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CHAPTER 1: PROFILE

Introduction

Located in the South China Sea, the Philippines is a nation of islands divided into numerous provinces. It can be roughly divided into the Northern Philippines (consisting mainly of Luzon Island, the largest Philippine island), the Visayas (the central island groups) and the southern Philippines, where the island of Mindanao is the largest land mass. Mindanao is the Philippines’ southernmost point, the second-largest island, and the regional name for a group of islands that includes the Sulu Archipelago.

The Sulu Archipelago lies at the southern tip of the Philippines and contains approximately 2,600 islands with a land area of approximately 2,699 sq km (1,042 sq mi). The Tausug people make up the majority of the population of this chain of three islands: Basilan, Jolo, and Tawi-Tawi, which extend 270 km (170 mi) southwest from Mindanao toward Malaysia. The Tausug are 85% of the population of Sulu Province. Approximately 75% of the Tausug live on Jolo Island; the rest live throughout Sulu Province. Other provinces in the archipelago are home to large numbers of Tausug, especially Tawi-Tawi Province, where they represent 36% of the population, and Basilan Province, where they are about 23%. The isolated islands of this province lie in the center of the Sulu Sea, between the South China Sea to the north and the Celebes Sea to the south.

Geography

The Sulu Archipelago is a series of volcanic and coral islands. Part of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), the archipelago contains three provinces: the northernmost islands of Basilan, Sulu in the center, and Tawi-Tawi on the southernmost tip. Sulu Province is rimmed by the Sulu and Mindanao Seas to the west and north and the Celebes Sea to the east.

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province comprises over 150 islands and islets, some of them still uninhabited. As a result of expanding human settlement, few wooded areas, which once consisted primarily of lowland rain forest, remain.7

Jolo Island in Sulu Province is the second-largest island in the archipelago and the seat of the provincial government.8 The volcanic island measures 64 km (40 mi) long, 23 km (14 mi) wide, and is covered in lush vegetation.9, 10 Short streams provide fresh water to towns and farms. Much of its land is arable, supporting rice, coconut, cassava, and fruit cultivation.11

The Bud Dajo Cinder Cone, also known as Jolo Volcano, sits in the center of Jolo Island. It stands 620 m (2,034 ft).12 The island’s highest point is the extinct Mount Tumatangas at 812 m (2,664 ft).13

Climate

The Sulu Archipelago, lying outside the typhoon belt, has a warm, moist climate characterized by two seasons. Rain is common throughout the year. Southeasterly rains come from May to October, and are replaced by dry winds from the northeast during the warm months of November to February. Weather is coolest in February. Temperatures are the hottest between May and August when the relative humidity averages 86%. May is the hottest month with temperatures averaging 31°C (88°F).14 Although January to April is considered the dry season, an average of 18–23 cm (7–9 in) of rain falls then.15, 16 January is the coldest month with an average temperature of 22°C (72°F).17

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Important Elements of History

Early History

Although the history of the Philippines covers 30,000 years, the history of the Tausug can be thought of as beginning in 1380 with the arrival of the Arab trader and Muslim missionary Sheik Karim al Makdum.18, 19, 20 Other Arabs followed Makdum, including Raja Baguinda, who arrived from Sumatra. Baguinda established a dynasty that continues today.21 In 1450, the Arabian scholar and direct descendant of Prophet Muhammad, Abu Bakr, arrived. He married the daughter of Raja Baguinda and soon became the sultan of the newly established political system known as the Royal Sultanate of Sulu.22, 23 Under the Sultanate, several of the major tribes in Sulu united, including the Tausug, Samal, Yakan, and Badjao.24 As Abu Bakr’s sultanate developed, he laid the foundation for an Islamic sociopolitical order based on education, law, and commerce, reinforcing Muslim values and strengthening the community.25

Before the Spanish colonization of the island of Luzon in the 16th century, the Sulu Sultanate was the largest and most powerful political entity in the Philippines, with authority over at least 250,000 persons of several ethnicities.26 The Sultanate had diplomatic relations with neighboring sultanates in Brunei, whose ruling royal families shared an ancestry with their Sulu counterpart. Wealth was generated through maritime trade as well as slave raiding, a regional form of commerce that persisted into the 19th century.27, 28

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Colonial Rule

The Spanish brought Catholicism to the Philippines in 1521. For several hundred years, the Spaniards battled the Muslims for control of the south. In 1570, the Spanish gained control of Manila but could not dislocate the Muslims in the south. The Tausug and Spanish warred for 300 years until 1899, when the Spanish left after ceding the Philippines.29

In 1898, the Treaty of Paris had placed the Philippines, including lands from the Sultanate of Sulu, under the United States’ colonial rule.30 The Sultanate had existed for over 200 years and was the largest and most powerful political force in the country.31 Some regard the transfer of Sulu lands as illegal, because the Spanish did not control those lands when they were ceded. An 1845 treaty between France and the Sultanate had apparently recognized the latter as an independent Muslim state.32

In 1899, the Sultanate and the United States signed the Bates Agreement. The United States agreed to respect the Sultanate’s authority and not to give or sell any part of Sulu to any nation.33 Within 2 days of the signing, war broke out between U.S. forces and Filipino nationalists, who had declared the nation’s independence. Over the next 3 years, the war claimed the lives of more than 200,000 Filipino civilians, 20,000 Filipino fighters, and 4,200 Americans.34

The U.S. unilaterally nullified the Bates agreement in 1905 and set up a colonial government that substantially weakened the Sultanate, stripped the sultan of political power, and recognized him only as “the religious head.”35, 36 Animosities continued and, in 1906, American soldiers killed 600 to 1,000 Tausug men, women, and children on Jolo.

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Island. In 1913, the U.S. again met Tausug resistance to its disarmament order. Over 500 men, women, and children were killed.

*Philippine Commonwealth and World War II*

The Philippine Commonwealth was formally established in 1935. This presented the Moros (the Spanish word for Moors or Muslims) with the prospect of domination by the majority Christian population. To avoid such a fate, they lobbied for Sulu and Mindanao provinces to become independent or remain under U.S. colonial administration. After the death of the sultan in 1936, the Philippine government expressly rejected recognition of the Sultanate and its new sultan. For the next 10 years, the Philippine government sought to erode many of the privileges Muslims had enjoyed under U.S. rule. Muslims were prohibited from using Islamic law and were no longer exempt from some national laws. The Office of Commissioner for Mindanao and Sulu was established to develop the economic potential of the Mindanao Muslim region; rather than helping the situation, the commission’s efforts caused increasing discontent among the Muslim population.

For the most part, the Muslim population opposed the Japanese during World War II. But during the war years, two men vied for the position of sultan. One was supported by the Japanese, but the one who clearly opposed the Japanese and their occupation was eventually restored as sultan.

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Independence

The Philippines gained full independence on 4 July 1946. In 1950, Mohammad Esmail Kiram was restored as sultan. In 1962, the government recognized him and became increasingly interested in the affairs of Sulu. In 1969, a Muslim (later Mindanao) independence movement emerged to press for a Moro nation (Bangsa Moro). Armed clashes between Muslim and Christian groups escalated. By 1971 Muslim Mindanao and Sulu were in a state of rebellion. A government task force was sent from Manila to Mindanao to mediate, but had little success. At year’s end, skirmishes between Muslim and Christian groups and the Philippine armed forces had killed over 1,566 people, 56% of whom were Muslims. The clashes created approximately 100,000 refugees whose villages were razed. They were predominantly Muslim but included Christian settlers and Lumad, who had been pushed into the mountains.

In 1974, the Philippine government formally recognized the creation of the government of Sulu. The conflict between Muslims and Catholics in the region flared off and on for years. Several Muslim separatist groups formed during the period including the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the Muslim Independence Movement, and the Union of Islamic Forces and Organization. Finally, in 1977, agreements between the MNLF and Manila forged the Tripoli Agreement, which provided for an autonomous Muslim region in Mindanao. But the talks collapsed and fighting flared after Muslims boycotted the referendum for creating a provisional government. In 1989, the Organic Act for Mindanao officially created the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, which includes the three provinces where the Tausug primarily reside. The current sultan, who has no formal authority within the Philippines, is Raja Muda. With five sons, the continuation of the sultanate seems secure, for the moment.

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48 Moshe Yegar, Between Integration and Secession: The Muslim Communities of the Southern Philippines, South Thailand and Burma/Myanmar (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2002), 257.
Recent Events

The Tausug remain resistant to attempts by Christians to dominate their land by settling amidst them and any effort to weaken their culture. They retain little allegiance to the national government. The predominantly Tausug MNLF refused to recognize the government’s actions, and returned to armed struggle. In 1996, President Ramos and the MNLF signed a peace agreement hailed on both sides as “the final agreement on the implementation of the 1976 Tripoli Agreement.” MNLF Chairman Nur Misuari became the head of the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development and the Governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

The regional government became a vehicle for the MNLF to dispense favors and jobs to its supporters, most of whom were Tausug. Yet little improvement in living standards caused public dissatisfaction to mount. By November 2001, elections threatened to strip Misuari of his position as head of the MNLF. To prevent the vote from taking place, he ordered his followers to attack Philippine Army headquarters in Jolo. After great loss of life, he abandoned his post as Governor of the ARMM and fled to Sabah in Malaysia, where he was arrested by law enforcement authorities and deported to Manila.

Other insurgent groups formed, partly in opposition to the MNLF. Peace talks between the insurgents and Manila began in 1997 but accomplished little until after 9/11.

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when the Global War on Terrorism prompted a ceasefire. But the insurgents remain active and the violence continues.

A sustainable peace agreement has proved hard to achieve. The primary reasons include unresolved issues regarding claims on ancestral land, ceasefire violations, political opposition to the negotiations, and a proliferation of separatist groups, some of which been involved in terrorist activities. Those not party to a settlement will be tempted to disrupt the peace process by violence. Yet a new peace deal signed with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in October 2012 offers the best hope in decades for an end to the violence. It also creates a new political entity, Bangsamoro, to replace the failed ARMM.

Government

Sulu Province is part of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). Its many islands comprise four main island groups: Jolo, Pangutaran, Tongkil-Banguini (Samales), and Siassi-Tapul. Jolo Island is the main island in the province (1,600 sq km/618 sq mi) and home to the provincial capital of Jolo Town and the Royal Sultanate of Sulu.

The chief regional executive of the ARMM, whose capital is in Cotabato City, is a regional governor. The regional governor is elected to a 3-year term and may serve no more than three terms. The governor appoints a cabinet of no more than 10 members that must be approved by the regional legislative assembly. The governor controls all regional executive commissions, agencies, boards, bureaus, and offices. An executive council consisting of the regional governor, one regional vice governor, and three deputy regional governors (one Christian, one Muslim, and one from the indigenous cultural group) advises on regional issues. Each province within the ARMM has a governor who is subordinate to the regional governor and vice governor.

The legislative branch of the ARMM is the 24-seat Regional Legislative Assembly. It has three representatives from each of the seven congressional districts plus three district members. Members are elected to 3-year terms and are limited to three consecutive terms. This body exercises legislative power in the region. It cannot deal with national issues including foreign affairs, national defense, customs, foreign trade, and monetary policies. But it may legislate on matters related to shari’a law. The ARMM’s main judicial powers reside with the Supreme Court of the Philippines. Shari’a courts also exist and have the right to preside over issues related to the Muslim population. The 5 district and 30 circuit shari’a courts in the ARMM handle issues involving Muslims, including personal, family, and property relations; commercial transactions; and criminal cases. Serious problems persist in the judicial system. Poor infrastructure, minimal staffing, and a lack of qualified lawyers and judges combine to create poor access for Muslims. Shari’a law applies only to Muslims and is limited to the southern Philippines and the ARMM.

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**Bangsamoro**

In October 2012, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Philippine government signed a peace accord that included a framework for the creation of a new political entity, Bangsamoro, which will replace the failed ARMM. The governance structure of the region where the Tausug live will change. According to a draft of the proposed legislation, Bangsamoro Basic Law (which has not been fully elaborated), the region will have new powers and will share some power with the national government. The ARMM will cease to exist when the Bansamoro Basic Law is passed and ratified. The six provinces that now make up the ARMM will vote to decide whether to join the new Bangsamoro. Elections are scheduled for 2016.81

**Media**

Although the Philippine media is not censored by the government, there have been complaints that it presents biased coverage of Filipino Muslims: casting them as “terrorists” while failing to provide information on the historical context of the Moro people’s plight.82 Violent incidents in a few hot spots within a large area tarnish the image of the entire region, and have created the “Mindanao Stigma.” It is claimed the mere mention of “Mindanao” elicits images of kidnappings and bombings.83 Some stories received international coverage, such as the foreigners on a tropical holiday who were abducted by terrorists posing as pirates.84

Until recently, few people in the Sulu region had access to good and affordable communication. In 2007, about 95% of people in Tawi-Tawi and Basilan provinces had cell phone coverage and 78% of the population of Sulu province had access.85 Radio is the second-most popular source of information and entertainment (after newspapers). Television is also popular and most channels are broadcast in both English and local languages. Content is monitored by the Movie and Television Review and Classification

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Board. Internet access is relatively low, with about 29 million users throughout the nation, but only a small fraction are active users. About 40% of users are between 15 and 24 years of age, and most users access the internet from internet cafes rather than ownership of a personal home computer. Broadband internet access is low and available to only about 3% of the population.

**Important Elements of Economy**

Nearly 66% of the labor force of Sulu Province is engaged in agriculture, fishing, or forestry. Major crops include coconut, cassava, coffee, and exotic fruits. Most municipalities, except Jolo Town, also have seaweed farms. The Tausug are primarily subsistence farmers who use water buffalo to plow their fields. Many of the Tausug along the coastal areas make their living by fishing with nets, rattan traps, or hook-and-line techniques. Occasionally, they employ dynamite to increase their haul. Industry, including mining, manufacturing, construction, and transportation, employs about 3% of the population.

Services, including government, employs around 31% of the population. But much of the province’s economy relies heavily on foreign aid. Continuing violence throughout the province has impeded economic development.

**Ethnic Groups**

In Sulu Province, there are three main Muslim ethnic groups. The Tausug make up 85% of the population, the Samal about 8%, and the Badjao slightly more than 2%.

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**Tausug**

The Tausug, whose name means “People of the Current,” represent the largest Islamic ethnic group in the Sulu Archipelago. They are concentrated on Jolo Island but significant numbers live on the islands of Pata, Marunggas, Tapul, and Lugus.96 The Tausug often see themselves as superior to other groups and rarely regard themselves as Filipino.97 Their language is a Malayo-Polynesian dialect written in a Malayo-Arabic script referred to as jawi or sulat sug.

Among the first of the Filipino groups to convert to Islam, the Tausug are a blend of Malay and Indonesian races. They have long traditions of piracy and being fierce warriors, and they possess great courage. They still live a combative lifestyle, and they regard it as shameful to turn away from a fight. Their religious beliefs are a fusion of Islam and traditional animism. They believe that spirits inhabit all things in nature. They also believe that a human has four souls: the life-soul, the spirit-soul, the soul of breath, and the transcendental soul.98, 99

Tausug live mostly in dispersed settlements in which the basic unit is the household. The settlements are generally clusters of kinsmen. Kinship follows both patrilineal and matrilineal lines and extends to all blood and marriage relations, regardless of how removed they may be from direct blood lines.100 Kinship and friendship are central elements in the organizational feature of violence within Tausug communities. Friendship includes moral expectations of reciprocity and friend relations may be as significant and close as kin relations.101

The Tausug are predominantly subsistence farmers growing corn, cassava, yams, and coconuts. They also are fishermen and traders with strong traditions of metalworking and weaving.102

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Samal (Sama)

The Samal are a predominantly Muslim group concentrated largely in Basilan and Sulu provinces, where they make up about 8% of the population. Their language, Samalan (Siamal), is one of the oldest in the Sulu Archipelago. Most Sama are fishermen or gatherers of seaweed or shells. Some supplement their incomes by growing crops (mainly rice and cassava), especially those in the southernmost regions. Shipbuilding is an important enterprise, particularly on Sibutu Island. The Sama can be divided into several relatively distinct groups, including the Balangini and the Pangutaran. Another major subgroup is the Jama Mapun, who live mainly in Cagayan de Tawi-Tawi and on the Turtle Islands.

The Sama pay greatest allegiance to their kinship group (tumpuk), who live clustered together. The group is headed by an elder who has political and religious authority. Some settlements are based not on kinship but on participation in a particular mosque. In some settlements it is normal for kinship groups to have the exclusive use of mosques.

The Samal Balangingi, originally a seafaring people, were specialists in state-sanctioned piracy during the 1800s. They engaged in slave-trading with the Tausug. Much of their present identity was shaped by a series of events that began in 1848, when the Spanish governor of the Philippines used superior ships to attack the Balangingi. The bloody battles illustrated the bravery and warrior mentality of the Samal. Men killed their own women and children before killing themselves once the Spanish had breached the walls of the fortifications. But half the Samal warriors avoided the carnage because they

were away from the fort during the attack. They tried to reestablish themselves and sought help from the Tausug Sultanate, which refused their requests. In fact, the Tausug requested help from the Spanish to totally eradicate the Balangingi, who eventually settled mostly on the Tawi-Tawi islands. Eventually, the Balangingi were forcibly resettled away from the coasts.115

Badjao

Often referred to as “Sea Gypsies” or “Sea Nomads,” the Muslim Badjao are the original indigenous people of the Sulu Islands.116 Traditionally, they lived full-time on boats called lepa-lepa, surviving on what they could harvest from the ocean. They ventured onto land only to barter their catches and resupply themselves. In recent years they have become more settled on the land along the coast, often living in houses built on stilts, particularly in Tawi-Tawi Province. Some of these stilt houses are built over water nearly 1 km (0.6 mi) offshore. The Badjao make their living as fishermen and deep-sea divers. The Badjao are such accomplished divers that they can dive to depths of 30 m (98 ft) with no scuba equipment. Many, especially among the elderly, suffer from hearing problems because of ruptured eardrums from their dives. The importance of the sea is reflected in many of their cultural rituals. One such custom involves tossing a newborn into the sea, where clan members dive in to save it. Many have fled to Malaysia and Indonesia to avoid the ongoing civil strife in the Philippines.117, 118, 119

Chapter 1 Assessment

1. The Tausug are concentrated mostly in Sulu Province in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).
   True
   The Tausug make up 85% of the population of Sulu Province. Approximately 75% of the Tausug live on Jolo Island; the rest live throughout Sulu Province, particularly on the islands of Pata, Marunggas, Tapul, and Lugus.

2. The hottest month in the Sulu Archipelago is August, when the temperatures average 38°C (100°F).
   False
   May is the hottest month with average temperatures of 31°C (88°F).

3. Shari’a law is not recognized in Sulu Province.
   False
   Shari’a courts have the right to preside over issues related to the Muslim population. Shari’a law applies only to Muslims and is limited to the southern Philippines and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

4. About two-thirds of the people in Sulu Province work in agriculture, fishing, or forestry.
   True
   Nearly 66% of the labor force of Sulu Province is engaged in agriculture, fishing, or forestry. The Tausug are primarily subsistence farmers, but many along the coastal areas make their living by fishing with nets, rattan traps, or hook-and-line techniques.

5. The Tausug have a strong sense of Filipino identity alongside their Tausug identity.
   False
   The Tausug often see themselves as superior to other groups and rarely regard themselves as Filipino.
CHAPTER 2: RELIGION

Introduction

Islam spread to the Philippines in the 14th century, and the Tausug were among the first Filipinos to embrace the new faith. Islam did not reach north of Mindanao, where Catholicism, which had been brought by the Spaniards, was firmly entrenched. From the 16th through the 19th centuries, the Spanish Catholics and the Muslims battled as Catholicism spread throughout the nation to become the dominant religion. The Tausug have continued to resist colonization and what they see as religious persecution by Christians.

The Tausug follow an orthodox form of Sunni Islam that includes (according to one observer), “Mecca pilgrims, religious teachers, religious tracts in Arabic script, pig-free homesteads, and toddy [alcohol]-free markets.” The Tausug also believe that each person has four souls that leave the body upon death. Tausug religious practices reflect this unique blend of Islamic and other beliefs.

The Tausug recognize three types of law. The first is Quranic law, which deals with God’s punishment following death. The second law is codified religious law carried out by the sultan and other Tausug officials. The Quranic and religious laws primarily deal with murder, slander, and adultery. The third law, customary law, deals with conflicts and traditional mores including issues of honor.

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Islam among the Tausug

The Tausug are Sunni Muslims who follow the Shafi’i school.129 Traditional animistic beliefs and traditional Islam blend with a folk Islam. Because Tausug males often behave in ways that are incompatible with Islamic doctrine, they begin to adhere to the religion when they are old enough to have settled down.130

Muslims practice the basic tenets of faith known as the Five Pillars. The first pillar is the reciting of the Muslim profession of faith (shahadah): “There is no true God (Tuhan) but God, and Muhammad is his prophet.” The second pillar is the ritual prayer (salat) performed five times a day. Among the Tausug, the elderly are the most devout. Friday prayers are most strictly observed on Jolo. Among young men, attendance is erratic. The young do not observe the prayer until they are ready to settle down.131, 132 The third pillar is giving (zakat); the word zakat means “purification” and “growth.” Alms must be given to the poor as acknowledgment of the gifts one has received. A minimum of 2.5% of one’s wealth must be contributed. In addition to the zakat, voluntary almsgiving (sadaqah) for the needy is encouraged.133 The Tausug observe this tenet if they reap a bountiful harvest, to avoid a poor harvest in the future. Those who cannot contribute money may do charitable acts.134 The fourth pillar is fasting (sawm) during the month of Ramadan. Most Tausug observe the fast at least part of the month but the elderly most strictly observe the ritual.135 The fifth pillar is a pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj) for those who can afford it. Few Tausug make the pilgrimage. The community expects pilgrims to exhibit exemplary conduct, thus deterring young men from joining a pilgrimage even if they are financially able.136, 137

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Care and Handling of the Quran

Muslims regard the Quran as sacred, and it should be treated with respect. Do not touch the Quran with dirty hands. Keep the Quran off the floor. If sitting on the floor, hold the Quran above the lap or waist. When not in use, protect the Quran with a dustcover and do not place anything on top of it. (Muslims will keep Quranic texts on the highest shelf of a bookcase). Finally, keep Qurans out of latrines.  

Old or damaged copies can be properly disposed of in one of two ways. Burning is acceptable if the process is conducted with respect. Texts should not be burned with trash or other items but can be buried. Before burying the text, it should be wrapped in something pure and then buried where people do not walk.

Religion and Government

The Philippine Constitution calls for the separation of religion and state. The Philippine government allows the practice of shari’a law through the Code of Muslim Personal Laws of the Philippines, which was signed into effect by then-President Marcos in 1977. All laws, including those of the shari’a code, must conform to the national constitution. In 1973, a task force was set up to consider the difficulties faced by the Moro (the name given to Muslims by the Spanish) as a religious and cultural minority, and to find ways to make shari’a civil code compatible with Philippine general law. The goal was to enable Muslims to make decisions in line with their faith in personal matters such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance. It applies only to Muslims and is applicable only in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). The shari’a courts also

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have jurisdiction over criminal matters involving Muslims. The national Supreme Court has the right to hear appeals of shari’a court decisions and may reverse, revise, or modify such decisions in accordance with national law.147

A severe lack of access and a disconnected judicial structure in the region create problems for the administration of Islamic law in the ARMM. This is reflected in the mix of shari’a and customary legal code (adat) that Muslim communities currently use to administer justice, which is meted out by datu (headman) rather than Islamic judges seated on the bench of a Philippine Court.148, 149, 150

**Influence of Religion on Daily Life**

Social patterns of interaction and behavior among the Tausug are informed by Islamic tradition and practices. The Tausug apply their unique understanding of Islamic law and the Quran but are also influenced by typical, secular Western practices of the Philippines.151

Religious observances include daily prayers, ritual fasting during the holy month of Ramadan, and several others. Weddings and funerals are normally conducted in accordance with Islamic tradition. Yet both rituals are heavily influenced by non-Islamic traditions, making them unique to the Tausug.152, 153, 154

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151 Ronald de Jong, “Tribes from Mindanao, the Tausug, People of the Current,” n.d., [http://www.aliawanenterprises.com/id64.html](http://www.aliawanenterprises.com/id64.html)


Early Tausug beliefs in animism manifest particularly in the use of traditional healers (mangungubat), and in wearing amulets for protection or to cure diseases.\textsuperscript{155, 156}

**Religion and Gender**

Males and females often are segregated in society. At family celebrations and feasts, women and the younger children generally stay inside the home while men socialize outside on the porch. Muslim tradition also suggests a clear division of labor and identifies what is men’s work. For the Tausug, this includes plowing and fishing, while women would care for the animals, gather fruits, and prepare food.\textsuperscript{157, 158}

Yet Tausug women enjoy more liberties than in other Muslim communities; women are free to move around the community as they wish. Often, their family responsibilities require this; moreover, they are allowed to mingle with men without risking their family honor.\textsuperscript{159}

**Religious Holidays and Celebrations**

The Philippines celebrates a number of traditional Christian holidays that are of relatively little significance to the Muslim population in the ARMM. In addition to these, several Islamic holidays are commemorated throughout the nation, especially among the Tausug and other Islamic groups.\textsuperscript{160}

*Maulid-al-nabi*

Muhammad’s birthday is celebrated in the third month of the lunar New Year, which in 2013 was 24 January.\textsuperscript{161} Each community mosque selects one evening for an all-night
celebration. Priests chant continuously in Arabic, and special flowers are placed in the center of the mosque to symbolize the Prophet. When the imam reaches a certain point in the service, each congregant stands up to hold a flower. Otherwise, the congregants seem unconcerned about the significance of the prayers, leaving that to clerical expertise. The service is noteworthy for its informality: Congregants pass the time by smoking, chatting, and gossiping about worldly matters. Around midnight they enjoy a communal feast in which each family brings a tray of food. Sharing food garners credit for generosity.\footnote{A. J. Abalahin, “Tausug,” in \textit{Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life}, 2nd ed., ed. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009), 4:959.}

\textit{Lailatul Isra Wal Mi Raj}


\textit{Ramadan}

Maintaining a fast during the daylight hours of this holy ninth month (on the lunar calendar) is a requirement for Muslims, exempting only the young, old, sick, and pregnant. The lack of food and water may cause people to be grumpy or tired. Often during Ramadan, business hours are erratic and some shops may be closed. As in other Muslim areas, it is polite for non-Muslims to refrain from eating, drinking, smoking, or chewing gum in public during Ramadan. The fast is broken on the first day of the following month by a large and celebratory feast. This day is known as \textit{Hari Raya} (\textit{Eid al-Fitr}). People wear their best clothes and visit each other, as well as venture to the nearest town for festivals and entertainment. Many also visit cemeteries to tend the gravesites of relatives.\footnote{Asean Festival, “Philippines Public Holidays 2013,” 24 May 2012, \url{http://aseanfestival.org/philippines-public-holidays-2013/}}\footnote{H. R. Khusha and C. Sather, “Tausug,” in \textit{Encyclopaedia of the South-East Asian Ethnography}, ed. N. S. Bisht and T. S. Bankoti (Delhi, India: Global Vision Publishing House, 2004), 644.}\footnote{A. J. Abalahin, “Tausug,” in \textit{Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life}, 2nd ed., ed. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009), 4:959.}
Hari Raya Hadji

Also known as Eid al-Adha, this is the festival of sacrifice. Celebrated at the end of the hajj (15 October in 2013), this day commemorates the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his son. Muslims celebrate with a feast during which one-third of the meat is given to the needy and one-third is shared with family and friends.¹⁷⁰ ¹⁷¹

Pagtulak bala

This holiday, literally named “sending away evil,” falls on successive Wednesdays during the second month of the Muslim calendar. It is a ritual held on the beach. Prayers and ablutions are conducted as a means of washing away accumulated bala, a form of supernatural evil believed to accumulate in the body. It can manifest in many forms including disease, drought, and warfare. Rafts are filled with various foods and a live chicken before being released into the current to lead the spirits away from the land.¹⁷² ¹⁷³ ¹⁷⁴

Buildings of Worship

Mosques are places of worship for Muslims. Both men and women may attend mosque in the Philippines, although women must stay in the back, out of sight of the men. Normally, visitors are allowed but it is polite to seek permission before entering.¹⁷⁵ ¹⁷⁶

The largest mosque in the Philippines, capable of holding 1,200 worshippers, is the Golden Masjid near Cotabato City. Built as part of a bilateral agreement with the Sultanate of Negara Brunei Darussalam, the mosque resembles many in the Middle East. The mosque is still under construction but will eventually house a sports field and educational facilities, including a madrassa.¹⁷⁷

The nation’s oldest mosque, designated a national shrine, is the Sheik Karim Makdum Mosque on the island of Simunul in Tawi-Tawi Province. The mosque was built in 1380 by an Arab trader and missionary. The building has been rebuilt but the original wooden pillars exist inside the building. Inside the mosque is Sheik al-Makdum’s tomb, which is a popular pilgrimage site. ¹⁷⁸, ¹⁷⁹

**Exchange 1: May I enter the mosque?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>May I enter the mosque?</th>
<th>manjaaree baha koo somood pa lom sin masjid?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exchange 2: Must I take off my shoes inside the mosque?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Must I take off my shoes inside the mosque?</th>
<th>sobaay ku eegun in tawpa bang somood pa lom sin masjid?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although mosque designs vary, all mosques include several elements. Most have four walls and the *qibla* is the wall facing Mecca. In the *qibla* is a small niche called the *mihrab*. To the right of the *mihrab* stands a pulpit, or *minbar*, where the imam stands while giving services. Mosques also have a minaret from which the calls to daily prayers are issued. Many mosques also have an ablution fountain in the center of the courtyard (*sahan*), at which Muslims may conduct ritual washing before prayers. ¹⁸⁰, ¹⁸¹

**Exchange 3: When do you pray?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>When do you pray?</th>
<th>ko ono kaw magsambahaayang?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>We pray at noon.</td>
<td>magsambahaayang kamee sin ogto sooga</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exchange 4: Do I need to cover my head?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Do I need to cover my head?</th>
<th>sobaay akoo magteerung?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Behavior in Buildings of Worship

Visitors to mosques should be respectful and follow several basic rules. Remove hats and sunglasses before entering the mosque. Don’t make loud noises and avoid unnecessary conversation while in the mosque. Do not chew gum or take food and drinks inside. Turn off cell phones.¹⁸²

When sitting, do not point feet toward the qibla, which is the wall facing Mecca. Dress modestly by wearing clothes that leave as little skin exposed as possible. Women should wear ankle-length skirts or loose-fitting long pants and long-sleeved blouses. A scarf should be worn that covers the hair. Long pants are appropriate for men along with plain shirts. Short-sleeved shirts are acceptable for men. Do not wear brightly colored T-shirts with advertisements or written messages. Some mosques may provide appropriate coverings for tourists.¹⁸³, ¹⁸⁴

Men and women often use separate entrances at mosques. Signs will indicate the appropriate entrance. Muslims enter the mosque with the right foot first and leave the mosque with the left foot first. If visiting during prayer times, stand quietly toward the rear of the mosque and avoid taking photos. Mosques are often open to tourists during Ramadan, but visitors should be sensitive to the fasting requirements and avoid eating, smoking, or drinking near mosques during this time. During Ramadan, visits to mosques should be made during the daylight hours to avoid intruding on the dinners that often are hosted in the mosque after sunset.¹⁸⁵, ¹⁸⁶

Chapter 2 Assessment

1. The Tausug resisted efforts to convert to Islam when it was introduced in the 14th century.
   False
   In the 14th century, the Tausug were among the first Filipinos to adopt the Islamic religion and way of life.

2. Men take up Islamic practice in their youth.
   False
   Because Tausug males often behave in males that are incompatible with Islamic doctrine, they begin to adhere to the religion when they are old enough to settle down. Among young men, attendance at Friday prayers is erratic.

3. Because of their strict adherence to Islamic beliefs, Tausug women are limited in their movements outside their homes.
   False
   Tausug women are free to move around the community as they wish and as their family responsibilities require. Moreover, they are allowed to mingle with men without risking their family honor.

4. Muslim men and women pray together during communal prayers on Fridays.
   False
   In the communal Friday prayer, men sit in front while women are restricted to the back.

5. Tausug Muslims practice rituals, such as pagtulak bala that are not strictly Islamic in origin.
   True
   *Pagtulak bala* is a ritual means of washing away evil. Many rituals within the Tausug community contain elements of their animistic pre-Islamic beliefs.
CHAPTER 3: TRADITIONS

Introduction

The Tausug people are an Islamic group that has occupied the southern archipelago of Sulu in the Philippines for about 1,000 years. Their name means “People of the Current,” reflecting their long history as sailors, pearl divers, and traders. They were the first people in the area to convert to Islam. They are relatively small in number: around 850,000 according to a 2007 survey, and about 75% of them live on Jolo Island. The Tausugs have developed and maintained a unique culture that includes strong family ties, warrior traditions, and a folk Islam. Although linguistically and racially similar to other groups in the Philippines, Tausugs do not consider themselves Filipino.

The Tausugs have a reputation for bravery stemming partly from 300 years of intermittent warfare against Spanish colonizers. They generally view themselves as superior to other Philippine Muslims (Maguindanaos of North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Maranaos, Samals and Bajaus, the Yakans, the Ilanons and Sangirs, the Melabugnans and Jama Mapuns). Tausugs follow many traditional warrior ways, and consider running from a confrontation to be shameful. One of their favorite adages reminds them to “never admit defeat as long as you live.” Their regard for nature and the spirit world is reflected in their many traditions, including dances. Much of their culture is disappearing as the modern world infringes upon their lives, but they remain fiercely loyal to each other and their traditions.

The name Moro is the Spanish word for Moors. In the Philippines, it became associated with savagery, piracy, and violence. During the 1934 convention to write a national constitution, delegates from the south implored their counterparts from the north to cease calling Muslims “Moros.” It implied that they were something other than full-fledged

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187 Ronald de Jong, “Tribes from Mindanao, the Tausug, People of the Current,” n.d., http://www.aliawanenterprises.com/id64.html
190 Ronald de Jong, “Tribes from Mindanao, the Tausug, People of the Current,” n.d., http://www.aliawanenterprises.com/id64.html
Filipinos. In the late 1960s, a form of identity politics emerged as part of the independence movement. The term “Moro” became a source of pride. Nonetheless, although it is a useful label when dealing with outsiders, it obscures the real cultural and linguistic differences among Filipino Muslims, who regard themselves as members of their distinct ethnic groups. This is especially true for the Tausug, who feel superior because they are descendants of the Sulu Sultan.

Special Issues

Weapons

Much has been made of the Tausug “culture of violence.” Both Filipinos and foreign observers are aware of Tausug males’ reputation as fierce warriors who are never without their daggers (kris) or, more recently, guns. The Tausug male’s role as protector is foremost and explains his affinity for guns. In fact, Sulu is awash in weapons and almost every household has at least an assault rifle, despite few material possessions. Pantakasi refers to a situation in which every adolescent and adult male in a given area converges to annihilate a pinned-down enemy.

Yet guns also have non-lethal, recreational uses and are fired on holidays as part of the celebration. According to one visitor, “During lunar eclipses and New Year’s, the sky above the capital, Jolo City, looks like the first night of Operation Desert Storm over

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Baghdad as folks unload flaming rivers of phosphorous-coated ordnance into the heavens to chase off evil spirits.”

Clan Conflicts

The importance of bravery is instilled in every Tausug male. There is no Tausug word for violence as physical force, but the closest word is maisug, which refers to personal lifestyle and means “very masculine” or “brave.” For a Tausug male, being combative or violent is viewed as an act of bravery. If an offense is committed against him, the shame he feels is reflected in his diminished worth in the eyes of those around him and particularly in the eyes of his enemy. Being unwilling to exact revenge upsets the defined expectation between adversaries.

Exchange 5: Did these people threaten you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Did these people threaten you?</th>
<th>bakas kaw shangupan sin manga taw eenee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>uwaay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Tausug male must protect and defend not only himself and his family, but his entire clan, as a matter of reciprocal obligation. He will endanger his life for a family member, no matter how distant a relative, to ensure that the clan will rally to his defense when his life is in jeopardy.

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Exchange 6: How is your family?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>How is your family?</th>
<th>beeya dee in da in tawta ya nak moo?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>They are doing fine, thank you.</td>
<td>moora mooraahaan, marayaw eesaab seela, magsukool</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When a Tausug male publicly states that he is angry with another, it implies that revenge will be taken. For the Tausug, the most sensible form of retaliation for serious problems is killing the offender. Clan conflicts, known as *rido* in Tagalog and *pagbanta* in Tausug, are akin to honor killings. Refusal to demand payment of a blood debt from his enemies opens a Tausug male to the charge that he is without shame (*way sipug*). Shame reflects awareness of the individual as a member of a community.

**Kinship and Friendship**

It is virtually impossible to underestimate the importance of kinship among the Tausug. Degrees of loyalty increase with degrees of relatedness and frequency of interaction. Tausug kinship rules are complex and follow paternal and maternal lines. Kinship requires obligation, especially in matters related to violence. A Tausug is expected to know the names of all kin through second and third cousins. Knowing who are close kin is a matter of survival, because one depends upon these kin for support and assistance in all matters.

The Tausug meaning of friendship involves a social contract that obliges reciprocity, particularly concerning violence. Reciprocity levels typically increase but rarely decrease. A Tausug who fails to live up to these obligations brings shame upon himself and his friend. One category of friendship, sanctioned religiously and legally, likens friends to brothers. Such relationships are not always mutual but can be made by

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village headmen who seek an honorable way to end feuds. Such friends are not required to render assistance but they are prevented from inflicting any violence.\textsuperscript{213, 214, 215}

**Attitudes Toward Conflict Resolution**

Tausug culture does not believe in compromise. Instead, discussions must result in *sulut*, or complete satisfaction for all parties. According to cultural values, conflicts should be made public and open rather than kept private. Local and regional officials, as well as members of the aristocracy holding the title of *datu*, have the authority to act as *sara*, or enforcers of the law.\textsuperscript{216, 217} Issues related to family matters (including marital disputes) are often handled by religious leaders. But in other legal matters, religious authorities are secondary to headmen or *datu*.\textsuperscript{218}

**Formulaic Codes of Politeness**

Tausug-speaking people are generally formal in their initial greetings. Handshakes are a common form of greeting and should begin with the eldest person.\textsuperscript{219} If women are present, it is polite to wait for them to extend their hand first.

**Exchange 7: Good morning.**

| Soldier: | Good morning. | salaam alaykum |
| Local:   | Good morning. | alaykum was salaam |

In the Philippines, it is expected to use the person’s surname preceded by their professional or honorific title until one is invited to use their first name. Often, business associates develop personal relationships, and nicknames may be used between friends. When given a nickname, it is considered rude to not allow people to use it.\textsuperscript{220}

\textsuperscript{213} Herbert A. Daniels, “No Child Left Behind: COIN Strategies to Deny Recruitment of Adolescent Males in the Southern Philippines” (master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2009), 17, 19, \url{http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a514315.pdf}


\textsuperscript{217} The Tausug believe that aristocrats who hold the title of *datu* can trace their patrilineal lineage back to previous sultans at least to the 15th century.


\textsuperscript{219} Kwintessential, “Philippines: Language, Culture, Customs and Etiquette,” n.d., \url{http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/global-etiquette/philippines-country-profile.html}

\textsuperscript{220} Luis Francia, *Passport Philippines* (San Rafael, CA: World Trade Press, 1997), 70.
Exchange 8: Hi, Mr. Ali.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Hello, Mr. Ali.</th>
<th>as salaam alaykum, bapa alee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Hello!</td>
<td>alaykum was salaam!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soldier:</td>
<td>Are you doing well?</td>
<td>marayaw da saab kaw?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tausug often greet equals with first names and often use kinship terms when dealing with relatives. The terms uncle (bapaq) and aunt (babu) are often used with non-blood relatives as well.221

Exchange 9: How are you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>How are you?</th>
<th>maw noonoo da kaw?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Fine, very well.</td>
<td>marayaw da eesaab</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exchange 10: Good evening!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Good evening!</th>
<th>salaam alaykum!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Good evening!</td>
<td>alaykum was salaam!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hospitality and Gift Giving

In Filipino culture in general, when invited to a person’s home for a larger event, it is acceptable to arrive up to 30 minutes late; any later may be considered rude. For a smaller gathering or for meeting at a restaurant, arrive on time. Filipinos often will not take a casual dinner invitation seriously, so invitations are usually extended three times before one accepts.222

When complimenting the woman of the house, it is important not to refer to her as the “hostess.” This word is used when referring to a call girl and should not be used to thank someone for their hospitality.223

Exchange 11: I really appreciate your hospitality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>I really appreciate your hospitality.</th>
<th>magsukool tood ha panayma neeyo kamoo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>It is nothing.</td>
<td>uwaay day san</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When dinner is ready the host will ask everyone to move to the dining area and will seat each person. The host will also alert everyone when to serve themselves. Meals are often

served family-style, with large dishes set in the middle of the table, or buffet style, where everyone serves themselves.²²⁴

**Exchange 12: This food is very good.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>This food is very good.</th>
<th>masaraap tood in pagkaw neenee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>It’s byangang.</td>
<td>pee yan gag san eenee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Gift Giving*

As a general rule throughout the Philippines, show thanks for hospitality by bringing small gifts. Because the Tausug are Muslim, flowers and sweets are the most well-received items. Alcohol should be avoided because pious Muslims are not permitted to drink it. Chrysanthemums and white lilies should be avoided because white flowers are associated with funerals. Just as a person’s appearance is important, a gift should also be wrapped elegantly with proper presentation in mind. When giving a gift, it might not be opened immediately because Filipinos do not open gifts in front of the giver. If sending gifts of food, such as a fruit basket, avoid doing so until after the event. Sending it before or bringing it along may imply that the host is unable to supply enough food—such an implication can cause hiya, or shame.²²⁵

**Exchange 13: This gift is for you.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>This gift is for you.</th>
<th>tabooka in pagsampaay namoo kaymoo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>I cannot accept this.</td>
<td>maaha paakoo, sa dee ku manjaaree tabookun eenee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Tausug notion of reciprocity is a central cultural value. Failing to measure up to reciprocal obligations can bring shame and can insult the person to whom the debt is owed. This plays out in critical ways in the process of gift-giving, where even a perceived slight can end an alliance, destroy friendships, and result in violent feuds.²²⁶ Even debts of gratitude must be repaid spontaneously or there may be a sense of rejection among the Tausug that often culminates in rage. The Tausug, ever conscious of the burden of reciprocity, often are careful to repay debts with interest to avoid shame.²²⁷ Shame means

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that an individual has lost face or esteem in another’s eyes. The way to recapture such esteem is to fight; even if the fight is lost, the individual gains status by not appearing cowardly. In some cases, a Tausug man may bring along his kinsmen and friends to help.228

Food & Eating Habits

Tausug cuisine is heavily influenced by Malaysia, Brunei, Sumatra, and Indonesia. Unlike much of the rest of the Philippines, it does not have strong Spanish influences. Muslim Tausug do not eat pork. Dishes are often accompanied by heavily spiced, coconut-milk based curries or by sauces.229, 230 Examples include piyanggang, a chicken dish made with a green curry of coconut, lemongrass, and garlic; and beef kurma, a curried stew dish.231 Tausug satti is a skewer of barbecued chicken or beef, served with rice that was cooked in young coconut leaves and accompanied by a sweet and spicy sauce.232

Rice is considered a “prestige” food and is reserved for feasts or guests. Maize is often mixed with rice as a staple, or the Tausug eat cassava, a starchy staple that is similar to potatoes. Simple meals often include dried fish and sautéed vegetables added to a starch called kaunan. Lamay is another popular dish, in which fish and vegetables are stewed with onions, tomatoes, ginger, and lemongrass. Tiula itum is a savory beef broth spiced with onions, lemongrass, garlic, chili, turmeric, and burned coconut.233, 234 Tausug desserts include sweet cakes (such as baulu) made with rice flour. Putli mandi are sweet rice balls filled with coconut jam.235, 236

Exchange 14: What is the name of this dish?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>What is the name of this dish?</th>
<th>unee pagko neenee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>This is tamu.</td>
<td>taahmoo eenee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Exchange 15: The food tastes so good.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>The food tastes so good.</th>
<th>maa nanam in pagka un eenee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Thank you.</td>
<td>magsukool</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Food is often eaten with the hands while sitting on the floor. In accordance with Muslim tradition, only the right hand should be used to touch or pass food because the left hand is considered unclean.237, 238

The Tausug love to drink coffee. Each day typically begins with coffee for breakfast and another cup before leaving for work. Coffee is drunk throughout the day, particularly at the 3 p.m. break when it is often complimented with sweets. Coffee houses are common places throughout Jolo Town for people to meet, drink coffee, and socialize.239,240

Dress Codes

In Sulu, the patadyong is a featured piece of traditional clothing that resembles a sarong. Both men and women wear loose baggy pants known as sawal or kantyu. For men, the sawal is generally worn with a polo shirt whereas women usually wear a sambra or collarless V-neck blouse with short sleeves. Sometimes women will wear a sablay, a long-sleeved blouse reaching the hips. Another popular top for women, the biyatawi, features a tight-fitting bodice that flares at the waist. Common headgear for men is a cloth hat with geometric or floral designs known as the ppis. If a man has made the hajj to Mecca, he may wear a white cap called a kadi.241

Exchange 16: How should I dress?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>How should I dress?</th>
<th>beeya dee in akoo manamoo?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Wear loose fitting clothes which cover your body.</td>
<td>sooloogha in panamoo bokoon masigpeet eeban dee katampanan in baran moo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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But many Tausug have adopted conservative Western dress. Some Tausug women wear the hijab to cover their hair. Muslim officials and employees are required to conform to Islamic standards of dress. For the Philippines in general, in a business environment, conservative dark-colored suits are appropriate for both men and women. Filipinos will not remove their suit jackets unless the most important or senior person does so first.

**Exchange 17: Is this acceptable to wear?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Is this acceptable to wear?</th>
<th>manjaaree ku sologon in bajoo eenee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Non-Religious Celebrations**

The Philippines has a number of secular holidays that are also legal holidays in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). New Year’s Day is celebrated on 1 January. The Day of Valor (Araw ng Kagitingan), celebrated on 9 April, commemorates the Filipino fighters in World War II. Labor Day is celebrated on 1 May. Independence Day, commemorating the Philippine’s independence from Spain in 1898, falls on 12 June and is often filled with military parades. For the first time, the ARMM officials and the military jointly celebrated the day in 2012. Ninoy Aquino Day, on 21 August, observes the anniversary of the 1983 assassination of Senator Benigno “Ninoy” Aquino, Jr. upon his return to the Philippines from exile. National Heroes’ Day, celebrated on the fourth Monday of August (26 August 2013), honors all those who

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gave their lives in sacrifice for Philippine freedom.\textsuperscript{251} Bonifacio Day, on 30 November, honors Andrés Bonifacio in the struggle for freedom against Spain.\textsuperscript{252, 253} The Islamic New Year, on 5 November in 2013, is celebrated in the ARMM. Worshippers often gather at mosques for special prayers and to reflect on their lives.\textsuperscript{254, 255} Rizal Day (Araw ni Rizal), on 30 December, honors José Rizal, who advocated for reform under Spanish colonial rule.\textsuperscript{256, 257}

Dos and Don’ts

Do get someone’s attention by motioning downward gently or making the “psssst” sound instead of pointing at them.

Do show appreciation for any help received.

Do show respect to those older than you regardless of their professional status and educational level.

Don’t point at someone. This is considered extremely rude.

Don’t use curse words. Most Filipinos understand enough English to know what you are saying, and cursing is not appreciated.

Don’t use your left hand for touching food or people. Muslims reserve the left for activities associated with the bathroom, and it is considered unclean.

Don’t stare at people. Prolonged eye contact is considered impolite and can even be seen as a form of intimidation.

Don’t speak in a loud voice; this is considered rude.

Don't draw or otherwise depict human or animal forms. The Tausug follow the Islamic belief that only God can create living creatures.
Chapter 3 Assessment

1. The word “Moro” is of Tausug origin.
   False
   The word “Moro” is Spanish for Moors. In the Philippines, the name Moro became associated with savagery, piracy, and violence.

2. The Tausug are strong nationalists who consider themselves to be Filipino.
   False
   Although linguistically and racially similar to other groups in the Philippines, the Tausug do not consider themselves to be Filipino.

3. Weapons are an important part of Tausug culture and nearly every household has at least one assault rifle.
   True
   The Tausug male’s role as protector is foremost and explains his affinity for guns. Sulu is awash in weapons and almost every household has at least an assault rifle, despite few material possessions.

4. A public proclamation of anger by a Tausug implies that clan conflict will be resolved with revenge.
   True
   When a Tausug male publicly states that he is angry with another, it implies that revenge will be taken. For the Tausug, the most sensible form of retaliation for serious problems is killing the offender.

5. Kinship obligations follow only paternal lines among the Tausug.
   False
   Tausug kinship rules are complex and follow paternal and maternal lines. Kinship requires obligation, especially in areas related to violence.
CHAPTER 4: URBAN LIFE

Introduction

Although the Philippines has experienced rapid urbanization in recent years, the pattern of urbanization has been uneven. In the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), about 21% of the population lived in urban areas in 2000—only a small increase from 1980. About 85% of Sulu Province’s 1.2 million are Tausug. Like much of the population in the ARMM, the Tausug live in small settlements. Jolo Town, a predominantly Tausug area in Sulu Province, is one of the most highly urbanized areas in the region and the only urban area in Sulu Province. Five other municipalities in the province have populations of 50,000 or more and are officially classified as partly urban.

Urban and Economic Issues

Like any urban area, Jolo Town faces serious challenges, but some are not typical urban challenges. One of the largest problems is dealing with internally displaced persons (IDPs). In October 2012, more than 33,000 persons had been displaced in Mindanao, and two-thirds of them were displaced by armed violence. Besides armed conflict and rebel insurgency, the second major cause of displacement is flooding.

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265 Institute for Autonomy and Governance, “Urban Safety Profile in the ARMM,” Autonomy and Peace Review 6, no. 4 (October–December 2010), http://www.internal-
Jolo Town sits only about 1 m (3 ft) above sea level on a flood plain open to the Sulu Sea. Flooding is a constant problem. The outdated drainage system that serves the city is insufficient to handle the overflow. The problem is further worsened by improper waste disposal. Many residents live on stilts houses built on the coastal shelf and simply throw their waste along the coastline or along canals in the city. This clogs drains and canals, and leads to floods. 

Crime and security are major concerns, particularly in Jolo, where bombing, illegal drugs, criminal gang activity, and the presence of rebel groups present serious security risks to residents. In Jolo Town, the two barangays with the most serious problems are Bus-Bus and Kasanyangan. Residents generally feel unsafe in the city and believe the police are ineffective. The situation has become so stark that students and teachers rush home after schools end at 5:30 p.m. to avoid being victims of rape, robbery, or bombings. Rido, or violent interclan feuding, is a common occurrence. Many parents send their children to school in neighboring cities such as Zamboanga or Cebu.

Poverty is problematic throughout the nation but in the provinces of the ARMM, approximately 60% of people live below the poverty line. Sulu Province has a higher estimate of 65% of the population below the poverty line. Unemployment is highest for ages 15–24, with approximately 26% of young men and 34% of young women without work. Jolo Town is a commercial center filled with small-scale vendors in the

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public markets or along the roads. These businesses are the major source of employment for city residents. The production of abaca fiber is another major source of employment and income.275

Healthcare

The Philippines lags behind other Southeast Asian and North Asian countries in most health indicators. Improvements have been made in recent decades but progress has slowed. Indicators vary substantially across regions. In the ARMM, the life expectancies of men (58 years) and women (62 years) are considerably below the national average of 72 years.276, 277 The government provides free use of its tax-funded National Health Service to all citizens.278, 279 The dual health system within the Philippines uses the public and private sector to provide healthcare to the people. Public healthcare is generally free, although in recent years, some charges have been introduced for specific services. The private sector operates on the fee-for-service model, charging for services rendered.280, 281

Healthcare in the ARMM is provided through a public sector health system managed by the regional government. The system is among the most inadequate in the nation and is generally unable to meet the demands of the population. The ARMM has the fewest hospitals, the lowest ratio of healthcare workers to patients, and the worst health indicators in the nation. Sulu Province has 210 beds in 7 hospitals while Tawi-Tawi Province has 87 beds in 3 hospitals.282, 283 In 2006, the ARMM had 78 doctors and 114 nurses to serve the entire region.284

Exchange 18: Is there a hospital nearby?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Is there a hospital nearby?</th>
<th>awun hospeetal masook dee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes, in the center of town.</td>
<td>awun, ha geetungan sin kawman eenee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exchange 19: Is Dr. Omar in, sir?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Is Dr. Omar in, sir?</th>
<th>bapa, yaaree hee doktol omar?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prescription drugs are often in short supply partly because there is a lack of doctors who can write prescriptions. Over half the nation’s pharmacies are in and around Manila. Most healthcare workers are employed in and around urban areas, so the problems there are less acute than in rural areas.\(^{285}\)

**Education**

Sulu Province sits at the bottom rung in the Philippines in terms of literacy. Only 42% of Sulu’s population is literate.\(^{286}\) As many as 56% of people in some parts of Sulu have never been to school.\(^{287}\) Access can be a problem because there are only about 383 elementary schools, 25 high schools, and 4 colleges in the province. Of the 410 barangays in Sulu Province, 119 have no schools, and throughout the ARMM, about 20% of villages have no schools.\(^{288, 289}\) In 2005, nearly 25% of school-aged children in the ARMM did not attend school and were unemployed.\(^{290}\) Nearly 60% of children drop out

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of elementary school. Many students fail to go on to secondary schools or institutions of higher education. The major reasons for students leaving school are poverty, poor quality education, and lack of access. Another reason for poor educational attainment is that students and teachers are afraid to attend classes because of threats from the terrorist group, Abu Sayyaf.

Elementary education, grades 1–6, is compulsory for students between the ages of 6 and 11. This basic education is divided into two components: primary (grades 1–4) and intermediate (grades 5–6). Students receive a certificate of graduation upon completing their studies. Secondary education consists of 4 additional years of education. Schools may be either public or private. Private schools are located mostly in urban areas. Madrassas provide a traditional Islamic education, and the ARMM has about 600 to 1,000 such schools, which enroll between 60,000 and 100,000 children. Many of these schools do not comply with national educational standards: they operate outside the national formal education system and students do not receive recognized degrees. The schools often lack teaching materials and even furniture. Teachers earn significantly less than the national average for teachers.

Restaurants

Jolo has a variety of restaurants and eateries.\textsuperscript{299} Tipping is not generally expected.\textsuperscript{300}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exchange 20: Put this all on one bill.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soldier: Put this all on one bill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local: Okay.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exchange 21: I would like coffee or tea.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soldier: I would like coffee or tea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local: Sure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A popular breakfast in Sulu is \textit{satti}, which is made up of barbecued beef bits served on skewers and steamed rice balls cooked in coconut leaves (\textit{puso}). These are topped with a curry-like sauce.\textsuperscript{301}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exchange 22: Are you still serving breakfast?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soldier: Are you still serving breakfast?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local: Yes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another popular dish is \textit{sabaw maymu}. This soup is made from ripe green bananas cooked with eggs and coconut cream, and is served during the month of Ramadan.\textsuperscript{302}


\textsuperscript{301} Manila Times, “Pork-less Cuisine from the South,” 22 June 2007.

\textsuperscript{302} Kcaiyah D., “Tausug Fasting,” Soul Hijabified (blog), 30 August 2009, \url{http://www.hijabified.net/2009_08_01_archive.html}
Exchange 23: I’d like some hot soup.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>I’d like some hot soup.</th>
<th>mabaya akoo sin sabaw mapasu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Sure.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tausug cuisine is noted for being spicy, and *tiula itum* (black soup) is particularly spicy. It is a dark, chicken-or beef-flavored broth prepared with ginger, turmeric, and burned coconut meat. It is served on special occasions such as weddings, but may be available at restaurants.\(^{303}\)

Exchange 24: May I have a glass of water?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>May I have a glass of water?</th>
<th>manjaaree mangayoo hangka basoo toobig eenomoon?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes, right away.</td>
<td>hoon, manjaaree eesaab</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exchange 25: What type of meat is this?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>What type of meat is this?</th>
<th>unoo in shin baaya eenee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Lamb.</td>
<td>beelee beelee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is said that no Filipino meal is complete without dessert. Fresh fruit such as mangosteens, durians, or lanzones are popular choices.\(^{304}\) Favorite desserts include prepared sweet cakes, rice cakes, or steamed *putli-mandi*, which is made from cassava rolled in grated coconut.\(^{305}\)

Exchange 26: Do you have dessert?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Do you have dessert?</th>
<th>awun kamoo bubunglaw atawa pagka un maleemoo?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes, we have <em>apam.</em></td>
<td>awun kamee apam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In the Philippines it is customary for the host to pay the bill. 306

**Exchange 27: Can I have my total bill, please?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Can I have my total bill, please?</th>
<th>manjaaree ku eengatun bang peela in gastus ku?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes, of course.</td>
<td>hoon, manjaaree eesaab</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exchange 28: Where is your restroom?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Where is your restroom?</th>
<th>haree eenen kasilyas neeyo?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>That room to your left, over there.</td>
<td>yadtoo, ha baleek pa tu omoo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Markets and Bazaars**

**Money and Currency**

The official unit of currency is the Philippine peso (PHP). 307 In November 2012, USD 1 was equal to approximately PHP 41. 308 ATM machines are readily available in most urban areas but may be lacking in rural settings. Credit cards are widely accepted in larger towns and cities. But in small towns and on infrequently visited islands, it is difficult to use credit cards. Credit card fraud is widespread, so be vigilant when using credit cards and always keep the card in sight. It is easy to find moneychangers in most city centers, or in shopping malls and major department stores. Although moneychangers generally offer the best rates, it is safer to exchange money in banks or hotels. 309

**Exchange 29: Do you accept US currency?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Do you accept US currency?</th>
<th>toomabok kaw sin sin meeleekan?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>No, we only accept pesos.</td>
<td>dee, pagtabokun namoo hadja in peysos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Shopping

Jolo Town is the commercial center of Jolo Island and the showpiece of Sulu Province. It features over 4,000 retail stores plus many small vendors sell in public markets or on the roadside near the commercial area.310

Exchange 30: How much longer will you be here?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>How much longer will you be here?</th>
<th>beeya dee in pa in loghay mo dee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Three more hours.</td>
<td>tung ka jam pa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exchange 31: Please, buy something from me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local:</th>
<th>Please, buy something from me.</th>
<th>bang manjaaree, awun pabihum ku kaymoo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soldier:</td>
<td>Sorry, I have no money left.</td>
<td>maapa akoo, sa uwaay na sin nakapin kakoo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Markets in urban areas are unsafe. Recently, several people have died in or near commercial shopping areas after explosions linked to terrorist attacks.311, 312

Aside from offering food and other amenities, markets may also sell local handicrafts. The Tausug are known as fine basket makers, weavers, and potters.313, 314

Exchange 32: Do you sell pis?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Do you sell pis?</th>
<th>magleeto kaw sin pees sin heenagan daayin dee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exchange 33: Is the bazaar nearby?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Is the bazaar nearby?</th>
<th>awun taboo masook dee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes, over there on the right.</td>
<td>awun, yadtoo pa to oo moo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those who look to purchase an item should be aware that vendors may only have small change. Therefore it is important to carry smaller bills of the local currency.  

**Exchange 34: Can you give me change for this?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Can you give me change for this?</th>
<th>awun heekaahug moo dee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>uwaay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exchange 35: Do you have any more of these?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Do you have any more of these?</th>
<th>awun pa eenee kaneeyo?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>uwaay na</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once an item is located, vendors will usually let potential customers examine their wares. If you start negotiating for a bargain, the expectation is that both parties will eventually decide on an agreeable price. Do not start bargaining unless you really intend to buy the item.  

**Exchange 36: May I examine this close up?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>May I examine this close up?</th>
<th>manjaaree ku keeta oo eenee ha masook?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Sure.</td>
<td>kadool ee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exchange 37: Can I buy *pis* with this much money?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Can I buy <em>pis</em> with this much money?</th>
<th>sarang na baha in sin eenee ha soopaya makaabee akoo sin pees?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>dee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Transportation

Terrorists have previously targeted transportation hubs. Travelers are advised to exercise caution when lingering in any place where the public congregates. Foreigners are also advised against using buses because of the threat of kidnapping and possible harm. Except for authorized taxis, all forms of public transportation, including jeepneys and buses, are unsafe and should be avoided.317, 318

Exchange 38: Will the bus be here soon?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Will the bus be here soon?</th>
<th>magdaratung na bahay in tarak padjak?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exchange 39: Is there a gas station nearby?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Is there a gas station nearby?</th>
<th>awun pagbeehan sin gaas masook dee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>awun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Driving is dangerous because of poor road conditions, erratic driving habits, and threats of insurgency and terrorism. Driving at night, especially off the national highways, should be avoided.319

Exchange 40: Is there a good auto mechanic nearby?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Is there a good auto mechanic nearby?</th>
<th>awun magdadayaw sin sasakataan masook dee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>awun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Exchange 41: Where can I rent a car?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Where can I rent a car?</th>
<th>haree in in pagpadjakan sin sasakataan?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>yadtoo hatyangee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no rail service in the Sulu Archipelago.\(^{320}\)

Exchange 42: Is there a train station nearby?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Is there a train station nearby?</th>
<th>awun trin masook dee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>uwaay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other than ferries, the main intra-island form of transportation is air. The European Commission has banned all Philippine-certified air carriers because of an inability to verify compliance with international safety standards.\(^{321}\) Similarly, the United States Federal Aviation Administration has found that the Philippines does not comply with international safety standards.\(^{322}\) Ferries are known to be rundown and are often overloaded. Combined with the lack of safety equipment, this has led to loss of life, as in a June 2009 ferry disaster in which 900 people died. Piracy also represents a real risk to sea travelers in the Philippines. Ferries should be transportation of last resort that are used only when there are no other options.\(^{323}, 324\)

Exchange 43: Which road leads to the airport?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Which road leads to the airport?</th>
<th>haree in in dan todjoo pa landing?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>The road heading east.</td>
<td>in dan todjoo pa sadlopan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To minimize problems of safety and security, taxis should be authorized from hotels. Avoid hailing taxis on the street and do not get into a taxi that already has passengers. While driving, be sure that all doors are locked and the windows are closed.\(^{325}, 326\)

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Exchange 44: Where can I get a cab?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Where can I get a cab?</th>
<th>hawnoo akoo makalag sin taksee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Over there.</td>
<td>daayin deeto</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exchange 45: Can you take me there?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Can you take me there?</th>
<th>ka agaran moo akoo madtoo?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes, I can.</td>
<td>hoon, ka agaran ta kaw</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Street Crimes and Solicitation

The greatest risk to personal safety comes from terrorist activity in the Sulu Archipelago. In March 2012, a bomb thought to be planted by the al-Qaeda linked group, Abu Sayyaf, exploded in a commercial district on Jolo Island. Kidnapping for ransom is a particular risk in the ARMM and foreigners have been targets in recent months. The situation is sufficiently serious that U.S. government employees require authorization to travel to the Sulu Archipelago. Travelers should avoid going to the region. Nevertheless, the latest police reports from ARMM suggest that the region has the lowest crime rate in the nation.

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Chapter 4 Assessment

1. Most Tausug live in urban areas.  
   False  
   In the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), about 21% of the population lived in urban areas in 2000, up only 10% from 1980. Much of the population in the ARMM, including the Tausug, live in small settlements.

2. Violent interclan feuds are relatively common in urban areas.  
   True  
   Rido, or violent interclan feuding, is a common occurrence.

3. Public transportation, although often unreliable, is generally a safe option.  
   False  
   Taxis arranged through hotels are generally safe. Because of the poor condition of vehicles as well as the threat of armed robbery or kidnapping, all other forms of public transportation, including jeepneys and buses, are unsafe.

4. The greatest threat to people in urban areas is criminal gangs.  
   False  
   The greatest risk to personal safety comes from terrorist activity, which is high in the Sulu Archipelago.

5. Jolo Town is one of the most highly urbanized areas in the Sulu Archipelago.  
   True  
   Jolo Town, a predominantly Tausug area in Sulu Province, is one of the most highly urbanized areas in the region and the only urban area in the province. Five other municipalities in the province are officially classified as partly urban.
CHAPTER 5: RURAL LIFE

Introduction

The Sulu Archipelago is a predominantly rural area. About 79% of the population of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) live in rural settlements. Sulu Province is one of the poorest in the Philippines with an estimated 65% of the population living in poverty. Tawi-Tawi Province, home to a significant number of Tausug, is among the least-developed provinces in the nation. Employment opportunities are limited and most Tausug are employed in subsistence agriculture or in fishing, although much of the fishing industry is now in the hands of the Chinese and Japanese. Besides poverty, the area suffers from high rates of illiteracy, lack of access to healthcare and education, and poor infrastructure. In 2006, just 41% of the barangays had access to electricity, and the poor transportation infrastructure limits the possibilities for economic growth. Frequent armed conflict with rebel groups poses security risks to the people, although a recent peace treaty between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Philippine government offers hope that fighting may end.

Land Distribution

Land ownership and private property among the Tausug depend on how the land will be used. Everyone in the community has the right to use pastureland and watering holes, which cannot be privately owned. Tausug law acknowledges the right of usufruct, or inherited land use rights. Older males and headmen may hold titular rights of ownership, yet many individuals are likely to have the right to use that land. Traditionally, the land belongs to the sultan while the authority to distribute usage rights lies with the regional and local headmen (datu). The arrival of Western concepts of private property and law slightly changed the Tausugs’ traditional view. Today, the titular owner of a piece of land is the person whose name appears on the title document filed with the government.

Exchange 46: Do you own this land?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Do you own this land?</th>
<th>eekaw in tagdapo sin loopa eenee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sharecropping exists, but the amount of the harvest that the tenant must give the landlord is significantly lower than elsewhere in the Philippines—typically around 10%. Landlords view their status in terms of the political influence it confers rather than the economic returns that the arrangement could generate.

Though the traditional system of land inheritance was vague, it worked well for much of Tausug history. But in recent years, as land has become scarcer, feuds over land ownership have become increasingly common.

---

341 There is still a sultan of Sulu, but his role is largely ceremonial because the office lacks political authority.
Rural Economy

The fertile soils and tropical climate of Sulu Province provide excellent conditions for the cultivation of crops.345, 346 The majority of people depend on agriculture for a living.347 The main crops are coconut, cassava, coffee, and fruits.348 The Tausug are skilled in the production of cassava, a food staple more important than rice among the Tausug.349 Abaca, from which the fiber is used to make cables, fishing nets, and ropes, is becoming increasingly important as international demand soars.350, 351 The province is a major seaweed supplier that produces 72% of the nation’s output.352, 353

The waters of the Sulu Sea are the richest in the nation, and fishing has long provided a livelihood for the Tausug.354 Most fishing is done from motorized boats with either nets, bamboo traps, or hook and line. To try to increase their catch, some have resorted to using pesticides or dynamite even though these practices are illegal. Common fish include tuna, shark, rays, as well as squid and sardines.355

---

Exchange 47: Where do you work, sir?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Where do you work, sir?</th>
<th>hawno in pag heenangan moo, bapa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>I am a farmer, sir.</td>
<td>magoma akoo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Rural Transportation

Transportation infrastructure in the region is underdeveloped. There are approximately 1,030 km (640 mi) of roads, most consisting of gravel paved roads. Poor road conditions, erratic driving habits, and threats of insurgency and terrorism make driving a dangerous option. Driving at night, especially off the national highways, should be avoided. Foreigners are advised against using buses because of the threat of kidnapping and possible harm.

Boats ferry passengers from Jolo to Zamboanga City almost daily. Ferries are often rundown and are overloaded. Piracy is a real threat to sea travelers. Ferries should be used only when there are no other available options.

Port facilities are being updated to facilitate trade in Sulu. Commercial air flights between the provincial capitals of Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, and Jolo are available. The European Commission and the United States Federal Aviation Administration have found that the Philippines does not comply with international safety standards.

---


Healthcare in Rural Areas

Healthcare in the ARMM is provided through a public sector health system managed by the regional government. Medical care is extremely limited in the rural areas, particularly in the more remote regions of Sulu Province. The ARMM has the fewest hospitals in the nation, the lowest ratio of healthcare workers to patients, and the worst health indicators. Sulu Province has 210 beds in 7 hospitals and while Tawi-Tawi Province has 87 beds in 3 hospitals. The entire ARMM had 78 doctors and 114 nurses in 2006. To help ease access problems, mobile health clinics deliver services in some rural areas. Adding to these problems is the risk to rural health workers. In 2012, six health workers were kidnapped from a rural health unit in Sulu by Abu Sayyaf rebels.

Exchange 48: Do you know what is wrong?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Do you know what is wrong?</th>
<th>kaynata moo bang onoo sakit moo?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>dee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Life expectancy throughout Sulu is significantly lower than the national average. The average life expectancy is slightly less than 48 years, which partly reflects the region’s high rate of violence. The primary cause of death is gunshot wounds.

---

374 David Gorman, “A Man, and a Plan in War-Torn Philippines,” Asia Times (Hong Kong), 1 November 2007, http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/IK01Ae03.html
Exchange 49: Is there a medical clinic nearby?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Is there a medical clinic nearby?</th>
<th>awun keeleenik masook dee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes, over there.</td>
<td>awun, deet too</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sulu Province is a leader in family planning in the Philippines. Family planning receives no official promotion in the Catholic part of the country. Still, contraceptive use in Mindanao ranked 25% below the national average because Muslim Filipinas felt bound by the religious restrictions on artificial forms of contraception. This was rectified by a group of Muslim leaders who organized a conference to address the issue of responsible parenthood. They subsequently issued a *fatwa* proclaiming that family planning is permissible under the Quran.\(^{375}\)

Exchange 50: My arm is broken, can you help me?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>My arm is broken, can you help me?</th>
<th>naabalee in buktun ku, katabangan mo akoo?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes, I can help you.</td>
<td>hoon, katabangan ta kaw</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rural Education

Six years of elementary education is compulsory for all students. This basic education is divided into two components: primary (grades 1–4) and intermediate (grades 5–6).\(^{376}\) Secondary education consists of 4 additional years of education.\(^{377}\) Schools may be either public or private, although there are few private schools in rural areas.\(^{378}\)

Exchange 51: Is there a school nearby?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Is there a school nearby?</th>
<th>awun iskool masook dee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>awun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---


Education levels in the ARMM are the lowest in the nation and levels in Sulu Province are the lowest in the region. In 2000, 25% of the population reported that they had no formal schooling. In the mostly Tausug area of Sulu Province, as many as 56% of people had never been to school. In Sulu, an average of five years of education were completed. One major reason for such low levels of educational attainment is the lack of schools. The province has only 383 elementary schools, 25 high schools, and 4 colleges. Approximately 29% of barangays in Sulu Province have no schools, and about 20% of villages throughout the ARMM have no schools.

Primary school attendance rates in the ARMM in 2003 were the nation’s lowest, at 70% for girls and 74% for boys. Secondary school attendance rates were even lower, at 46% for girls and 28% for boys.

**Exchange 52: Do your children go to school?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Do your children go to school?</th>
<th>nag iskool in manga anak moo?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Poverty is another basic reason for a lack of education in Sulu Province, where about 80% of families live in poverty. Purchasing school supplies under such conditions is nearly impossible. The second most frequently reported reason for dropping out of school was that students needed to work to help support their families.

---

**Exchange 53: Are you the only person in your family who has a job?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Are you the only person in your family who has a job?</th>
<th>ha kamo magtawtayanak, eekaw day in awun heenang?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>bokoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Village Governance**

The Tausug live predominantly in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), which was set up in 1989. Each of the region’s five provinces has a governor who is subordinate to the regional governor in the capital of Cotabota City.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exchange 54: Does your mayor live here?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soldier: Does your mayor live here?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local: Yes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exchange 55: Can you take me to your mayor?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soldier: Can you take me to your mayor?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local: Yes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Local politics are considerably more complicated because they involve families and clans—many of which are engaged in serious rivalries. In general, Tausug communities are almost entirely composed of clans of related individuals. Leadership at the village level is often based on family lineage. Each clan community attempts to maintain its political and economic status and physical security. Therefore, governance among the local Tausug becomes a family affair.

### Exchange 56: Respected mayor, we need your help / advice / opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Respected mayor, we need your help / advice / opinion.</th>
<th>maayul, kabanon naamo in taban / hindoo / eepameekilan moo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Exchange 57: Do you know this area very well?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Do you know this area very well?</th>
<th>ka ingatan mo tood in hola eenee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tausug villages generally consist of clusters of several households, which are the smallest territorial groupings. The hamlet (lungan) is a slightly larger unit. Finally, there is the larger community (kauman), which has a name and a leader or headman (datu). He is also the community representative when dealing with national officials. It is important to note that the datu has authority over people but not territory. Among the Tausug, issues of law are carried out by datu or headmen, all of whom know the legal code. The highest authority is the sultan. Datu are charged largely with enforcing customary law (adat), while religious laws (sara agama) created by the sultan remain solely within his authority. Beyond their legal authority, datu assume other functions within the community including appointing and promoting religious officials.

---


Exchange 58: Is there lodging nearby?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Is there lodging nearby?</th>
<th>awun hotel masook daayin dee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>awun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Landmines

In 1997, the Philippines signed the Mine Ban Treaty and in 2008 became a signatory to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Three rebel groups—the New People’s Army, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)—are known to have used antipersonnel mines or improvised explosive devices (IEDs), including on Jolo Island. Five other insurgent groups formally pledged in writing not to use such devices. Landmines continue to contaminate areas of Mindanao. Unexploded ordnance, some dating to World War II, continues to threaten the safety and security of residents. About 30% of all such ordnance is believed to be in the Mindanao region.

Exchange 59: Is this area mined?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Is this area mined?</th>
<th>awun meena haw logal eenee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>awun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The risk of encountering landmines continues in areas of conflict, including Sulu Province. In 2004, a Philippine soldier was killed by a landmine allegedly laid by the ASG. In 2000, the ASG was reported to have planted some 3,000 homemade mines around its training camps in Talipao.

Exchange 60: Where is the nearest checkpoint?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Where is the nearest checkpoint?</th>
<th>haw noo in chekpoyint masook daayin dee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>It’s two kilometers.</td>
<td>yadtoo, puwaas dowa keelomitroo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Checkpoints

Although Sulu Province has created its own citizen IDs, many residents may not have documents to identify themselves. The province’s new ID system, which was implemented in 2008, is intended to deter criminals and terrorists from settling in Sulu Province.403

Exchange 61: Is this all the ID you have?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Is this all the ID you have?</th>
<th>amura eenee aadee moo?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Checkpoints are set up throughout Sulu Province. They may be manned by warlords, rebel groups, or the military.404 After any upticks in insurgent activities, extra checkpoints and security may be implemented.405

Exchange 62: Please get out of the car.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Please get out of the car.</th>
<th>manjaaree kaw gumuwa daayin ha sasakataan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>OK.</td>
<td>okay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The government issued guidelines for checkpoints manned by the Philippine National Police. According to the regulations, checkpoints must be well-lit and manned by properly uniformed police. Drivers should slow down, dim headlights, turn on cabin lights, lock all doors, and stay inside the car. Only visual searches are allowed. Drivers do not need to open glove compartments, trunks, or bags. Always keep documents, including driver’s license and registration, within physical reach.406

Exchange 63: Show us the car registration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Show us the car registration.</th>
<th>pakeeta kamoo in katas sin sasakataan eenee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>OK.</td>
<td>o kay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exchange 64: Are you carrying any guns?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Are you carrying any guns?</th>
<th>nagdara kaw sinapang?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 5 Assessment

1. The smallest unit of settlement is the lungan, or hamlet.  
   **False**  
   The smallest unit is the household cluster. The next largest unit is the lungan (hamlet), which is composed of homes of related family members and can number 20 or more individual dwellings.

2. The primary cause of death in the region is disease.  
   **False**  
   The primary cause of death is gunshot wounds.

3. More than three-quarters of the population of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) is rural.  
   **True**  
   The Sulu Archipelago is a predominantly rural area. About 79% of the population of ARMM live in rural settlements.

4. With new regulations for land registration and ownership, feuds over land have become less common.  
   **False**  
   The traditional system of land inheritance, though vague, worked well for much of Tausug history. But in recent years, as land has become scarcer, feuds over land ownership have become increasingly common.

5. Education levels in Sulu Province are the lowest in the nation.  
   **True**  
   Education levels in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) are the lowest in the nation and levels in Sulu Province are the lowest in the region. In the mostly Tausug area of Sulu Province, as many as 56% of people have never been to school.
CHAPTER 6: FAMILY LIFE

Introduction

Family is central to Tausug society. The family forms the basis for permanent social relationships and social organization. Kinship binds political, economic, and military obligations. Among the Tausug, kinship is determined through the maternal and paternal lines. Individuals know the names of maternal and paternal kin, often through third cousins, even if they don’t live in the same community. Loyalty correlates to the degree of kinship; thus, the greatest loyalty is owed to one’s immediate family. The degree of relationship between Tausug determines the degree of obligation. A Tausug relies on kin for economic assistance, political alliances (including blood feuds), and all other support. A Tausug would never intentionally do anything that might bring shame to their family, and they would never tarnish their family by being a coward.

Typical Household and Family Structure

Most Tausug households consist of parents and their unmarried children. Extended households are rare. Some live in what is known as a “stem family” that comprises parents, unmarried children, a married child, spouse, and grandchildren. As a rule, there are few extended families among the Tausug. Polygyny is allowed among the Tausug but rarely practiced. In such cases, the husband must maintain a separate household for each wife.

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TAUSUG Cultural Orientation

Exchange 65: Are you married?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Are you married?</th>
<th>awun kaw asaawa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>uwaay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tausug families are often large. In 2000, the average household size in Sulu Province was approximately six people, but in Jolo, the average household size was nearly seven.415

Exchange 66: Is this your wife?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Is this your wife?</th>
<th>asaawa moo eenee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tausug women often marry young, sometimes at 14 or younger. Historically, the Tausug often expressed a desire to have at least 5 and as many as 10 children. This attitude is changing, but families are still large because the most popular family planning strategies involve pagpalahang sin paganak (the rhythm method) and abstinence. Women sometimes use herbs or roots to avoid pregnancy.416

Exchange 67: How many people live in this house?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>How many people live in this house?</th>
<th>peela taw in nag hoola ha baay eenee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Ten.</td>
<td>hangpoo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exchange 68: Does your family live here?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Does your family live here?</th>
<th>nabobotang in tawtayanak moo dee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because of the importance of family in Tausug culture, individuals usually know the names of all close kin no matter where they live. Men often know the names of second and third cousins even though they have no formal obligations to each other. Nevertheless, strong alliances can be built even with more distant relations.417

---

Exchange 69: Are these people part of your family?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Are these people part of your family?</th>
<th>tawtayanak mo seela?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>bokoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exchange 70: Do you have any brothers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Do you have any brothers?</th>
<th>awun kaw taymang hood usug?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>awun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Infant and Child Care

To enhance a newborn’s chances of survival and future good health, infants are secluded after birth and protected by amulets (hampan). The Tausug believe that every child is born with a spirit-twin that must be appeased to keep bad luck at bay. This is accomplished with a miniature replica (bay bay) of their home, which is hung from the rafters like a birdhouse. A small amount of rice and an egg are placed inside it every Friday at sundown. Feeding the spirit is seen as a means to keep it happy. A small dish with a few sticks of incense is also placed inside the miniature.

Since nuclear families are the norm, childcare is the responsibility of the parents and older siblings. Unlike in many cultures, fathers are the nurturing parental figure for Tausug children. At public gatherings, small children often choose to sit with their fathers. Displays of paternal affection are common and reciprocated. This is rarer between mothers and children.

Exchange 71: Is this your entire family?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Is this your entire family?</th>
<th>yaree na in katan tawtayanak moo?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exchange 72: Are these your children?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soldier:</th>
<th>Are these your children?</th>
<th>manga anak moo eenee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local:</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>hoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Status of Women

Tausug tradition and customs on the status of women do not follow standard Islamic rules. Women are allowed to get an education, to work outside the home, and to mingle with men during commercial responsibilities or at the market. Many Tausug women are active in politics and some hold positions as mayor and vice mayor in some communities. 422 Women are not required to wear a veil or headscarf, although many choose to as a sign of their Islamic faith.423

Yet there is a tradition of separating the sexes, especially unmarried men and women. This separation does not extend to the seclusion of women. There are clear gender roles in work: men are responsible for plowing, fishing, tending livestock, and harvesting crops; women tend gardens and chickens, perform household chores, and care for children.424

Married Life, Divorce, and Birth

Marriage

Marriages are generally still arranged among the Tausug, although it is increasingly common for the new generation to choose their spouses. First or second cousins are often preferred as spouses, primarily to strengthen clan relations and simplify issues of inheritance.425 Marriage between relatives of different generations or between half-siblings is taboo.426 In contemporary culture, restrictions on mate selection have loosened somewhat, and marrying a non-Tausug or a non-Muslim is increasingly acceptable among the Tausug. This reflects the Tausug’s strong belief in suratan, or

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destiny that one must surrender to. Although Islamic law forbids women from marrying outside the faith, it is acceptable but not preferred. Polygyny is allowed among the Tausug, although this practice is generally reserved only for the wealthy.

Traditionally, the Tausug recognize three types of marriage: arranged marriage by familial negotiation (pagpangasawa), abduction (pagsaggau), and elopement (pagdakup). In the arranged marriage, a young man often suggests a girl that he is interested in to his parents, who then negotiate with the girl’s father or male kin about the ungsud (brideprice). Usually the amount includes wedding expenses and the bride’s outfit. When both parties agree to the ungsud, the wedding may take place. The end of Ramadan is a favorite time for weddings, as is the month of the Prophet Muhammad’s birth. The traditional arranged marriage is often regarded as reflecting the wishes of the parents. A marriage by elopement (pagdakup) is said to reflect what the woman wants, while a marriage by abduction (pagsaggu) reflects the man’s wish. A man takes the prospective bride to the home of the datu, who will solemnize the wedding. A man must pay a fine for “abducting” his bride but the cost is often less than for a negotiated marriage.

---

Divorce

The Philippine legal system generally does not grant divorce, but an exception was made for Muslims because their religion permits divorce. The 1977 Presidential Decree, formally known as the Code of Muslim Personal Laws in the Philippines, provides for divorce when the marriage was solemnized in accordance with Islamic law.\footnote{Patricio N. Abinales, “Women, Islam, and the Law,” review of Islamic Family law and Justice for Muslim Women, ed. Hjh. Nik Noriani Nik Badlishah; and Gender, Muslim Laws and Reproductive Rights, Kyoto Review (March 2004), \url{http://kyotoreview.cseas.kyoto-u.ac.jp/issue/issue4/article_368.html}} Divorce is held in low regard among the Tausug and only about 10\% of marriages end in divorce.

The most common reasons include female infertility, gambling, maltreatment of children, or a failure to provide support to the family.\footnote{H. R. Khusha and C. Sather, “Tausug,” in Encyclopædia of South-East Asian Ethnography, ed. N. S. Bisht and T. S. Bankoti (Delhi, India: Global Vision Publishing House, 2004), 640.} In theory, the code’s regulations are only binding when the wife wants to end the marriage. Muslim men have the option of divorcing their wives by simply declaring \textit{talak}, which is repudiating the marriage aloud three times in front of the headman (\textit{datu}). This type of dissolution is regarded as shameful (\textit{makasipug}), so it is not commonly used. Women generally get favorable property settlements in these cases.\footnote{Dirk J. Barreved, Terrorism in the Philippines: The Bloody Trail of Abu Sayyaf, Bin Laden’s East Asian Connection (Lincoln, NE: Writers Club Press, 2001), 88–89.}

The Code requires one to go through \textit{pagbugit}, literally “to discard something unwanted.” For this, the husband or wife must specify a reason for the divorce. Marriages typically break down over unfulfilled spousal obligations: for example, failure to earn a sufficient living, or inability to bear children. A final effort at reconciliation is usually attempted. For example, the mediator (normally the \textit{datu} or his wife) may ask the husband to swear on the Quran that he will stop gambling, which is a common source of marital discord.\footnote{Zawaj, “Philippine Muslim (Tausug) Marriages on Jolo Island—Part Four: Weddings and Divorces,” n.d., \url{http://www.zawaj.com/weddingways/tausug/tausag4.html}}

If the issue is not open to resolution, then the \textit{datu} will issue a divorce decree (in Tausug but written with Arabic script). This paper will protect the woman from charges of bigamy if she remarries.\footnote{Zawaj, “Philippine Muslim (Tausug) Marriages on Jolo Island—Part Four: Weddings and Divorces,” n.d., \url{http://www.zawaj.com/weddingways/tausug/tausag4.html} } Women view the option of divorce as a source of empowerment, enabling them to end miserable unions.\footnote{Jamail A. Kamilian, “Islam, Women and Gender Justice: A Discourse on the Traditional Islamic Practices amongst the Tausug in Southern Philippines” (paper, Emory University School of Law, 2005), 17, \url{http://www.law.emory.edu/ihr/wrkpaper/j_kamilian.doc}} Children younger than 7 generally remain in the custody of the mother. Older children who have not reached...
puberty choose the parent to live with. Unmarried children who have reached puberty must live with the opposite sex parent.446

Birth

Tausug are expected to have children, and large families are preferred among the Tausug, who regard children as a form of wealth and a sign of good fortune. Because of the importance of kinship relations, large families are often more secure and can develop stronger political alliances than smaller families.447 Pregnant women will not bathe in the sea, in the belief that doing so increases the risk of a stillbirth. Births may occur at home or in a hospital (in some of the larger cities such as Jolo Town). The clanging of gongs announces the child’s birth. The imam often comes to pray for the new child.448 Gunshots also signify the baby’s arrival; more rounds are fired if the child is a male.449

Family Social Events

Weddings

Modern weddings, which often last 2 days, blend Islamic and Western influences and occur in two stages.450 The first day, a wedding ceremony (pagkawin) is often held at a hotel. Brides wear Western wedding gowns and grooms wear a coat and tie or traditional Philippine dress. The ceremony is presided over by an imam and ends with the signing of the official wedding contract.451, 452 The second day, a more traditional stage occurs at the bride’s home. Both bride and groom wear traditional Tausug clothing. The groom does not see his bride until after the wedding ceremony, when the bride comes into the room. The groom ritually touches her forehead to acknowledge his

right to touch her. The stone-faced couple is presented to the guests, after which the couple eats the traditional tray of food (*dulang*). The food normally comprises steamed yellow rice, fried chicken, hard-boiled eggs, and traditional Tausug specialties. The guest watch as the new couple shares their first meal as husband and wife.  

**Exchange 73: Congratulations on your wedding!**

| Soldier: | Congratulations on your wedding! | makug akoo kaayin moo! |
| Local: | We are honored you could attend. | landoo kamee makoo ha paglaruk moo ha pag kaa an namoo |

**Exchange 74: What ingredients are used to make *byangang*?**

| Soldier: | What ingredients are used to make *byangang*? | onoo noo in sangkap yusal ha paglaatoo sin peeyangag? |
| Local: | Spice mix, chicken, coconut milk, turmeric, ginger, garlic, pepper. | yusal da moo eenee pamaapa, manook, gataa, dolaw, bawaan, looy ah, laara |

After marriage, the couple generally moves in with the bride’s parents. The bond between the father and son-in-law should become as strong as that between father and son. After 1 year or the birth of a child, the couple moves in with the groom’s parents or into their own home.  

**Exchange 75: I wish you both happiness.**

| Soldier: | I wish you both happiness. | mora moraahaan, dulaan kamoo sin toohaan sin takayogan eebaan kasan nagan |
| Local: | We are honored. | magsukool |

**Exchange 76: Did you grow up here?**

| Soldier: | Did you grow up here? | leeyumago kaw dee? |
| Local: | Yes. | hoon |

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Funerals

For Muslims, it is a religious obligation to bury the dead within 24 hours. Tausug are usually buried on the afternoon following death. There is a last reading of the daily prayer before the coffin is carried on a bamboo stretcher to the grave, which faces Mecca. Afterward, there is a 7-day vigil. If the family is able to, it holds memorial feasts on the 7th, 20th, 40th, and 100th days following the burial as well as the first, second, and third anniversaries of the death.457, 458

Exchange 77: I would like to give my condolences to you and your family.

| Soldier: | I would like to give my condolences to you and your family. | tabooka in kasoosaahaan ku |
| Local: | Thank you. | magsukool |

Mourners are expected to remain stoic throughout the service, in which it is emphasized to the deceased that they are dead. Corpses are not thought to be totally devoid of feeling, and the service allows the deceased to adjust to a new state of being before the coffin is covered with earth.459

Exchange 78: Please be strong.

| Soldier: | Please be strong. | pakasuga in atay neeyo |
| Local: | We will try. | sulaayan namoo |

After the burial, water is sprinkled on the grave so the deceased’s spirit can drink and bathe.460 Gravestones for men are rounded columns, while markers for women are flat-sided and wider at the top.461 Tausug believe that spirits must be kept happy to prevent them from wreaking havoc on the living. One month before Ramadan, a feast and prayer session (nispu) is held at the mosque, to keep the souls from cursing their descendants.462

Several days later, the entire community turns out to tidy the cemetery. Passages from the Quran are read by each grave to ease the suffering of the deceased and to bring religious merit to the reader. This is followed by a communal feast in the cemetery. Most Tausug believe that the fate of their forebears in the afterworld partly depends on how faithfully the living adhere to rituals. 463

Rites of Passage

Around the age of 2, the child’s family holds a ceremony known as paggunting, in which a lock of the child’s hair is cut by an imam. Perfume is poured over the child’s head as the imam prays. Many children study the Quran between the ages of 5 and 12; when they are ready to recite verses, another ceremony called pagtammal is held. 464

Sometime around age 10, a boy will be circumcised (tuli) and a ceremony, pag-Islam, is held. 465 The Tausug place great importance on this rite of male passage, which their culture considers another pillar of Islam. The ritual is conducted in a private ceremony by a cleric who has the surgical skill to perform the operation. Though painful, it is considered bad form for a boy to cry. A similar but nonsurgical ceremony (pagsunnat) is held for girls around age 6. 466

Naming Conventions

Newborn Tausug children are not named immediately. Children are frequently given a temporary name until they are 1 or 2. Tausug parents often select Arabic names for their children, such as “Ameer” for a boy. They may also choose the English names of well-known Americans. Nonsense words may be chosen as names because parents like the way they sound. The father’s first name is given as the child’s last name. 467

Chapter 6 Assessment

1. Most Tausug households consist of several generations, including parents and grandparents as well as aunts, uncles, and cousins.
   **False**
   Extended households are rare among the Tausug. The typical household is nuclear and consists of parents and their unmarried children.

2. Tausug fathers are the more nurturing parent to their children.
   **True**
   Fathers are generally the more nurturing parent for Tausug children. Displays of paternal affection are more common, while relatively rare between mothers and children.

3. The Muslim custom of divorce by verbal repudiation is common among Tausug men.
   **False**
   Muslim men have the option of divorcing their wives by simply repudiating the marriage aloud three times in front of a headman. Yet it is regarded as shameful (*makasipug*) and not commonly used.

4. Tausug children are not named at birth.
   **True**
   Newborn Tausug children are not named immediately. Children are frequently given a temporary name until they are 1 or 2.

5. Newly married couples are expected to live with the groom’s parents.
   **False**
   After marriage, the couple generally moves in with the bride’s parents. After 1 year or the birth of a child, the couple moves in with the groom’s parents or into their own home.
FINAL ASSESSMENT

1. The Tausug represent just over one-third of the population of Basilan Province.  
   **False**  
   In Basilan Province, the Tausug are about 23%. In Tawi-Tawi Province, the Tausug represent 36% of the population.

2. Jolo Island is the largest in the Sulu Archipelago.  
   **False**  
   Jolo Island in Sulu Province is the second-largest in the archipelago and the seat of the provincial government. The volcanic island measures 64 km (40 mi) long and 23 km (14 mi) wide.

3. The Sulu Archipelago lies outside the typhoon belt.  
   **True**  
   The Sulu Archipelago lies outside the typhoon belt. It has a warm, moist climate characterized by two seasons: the monsoon and the dry/warm season.

4. The Tausug are also known as “Sea Nomads.”  
   **False**  
   The Tausug, whose name means “People of the Current,” represent the largest Islamic ethnic group in the Sulu Archipelago. The Badjao on Tawi-Tawi are known as “Sea Nomads” or “Sea Gypsies.”

5. The Tausug generally align themselves with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).  
   **True**  
   The Moro National Liberation Front is predominantly Tausug. Other insurgent groups formed in opposition to the MNLF’s practices of dispensing political favors and jobs to its supporters.

6. **Shari’a** law governs the Muslims in ARMM.  
   **True**  
   The Philippine Constitution calls for the separation of church and state, but shari’a courts have jurisdiction in the ARMM (Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao).

7. Most Tausug are adherents of Shi’a Islam.  
   **False**  
   The Tausug are Sunni Muslims who follow the Shafi’i school.

8. Burning the Quran is an acceptable way to dispose of old or damaged copies.  
   **True**
Burning is acceptable if the process is conducted with respect. Texts should not be burned with trash or other items. The second method of disposal is burial.

9. Shari’a courts have undisputed jurisdiction in criminal matters involving Muslims. **False**
A severe lack of access, a poor judicial structure and mix of shari’a and customary legal code (adat) create problems in administering justice. Sometimes the datu (headman) metes out justice, rather than the Islamic judges on the Supreme Court.

10. The third pillar of Islam, giving (zakat), is the obligatory payment of alms for the poor. **True**
Zakat is an obligatory payment, a minimum of 2.5% of one’s wealth, partly to signify that all things flow from Allah and partly to care for the poor. In addition to the zakat, Muslims are encouraged to give alms (sadaqah) for the needy. Those who cannot contribute money may do charitable acts, according to the hadith.

11. Friendships are always mutual among the Tausug. **False**
One category of friendship sanctioned religiously and legally, likens friends to brothers. Such relationships are not always mutual but can be made by village headmen who seek an honorable way to end feuds.

12. Compromise is a legitimate consideration in conflict resolution among the Tausug. **False**
Tausug culture does not believe in compromise. Instead, discussions must result in sulut, or complete satisfaction for all parties.

13. Reciprocity is a core value among the Tausug. **True**
Reciprocity is a central cultural value. Failing to measure up to reciprocal obligations brings shame and can insult the person to whom the debt is owed. This is critical in gift-giving, where even a perceived slight can end an alliance, destroy friendships, and result in violent feuds.

14. Rice is a mainstay of the Tausug diet. **False**
Rice is considered a “prestige” food and is reserved for feasts or guests. Maize is often mixed with rice as a staple, or the Tausug eat cassava, a starchy staple.
15. The traditional headgear for men is a white cap (*kadi*).
   False
   The traditional headgear for men is a cloth hat with geometric or floral designs known as the ppis. Men who have made the hajj to Mecca may wear a white cap called a kadi.

16. There are few *madrassas*, Islamic schools, in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).
   False
   In the ARMM, there are 600 to 1,000 madrassas with enrollments between 60,000 and 100,000 children.

17. The lowest civilian crime rate in the Philippines is in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).
   True
   Police reports suggest that the ARMM has the lowest crime rate in the nation.

18. Market places in urban areas are generally safe.
   False
   Markets in urban areas are unsafe. Recently, several people have died in or near commercial shopping areas after explosions linked to terrorist attacks.

19. Environmental disasters rarely affect the urban population.
   False
   Tidal surges and flooding are common problems, especially because many residents live on stilt houses built on the coastal shelf.

20. Jolo Town is a main commercial center for the region.
    True
    Jolo Town is the commercial center of Jolo Island and the showpiece of Sulu Province. It features over 4,000 retail stores, plus many small vendors sell in public markets or on the roadside near the commercial area.

21. There is little family planning in Sulu Province.
    False
    Sulu Province is a leader in family planning in the Philippines.

22. Leadership in Tausug villages is often based on family or clan relations.
    True
    Local politics are complicated because they involve families and clans—many of which are engaged in serious rivalries. Tausug communities are almost entirely composed of clans of related individuals. Leadership at the village level is often based on family lineage.
23. Life expectancy throughout Sulu Province is about 48 years.
   **True**
   Life expectancy throughout Sulu is significantly lower than the national average. The average life expectancy is slightly less than 48 years, which partly reflects the region’s high rate of violence.

24. Most Tausug are employed in agriculture and fishing.
   **True**
   The majority of people in Sulu Province depend on agriculture for a living. The waters of the Sulu Sea are the richest in the nation and fishing has long provided a livelihood for the Tausug.

25. The *datu*, or village headman, has legal authority over people and territory.
   **False**
   Among the Tausug, issues of law are carried out by the datu. The datu’s authority is over people but does not extend to territory.

26. Kinship bonds are formed only through paternal lines.
   **False**
   Bonds of kinship are determined through the maternal and paternal lines. Individuals know the names of maternal and paternal kin, often through third cousins, even if they do not live in the same community.

27. Women in Tausug families are secluded from the rest of the household.
   **False**
   There is a tradition of separating the sexes, especially unmarried men and women. This separation does not extend to the seclusion of women.

28. Marriages between cousins are popular among the Tausug.
   **True**
   First or second cousins are often preferred as spouses, primarily to strengthen clan relations and simplify issues of inheritance.

29. Gravestones for men are in the shape of rounded columns.
   **True**
   Gravestones for men are rounded columns, while markers for women are flat-sided and wider at the top.

30. Polygyny is common among the Tausug.
    **False**
    Polygyny is allowed among the Tausug but rarely practiced. In such cases, the husband must maintain a separate household for each wife.
FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES


Kieffer, Thomas M. *The Tausug: Violence and Law in a Philippine Moslem Society.*

