



THE MOROS IN THE JESUITS LETTERS (1862-1898)

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the Maguindanawons in Jesuit accounts of Volume One: Rio Grande de Mindanao Mission on late 18th century, Rio Grande de Mindanao that's located in central Mindanao area of Southern Philippine archipelago. The paper sought to understand the Maguindanawons in accordance of Jesuit letters that consists of one hundred and twenty-two (122) documents within the timeframe 1862-1898. These Jesuit letters becomes the primary bases for the researcher counter validation of documents taken from the primary, secondary and other auxiliary sources.

The study showed that out (122) published letters only (59) letters constantly mentioned the Maguindanawons in spite of missionary objectives which is for Tirurays. Studies reveled that negative perceptions about Maguindanawons in the local province of Mindanao emerged to the continuous "misrepresentation" by Spanish forefathers from 16th to 17th centuries. And still persists even in 18th century and present time. This misunderstood group resulted on altered Characteristic, Morals, and values which are believed to be the product of Spanish-Moro conflicts, and perceived from those incidents Moros reaction on Spanish colonial subjugation shown in the former piratical practices. Assaults town under Spanish domain, capture Christianized natives and sell them or reduced to slave, moreover the subsequent retaliation between Moros and Spanish troops developed the Jihad ideology among the Moro against the conquistadores.

Keywords: *Islam, Jihad, Jesuit Letters, Moros, Maguindanawons, Tarsilas*

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INTRODUCTION

In the framework of Philippine history, the Moro group, or Islamized inhabitants of the Philippine archipelago, has frequently been depicted poorly, whereas the researcher can speak to the present unjust marginalization and distortion of Moro images in society. The term Moros originally derived from the word *Moors* an identified Muslims group of Islamic Iberian Peninsula (presently known Spain), where it denotes the Muslims group who had conquered Spain.¹

In the case of Magindanao or the undivided Cotabato and how the Jesuits perceived the Maguindanawons in the latter part of 18th century is not an exemption instead it is the continuations of distorted Moro images. And the researcher believed that this is how the problem arises because of the false representation, lesser mention of Moro History in Philippine national history books, continual lack of knowledge pertaining to the Moros of Southern Philippine archipelago and without an in-depth discussion about Moro history in academe world resulted on high level of ignorance by majority of the Philippine population, not only from the Christianized population but sadly some of the Moros youth lacks the basic knowledge of their own History as they showed proficiency and familiarization to the historical context and contents of events that unfolds in Northern Philippine archipelago than appreciating the Moro history.

The act of ignoring the historical identity of the Moros, failure to recognized their significance in Philippine nations, racially discriminating and marginalizing their community and worst disconnecting events of Mindanao to what is called Philippine History will never understand the occurrence of Mindanao/ Moro problems. As they had removed the fundamental factors that can prevent the problems and that is to educate the Filipino communities the importance and role of Moro History on National history.

¹ Cesar Aib Majul, *Islam de Filipina* (Translated by Shamsuddin Japaar, DBP, 1998) p. 114.

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Thus, this historical query will try to examine perceptions in the form of accounts and narration derived from Jesuit Letters and countered checked from others sources or outside the Spanish lenses that had observed the Magindanao as venue and the Maguindanawons as an actor's that contributes and unfold a piece of Moro History during the late part of 18th century.

This study aims to highlight and present the Maguindanawons as an actor's described in the Jesuit Letters Volume One: The Rio Grande de Mindanao Mission with a timeframe 1862 – 1898; this study specifically aims to answers the following queries.

1. Who are the Moros mentioned in Jesuit Letters?
2. How did Jesuit writers describe the Moros in Jesuit Letters?
3. How distinctive are the features of Moro History as gleaned by the Jesuits?

This study gathered the (122) Jesuit Letters from Jesuit Missionary Letters from Mindanao Volume One: Rio Grande Mission edited Translated, and Annotated by Jose Arcilla, S.J, and conduct a content analysis on the said letters. After scrutinizing the content of the Jesuit letters the researcher employs a counter validation of documents taken from the primary, secondary and other auxiliary sources in order to arrive to the findings of the study.

Operational Definitions of Terms:

1. **Datu** – is a noble title that is equivalent to a lord, chief or ruler. He governed his territories led his soldiers to war, commanded his armadas at seas, protected his villages from enemies and settled dispute among his people.²

² The Datu Lordships, retrieved from <https://datupress.com/2018/01/20/the-datus-lordship/> access on April 7, 2024.

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2. **Islam**— is the religion of the Muslims, it is a monotheistic faith regarded as revealed through Muhammad as the Prophet of Allah.³ The word Islam means “submission” or “surrender,” as its faithful surrender to the will of Allah.⁴
3. **Magindanao** - is a province in Philippines archipelago situated in the present time Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao or (BARMM) that specifically occupies the Sulu Archipelago the provinces of Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao in central Mindanao.⁵
4. **Maguindanawons** – is the ethno linguistic group living primarily in southern central Mindanao, bearing a name that means “people of the flood plain,” the Maguindanaos are most heavily concentrated along the shores and in the flood lands of the Pulangi-Mindanao River basin.⁶
5. **Moros** – is the name by which Filipino Muslim ethno-linguistic groups are usually known for.⁷ It denotes all the Multi-ethnic Muslims natives living in Philippine archipelago.⁸
6. **Moors** – is the Muslim group of the Islamic Iberian Peninsula (presently known Spain) Mauritania who were of Arab or Berber decedents.⁹
7. **Moroland** – refers to the land occupied by the Moros embracing the Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan Islands.¹⁰

³ What is Islam?, retrieved from <https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100012298>, access on April 25, 2024.

⁴ Definition of Islam?, retrieved from <https://www.history.com/topics/religion/islam>, access on April 25, 2024.

⁵ Where is Maguindanao?, retrieved from <https://bcpch.bangsamoro.gov.ph/maguindanao/>, access on April 25, 2024.

⁶ Who are the Maguindanawon?, access from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Maguindanao-people>, retrieved on April 25, 2024.

⁷ Who are the Moros?, access from <https://minorityrights.org/communities/moro-muslims/#:~:text=Moro%20is%20the%20name%20by,per%20cent%20of%20the%20population.,> retrieved on April 25, 2024.

⁸ Asree Moro, *Tausug & the Sulu Sultanate* (Kuala Lumpur Malaysia: Saba Islamic Media SDN BHD, 2008).

⁹ Ibid, herein Asree Moro accounts.

¹⁰Jainal Rasul, *Muslim-Christian Land: Ours to Share*, (Quezon City:Alemar-Phonix Publishing House, Inc.,1979), p.13.

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- 8. **Muslims** – a person or group who follows the religion of Islam.¹¹
- 9. **Munjaheedin** - in its broadest sense, Muslims who fight on behalf of the faith or the Muslim community.¹²
- 10. **SAW (Sallallahu Alyahi Wa Sallam)** – is a benediction mentioned after the name of Prophet as a sign of respect, "May Allah honor him and grant him peace" or "May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him". This term should be used specifically when saying Prophet Muhammad's name.¹³
- 11. **SWT (Subhanna Wata Allah)** – is a benediction mentioned after the name of Allah as a sign of respect, it means "The Glorified He be" or more simply put that all praises are for him alone.¹⁴
- 12. **Shariff/Sarif/Sarip** – An arabic title of respect, "noble" or "high-born".¹⁵
- 13. **Sultan** - originally, according to the Qur'ān, moral or spiritual authority; the term later came to denote political or governmental power and from the 11th century was used as a title by Muslim sovereigns.¹⁶

Islam in the Philippines

The Arabs made Islam popular by making their empire as the center of wealth population, and culture, furthermore the Arab peninsula became an important commercial center for the products that predominately connects the India, China, and Southeast Asia and to a great extent,

¹¹ Who are the Muslims? access from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/muslim>, retrieved on April 25, 2024.

¹² Munjaheedin, access from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/mujahideen-Islam> retrieved on May 7, 2024.

¹³ What is the meaning of Sallallahu Alyahi Wa Sallam, access from <https://abdurrahman.org/2011/11/03/the-meaning-of-sallallahu-alayhi-wa-sallam/>, retrieved on May 7, 2024.

¹⁴ What is the meaning of Subhanna Wata Allah, retrieved from <https://myislam.org/allah-subhanahu-wa-taala/>, access on May 7, 2024.

¹⁵ What is Shariff?, retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/sharif> , access on May 7, 2024.

¹⁶ Sultan, retrieved from, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/sultan-Islamic-title> access on May 7, 2024.

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and Arabs became the intermediaries between European merchants and other Asian traders.¹⁷ And with the rise of the Arabs as a center of trading and commerce they had eventually expound their trading engages with different countries coming from Europe, Asia, eventually to the Southeast Asia, and southern archipelago as the Sulu island became one of the center of trading as well the Arabs brought with them the product for trading as well as their religions.

The Arab influences had expanded through the commerce and trading systems, it was also argued that around the 9th century, Arab merchants and sailors started to dominate the *Nahni* or the Southeast Asian trade.¹⁸ It was then that the Southeast Asian countries engaged in Islamization that eventually influences the southern Philippine or Mindanao area. Since the Arab merchants were engaged in trading and commerce systems, they tended to be in Chinese vessels thus, when the Filipino natives had contact with the Chinese merchants they were also dealing with the Arab merchants. As observed by Morga when they arrived in the Philippine Archipelago,

“The influence of Muslims, Chinese and other foreign traders over the life ways of the Filipinos become visibly felt towards the beginning of the 16th century.”¹⁹

Furthermore the Muslims believes that the clock of History didn't begin to tick for real until they came in contact with a new religion, and the arrival of Islam was as the rising sun and the failing of rain on a dark and barren landscape.²⁰ Nothing of the history of this island is on record, before the Arabs came to it, about three hundred years ago.²¹ With the arrival of Islam it brought

¹⁷ Cesar Adib Majul, *Muslims in the Philippines* (Quezon City: University of the Philippine Press, 1999) p. 41.

¹⁸ Wang Gungwu, *The Nahni Trade: A study of the Early History of Chinese trade in the South china Sea*, (JMBRASS, Vol. XXXI, Part 2 no. 182), p. 107.

¹⁹ F.Landa Jocano, *The Philippines At The Spanish Contact: Some Major Accounts of Early Filipino Society and Culture*, (Manila: MCS Enterprises Inc., 1975), Introduction p.8.

²⁰ Ruben R. Canoy, *The History of Mindanao volume 1* (Cagayan De Oro City: International School Press, 2001).

²¹ Thomas Forrest, *A Voyage To New Guinea and The Moluccas, From Balambangan: Including an Account of Magindanao, Soloo, and other Islands* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1779).

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a profound and far-reaching change in social, political and religious life of the Islands and brought Mindanaons to a higher level of civilization as Majul stated,

“Islam gave Mindanao a high sense of religious community, new laws, a more developed political organization, a new system of writing and above all, a new ethical outlook in life.”²²

Islam first came to Sulu islands with the efforts of Muslim missionary works of Kirim-ul-Makdum, Raja Baguinda, Sharif Maraja and Sayyid Abu Bakr who relentlessly propagate Islam leading to its firm hold in some area of the Philippine archipelago. And with the subsequently visit of Arab traders straightens the Islamic faith in the Philippines concentrating in the south and eventually reach as far as north.²³ In elaborating further the Sulu Tarsilas or genealogies around year 1380, a person Mukdum an Arab scholars coming from Malacca had reached Sulu and preached Islam it was considered as the first Muslim missionary to step on Philippine Soil, later on after 10 years Raja Baginda a Muslim Malayan prince from Sumatra arrived in Sulu and win the people of Sulu, and subsequently around 1450 Abu Bakr arrived as Arab missionary and eventually married the Prince Baganda’s daughter Paramisuli and became the first Muslim sultan of Sulu.

Eventually from the land of Sulu the *Asadith* were send just like catholic missionaries were sent to win more numbers of reverts continued in the islands of Mindanao, and with the effort of Sharif Kabungsuwan in 1478 a Muslim Malay leader from Johore, landed at the mouth of Cotabato River, where he married a native princess named Tunina and became the first Muslim sultan of mainland Mindanao.²⁴

²² Ruben Canoy, *The History of Mindanao volume 1* (Cagayan De Oro City: International School Press, 2001) p. 66.

²³ George T.J.S. *Revolt in Mindanao: The Rise of Islam in Philippine Politics* (Kuala Lumpur:Oxford University Press.1980)pp. 134-135.

²⁴ Gerorio F. Zaide, *Oriental History* (Quezon City: JMC Press, Inc., 1974) p. 138.

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In further understanding the Mindanao problems and continua's conflict arising between the Moros of south and some of the Indios of North Philippine archipelago it is right to make a venue for the discussion of roots and driving forces that considered as main factor that unified the multi-ethnic Moro group that fought against colonialism and that is Islam. Islam gradual arrival to the Southern Philippine archipelago started in the early 13th century to be specific around 1380,²⁵ wherein the Muslim Missionaries together with the traders predominately came from Malay Peninsula and Borneo Island came together with their product, ideologies and their faith. Eventually they actively propagated Islam upon arriving on a conclusion that the local natives of the land practiced animism or paganism was highly practice these observation took place in Sulu.

Islam came gradually and progressively in southern Philippine archipelago, whereas the indigenous or local groups of areas in Sulu, Mindanao, Palawan even as far as north Philippine archipelago some had accepted Islam which eventually the starts of Moro or BangsaMoro History their identity and formation, whereas others stays on their ancestral faith animisms.

The Maguindanawons in Moroland

Majority of the natives of Magindanao was known to be the Islamized native Maguindanawons or also bears the meaning "The people of the Flood Plain" they can be found in the shores and broad valleys of Rio Grande de Mindanao,²⁶ whereas, the Rio Grande de Mindanao was part of the Moroland that refers to the land occupied by the Moros embracing the Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan Islands.²⁷ The Mindanao Islands that consists of around 44, 094 square miles or approximately 116, 895.3 square kilometers located on 7 degrees north latitude and 122

²⁵ Alfredo T. Tiamson and Rosalinda Caneda, *The Southern Philippines Issues: Readings in the Mindanao Problem Volume I*, in the study of Leon MA. Guerrero Encounters of Cultures: The Muslims in the Philippines, (Marawi City: 12th annual Seminar on Mindanao-Sulu Cultures on Nov. 16-18, 1979

²⁶ Peter Gowing. *Mosque and Moro* (Manila: Philippine Federation of Christian Churches, 1964), p. 4.

²⁷Jainal Rasul, *Muslim-Christian Land: Ours to Share*, (Quezon City:Alemar-Phonix Publishing House, Inc.,1979), p.13.

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degree east longitude. The island is set off from Visayas and Luzon which were identified as two main regional components of Philippine; in terms of body of waters Mindanao Sea was under the Jurisdiction of Mindanao Island. Whereas, in the east of Mindanao was bounded by the Pacific Ocean, and in its west the South China Sea can be located and on its Southwest can be located the Borneo Island.²⁸ Furthermore as described by Herman Hagedorn, Gen. Leonard Wood's biographer state that the land of Moros pertaining to Mindanao had a vast green crab in tropic waters, stretching out an irritated claw after a school of minnows skipping off in the direction of Borneo. The crab is the island of Mindanao while the irritated claws are the Zamboanga Peninsula making the Sulu archipelago as the minnows. The Moroland territory had 36, 540 square miles exceeding the size combined areas of all the other island of Philippines excluding the Luzon. And by way of comparison the land of Moros is larger than the American state of Connecticut, Delaware, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont putting together and larger than either Portugal or Greece.²⁹

Moreover, it is concluded based on accounts and reports coming from Spain, Portugal, Dutch and British explorer how Mindanao Island alone can suffice the other Islands such as Luzon and Visayas and other countries who seek for the unique products of Mindanao in fact the explorers had indeed labeled the Island as Garden of Eden, with how amazing, wealthy and beauty the land posses, according to Canoy study,

On the cinnamon had naturally grown in wild, Gold was plentiful that the natives had naturally used it to make pots and kitchen utensils and gladly exchanged it for iron bars. Whereas the islands remains as the biggest source of timber in country, an existence of vast and fertile lands which offered a great opportunity for plantation, farming and large-scale livestock rising. The Luzon and visayas was so dependent on Mindanao resources and food supply resulting on tagging it as *"the food basket of the nation."* And despite the centuries of exploitation

²⁸ Abdulrasad Asani, Moros- Not Filipinos.

²⁹ Report of the department of Mindanao and Sulu, in Manuscript report of the Philippine Commission, 1914 (in National Archives, Washington D.C.) pp. 506 – 507

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Mindanao fabulous mineral wealth remains largely untouched, where there are more than 220 million metric tons of gold, or close to half of the Philippines total gold deposits that can only be found in Mindanao Islands.³⁰

The Mindanao Island was indeed a rich land where it can offer a lot of things, though it wasn't only a home for the Moros or Muslim it is also a home of the various non-Muslim indigenous groups or pagan groups such as Bila-ans, Manobos, and Tirurays of Cotabato regions, Subanons of the Zamboanga Peninsula and Mandayas and Bagobos of Davao³¹

The name Mindanao was known to originate to the Magindanao as spelled to the original documents of Sarsilas, explorers and Spanish conquistadors' accounts where they foremost familiarize the Magindanao as the whole Mindanao. Furthermore, by examining various accounts discoursing Mindanao islands it always pertains to Magindanao Islands, and evidently true to its claim the earliest accounts mentioned Mindanao as Magindanao was done by Europeans in the body of Antonio Pigafetta who mentioned in his translated accounts the Mindanao Island in the name Maingdanao,

Laying our course towards the northeast, and going to a large city called Maingdanao, which is located in the Islands of Butuan and Calaghan so that we might gather information concerning the Maluco.³²

The above was the first early mentioned accounts recorded by the Spanish explorer specifically pertaining to the capital city of Mindanao where the seat of Magindanao kingdom in Moroland was also mentioned in its existence. Moreover it was also confirm by the study of Mastura that indeed the Mindanao name was derived from the name of Magindanao, because it

³⁰ Ruben R. Canoy, *"The History of Mindanao volume 1"* (Cagayan De Oro City: International School Press, 2001), p.9

³¹ Peter Gowing mandate of moroland

³² Emma Helen Blair and James Robertson, *"The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898, Volume 33"* (Cleveland, Ohio: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1906), pp. 293 -243

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was for the centuries the capital town and ports of the Mindanao Island, making the Simuay area in 17th century and Tamontaka in 18th century an alternative seat of Sultanate for defensive reasons as well.³³ Originally Islamic faith had first started to penetrate in Magindanao area through the Illana bay moving forward to the rivers of Pulangi and Rio Grande, and eventually widely accepted to the Maguindanawons land.

After the Maguindanawons acceptance of Islam civilization was experienced which is evidently emphasis on the establishment of kingdoms based Mindanao organized by their political, social, economic and religious system in accordance on Islamic doctrine. Furthermore if we sought the meaning of civilization it defined it as complex human societies that have certain characteristics of cultural, commerce, literature, arts, government system and technological development.³⁴

Indeed the Mindanao area become one of the setting of a prosperous ancient kingdom³⁵, These ancient kingdoms based in Mindanao islands was represented by the Magindanao sultanate which was further divided into three prominent regions in Mindanao namely Magindanao, Buayan, and Kabuntalan (or Bagumbayan) whereas, the Magindanao area was known to be the representative of the three sultanates of mainland Mindanao though the Magindanao is under the domain power of Buayan sultanate.

The Magindanao area becomes the historical site of Mindanao Island that witnessed various historical events. From the early Malay migration that consists the early population of

³³ Michael Ong Mastura, *The Rulers of Magindanao in modern History, 1515-1903 Continuity and Change in a traditional realm in the Southern Philippines*, (Research Project No. 5: Philippine Social Science Council Modern Philippine History program, 1979)

³⁴ Civilizations, retrieved from <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/civilizations/> access on may 15, 2024.

³⁵ Ruben R. Canoy, *The History of Mindanao volume 1*, (Cagayan De Oro City: International School Press, 2001), p.4.

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Mindanao to the introduction of Islamic faith originally penetrates in Sulu islands and found its ways to the Illana bay and great rivers of Magindanao where they introduced their Islamic faith to the local natives where some had accepted it and build prosperous kingdoms in the area, while other natives stayed to their ancestral animistic faith and move to the hinterland of Magindanao and was known to be as Non-Muslim Indigenous group of Mindanao, up until the arrival of the Spaniards and attempted to grow their Christianity community in a populated Moro area by utilizing the Non-Muslim indigenous group of Mindanao.

Christianity and the Jesuits Missionaries

Philippine archipelago in present time was a home of the third largest catholic population in the world, and sole recognized Christian country of the Southeast Asia nations. Thus, this study must also understand the Christianity. So Catholicism had rapidly spread during the early years of Spanish colonialism which evidently become the identity of some of the Filipino natives of Philippine archipelago.³⁶

The growth of Christianity as a religion was highly credited to the five identified specific religious order that arrived in Philippine archipelago and preached their faith; these are Augustinians, Franciscans, Jesuits, Dominicans and the Recollects. The first religious order that arrived in Philippine archipelago is the Augustinians around 1523 together with Spanish explorer Miguel Lopez Ligazpi brought with him four Augustinian missionaries. Augustinians religious order was known to be builders of the oldest church in Philippines, some of their finished work were the church of convent of St. Paul also known as the San Agustin Church. After them is the Franciscan or the order of friar minor which arrived on June 24, 1578 their legacy was the first establishment of their first church inside the intramurous in honor of Nuestra Sonera de los

³⁶ Shirley Steven, *Guided by God: The Legacy of the Catholic Church in Philippine Politics* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Academia, 2004).

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Angeles or also known as Our lady of Angels. Eventually these were followed by the Jews which is commonly known as the Society of Jesus their order had arrived in Philippine Archipelago around September 17, 1581 in Manila, These Jesuit order is known for their educational strategy of evangelization which resulted on founded various schools some of these was the Colegio de Manila or Colegio Maximo De San Ignacio inside the intramuros in 1590 at Pamantasan ng Lungson ng Manila.³⁷ In order to not to overlap with the five existing missionary order in Philippine archipelago the Spanish government portioned the areas where these religious order is assigned.

First, the Augustinians missionary work whose religious work that was confined in Ilocos, Pangasinan, Pampanga, and some Islands in Visayas. Second were the Franciscans whose missionary works was assigned in Bicol Peninsula and region around Laguna de bay to be specific the Alguna, Rizal, Batangas, and Tayabas. Third were the Dominicans that were put in Cagayan Valley and part of Pangasinan. Fourth were the Jesuit in Cebu, Leyte, Samar, Bohol and later Mindanao. And lastly the fifth recollects who was assigned in Bataan, Zambales, Mindoro, Masbate, Ticao, Burias, Romblon, Cuyo, Palawan, Negros and part of Mindanao.³⁸

Jesuits and Recollects order was known as the religious order that arrived in Philippine archipelago and specifically the Jesuits had made a mission in one of the Moro populated area in mainland Mindanao that is the Jesuit Missionaries or Society of Jesus. The creation of the Society of Jesus can be trace back in June of 1539 when the Spanish founder Iñigo Lopez de Recaldo (who adopted the new name Ignatius Loyola) wrote the Formula Instituti, a document that summarize his evangelical mission. This document then became the basis of de Loyola and his

³⁷ "Travelers on foot: Photo Essay and Traveler Narrative" retrieved from <https://traveleronfoot.wordpress.com/>, access on May 7, 2024.

³⁸ Gregorio Zaide, *Philippine Political and Cultural History Volume 1: The Philippines since Pre-Spanish Time*, (Manila: McCulloch Printing Company, 1957) pp. 186-187.

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followers to form the "Society in the name of Jesus" a year later the members of the society pledged themselves to engage in military service for God under the standees of the cross and the leadership of a lifetime in general.³⁹ The Society of Jesus was founded when the Catholic Church realizes the exigent need for change and to stop the spread of Protestantism and adopt the growth of Human values.⁴⁰

The Jesuits with their founder having a military-like organization and military background⁴¹ was an advantage to their evangelical work furthermore their evangelization motivation compose of three elements, Education, preached of Christian doctrine and lastly the stop of the of the growing influence of Protestantism in Europe. Eventually their methods of evangelization greatly differs to other missionaries, they were tolerant of other religious traditions, making it a strategy for a much effective way to penetrate tightly knit societies and triumphantly convert people. Their religious order practices diplomacy and accommodates in dealing with the non-Christians become the main features of their evangelical work, together with social interaction and community services become their main features in forming their members of society.⁴²

So the first batch of the Jesuits Missionaries arrives in Philippines in the year 1581 and permanently established their mission in the Philippines in 1590. The nature of their mission is an exploratory mission which functions on assessing the practicality of establishing an active mission in the Islands, "to be of assistance to the Spaniards there, and after familiarizing themselves with

³⁹ Alden Duriel, *The making of an enterprise: The society of Jesus in Portugal, its Empire, and Beyond 1540 – 1750*, (California: Stanford University Press, 1996), p 7.

⁴⁰ Francisco Galasi *Jesuits in the Philippines: Politics and Missionary work in Colonial Setting*, (A master thesis. New York).

⁴¹ Paul Van Dyke, Ignatius Loyola, *The Founder of the Jesuits*, (Port Washington: C. Scribner's Sons, 1923), pp. 14-28.

⁴² Francisco Galasi, *Jesuits in the Philippines: Politics and Missionary work in Colonial Setting* (A master thesis. New York).

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the conditions in that region, send back report.”⁴³ This mentioned report were in the form of letters where it gives the Mission Superior an updates of the area they were assigned in terms of the location the environment the people and their languages as well as practices and most especially the progress of their evangelization.

Jesuit first missionary missions unfolds Visayas peninsula in areas such as Tibuan and Panay, though their Mindanao mission was one of the highlights of their evangelical career in Philippine Archipelago.⁴⁴ Their evangelical career in Mindanao started in year 1596 when the Jesuit Missionary found their ways in Mindanao almost at the end of the sixteenth⁴⁵, they had initially inaugurated the first Catholic Church in Butuan City by 1597 with an effort made by Fr. Valerio de Ledesma and Fr. Manuel Martinez eventually on 17th century they opened a mission in Mindanao in Southwest Zamboanga, Mindanao Northwest Dapitan and North of Mindanao Iligan, these point were considered by the Spaniards as a points of possibilities in controlling some of the areas in Mindanao.⁴⁶ However, the lack of men and clerical shortage forced them to close their initial mission and the goal of establishing a permanent mission in Mindanao as they were stopped especially when they got expelled from the Philippines archipelago around 1768 when the entire Jesuit evangelical order was ousted to Philippines archepoelago.⁴⁷

The Jesuits was expelled by the order of King Carlos III of Spain furthermore, they weren't only ousted to the Philippine Island but was also expelled from mainland Spain and the other

⁴³ Horacio De La Costa, *The Jesuits in the Philippines 1581-1768* (Cambridge: Harvard University press, 1967) cited from Galasi, p. 12.

⁴⁴ Ibid, herein De La Costa accounts.

⁴⁵ Jose S. Arcellia, S.J. *Jesuit Missionary Letters from Mindanao Volume One: The Rio Grande Mission*: Introduction pp. xiv-xv.

⁴⁶ Joel Tabora, S.J. *Recalling the Jesuits in Mindanao History*.

⁴⁷ Jose S. Arcellia, S.J. *Jesuit Missionary Letters from Mindanao Volume One: The Rio Grande Mission*: Introduction pp. xiv-xv.

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Spanish territories with the reason of a misunderstanding with the Spanish crown.⁴⁸ On the other hand their case in Philippines and their initial missions' achievements, properties were all surrendered to the civil government of Spanish territories. Though in less than a century they bound to return to the Philippine archipelago and continued their evangelical order in the Island of Mindanao on 1859.⁴⁹

With the order decrees of Queen Isabel II of Spain on July 30, 1860 she issued two decrees with the intention of Politico-Military districts in the Philippine archipelago. The first decree covered the Visayan Islands where the following districts were delineated: Cebu, Panay, Negros, Leyte and Samar. While the second decree mention the division of the Mindanao into six districts namely, Zamboanga, North Mindanao, East Mindanao, Davao, Central Mindanao, and Basilan. The queen's decree consists of 27 articles where the provision assigns the Jesuits to conduct their spiritual mission to Mindanao.⁵⁰ The first missionary mission after Jesuit expulsion was indeed established in Mindanao but wasn't conducted in just any Spanish settlement of Mindanao instead it was on an uninhabited place in Tamontaka located in the delta of the Rio Grande de Mindanao. The area which is populated with the two non-Christians namely the Tirurays indigenous group settlers in hinterland of Tamontaka and the Muslims settlers in urban area and riverbank of Magindanao.⁵¹

Critical Analysis of Jesuit letters

The Jesuits Letters is a small collection of information coming from the Jesuit Missionaries in Mindanao, wherein members of the Society of Jesus send formal reports in the form of letters to their Missionary Superiors on a regular basis to keep them updated on the development of

⁴⁸ Fe O. Magallanes, *Talisay Legacy of the Past – 21st century Millennial Civilization* 2018, pp. 84 – 85.

⁴⁹ Travelers on foot: Photo Essay and Traveler Narrative, retrieved from <https://traveleronfoot.wordpress.com/>, access on May 7, 2024.

⁵⁰ Greg Hontiveros, *Butuan of Thousands years*. p. 152.

⁵¹ Bernad S.J., *The Great Islands: Studies in the Exploration and Evangelization of Mindanao*, p. 108.

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their missions. St. Ignatius Loyola himself asked the Jesuit fathers to write in the form of letters the knowledge and progress of their mission, as he states

The conversion of those regions . . . how long the days of summer and of winter; when summer begins; whether the shadows move towards the left or towards the right. Finally details about animals and plants that are either not known at all, or not of such size.⁵²

The goal of St. Ignatius himself was to popularize his Jesuits Fathers assigned outside Europe countries and spread the news and descriptions about the practice and physical features of the venue his Jesuit fathers were assigned and laboured. Moreover, the element of the letters were originally meant to awaken the interest of the foreign mission which is why the content and context of letters was meant to be exaggerated, and more on the taste of European audience, portraying his Jesuit Fathers as the main actor of the story. Nevertheless their way of describing the local natives of their assigned venue posses' facts, however it differs on how they express their one-sided perceptions and opinions. And as observed in their letters their ways of writing attributes on how their Spanish ancestry perceived natives, which is highly observed in the case of Moros. The misrepresentation portrayal of Moros was inherit from their Spanish forefathers who died in southern Philippine because of their attempt of subjugation. And the case of Maguindanawons community and the undivided Cotabato is not an exemption. Though one should understand that not all Jesuit fathers portrayed the Moros in dark light as shown in the letters and observed from Fr. Jose Ignacio Guerrico letter he showed open-minded on the case of the Moro ethnic group of Rio Grande de Mindanao.

⁵² Jose S. Arcilla, S.J., *Jesuit Missionary Letters From Mindanao: The Rio Grande Mission* (Quezon City: Philippine Province Archives, 1990) Introduction, p.x.

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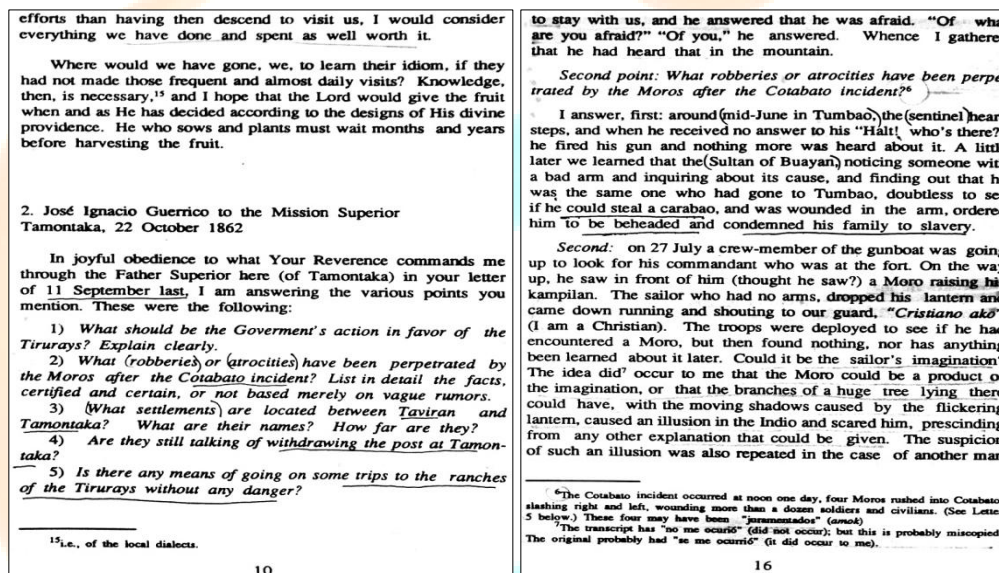
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Letter No. 2 Fr. José Ignacio Guerrico to Mission Superior Tamontaka, October 22, 1862

The number two (2) letter that is published under the Volume One: The Rio Grande de Mindanao Mission was written in Tamontaka by Fr. Guerrico dated on October 22, 1862 the letter was addressed to Mission Superior and it composes of 8 pages bearing the pages number 10 until 24 the letter which constitute of 32 paragraphs, and 12 notes was included at the bottom pages of 11, 12, 13, 16, 18, and 19 where it contains information's that may further enhanced understanding on the context of letter.

Figure 1: Fr. Guerrico translated letters No. 2 pages 10 and 16



Source: Jesuit Missionary Letters from Mindanao Volume 1: The Rio Grande Mission, edited, Translated and Annotated by Jose S. Arcilla, S.J., (Pictured by the researcher retrieved on May 10, 2024)

The letter consists of Mission Superior curiosity that took place and happened in Rio Grande de Mindanao Mission where some of the point he wanted Fr. Guerrico and Rev. Fr. Superior of the local mission needs to elaborate was the case of Moros. The Mission Superior requested on,

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What robberies or atrocities have been perpetrated by the Moros after the Cotabato incident? List in details the facts, certified and certain, or not based merely on vogue rumours.⁵³

The Mission Superior seeks validation among his Jesuit fathers who stayed in Cotabato, the Cotabato incident he mentioned in his requested letter is an event that happened at noon one day when a four (4) Maguindanawons rushed on Cotabato open area and slashing right and left wounding more than dozens soldiers and civilian.⁵⁴ Some of the incidents described by Fr. Guerrico in his letter were first,

I answer, first around mid-June in Tumbao, the sentinel heard steps, and when he received no answer to his "halt! Who's there?" he fired his gun and nothing more was heard about it. A little later we learned that the Sultan of Buayan, noticing someone with a bad arm and inquiring about its cause, and finding out that he was the same one who had gone to Tumbao, doubtless to see if he could steal a carabao, and was wounded in the arm, ordered him to be beheaded and condemned his family to slavery.⁵⁵

Second described event,

On 27 July a crew-member of the gunboat was going up to look for his commandant who was at the forts. On the way up, he saw in front of him (thought he saw?) a Moro raising his kampilan. The sailor who had no arms dropped his lantern and came down running and shouting to our guard, "*Cristiano ako*" (I am a Christian). The troops were deployed to see if he had encountered a Moro, but then found NOTHING, nor had anything been learned about it later. Could it be the sailor's imagination? The idea did occurred to me that the Moro could be a product of the imagination, or that the branches of huge tree lying there could have, with the moving shadows caused by flicking lantern, cause an ILLUSSION in the indio and scared him. The suspicion of such an illusion was also repeated in the case of another man who came afterwards.⁵⁶

⁵³ Fr. Jose Ignacio Guerrico, April 1862, The Rio Grande Mission. Letter No. 2: p.10.

⁵⁴ Fr. Jose Ignacio Guerrico, April 1862, The Rio Grande Mission. Letter No. 2: p.10.

⁵⁵ Fr. Jose Ignacio Guerrico, 22 October 1862, The Rio Grande Mission. Letter No. 2: p. 10.

⁵⁶ Fr. Jose Ignacio Guerrico, 22 October 1862, The Rio Grande Mission. Letter No. 2:p.16.

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Third described event,

About a petty theft of few eggplants or an earthen jar which they stole from our garden one night, FOR WE DID NOT KNOW WHO DID IT. Someone blamed a little Moro boy, but there are no proofs.⁵⁷

Fourth described event,

On 13 August, early in the morning here in Tamontaka, a little after reveille, a sergeant came down to the narrow flatland when the kitchens were. Suddenly, two Moros attacked him, pursued him up to the steps of the fort, and wounded him. Several soldiers answered the shouts of the sergeant; they finished two attackers, as well as a third whom they killed with a rifle shot from the fort as he was shouting threats from below. It seems that these Moros had passed the night there, perhaps on the lookout for some Carabao they had hoped to steal if indeed they had no intention to ambush someone. Nothing is known of their purpose or reason.⁵⁸

Fifth described event,

Around mid-August near Lebungan, two bancas of Moros robbed a Chinese Christian of Tumbao and killed him as well as the three who ferried him in the banca.⁵⁹

Sixth described event,

One night in Cotabato in the beginning of September, two or three Moro vintas beached at the swamp near the guard and that some at least had gone ashore. The guard shouted Halt! Who goes there!" and when there was no answer. Signaled the alarm; the troops were deployed, but the Moros had retreated to their bancas.⁶⁰

Seventh and last described event in Fr. Guerrico letter no. 2,

The other also in Lebungan, on 12 September, at 11o'clock at night, four vintas approached heedless of the sentinel's warning, and I do not know if someone fired a gun; that at the moment a launch happened to be sailing up the river

⁵⁷ Ibid, herein Fr. Guerrico accounts, p. 18.

⁵⁸ Ibid, herein Fr. Guerrico accounts, p. 17.

⁵⁹ Ibid, herein Fr. Guerrico accounts.

⁶⁰ Ibid, herein Fr. Guerrico accounts.

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which had failed to arrived earlier, and from afar they were shot at, and they left.⁶¹

The first described event by Fr. Guerrico was an attempt of robberies committed in Tumbao by the some of the Moro of the said areas, though it was eventually resolved by the diplomacy of the Sultan of Buayan Datu Utto. Sultan of Buayan had showed organized government system by following the Magindanao code where he practiced due process by inquiring the cause and finding out the same person was the perpetrators of attempt Tumbao robberies.

As mentioned in the study of Reynaldo Iletto. The sultanate of Buyan can be located on its capital area Dulwan, and its influence was felt above Tumbao area in the upper reaches of the river and in the region of the two lakes Lugusan and Buluan which feed it, these territory was known to the Magindanawon as *Sa-Raya* or upper valley.⁶² Datu Utto at these times was mentioned to be the sultan of the said sultanate where he was defined as literate and treated equal to the Spaniards.⁶³ And how he had handled the treachery incident in Magindanao where the Spaniards were settling in showed his respect and diplomacy with the Spaniards by not hiding the perpetrators in his jurisdiction and imposes the punishment by beheading and condemning the perpetrator family to slavery.

The second, third and fourth and filth event described by Fr. Guerrico is a picture of how Moros had drastically portrayed negatively where some of the Christianized local natives and natives under Spanish jurisdiction inherited the distorted Moro portrayal. As events mentioned and describes crime, treachery, robberies, murders was easily pointed on Moros without proofs as a result of inherited mentality from predecessors of Spaniards.

⁶¹ Ibid, herein Fr. Guerrico accounts.

⁶² Reynaldo C. Iletto, *Magindanao 1860 – 1888: The Career of Datu Utto of Buayan* (Manila: Anvil Publishing Inc., 2007).

⁶³ Ibid, herein Iletto accounts, p.xiii.

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While the sixth event is a product of rumours, as Fr. Guerrico had seek validation to *Don Pedro Ortuoste* known as interpreter of the Maguindanawons dialects, and a official interpreter of Cotabato, furthermore explained in the local idiom the meaning of law.⁶⁴ will not be ignorant on the events in Magindanao, thus Ortuoste was a reliable person to validate rumours that's why Fr. Guerrico seeks his knowledge and Ortuoste state that no one knew whether the incident of Cotabato actually involves real Moros or someone merely thought he saw furthermore the seventh event in Lebungan, Ortuoste state that he heard nothing about it.

As observed on Fr. Guerrico described events, these were all points to the Mors actions perceived from rumours and lack further validations. However Fr. Guerrico was open-minded on the case of Moros or Maguindanawons as he showed that these were just either a rumours or an illusion of fears among Moros.

Letter No. 4 Fr. José Ignacio Guerrico to Mission Superior Tamontaka, December 15, 1862

The number four (4) letter Volume One: The Rio Grande de Mindanao Mission was written in Tamontaka by Fr. Guerrico dated on December 15, 1862 the letter was addressed to Mission Superior it composes of 4 pages bearing the pages number 40 until 45 the letter which constitute of 32 paragraphs, the both 2 notes was included at the bottom page of 42 that may help the readers in further understanding the context of the letter.

Figure 2: Fr. Guerrico translated letters No. 4 pages 40 and 43.

⁶⁴ Fr. Jose Ignacio Guerrico, April 1862, The Rio Grande Mission. Letter No. 1: p.1.

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last year. A robbery or attempted robbery of one or more individuals happened in Pollok in the beginning, but perhaps not all by Moros. For one night a woman was killed who was dressed or taken for a Moro, but was not. The killer has been put in prison for a time, but since his case was well known, he has been set free.

4. José Ignacio Guerrico to the Mission Superior Tamontaka, 15 December 1862

In my last letter I explained to Your Reverence some means with which to work for the good of these Moros. On the question whether dedicating ourselves to obtain their good and their conversion could hinder the greater fruit one can expect from the Tirurays, I was saying that, far from being an obstacle, I thought it was a means, and I promised to discuss this point in the next letter. Today, I am fulfilling my promise.

The reason for thinking that it may be an obstacle is the fear of the Tirurays, since I am afraid these will never trust the Moros. I see no other plausible reason. Let us see how strong it is.

It is true that the Tirurays are afraid of the Moros, but their fear does not appear to be as great as we thought at first. If they are protected by the Spaniards, their fear diminishes each day.

I say that their fear is not that strong, for they deal with the Moros, sell, and buy from them. The very fact that they speak the Moro language [Magindanao] fluently seems to be a sign of frequent communications [with them]. Many times we observe the Moros telling them this or that. Besides, there are villages where the Tirurays and Moros live at a short distance from one another, and Moro villages are close to Tiruray settlements. There are not

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if the Moros had bothered them much. He said no, and that if the soldiers deserted, the Moros apprehended and brought them back, that they had killed only one who had robbed and had escaped, and the Moros killed him because he had robbed. And talking about himself, he described a critical situation in which he had found himself once. Having gone aboard a launch, or another boat I am not sure which, near the town, and he had gone with a companion ashore into the town in the row-boat, he was busy among the Moros buying something or I know not what, when suddenly a riot occurred in the town, he not knowing the reason why. He went to the row-boat, but it was no longer there. In his quandary, it occurred to him to approach a leading figure among them, I do not know whether he was a datu or chief of the town, and explained his situation, and asked for protection. The Moro guarded him in his house, and later some from the town (I do not know if they were Chinese) sent him aboard the launch. Because he had delayed in returning, they were thinking they must have detained him aboard; but when he appeared unharmed later on, the Moros felt relieved.

I know that recently the secular priest or chaplain and an officer were killed by the Moros who were ferrying them in their boat. But the one who provoked this crime was the officer himself. The banca had bumped a little, sprinkling them with sea-water, and the officer slapped the boatmen. They endured it, but shortly after, in a careless moment, the Moro fell upon the officer and killed him. The priest, slightly wounded, threw himself into the water and was drowned. The aides were able to swim to safety. Of this officer, someone else who knew him said that he was a brute, and others said something similar, namely that he had died because he should have died earlier. From this it is shown also that some of those acts the Moros commit are occasioned by our own people and that provoking them is not the means to mollify them, but created in them the spirit of vengeance and

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Source: Jesuit Missionary Letters from Mindanao Volume 1: The Rio Grande Mission, edited, Translated and Annotated by Jose S. Arcilla, S.J., (Pictured by the researcher retrieved on May 10, 2024)

Fr. Guerrico discusses and examines how strong were the fear of Tirurays towards the Maguindawons as observed in Magindanao community and as he stated,

It is true that the Tirurays are afraid of the Moros, but their fear does not appear to be as great as we thought at first. I say that their fear is not that strong, for they deal with the Moros, sell, and buy from them. The very fact that they speak the Moro language fluently seems to be a sign of frequent communication. Many times we observed the Moro telling them this or that. Besides, there are villages where are the Tirurays and the Moros live at a short distance from one another, and Moro villages are close to Tiruray settlements. There are not lacking Moros and Tirurays related to one another. We ourselves have observed that now they take for granted the presence the moros, for they trust that they have nothing to fear. Thus we noticed that they are together without any difficulties when they meet one another, they go near the bancas of the Moros who come, and sometimes go to the Tiangi or market of the Moros. I know some go at least to tavian when it is market day there. Not long ago, some went to Bansil's market. Recently two here for the same reason, but because they found no banca in which to go, they went back.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Fr. Jose Ignacio Guerrico, 15 December 1862, The Rio Grande Mission. Letter No. 04: p. 41

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It can be observed from Fr. Guerrico letter that the Tamontaka community and its natives fears toward the Islamized group in Magindanao that originated from the negative portrayal of the latter is not that strong as observed in Magindanao local pagans co-exist finely with their Islamized brothers contrary on how Jesuit Fathers perceived them. As described event above wherein they practice commerce by buying and selling practice, they also live together as their settlement was near each other and no harm was done out of it. Instead the Tirurays shows fear to the Spanish troops more than they fear the local Moro of Magindanao. And from these descriptions it leaves an impression that indeed the society in Magindanao on 18th century prevails the impression that in a certain community good or bad, friends or foes exist and that judging a certain group out of one races was highly visible in Magindanao society.

Letter No. 5 Fr. José Ignacio Guerrico to Mission Superior Tamontaka, December 31, 1862

The number five (5) letter of Volume One: The Rio Grande de Mindanao Mission was written in Tamontaka by Fr. Guerrico dated on December 31, 1862 it was the last letter for the year 1862 since they had started their mission in Tamontaka. Furthermore the letter was addressed to Mission Superior composes of 7 pages bearing the pages number 45 until 47 the letter which constitute of 25 paragraphs, and 4 notes was included at the bottom pages of 49, 56 and 57 in further understanding the context of the letter.

Figure 3: Fr. Guerrico translated letters No. 5 pages 47 and 49.

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around it were and are Moro settlements. The river was occupied the last year, with five detachments established at five places, but the Moros are staying on, and their houses are within sight. They do not give any indication of going away. On the contrary, several who at first had moved away from certain locations, having recovered somewhat their confidence, and, optimistic, have again settled nearer to our places.

Not long ago, someone said that if the troops went out on frequent raids on the Moro settlements, this would be enough to drive them away, and we shall be left in greater security. But the Commandant General answered that the Moros would not go away even for that reason, pointing out also to his interlocutor that what he [the General] had been advocating before was precisely to eject the Moros from Taviran. He drove them away, and the Moros are still there. For clearing the surrounding areas of Moro settlements would not give us greater security; rather, less, since those Moro settlements, purposely to forestall harm being done to them, are rather a defense to us and they are on the watch that neither they nor others cause them harm. But the day they disappear, there would be no one responsible, and anybody could attack us, if the occasion offers, with nobody accepting the responsibility.

The Commandant General's opinion is confirmed by the fact that these very days the troops had gone out twice against the Moro settlement of Limapatuy. The (first day) it seems that when they saw the soldiers from afar, all the people fled. The officer leading the assault took care that nothing should be destroyed nor touched in the least in the village. The second day, far from fleeing, the people received them well, offered them corn and other things, opened a way for them through a stockade, helped them repair or build a bridge or passageway to cross the river on their return, and three Moros accompanied them up to the fort. And as for not having been in the village the other day, they said

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to them. There are datus who have formally submitted spontaneously, making themselves, with their dependents, subjects of Spain, and until now there is not one thing that belies their loyalty, but, yes, more than one thing to prove it. I say, "not one thing," for even Your Reverence may have heard and may hear stories told against individual Moros, or even several Moros. Still, I doubt if there is a single proven fact to support them, and it would cost me little to prove my statement. But for that, I have to extend myself a bit, but I do not think that is necessary. I do not know if some day I shall be forced to do so, for perhaps it would not be useless to know what is being said, and what reasons are adduced one way or other.

There are several Moros who have shown special fondness for the Spaniards, and whose voluntary and absolute submission would perhaps not be difficult to obtain. Of the Sultan and of old Amiro! I have several times heard favorable talk. Not long ago, while passing through with some military officers, the chaplains of Cotabato and Tumbao were telling us that the Sultan and Amiro! were acting properly and could not have done better. Now then, can there be any justification to eject them all from their homes and their country, not knowing where to go? And how would they judge us if, hardly two years after formal promises were made to them in the name of the government, we begin to persecute them for no reason at all, seek to dislodge them from the land they have owned for hundreds of years?

But, at least, ought they not to be forbidden to carry arms? Should they not be controlled as to the manner and place to live in, so that we can expect some security? Should we not bear in mind the attempts perpetrated by them, in order that, thus subjected and humbled, they may fear and respect us? More than

¹The reference is to the Sultan of Cotabato and Amiro!, his father.

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Source: Jesuit Missionary Letters from Mindanao Volume 1: The Rio Grande Mission, edited, Translated and Annotated by Jose S. Arcilla, S.J., (Pictured by the researcher retrieved on May 10, 2024)

The letter was the continuation of Fr. Guerrico update on Mission Superior questions on thoughts on permanent establishment of Moros in Tamontaka. He critique the suggested removal of Maguindanawon population though on their own land, where he raised a question whether would it be good to clean the population of Maguindanawons in the area as they see them as a problem and come up with the solution of populating it with natives coming from the Luzon or Visayas area. In Fr. Guierrico letter first expresses,

I started from the principle if these Moros would live permanently here, for I believe, not to say more, that Moros and Christians, friends or enemies, subject or independent, they would not leave the area it is a fact that it was very hard for the people to abandoned the land they were born and had lived in where they had already build their interest and their way of living, the question of where would they go?⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Fr. Jose Ignacio Guerrico, 31 December 1862, The Rio Grande Mission. Letter No. 05: p. 45

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Second he elaborated why couldn't the Moros be ousted on their own land,

The Moros would not go away even for that reason, pointing out also to his interlocutor that what he (general) had been advocating before was precisely to eject Moro from Taviran. He drove them away, and the Moros are still there.⁶⁷

The troops had gone out twice against the Moro settlements of Limapatuy, the first day; it seems that when they saw the soldiers from a far, all the people fled. The second day, far from fleeing, the people received them well, offered them corn and other things opened a way for them though a stockade, helped them repair or build a bridge or passageway to cross the river on their return, and three Moro accompanied them up to the fort.⁶⁸

Third he describes the peace treaty between the Spaniards and the Moros,

First, it does not seem that the government entertains such an idea because it leaves them alone in other places and I see no reason for an exemption here. Less than two years ago they were formally promised they would be treated as friends, their customs and usage, etc.⁶⁹

By what right? Why? How do we justify ejecting them from their homes, from the land in which they and their ancestors were born, especially after the recent promise of treating them as friends? Justice is due to everyone, even for Moros. Trusting in our words, they (or atleast some) have declared themselves and act as our friends. Even the rest, with some exception, have not harassed us.⁷⁰

Fourth Fr. Guerrico mentioned the existence of some of the Maguindanawons had accepted Spanish power,

There are Datus who have formally submitted spontaneously, making themselves, with their Dependents, subject of Spain, and until now there is not one thing that belies their loyatly but yes, more than one thing to prove it. I say, "not one thing," for even your reverence may have heard and may hear stories told against

⁶⁷ Ibid, herein Fr.Guerrico accounts.

⁶⁸ Ibid, herein Fr.Guerrico accounts.

⁶⁹ Ibid, herein Fr.Guerrico accounts, p. 48.

⁷⁰ Ibid, herein Fr.Guerrico accounts, p.49.

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individual Moros, or even several Moros. stil I doubt if there is a single proven facts to support them, and it would cost me little to prove my statement.⁷¹

There are several Moros who have shown special fondness for the Spaniards, and who's showed voluntary. Moro Submission would not be difficult by obtaining the Sultan and Amirols. Whereas not long ago, while passing through with some military officers, the Amirol were acting properly and could not have done better⁷²

The Spaniards suggested removing the Maguindanawons on their land as a solution which Fr. Guerrico expresses that it would be ridiculous even if it happened to Moros or Christians, Friends or enemies it will be impossible as Fr. Guerrico logically explain. But sadly as described by Fr. Guerrico Spanish troops had employed these suggested Maguindanawons removal in Taviran area but they can still be found in the area. Jihad can be employed especially when it comes to removing the natives on their own land as described and mentioned jihad can be employed by,

The primary objectives of Jihad are the following: 1. Fighting in Islam is a logical step for "Self-protection, and Self-Preservation" from the spectre of violent, tyranny and oppression in the hands of any aggressive forces within the society. 2. Muslims must take up arms against people who expelled them from their home grabbed their land and robbed their properties; 3. Fighting is prescribed in support of the weal, young and old, men and women who are crying for peace, Justice and freedom, 4 Muslims must fight against imposers of war on them. This is in accordance with the divine order of Allah (SWT).⁷³

The Maguindanawons resistance was employed by the ideology of Jihad in accordance with the divine order of Allah S.W.T. and as mentioned above the Spanish actions applies all the objectivities of Jihad. And from observed to the Jesuit letters which is written in the year 1862,

⁷¹ Ibid, herein Fr.Guerrico accounts.

⁷² Ibid, herein Fr.Guerrico accounts.

⁷³ Karabat Murshi Ibrahim, Jihad Fii Sabillillah: The struggle in the way of Allah, (The southern Philippine Issues, 1995).

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four years ago when the Spanish troops together with their missionaries arrived in 1859 they had continued to commit all the actions that allows the Jihad, and to be specific Fr. Guerrico 5th letter describes the second objectives of Jihad.

Letter No. 8 Fr. José Ignacio Guerrico to the Mission Superior

Tamontaka, (?), 1866 [Cartas 1:19-26]

The number eight (8) letter was written in Tamontaka by Fr. Guerrico with no exact month and date but had the year 1866 addresses to the Mission Superior, the same letter was the first Jesuit letter included to the 10 Volume of Jesuit Cartas which can be found in Volume 1 pages 19 up to 26. On the other hand the 8th letter that were under the Jesuit Missionary Letters from Mindanao by Jose Arcilla composes of 4 pages and bears the page number 66 until 72, it also constitute of 14 paragraphs and 2 notes included in pages 71and 72 to assist on comprehending the content of the letter.

Figure 4: Fr. Guerrico translated letters No. 8 pages 67 and 68.

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of the Apostle of the Slaves, St. Peter Claver, 9 September 1872. Now we have about 60 boys and 30 girls, excluding seven couples from these libertos now living in their own small houses in this mission.

These children are trained and accustomed to the works of the farm, everyone being occupied in something according to his age and capacity. Ordinarily they rise at 5:30 o'clock, attend Holy Mass, recite the prayers and sing some devout hymns to start and at the end of the Mass, and on Saturdays, the *Salve*. One of these children accompanies with the harmonium. Afterwards, they eat their breakfast and attend to the chores which Brother assigns to them. They recreate briefly from 11:00 to 12:00 o'clock, and learn how to read and write a bit.

* After the noon meal, recreation until 1:30 o'clock, and rest or free time until 2:00 o'clock. From 2:00 to 3:00, reading, writing, and catechetical instructions, immediately followed by work. At sundown, rest or recreation, and around 6:30 o'clock, the Rosary, followed by a few hymns, catechism, practice of Spanish and Moro until 7:45 o'clock. After supper, they recite the prayers, and go to bed.

In this way, they pass the time enjoyably. In general they are happy, do not think of going back to the Moros. This gives us hope of forming Christian families with them, and establishing a permanent town as they reach the age of marriage.

Although in general they are occupied with work in the farm, some are assigned to a specific duty, like carpentry work, masonry, etc. Others, too, receive more instruction in music. Of these, some concentrate on the harmonium, time being allowed them to learn the instrument. In this way, we can have them to sing and accompany with the harmonium at the solemn masses and other religious functions. In general, both boys and girls love

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to sing, and they have already learned several religious songs.

Besides the seven married couples among the libertos, others are preparing to be married in a short while. There are less girls than boys, since our funds do not allow us at the moment to ransom more of the first. Perhaps we can supply this need with some Tiruray girls, as has already happened to one, and we shall see if we can continue doing so. But it would be for the good of the mission and of Spain if we could ransom more children of both sexes to develop here a Moro-Spanish population who speak some Spanish, are trustworthy, joined besides to the families of the other races which we observe come here, either Tirurays or Indios from the other provinces of the archipelago. But we need resources for this. Just to attend to the lodging, clothing and the support of those that we now have, we have to use much of the allotment for the attraction of the pagans, to the detriment of this apostolate which is just as important.

Besides the libertos who live in the agricultural institute, about 98 persons reside in the part we call "Estuary," a few more on the road between Tamontaka and Cotabato. They have their own rice crops close to their houses. These are families of Tirurays, Indios from the several provinces, or the married libertos.

On the other side of the river there are about nine persons, shepherds of two individuals from Cotabato who have cattle and carabaos there. Higher up in the mountains are several Tiruray barrios with their aged *principal* and magistrates appointed by the Governor, like the the two on the Estuary plain.

These barrios are about three quarters of an hour from the Pulangi, some an hour away, others a little farther. The missionary priests go visiting there, one of them more or less frequently.

To attend to everybody's spiritual needs, the missionaries built

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Source: Jesuit Missionary Letters from Mindanao Volume 1: The Rio Grande Mission, edited, Translated and Annotated by Jose S. Arcilla, S.J., (Pictured by the researcher retrieved on May 10, 2024)

Fr. Guerrico had mentioned for the first time the *Libertos* as they had defined children ransomed from Islam. A community where the Jesuits plan to expend in order to grow the Christianity in a Moro populated areas, it was an exaggerated descriptions made to the slaves that were saved by the Jesuit fathers to their Moro master. The letter bears the discussion about the libertos received in estuary and agricultural institute for libertos. The libertos or ransom children in accord with the Jesuits fathers discuss the daily routine of the libertos. The goal of populating the two side of the Pulangi River by using either the experiment per marriages by either Indios, Tirurays and Moros boys and girl in the marriage age. As Fr. Guerrico mentions in his letter;

It would be for the good of Mission and of Spain if we could ransomed more children of both sexes to develop here a Moro-Spanish population who speak

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some Spanish, are trustworthy, joined besides to the families of the other races which we observe come here, either Tirurays or indios from the other provinces of the archipelago.⁷⁴

The Jesuit fathers had been labelling the community in Mindanao as Moro if not Christianized even in fact it came from indigenous community if not baptized they loosely denotes everyone Moros. And the slaves that came from the Moro masters is not an exemptions. The Libertos as mentioned by Fr. Guerrico was an experiment to grow the Christian population Magindanao and to attract the interest of the readers of cartas they had describe it as save from Islam. When in fact some of the slaves of the Moros in Mindanao came from the Moro raids the Moros had conducted during the retaliation attacks between the Moros and Spanish troops.

Nevertheless Fr. Guerrico mentioned again the co-existence between the Maguindanawons and Tirurays,

This year, besides these classes, we started others in Tianggi (Market) on the other side of the river, where every Monday Tirurays and Moros come together.⁷⁵

The Maguindanawons and indigenous Tirurays of hinterland of Magindanao was known to be brothers where they had a very good relationship, as observed by Fr. Guerrico above and to his other letters where he describes the good relationship of the two where they practiced trade system as mentioned in the study of Illeto where he cited the study of an anthropologist Grace L. Wood, the history of the Tirurays begins with a legend shared by the Maguindanawons that the two people had "same father and mother" in other word they were two brothers and was only divided when Sharif Kabungsuwan came and introduced Islamic faith, the elder Mamalu refused to convert to Islam while Tabunawai the younger brother accepted Islam from elder

⁷⁴ Fr. Jose Igancio Guerrico, 1875, (Cartas 1:19-26), The Rio Grande Mission, Letter 08: p. 68.

⁷⁵ Ibid, herein Fr. Guerrico accounts' p. 69.

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comes the Tirurays and the youngest came the Maguindanawons, the elder moved to mountains but the two mutually agreed to practice trade and preserve good kinship relationship.⁷⁶

Contrary on how Fr. Guerrico observation on Tirurays and Maguindanawons relationship some of the Jesuit Fathers picture them to be in conflict and enemies.

Letter No. 11 Jacinto Juanmartí to Mission Superior Cotabato, May 16, 1877

The number eleven (11) letter was written in Cotabato by Fr. Juanmarti on May 16 year 1877 the letter which is addressed to the new Mission Superior Fr. Juan Bautista Heras appointed on August 24, 1875. The letter composes of 6 pages bearing the page number 80 – 89 the letter which constitute of 22 paragraphs, and had 13 notes included at the bottom part of every page these notes that may enhanced understanding on the context of the letter.

Figure 5: Fr. Juanmarti translated letters No. 11 pages 88 and 89.

⁷⁶ Reynaldo Iletto, *Magindanao 1860-1888: The career of Datu Utto of Buayan* (Philippines: Anvil Publishing, Inc., 2007). P. 39.

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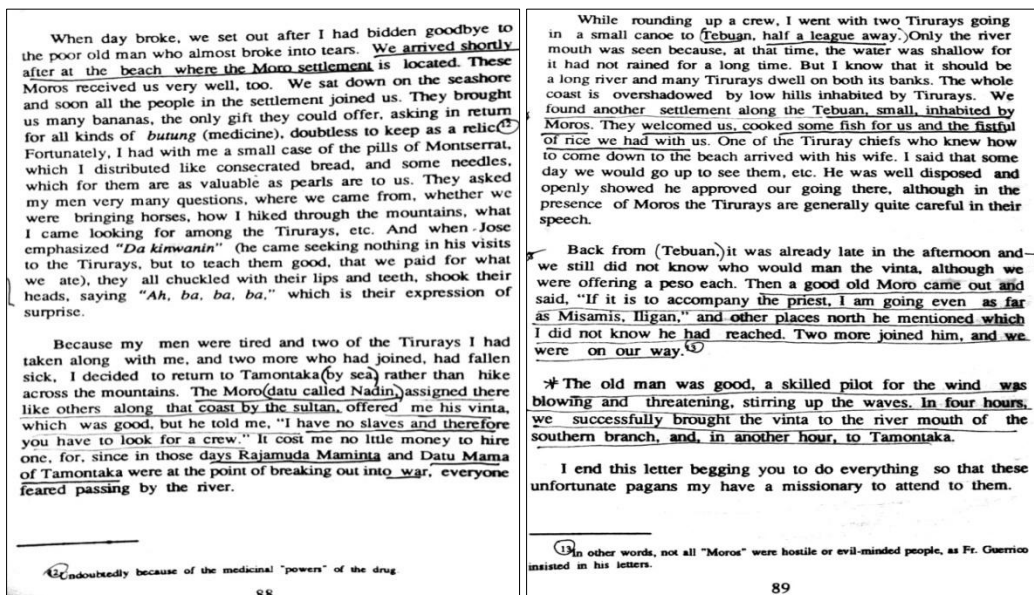
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Source: Jesuit Missionary Letters from Mindanao Volume 1: The Rio Grande Mission, edited, Translated and Annotated by Jose S. Arcilla, S.J., (Pictured by the researcher retrieved on May 10, 2024)

Fr. Juanmarti was newly assigned Jesuit father in Tamontaka he was born on February 3 1833 in Llarvent Spain and entered to the Society of Jesus on December 3, 1857. He arrived in Philippines in the year 1865 and was subsequently assigned to southern Mindanao Mission. He becomes local superior of the Rio Grande Mission, and was considered that under his term as local superior in Rio Grande the mission had rapidly expanded, he eventually died on April 7, 1897 in Tamontaka, Mindanao.⁷⁷

The content of Fr. Juanmarti letter was the six days mountains travels in Tiruray Mountains to assess the areas in terms of local native's pagans or Moros that settled in hinterland.⁷⁸ His exploration started on May 2 where he visit the Chapels in Lebungan, explore even further the area of Talayan, the Buayan area was also mentioned as Maguindanawons populated areas. Fr.

⁷⁷ Fr. Jose Igancio Guerrero, 1875, (Cartas 1:19-26), The Rio Grande Mission notes number 7, Letter 08: p. 76.

⁷⁸ Fr. Jacinto Juanmarti, 16 May 1877, The Rio Grande Mission, Letter 11: p. 80.

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Juanmarti arrived in Ulangu where he had encountered the local pagan's natives of the area, along the river of Surran he found the kaingin natives and not far away he found the Tirurays settlement composes of 60 person headed by Datu. He continued his exploration and arrived in Kabakaba found some settlements and eventually arrived on the river of Safitan and found their way to Tebuan. They spend their night in Klemiek where Datu Mabalo and its people were identified as pagans furthermore the Datu was a relative of Bandarra of Tamontaka. Eventually they had arrived at Matabar River and found the settlement of Kadla headed by chief Masalicampo. They ended their visit in Tebuan but were able to have a detour because his Tiruray guide wanted to meet Datu Uata's house and settlement which they were able to visit. They continued his travel from Datu Uata's place eventually arrived in the Moro settlement which the Moros had accepted them well according to Fr. Juanmarti,

We sat down on the seashore and soon people in the settlement joined us, they brought us bananas, the only gift they could offer, asking in return for all kinds of *butung* (medicine). They asked my men very many questions, where we came from, whether we were bringing horses, how I hiked though the mountains, what I came looking for among the Tirurays. And José emphasized "*Da kinwanin*" (he came seeking nothing in his visits to the tirurays but teach them good, that we paid for what we ate) they all chuckled with their lips and teeth, shook their heads, saying "*ah, ba, ba, ba,*" which is their expression of surprise.⁷⁹

It is quite fascinating how they could put meaning on the Moro language to their own accord, because if we examined the word "*da kinwanin*" it had a Moro literal meaning (he didn't steal anything) these phrase an answer on a question of did you steal anything? And not an answer on question being raised by the Moros on above statement, and how Fr. Juanmarti extend the meaning by including teach them good, and they paid for what they eat is an expanded meaning for the short word given by those men in his team. Also the word *Ah, ba, ba, ba* that was define by Fr. Juanmarti as surprise expression in quite not right because it gives a vibes that

⁷⁹Fr. Jacinto Juanmarti, 16 May 1877, The Rio Grande Mission, Letter 11: p. 88

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they don't believe what they were saying. Somehow the researcher questions how the Jesuits put meanings on the Moro language despite the fact that they were admittedly having a hard time learning the Moro tongue.

Furthermore, the men of Fr. Jumarti were tired and decided to go back home by the river, than hike the mountains. But they had settled in the Moro settlement under the Datu Nadine he had offered his *vinta* (boat) to the priest according to the letter,

I have no slaves and therefore you have to look for a crew." It cost me no little money to hire one, for, since in those days Rajamuda Maminta and datu Mama of Tamontaka were at the point of breaking out into war. Everyone feared passing by the river.⁸⁰

The above statement mentions give an impression that Moros were not all bad who commits violence and not all of them practice of attacking villages and make them slaves. As mentioned in the Moro settlement the Datu himself doesn't have a slave to assist the visiting priest in their area.

While Fr. Junmarti was looking for the one who could man up the *vinta* for his return by sea, they went to Tebuan which is half league away. A small settlement inhabited by the Moros wherein they were shown again with good will as they were welcomed by the Moros and cooked some fish and rice for their fest. In tebuan they were able to find the knowledgeable Moro man who can man up his *vinta* back to Tamontaka who was first offered by peso each by the priest but decline in his goodness and had a statement;

Then a good old Moro came out and said, "if it is to accompany the priest, I am going even as far as Misamis or Iligan," and other places north he mentioned

⁸⁰ Ibid, herein Fr. Juanmarti accounts.

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which I did not know he had reached, and two more joined him and we were on our way.⁸¹

If the Moros were all bad there's no way that Fr. Junamarti would be able to come home in peace and there will not be any moro who will offered him as his boatman in order to come home to Tamontaka. Aside from the showcasing of the goodwill of the Moros it is admittedly that the Moros were knowledgeable brought to as described by Fr. Junamrti,

The old man was good; a skilled pilot for the wind was blowing and threatening, stirring up the waves. In four hours, we successfully brought the vinta to the river mouth of the southern branch and in another hour to Tamontaka.⁸²

Conclusion

The described Moros in Volume One: The Rio Grande de Mindanao Mission was specifically pertaining to the Maguindanawons known local ethnic group of areas, out of one hundred twenty two (122) Jesuit letters there are only Fifty Nine (59) letters that repeatedly mentions the activities done by the Maguindanawons as identified Moro of undivided Cotabato, Tamontaka and further inlands towns of the areas. The letters indeed consist biases of the Spanish Jesuit Fathers and just like how some of the Spanish believed that there is no good results out of Moros if they were involved, the same case the Moros mutually believed also that there is no good words the Spaniards can describe the former. However examining the (122) Jesuit letters and conduct a content analysis on it, it was observed that indeed majority of the Jesuit Missionaries portrayed and sees them as a problematic case and describes them negatively, but there are also some who described them in a good way just like how Fr. Guerrico had expresses his open-minded on

⁸¹ Ibid, herein Fr. Juanmarti accounts.

⁸² Ibid, herein Fr. Juanmarti accounts.

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the case of the Maguindanawon while others Jesuit was influenced by the negative portrayal of their Spanish predecessors resulted on negative perceptions.

To conclude the Maguindanawons as described in Rio Grande de Mindanao in late 18th century gives the contemporary 13 Moro multi-ethnic youths a piece of their Moro history. These identified colonial letters gives the various Moro scholars an opportunity to clarify their negative portrayal and make a venue on reasons behind described negative activities portrayed and recorded by the Spanish colonizers. Furthermore these colonial accounts motivate and inspired the Moros to re-write their own history by examining colonial accounts and employed a counter validation on these claims by utilizing other Moro existing sources. .

Finally, the distortion and negative perceptions towards Maguindanawons in Jesuit letters were highly credited to the predecessors Spanish who aims to colonize the Mindanao Islands starting on 16th, 17th and even present in 18th century. Sadly these hate phenomena prevails in present time and was highly observed in Filipino society and culture. And obviously Moros in general still experiences the after effect of Spanish negative perceptions that originally originated in 16th, 17th, and 18th century. The researcher believed that these can be blamed on lack of in-depth discourse of Moro History wherein few details of Mindanao and indigenous group either non-Muslims or Muslims is being included in Philippine history. These cause the re-opening of the wounds of indigenous and Moro groups of Mindanao that would eventually fall on what is called Mindanao problems.

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