipinos, it does leave the question of some positive definition of "Moro" open. Given the present state of Moro studies, a good part of the content of such a definition must wait until more data are available. However, one way in which to immediately define

the Moros, as a whole, is to turn our attention to Moro social and political organization. The existence of a political structure which went beyond the immediate region is quite as characteristic of the Moros as their system of belief. Indeed, the two are coterminous; there were no Moros who were outside of the political system. While it cannot be said that the political structure organized real states, the size and degree of organization of the units which were created clearly set the Moros off from all other Philippine peoples. Further, these political units were so interlaced and related as to provide, in a general sense, a single system of social and political organization for the Philippine Muslim world—thus minimizing the internal cultural and ecological variations. In short, the Moros were a single society, though not a single culture.

Before describing the operation of this system, some qualification and explanation is necessary. The same reasoning which was leveled against any attempt to define the Moros in terms of their system of belief may be applied to the attempt at definition in terms of political organization. Thus, while it is true that every Moro group can be characterized by the existence of such a system, it is also true that there were variations, and that the system did not operate in the same way in each group. There was no overall political authority embracing all of the Moro groups, and each individual group was broken up into one or more principalities. All of the Taw-Sug were in the sultanate of Sulu, which territorially also encompassed North Borneo, southern Palawan, and parts of the southern Mindanao coast. The Magindanao were distributed among several sultanates, but only two were important, Magindanao and Buyan. The Maranao, however, were extremely segmented; Forrest (1779:276) lists no less than 33 sultanates dividing up a population of 61,000 persons. On the other hand, groups such as the Samal, Yakan, and Bajao had no independent political existence and were subject peoples.

The complexity of the various sultanates and the amount of authority the sultans wielded differed from principality to principality, and the sultanates are not comparable units as such. There are five different grades of office reported for Sulu (Orosa: 1923, p. 59), as well as some 15 different political offices, while there are only three grades of office reported for the Magindanao and Samal (Beyer-Holleman Papar 163; account No. 34). The number of titles held in any one sultanate appears to vary greatly, but is usually large. Further, the actual authority wielded by any one official did not bear any fixed relationship to the system as such, so that there were variations from area to area and over time. A minor sultan might have greater control over his area than did the Sultan of Sulu, and any lower official might have more actual power than the sultan who was his sovereign. The degree of real control and the distribution of effective political authority depended upon the situation at hand and was not an attribute of the political system as such.

Despite the fact that we do find regional variation and organizational differences, it still remains possible to characterize Moro socio-political organization as a whole. The basic pattern of social and political relationships was the same all through the Moro world. The variations which exist point out one of the characteristics of the pattern, its flexibility, but do not negate its existence.

Perhaps the best proof that there existed a single structure is provided by the social and jural equivalence of individuals throughout the Moro area, and this, despite linguistic and cultural differences. The aristocratic *datu* class of the various groups was both interrelated and intermarried. The Taw-Sug Sultanate maintained its hegemony over the minor groups (Palawan, Yakan, Melebugnon) and the Samal through the intermarriage of *datu*s. The Magindanao and Buyan Sultanates claimed to be branches of the same house which ruled the Taw-Sug, and in any case numerous marriages took place between the *datu*s of these groups. While the lower classes of the various groups did not have this pattern of intermarriage, they were the jural equivalents of their opposites in each group. Families and even whole villages could and sometimes did shift from one group to another. After a volcanic eruption in 1765, groups of Maranao are reported to have moved into Magindanao and Taw-Sug territory. Similarly, whole Samal villages dissatisfied with life under the Sulu Sultanate moved to the Mindanao coast where they became subject to the Magindanao Sultanate. The Samal as a group, though linguistically and, to some extent, culturally distinct from the Taw-Sug, were a part of the Sulu Sultanate.

To sum up, there were very real differences in the local operation of the system of social and political organization, but there is little doubt that it was the same system in operation everywhere. The differences which existed were more a function of local conditions than of social differences.

To sum up, there were very real differences in the local operation of the system of social and political organization, but there is little doubt that it was the same system in operation everywhere. The differences which existed were more a function of local conditions than of social differences, and there were probably more differences between the large sultanate of Buyan and the small sultanate of Bagumbayan, both of which were Magindanao-speaking, than between Buyan and Sulu which were linguistically and ethnically different.

What then was this "basic" system of organization which united all of Philippine Moslem society? In the next few pages I shall attempt to lay out its structural lines. However, a few words of caution and explanation are called for here. There is no complete description of Moro socio-political structure in the literature. The description which is given here has been pieced together from a variety of sources ranging from travelers' reports to the Beyer-Holleman collection and the works of Saleeby (1908), Orosa (1923), Christie (1909), Hurley (1936), and others. The time period covered extends from 17th century to 1954. What emerges then cannot be an accurate description nor is it intended as such. Rather, I look upon it as a reasonable description, a working model intended to lay out the main lines, but undoubtedly inaccurate in many details.

Formal Moro political structure may best be characterized as a pyramidally arranged hierarchy of authority and sanction which served to join almost any number of villages or settlements into a single political unit. At the top of the hierarchy was the *sultatan* (sultan) or *rajah*, the nominal ruler of the unit as a whole in whose name all authority was exercised. Under him was the *panglima*, the leading official for a particular combination of villages, and subordinate to the latter were lesser chiefs whose rank was based upon the number of villages and followers they could claim.

These lesser officials bore the title of maharajah and there were several grades within the rank; *maharajah bangsawan* and *maharajah pawlawan*. The lowest grade of chief was the *orangkaya* who was the local leader or village headman.

Assisting in the administration of each of these political units were a group of other officials whose duties were of a military, judicial, or administrative nature. The number of such officials seems to be almost infinite, and the division of labor between them minute. Thus, under the *panglima* was a *nakib* who was in charge of military matters, a *laksmanna* who was the *panglima's* messenger, a *parkasa* who was his aide-de-camp, a *bintala* who was the district supervisor of priests, and so forth, all the way down to the *makabil* and *monary* who acted as police in the market place.

The sultan also had his set of officials. These were a group of powerful noblemen who had great wealth, and a large number of followers, and who, as a group, formed the *ruma bechara* or royal council. Each of these men held titles, and presumably performed duties ranging from that of Prime Minister to Inspector of Weights and Measures. Succession to the office of sultan was either through immediate descendants or collaterals, and both the heir apparent and the latter's successor were chosen while the sultan was alive. The heir apparent held the title of *rajah muda* and sat with the royal council. All members of the council were considered equal in rank, and each had one vote. The sultan and heir apparent had two votes.

It is important to note that this structure operated primarily in terms of persons and groupings, and that territory was only of secondary importance. Authority was over people, rather than places, and a leader reckoned his power in terms of the number of his followers, rather than in terms of villages, *per se*. Since the political unit was groupings of people rather than villages, it was possible for some men to exercise political authority which had no territorial base at all, depending instead on the number of retainers and followers that could be mobilized. Only the sultan was exempt from this scheme. In theory, all persons who lived within the particular were his followers. For the sultan, people and territory were co-incident.

Roughly paralleling the political hierarchy was a religious one, and the two were united at the top in the person of the sultan, who was thus both chief political and ecclesiastical authority. The sultan's chief religious advisor was the *kadi*, who like the sultan was not identified with any particular place or group, but theoretically functioned in terms of the state as a whole. The *kadi* was the chief legal and religious authority in matters of Koranic interpretation, and could under some circumstances override decisions of the sultan. Each district chief, the *panglima*, also had his religious official who advised him, the *pandita*, a man well versed in the Koran, though not necessarily as learned as the *kadi*. There were also purely religious functionaries who were identified with particular groups of believers and mosques. The highest ranking religious officials of this type were the *imam mullam* and the *imam halipa*, who were in charge of the sultan's mosque—the most important in the state. The lowest ranking religious official was the *imam* of the local mosque, and he was assisted by the *hatib* and *bilad* who were the novitiates.

The basis upon which this system was founded, and, in theory, operated, is Koranic and Islamic tradition. The Sultan was a representative of the

Prophet, either in his own right, or because he considered his authority to stem from the Caliph at Istanbul who was the spokesman for Islam. The rule of the sultan was therefore not the rule of men, but the rule of the Book, and obedience to the Sultan meant obedience to Allah. All law was therefore essentially religious, both because it came from the Sultan, and because the Koran itself makes little distinction between "legal" and "religious." At Sulu, two steps were involved in drawing up new decrees. First, a body of high religious officials, presided over by the *kadi*, prepared the laws. These were then presented to the *ruma bechara*. If the royal council approved, the measure became law, and was enforced by the *panglima* and his subordinates under the Sultan's authority. If the Sultan and his *datus* objected to a recommendation made by the religious body, the latter were called in to justify the measure and explain its relation to religion and custom. "If there was a failure to agree," says Orosa, "the opinion of the *kadi* prevailed."

Islamic scholars have often pointed out that the most highly developed expression of Islam is to be found in its law rather than in its theology. These legal codes are based explicitly upon the revelations of the Koran, and where the Koran is silent and no inference can be drawn from it, the codes are morally and therefore legally indifferent. In the areas covered by the Koran, the codes are explicit, and specifications cover both obligatory and prohibited actions of believers. In the Moro area, selections from these codes, presumably of the Shaf'ite school of law, formed the basis of the judicial system. The subject matter of these codes covered a wide range: slavery, property, inheritance; murder and assault; penal law; sales and contracts, etc., defining in each case the course of behavior or offense, and prescribing penalties. Distinctions between civil, penal, private, and other kinds of law were not recognized. Side by side with the selections from the old Arabic code existed customary law. In theory, the two sets of laws were compatible, and both equally within the bounds of the Koran. In practice, there was often conflict, in which case customary law prevailed. Saleeby (1905:66) notes that "The laws relating to murder, adultery, and inheritance are seldom strictly complied with."

The administration of justice followed along the lines of the hierarchical structure, and political and religious officials overlapped in the judicial aspects of their roles. The village headman and/or *imam* functioned at the local level, acting as both judge and jury. Where a case involved persons from different villages, they cooperated with their equivalents from the other village. If no satisfactory conclusion could be reached, or where the argument concerned the two villages as a whole, the case was taken to the next highest person in the hierarchy. Each person who sat in judgment received a portion of the fine levied against the offending or losing party, and the higher up the ladder of judgment a case went, the heavier the fine, since there were that many more people to be paid off. If a person could not pay his fine, he became either a debt bondsman or an outright slave to the headman or to the person who was supposed to collect the bulk of the fine. Charges could be preferred by almost anyone and the proof of innocence was upon the accused. This combined with the high fees of appeal opened the judicial system to use as a political weapon.

Income for persons in the politico-religious hierarchy was derived from fines, and from the various alms, tithes, and fees prescribed in the Koran, and made explicit in the legal codes and sultanic decrees. *Jakat*, a tithe leveled on all Moslems, was the chief source of revenue for the Sultan, and was collected directly by his agents. Local religious and secular officials collected fees for a variety of services and occasions such as religious festivals and holidays, ceremonies of marriage, birth, death, divorce, harvest, etc. The fees were set by the Sultan, who received a portion of what was collected, the remainder being distributed among the other officials.

The politico-religious structure I have described thus far is an ideal one. The basic lines of the structure are strictly Moslem and are modeled after the Islamic empire. In the Philippines, its operation was tempered by the social system of which it was a part. I therefore turn now to a discussion of the social system.

Moro society can be roughly divided into the three part system that has been noted elsewhere in the Philippines (Kroeber, 1943): hereditary aristocrat, freeman, and slave. However among the Moro, these terms indicate not so much a fixed position in society as a difference in prestige and potential access to power and authority. Being born into the hereditary aristocracy or *datu* group meant that a person had a good chance of attaining office in the political hierarchy—both because of the high prestige of his hereditary status, and because he was likely to inherit wealth and followers. In order to achieve political office, an individual needed wealth with which to assemble certain prestige symbols, to support retainers, and to attract and support followers. Being born into the *datu* class gave an individual a good start toward a place in the political hierarchy, but it did not automatically assure him of one. High birth assured only social honor, and if an individual had not the wealth or followers with which to gain political power, his line might, after a generation or so, sink into the rank of freeman. Thus the status of *datu* included persons who had little or no power or authority, and persons who might have more of both than the Sultan.

Miller (1913:190) gives some details on what he calls "the manorial system" of landholding on Mindanao:

"[Under this system] the tenant has the use of a certain piece of land allotted to him by the owner. The product of the land is his own to do with as he likes. No rent is paid but the tenant is obliged to work for the landlord a certain part of the time, for which he receives wages. It is the custom for the tenant to work every second week for the landlord. If the two have a disagreement, the landlord must purchase whatever permanent crops the tenant may have planted before the latter leaves. There are isolated cases of the landlord's receiving the entire crop from a certain part of the land cultivated by the tenant, the latter taking the crop from the remainder."

However, there is also some direct evidence which would indicate that the *datu* held the land in the name of his followers or of the kinship grouping over which he held sway. Speaking of contemporary Cotabato, Masa (in Hunt, 1954) writes, "...under the *datu* system, property is held by the clan over which the *datu* presides... When a Christian buys a piece

of land directly from a Moro, that is not the only payment he makes, for sooner or later, relatives of the seller would come, one after the other, to demand payment for the same claim upon the land."

On the other hand, a person who managed to gain followers and accumulate wealth could rise into the *datu* class. This could be done either by genealogical manipulation or by appointment by the Sultan. In theory, all descendants of *datu*s were members of this class, so that almost any freeman could lay claim to being a *datu*, provided he had the validating symbols and the political power.

Probably the best definition of a freeman is a negative one. A freeman is a person who is not a *datu*, does not have wealth, prestige, or followers, and is not a recently captured slave. Actually, the term freeman means little if it is used in the sense of having a choice of the disposition of one's time, energy, or goods. About the only choice a freeman seems to have had was the right to attach himself to a leader and to abandon him if he chose. Wilkes (1842) describes the position of the freeman in Sulu society:

"...the untitled freemen... are at all times the prey of the hereditary *datu*s, even those who hold no official stations. By all accounts these constitute a large proportion of the population, and it being treason for any low-born freeman to injure or maltreat a *datu*, the latter, who are of a haughty, overbearing, and tyrannical disposition, seldom keep themselves within bounds in their treatment of their inferiors. The consequence is that some lower class of freemen are obliged to put themselves under the protection of some particular *datu*, who guards them from the encroachment of others. The chief to whom they thus attach themselves is induced to treat them well in order to retain their services, and attach them to his person, that he may, in case of need, be enabled to defend himself from deprivations, and the violence of his neighbors."

No person could exist in Moro society who was literally free. Every individual had to place himself under one leader or another in order to protect his life and property. The follower rendered his leader certain services, gave him part of the harvest, followed him on raids, and lived close by, if possible. In return the leader protected him, allotted him farm land, provided food for religious feasts, and lent food and money. Nor was the freeman entirely at the mercy of the *datu*, for he usually had the support of some body of kinsmen in social and economic activities. Presumably a freeman could obtain the office of *orang kaya* (a local leader), since this office did not require that the holder be a *datu*. Furthermore, there seems to have been avenues of political and economic mobility for the freeman. A man could gain wealth by acting as a *nakuda*, a leader of a pirate or trading expedition. The equipment necessary for such an enterprise could be obtained from a *datu* or a sultan in return for a share of the proceeds, and the *nakuda* supplied the fighting men and acted as organizer. If the expedition were successful the freeman might have enough wealth to support retainers, attract more followers, and obtain the valued prestige items. Given these he could then form an alliance with some more powerful person, promising him aid, cooperation, and probably

a share of the taxes he collected. In return he was given a title and a position in the political hierarchy.

The lowest class in Moro society was made up of slaves, but this term to has little meaning under the circumstances. In theory the position of the slave was determined by Koranic law. Slaves could not own property, could be bought and sold at will, could be put to death for almost any infraction of the law, and neither the slave nor his children could better their position. In practice, the situation was somewhat different. Slaves could purchase their freedom, and a child of a slave woman and freeman automatically took the father's status. The treatment that a slave received varied with his master, but almost all observers agree that slaves were well treated. Slaves owned their own property, though it reverted to their master at their death. In general, it is doubtful that their economic position was worse than that of a freeman. Wilkes (*ibid.*) remarks, "Some of them (slaves) are quite rich, and what may appear strange, the slaves of Sulu are invariably better off than the untitled freemen."

The greatest disabilities suffered by a slave were social. A slave could eat only in certain places in a house, could not acquire or own the symbolic items of prestige, and, in general, was forced to behave differentially. It is not known whether newly captured slaves could rise in status, but it is doubtful if a family remained slaves in perpetuity. Eventually the descendants blended into the general society, either through marriage or adoption, or by fleeing to another area where they became freemen under the protection of a *datu* hostile to their original masters.

As an institution slavery played an important part in Moro society. The labor of slaves permitted the elaboration of the military pattern, and in effect, enabled a wealthy *datu* or sultan to maintain his standing army. Each leader had, as part of his court, a retinue of fighting men. These did no productive labor, but were supported by the *datu's* wealth, the taxes he collected, and by the lands which a *datu* farmed using slave labor. Further, although there is little data on this point, it seems reasonable to presume that slave labor was also significant in the trading and raiding pattern. The forays into the Christian and pagan areas often took most of the able-bodied men in the community out of subsistence activities for long periods of time. While many of these expeditions were timed to coincide with the off-season of agriculture or fishing, other factors such as prevailing winds and weather, preparedness of the enemy, and so forth, must often have taken men away from the community at times when they were needed in the subsistence system. Under these conditions, it was slave labor which provided the compensating factor, either by supplementing the labor of those left behind, or by the stocks of provisions which were built up previously through their labors.

Slavery also made possible the elaborate social pattern which characterized the *datu* class. Being a *datu* called for a specific way of life which involved the maintenance of a large court, feasts, a ship of state, courtly visits, and numerous, indeed an overabundance of, servants. The presence of slaves not only made all of this possible, but also made of the *datu* a leisure class. They were free to devote themselves completely to military and political affairs as well as engage in the symbolic behavior for which their position called. This is not to say that all *datu* behaved in this manner; a way of life strongly reminiscent of the Hindu-influenced ports in

Indonesia. However, the degrees to which any *datu* could achieve this ideal was dependent upon the number of slaves he could muster.

This, briefly, is the social context in which the politico-religious hierarchy operated. Seen against its background, the political system loses much of its rigidity and structure. Instead of a hierarchy of delegated power and authority, it becomes a system of alliances between social units. Placed in an order of subordination and superordination, these alliances built up into a larger political unit, but each individual unit at all times retained his identity. This placed the system, as a whole, in jeopardy, for the individual units were constantly jockeying for position, as each *datu* sought to increase his wealth, gain more followers, place more villages under his jurisdiction, and subordinate other *datu*s.

Here the question, "What kept this system together?" may well be asked. A good part of the answer will have to wait until more specific data are at hand. I should like to suggest some parts of the answer. First, there was a system of economic interdependence in two senses: the dependence of the commoner upon the *datu* and the *datu's* dependence on some more powerful leader. No Moro group produced all of the different kinds of goods that it used. In addition to craft specialization, there were many items which could be brought in only from the outside. These items ranged from luxury goods such as fans, gong, and jars, to goods indispensable for everyday use such as clothing materials, and metals for weapons and implements. Among the Taw-Sug, the *datu* at Jolo had a monopoly of these kinds of items, since it was to their island that the Chinese brought the trade goods. The peoples on the outlying islands were consequently dependent upon the trade with Jolo for these items. Conversely, the Joloanos were dependent upon these peoples for the items which they, in turn, traded to the Chinese: sea slugs, shark-fins, and so on.

On Mindanao, another item, salt, furnished an example of economic interdependence. Inland Mindanao, understandably, had a perpetual salt shortage. Any people controlling the coast where salt was made and the trade routes into the saltless areas therefore stood to place these people in a position of economic dependence. The size and power of the various Moro sultanates illustrates this point as a whole. It is, I believe, no accident that the largest and most powerful sultanates, Sulu, Magindanao, and Buyan, controlled coastal areas, and sat athwart trade routes. In contrast, the Marinao, cut off as a whole from coastal and sea-borne trade, never developed large sultanates.

A second factor which might have brought the various units into alliance was military power and organization. The *datu* as a class had, more or less, a monopoly upon military force and action. Warfare and its implements among the Moros were fairly complex. Weapons included cannon, warships, suits of armor, and an elaborate system of fortifications. Most of these items were beyond the means of the ordinary person, and so for his safety he was forced to place himself under someone who had these and could protect him, the *datu*. And since not all of the *datu*s had the sinews of war in equal quantity, they in turn were forced to subordinate themselves to those who would protect their position.

A third factor which served to tie the various units together was kinship. Kinship appeared to have followed class lines. *Datu*s married within their class, and political alliances were often based on relationships through blood

and marriage. Belcher (1848), writing of Sulu, notes that the relatives of a *datu* live near him in order to afford him aid if needed. Kinship was also important in the freeman class and presumably it was groups of kin who constituted the local groups which were led by the *orangkaya*. How such groups were brought under the authority of a *datu* is not clear.

Territory, either by itself or in combination with kinship, also seems to be important. Kuder (1945) notes that the Maranao who have settled in Magindanao territory are known as a genealogical clan, or *pengampong*. Saleeby (B-H paper no. 161; account 3) says that the Maranao are divided into five different tribes. Each of these tribes is more or less concentrated in specific parts of the Lake Lanao region, and each tribe has its leading sultanate. There is no such mention of genealogical divisions among other Moro groups; instead, there are often distinctions based upon place of residence. The Taw-Sug are divided into the hill people and the sea people. Many such divisions have been noted for the Samal. It is impossible to state what part territory or contiguity played in the political system. However, insofar as territory served to create natural units, such as all the settlements of a valley or an island, it became one of the building blocks of the system.

Last, but far from least significant, are the effects of conversion to Islam. Once more, this area, the relation between religious theory and practice and the political system, is but little known. A few diverse facts present themselves and may give some inkling of the relation between the two.

As noted previously, the core of Islam is law even more than theology. Abstractly a true Moslem cannot exist outside a community organized along lines of religious law. But the very acceptance of a system of law implies the existence of authority to administer and enforce that law. In Islam, such administration is in the hands of a head of the religious community who, thus, becomes the head of the community as a whole. Among the Moros, it was the sultan who was the head of the community, and in theory, all law and all authority stemmed from him. In practical terms this meant that lesser persons in a position to administer or enforce the law, no matter how this position was achieved, must draw their ultimate sanction from the sultan. The necessity of obtaining confirmation was the meeting point between the class system with its local leaders, and the hierarchy of politico-religious leaders. Every *datu* had to have his position validated in terms of the hierarchy, without respect to the actual political power of the higher authority. Thus a powerful *datu* was, in terms of the hierarchy, subordinate to a sultan, although in terms of effective political power he might be independent. Among the Taw-Sug, for example, each *datu* was nominally subordinate to the Sultan, though in their actual behavior some of the more powerful ones took no account of his wishes.

The introduction of written legal codes which made Koranic injunctions specific is also significant. Such codes objectified and made Islam real to all of the believers. Law thus became the rule of the Book, rather than the rule of men, and the only legitimate authority was that which stemmed from the interpreter of the Book, the Sultan. In this light it is interesting to note that the presence of such written legal codes has been recorded only for the larger sultanates but not for the smaller one. The much-segmented Maranao do not seem to have had written legal codes. The implication

here is that the acceptance of a legal code is somehow related to the acceptance of an overall authority and that where such overall authority is lacking a written legal code is ineffective. Further, in a large political unit involving subordinate authorities it would be to the interest of the overall authority to promulgate such codes, thereby minimizing variations in the enforcement of the law as well as emphasizing that all law flowed from a single source. Once more, by way of contrast, such codes would be of little meaning or value in a smaller sultanate where less authority was delegated and rule was more personal.

To sum up, it was these factors, economic interdependence monopolies of military power, kinship, and territory, plus the system of authority implicit in Islam which combined to weld units of leader and led into a system of political organization. I do not suggest that these were the only factors or that all were equally relevant to the political system. I do believe, however, that these will be profitable lines of inquiry when more data are available.

Having discussed those factors which made for a system of overall authority, I turn to those factors which hindered the effectiveness of such a system. Here there are two interrelated social factors which I believe are crucial. These are the lack of a simple mechanism for recruiting or assigning persons to a place in the political system, and the lack of a fixed principle of inheritance or succession.

Neither leader nor led were automatically fixed in their relationship to the political system by birth. An individual could change his political group, and a group could change its relationship to the hierarchy either in the physical or social sense. This is not to say that these could be easily accomplished. Both kinship and territory probably tended to fix an individual or a group in a particular social or political relationship. However, since kinship was bilateral there was a range of choice of both political and social affiliation. Similarly the effectiveness of territory may have been weakened by the easy physical mobility of the sea-oriented groups and by the effects of the occasional shifts of territory of the upland rice raising peoples.

The lack of a fixed principle of succession either to office or the prerequisites for social status and political power also hampered the development of political authority. The offices of the political system were filled on the basis of the social system. The prerequisites for position in both these systems, wealth, followers, prestige, were in a sense open to all. An ineffective or unfortunate *datu* might find himself stripped of everything except the prestige of his birth, while a vigorous commoner could gain enough to rise. The point is, no person was assured of automatic or unquestioned succession to position or status. Ultimately the particular situation at hand plus an individual's capabilities were the determining factors. There were mediating factors which acted, however, to cushion the position of the high-born, and to act as a drag upon the mobility of a low-born person.

The legal position of the sultan, or of anyone who controlled the special knowledge related to Islam, was probably not threatened by the social system. A place in the politico-religious hierarchy could thus be used to bolster a place in the social system. But this is something of a special case, since these persons achieved offices upon the basis of the criteria of the political system rather than those of the social system.

Kinship was undoubtedly important in the sense that a person's fate was linked to that of the kindred to which he was attached. On the other hand, the fate of the kindred itself was dependent upon the individual who actually wielded power. An ineffective person thus threatened the position of the whole group, and to insure against this, succession to a particular social role or office remained flexible. The custom of naming an heir apparent during the lifetime of an office holder is an attempt to fix orderly succession, but such an heir apparent need not necessarily be a lineal descendant of the person in power, and even after being named he could be, and often was, by-passed.

In addition to these there are probably other factors which weakened the effective development of political authority, but as with so many of the other points raised here, their exposition must await the accumulation of more data. It is clear, however, that through most of Moro history the forces working against the development of systems of political control always balanced or outweighed the force which tended toward such a system. Outside threats sometimes forced an unfamiliar solidarity, but in the long run there was never created a real system of authority.

The foregoing is what I perceive to be the main outlines of Moro social and political organization. More questions have been raised than have been answered and there are, I am sure, gaps in reasoning as well as data. My hope is that these questions and some of the points raised may provide a focus for an analysis of Moro culture, history, and society.

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