



CULTURAL ORIENTATION

TAUSUG



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Panampangan island of the Basibuli Reef, Tawi-Tawi
Wikimedia / Ervin Malicdem

Chapter 1 | Tausug Cultural Orientation

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, the largest Philippine island), the Visayas (the central island groups), and the southern Philippines, where the island of Mindanao is the largest landmass.¹ Mindanao is the Philippines' southernmost point, the second-largest island, and the regional name for a group of islands that includes the Sulu Archipelago.²

The Sulu Archipelago lies at the southern tip of the Philippines and consists of 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 major islands—Basilan, Jolo, and Tawi-Tawi—which extend 270 km (170

mi) southwest from Mindanao to Malaysia. The Tausug are also the majority population of Sulu Province.^{3, 4}
⁵ 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.⁶

Geography

The Sulu Archipelago is a series of volcanic and coral islands.⁷ The archipelago contains three provinces: the northernmost islands of Basilan, Sulu in the center, and Tawi-Tawi on the southernmost tip.^{8, 9} Sulu Province is rimmed by the Sulu and Mindanao Seas to the west and north, and the Celebes Sea to the east. The province comprises over 150 islands and islets, some of which are uninhabited. As a result of expanding human settlement, only a few wooded areas, which once consisted primarily of lowland rain forest, remain.¹⁰

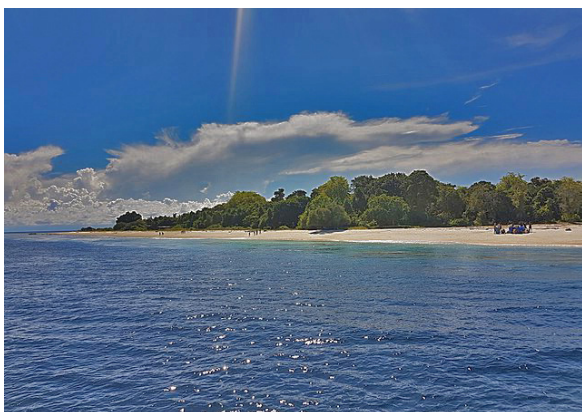


Bud Dajo volcano as seen from Jolo
Wikimedia / Icefirexd

Jolo Island in Sulu Province is the second-largest island in the archipelago and the seat of the provincial government. The volcanic island measures 64 km (40 mi) long, 23 km (14 mi) wide, and is covered in lush vegetation. Short streams provide fresh water to towns and farms. Much of the land is arable, supporting rice, coconut, cassava, and fruit cultivation.^{11, 12}

The Bud Dajo Cinder Cone, also known as Jolo Volcano, sits in the center of Jolo Island. It stands 620 m (2,034 ft).¹³ The island's highest point is the extinct Mount Tumatangas, at 812 m (2,664 ft).¹⁴

Climate



Pangan Island of the Celebes Sea in Tawi-Tawi
Wikimedia / Ervin Malicdem

The climate of the Philippines is tropical, with generally warm temperatures in the non-mountainous regions.¹⁵ 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 fall from May to October and are replaced by dry winds from the northeast during the warm months of November through February. Temperatures are highest between May and August, when the relative humidity averages 86%. May is the hottest month, with temperatures averaging 31°C (88°F). Although January to April is considered the

dry season, an average of 18–23 cm (7–9 in) of rain falls during this period. January is the coolest month, with an average temperature of 22°C (72°F).^{16, 17, 18}

Historic Events

Early History



The Daru Jambangan palace as it stood in Maimbung, Sulu
Wikimedia Commons

Although the recorded history of the Philippines covers 30,000 years, that of the Tausug began in 1380, with the arrival of the Arab trader and Muslim missionary Sheik Karim al Makdum.¹⁹ Those that followed Makdum included Raja Baguinda, who arrived from Sumatra. Baguinda established a dynasty that continues today. In 1450, the Arabian scholar and direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad, Abu Bakr, arrived in the region. He married the daughter of Raja Baguinda and in 1457 established the Royal Sultanate of Sulu. Under the sultanate, several of the major tribes in Sulu united, including the Tausug, Samal, Yakan, and Badjao.^{20, 21} As Abu Bakr's sultanate grew, he laid the

foundation for an Islamic sociopolitical order based on education, law, and commerce, reinforcing Muslim values and strengthening the community.²²

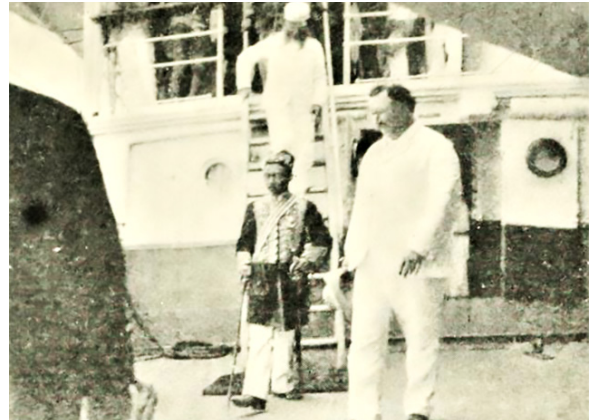
Prior to the Spanish colonization of Luzon in the 16th century, the Sulu Sultanate was the largest and most powerful political entity in the Philippines, with authority over at least 250,000 people from several ethnic groups. The sultanate had diplomatic relations with neighboring sultanates in Brunei, whose ruling royal families have a shared ancestry with their Sulu counterparts. Wealth was generated by maritime commerce, as well as the slave trade, a practice which persisted into the 19th century.^{23, 24}

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 dislodge the Muslims in the south. The Tausug and Spanish struggle only ended with the Spanish departure in 1899, following their defeat in The Spanish-American War.²⁵

In 1898, the Treaty of Paris placed the Philippines, including lands from the Sultanate of Sulu, under the colonial rule of the United States.²⁶ The sultanate had existed for over 200 years and was the largest and most powerful political force in the country.²⁷ Some regarded the transfer of Sulu lands to the United States as illegal because the Spanish did not control those lands when they were ceded. Complicating this matter was a treaty between France and the sultanate, drafted in 1845, which apparently recognized the latter as an independent Muslim state.^{28, 29, 30, 31}

In 1899, the sultanate and the United States signed the Kiram Bates Agreement. The United States agreed to respect the sultanate's authority and not give or sell any part of Sulu to another nation.^{32, 33} Within two days of the signing, war broke out between the United States and Filipino nationalist, who had declared independence. Over the next three years, the war claimed the lives of more than 200,000 Filipino civilians, 20,000 Filipino fighters, and 4,200 Americans.³⁴



President William Taft with the Sultan of Sulu in 1901
Wikimedia / Daniel Roderick Williams

The United States 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 a "religious head." Animosities continued and, in 1906, American soldiers killed 600-1,000 Tausug men, women, and children on Jolo Island.^{35, 36} In 1913, the United States again met Tausug resistance to its disarmament order. Over 500 men, women, and children were killed.³⁷

The Philippine Commonwealth and World War II



Tausug leader Datu Amil with U.S. Captain W.O. Reed
Wikimedia / Leslie Klass

The Philippine Commonwealth was formally established in 1935.³⁸ 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.³⁹ After the death of the sultan in 1936, the Philippine Commonwealth government expressly rejected recognition of the sultanate and its new sultan.⁴⁰ For the next 10 years, the government in Manila 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.^{41, 42}

For the most part, the Muslim population opposed the Japanese during World War II. 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.⁴³

Independence



Flag ceremony on Independence Day, 1946
Wikimedia / Philippine Presidential Museum
and Library

The conflict between Muslims and Catholics in the region flared intermittently for years. In 1974, the Philippine government formally recognized the creation of the government of Sulu. 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, negotiations 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.^{49, 50} In 1989, the Organic Act for Mindanao officially created the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), which included the three Tausug majority provinces.⁵¹

Recent Events

The Tausug remained resistant to attempts by Christians to dominate their land by settling among them and consequently weakening their culture. They retained little allegiance to the national government.⁵² The predominantly Tausug MNLF refused to recognize the government's actions and returned to armed struggle.^{53, 54} In 1996, President Ramos and the MNLF signed a comprehensive peace agreement. MNLF Chairman Nur Misuari became the governor of the ARMM and the head of the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development.⁵⁵

The Philippines gained full independence on 4 July 1946.⁴⁴ In 1950, Mohammad Esmail Kiram was restored as Sulu sultan. In 1962, the government recognized him and became increasingly interested in the affairs of Sulu.⁴⁵ In 1969, a Muslim (later Mindanao) independence movement emerged to press for a Moro nation (Bangsamoro). Armed clashes between Muslim and Christian groups escalated.⁴⁶ By 1971, Muslim Mindanao and Sulu were in a state of rebellion. A government task force was sent from Manila to mediate, with little success. At year's end, skirmishes between Muslim and Christian groups and the Philippine armed forces had cost the lives of 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 indigenous people, who had been pushed into the mountains.^{47, 48}



Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF)
fighters fighting for independence
Flickr / NCCA Official

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 the Philippine Army headquarters in Jolo. After a great loss of life, he abandoned his post as ARMM governor and fled to Sabah in Malaysia, where he was arrested by law enforcement authorities and deported to Manila.⁵⁶

Other insurgent groups formed, partly in opposition to the MNLF.^{57, 58, 59} Among the most prominent was the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). Peace talks between the insurgents and Manila began in 1997 but accomplished little until after the 9/11 attacks, when the Global War on Terrorism prompted a ceasefire.⁶⁰ In 2014, the MILF reached a comprehensive peace deal with the federal government, under which the group agreed to disarm in return for greater self-rule in the Mindanao region.⁶¹



Airstrikes conducted against Mautes in Marawi City, 2017
Wikimedia / Oliver Marquez for the Philippine News Agency

As the peace process stalled in the Philippine legislature, various rebel groups became emboldened. In 2015, dozens of Philippine police were killed in clashes with MILF fighters. In 2017, the Philippine army waged a bloody five-month battle to dislodge rebel groups aligned with the Islamic State from the Mindanao city of Marawi.^{62, 63}



President Rodrigo Duterte meets Nur Misuari
Wikimedia / Presidential Communications Operations Office

In 2018, President Rodrigo Duterte, the nation's first leader from Mindanao, persuaded Congress to pass the Bangsamoro Organic Law, which paved the way for the establishment of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), a more inclusive and functional successor to the ARMM. The BARMM was conclusively approved by referendums in Mindanao in early 2019, and was officially inaugurated in March.^{64, 65, 66, 67}

Government



Oaths administered to the Bangsamoro Transition Authority
Wikimedia / Simeon Celi Jr. for the Presidential Communications Operations Office

Sulu Province and other Muslim-majority areas of the southern Philippines are undergoing the complex transition from the ARMM to the BARMM. The process is fraught with uncertainty and haunted by the failed political settlements of the past, but it also enjoys an unprecedented level of support from the federal authorities in Manila, especially President Duterte.^{68, 69}

The BARMM was conceived to combat the spread of extremism and remedy the disastrous shortcomings of the ARMM through more autonomy, increased power-sharing in governance, a larger and more ethnically inclusive territory, and, crucially, a greater allocation of resources from the federal government. The BARMM authorities' critical tasks include delivering services, curbing corruption, facilitating the transition of MILF fighters to civilian life, and earning the trust of the Moro population while demonstrating the benefits of peace.^{70, 71, 72, 73}

The BARMM is initially being governed by the Bangsamoro Transitional Authority (BTA), which is spearheaded by the MILF. The BTA's 80 seats are held by MILF, MNLF, and ARMM members—the region's established power brokers—as well as individuals appointed by President Duterte. The Chief Minister is Ahod B. Ebrahim, also known as Al Haj Murad Ibrahim, the leader of the MILF. The BTA will govern until 2022, when elections are scheduled.^{74, 75, 76, 77, 78}



Transition meeting to create a Bangsamoro interim parliament
Wikimedia / Bangsamoro Regional Government

Geographically, the BARMM consists of the territory of the ARMM, plus Cotabato City and some surrounding areas of Mindanao, based on the results of the 2019 referendum. Sulu Province voted against ratification in the referendum, but will be included in the BARMM as part of the former ARMM. Sulu is contesting its inclusion in the BARMM before the Philippine Supreme Court. Some of Sulu's Tausug leadership have expressed support for the BARMM.^{79, 80}

The BARMM's special autonomy extends to fiscal and legal matters. The region benefits from an annual grant of as much as USD 1 billion, to aid in much-needed development. Unlike other provinces, which pay 40% of revenues to the federal government, the BARMM only has to remit 25%. Legally, the region is served by Sharia law courts.^{81, 82, 83}

The BARMM faces many daunting challenges, like persistent poverty, popular mistrust of authorities, and resilient local networks of influence. The specter of continuing violence from unpersuaded or disenfranchised extremist groups is ever present. As the MILF transitions from armed group to political party, some of its commanders and members may be reluctant to lay down arms. The region has a history of new terrorist groups emerging from old ones, such as when the MILF splintered from the MNLF in the 1970s. Furthermore, many fringe extremist groups remain, some of which hold on to the earlier goal of complete independence from Manila. In January 2019, during the BARMM referendum, the Sulu-based, Islamic State-affiliated Abu Sayaf Group carried out a deadly bombing of a cathedral on the island of Jolo, the capital of Sulu Province.⁸⁴

^{85, 86, 87}

Media

Despite a strong tradition of freedom of the press, the Philippines is one of the most dangerous countries to be a journalist. The constitution protects freedom of the press, but violence, intimidation, and legal action significantly undermine the work of journalists.⁸⁸ Between 1992 and 2015, only Syria and Iraq had more journalists killed. Defamation is a criminal offense and journalists who report information that is critical of government officials risk prosecution. In response to these threats, the government has set up a safety task force to protect journalists. The quality of journalism is also hindered by a lack of government transparency, advertisement disguised as journalism, and the popularity of sensational media.^{89, 90}



*Newsstand in Philippines
Flickr / Kenneth Tan*

There are over 600 radio stations in the country and hundreds of newspapers, including English-language ones. The government-run Philippine Broadcasting Service operates radio stations, a TV station, and the Philippines News Agency. Cable and satellite TV services are available. There are 119 cell phone subscriptions per 100 residents, and most Filipinos access the internet through their phones.^{91, 92, 93}

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.⁹⁴ 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.⁹⁵ About 29% of recent attacks and threats against the press took place in Mindanao.⁹⁶

Important Elements of the Economy

The Tausug are primarily subsistence farmers who use water buffalo to plow their fields. Rice is the major subsistence crop, and it is intercropped with corn, cassava, millet, sorghum, and sesame. Other crops include peanuts, yams, eggplants, beans, tomatoes, and onions. Major cash crops are coconuts, coffee, hemp, and fruit such as mangoes, mangosteens, bananas, jackfruit, durian, lanzones, and oranges. The primary livestock raised are cattle, chickens, and ducks. Fishing in coastal waters plays an important role in Tausug subsistence and is carried out with nets, hook-and-line, and traps. Many municipalities also have seaweed farms.^{97, 98, 99}



*A fishing boat near Kiamba
Flickr / Gary Todd*



*A worker bags up copra
Flickr / Paul Lewin*

The industrial and services sectors in Sulu Province have been held back by ongoing violence and terrorist activity. The Philippine government and the private sector have launched various initiatives to encourage economic development. Sulu's manufacturing activities are focused on bamboo household items, metal implements, mats, and headcloths.¹⁰⁰ Promising growth areas include telecommunications, hospital services, and coconut milling. In 2018, the World Bank encouraged the establishment of a free trade zone encompassing Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi.^{101, 102, 103}

The Sulu area has a long-established tradition of maritime trade with neighboring powers. Today, the Tausug supply copra (a source of coconut oil) and abaca (a source of hemp) to Chinese wholesalers. Smuggling activities between Sulu and Malaysian ports make up a large part of the region's informal economy.^{104, 105, 106}

Ethnic Groups

Tausug



Tausug women in traditional garb
Wikimedia / Jjarivera

being fierce warriors, and courage is a cornerstone of their culture. They still live a combative lifestyle and regard the refusal to fight as shameful. 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.^{109, 110}

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 bloodlines. Kinship and friendship are central elements in the organizational aspect of violence within Tausug communities. Friendship includes moral expectations of reciprocity, and friend relations may be as significant and close as kin relations.¹¹¹

Samal (Sama)

The Samal are a predominantly Muslim group concentrated largely in the Sulu Archipelago. 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.^{112, 113, 114} The Sama can be divided into several relatively distinct groups, including the Balangini and the Pangutaran.^{115, 116}



Samal children playing on a boat near stilt houses
Flickr / Kenneth Tan

Another major subgroup is the Jama Mapun, who live mainly in Cagayan de Tawi-Tawi and on the Turtle Islands.¹¹⁷

The Sama pay the greatest allegiance to their kinship group (*tumpuk*), who live clustered together. The group is headed by an elder with 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 exclusive use of mosques.¹¹⁸



Stilt houses of the Samal-Badjao people
Flickr / Travelbusy.com

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 their 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, who 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.¹¹⁹

Badjao



A Badjao mother and infant in a canoe
Flickr / Aia Fernandez

Often referred to as “Sea Gypsies” or “Sea Nomads,” the Muslim Badjao are the original indigenous people of the Sulu Islands.¹²⁰ 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. They 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.^{121, 122}



*Badjao children in a Davao City school
Flickr / Bro. Jeffrey Pioquinto, SJ*

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Cultural Orientation

Chapter 1 | Assessment

1. The Tausug are concentrated mostly in the Sulu Province of the Sulu Archipelago in southwestern Philippines.
2. The hottest month in the Sulu Archipelago is August, when the temperatures average 38°C (100°F).
3. Sharia law is not recognized in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).
4. The Tausug are primarily farmers who rely on rice and fishing for their subsistence.
5. The Tausug have a strong sense of Filipino identity alongside their Tausug identity.

Assessment Answers: 1. True; 2. False; 3. False; 4. True; 5. False



Islamic Center in Marawi
Wikimedia / Sultan Muhammad

Chapter 2 | Tausug Cultural Orientation

Religion

Introduction

As Islam spread to the Philippines in the 14th century, the Tausug were among the first to embrace the new faith.¹ The Tausug-led Sulu Sultanate became a prominent Muslim state in the 15th century and remains central to Tausug religious and political identity to this day. Islam's reach was halted north of Mindanao where Catholicism, which had been introduced by the Spanish, was firmly entrenched. From the 16th through the 19th centuries, the Spanish Catholics and the Muslims battled as Catholicism spread throughout the nation, eventually becoming the dominant religion. The Tausug have continued to resist colonization and what they see as religious persecution by Christians.^{2, 3, 4, 5}

Tausug religious practices reflect a unique blend of Islamic and traditional beliefs, including that each person has four souls that leave the body upon death.⁶ ^{7,8} The Tausug recognize three types of legal systems. The first is pure Quranic law (Sharia). The second is the codified religious law of the sultan and Tausug officials (*sara*). These Quranic and religious laws primarily deal with murder, slander, and adultery. The third law, customary law (*adat*), applies to conflicts and traditional mores, including issues of honor.^{9, 10}



Muslim women in a parade in Davao
Flickr / Keith Bacongco

Islam among the Tausug



The Hadja Sitti Raya Mosque, Talipao, Sulu
Wikimedia / Reign aboard

Historically, Islam has been a unifying force for Tausug society against inner factionalism, colonizers, and the Christian-dominated government in Manila. The Tausug adhere to orthodox Sunni Islam, but some elements of pre-Islamic beliefs and folk Islam are also present. According to Tausug tradition, supernatural spirits inhabit both nature and man-made locations, and may be either good or evil. Healers (*mangungubat*) may alleviate suffering caused by evil spirits. In addition to seeking medical care and offering Muslim prayers when ill, the Tausug may also make offerings to healers and wear protective talismans.^{11, 12}

Muslims practice the basic tenets of Islam known as the Five Pillars. The first pillar is recitation of the Muslim profession of faith (*shahadah*): “There is no true God 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 Island. Among young men, attendance is erratic. The young do not observe the prayer until they are ready to settle down.¹³ ¹⁴ The third pillar is charity (*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.¹⁵ 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 perform acts of charity. The fourth pillar is fasting (*sawm*) during the holy month of Ramadan. Most Tausug observe the fast for at least part of the month, but the elderly observe it more assiduously. 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.^{16, 17}

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 dust cover and do not place anything on top of it. In general, Muslims keep Quranic texts on a bookcase's highest shelf. Finally, keep the Quran out of latrines.¹⁸ Old or damaged copies may be properly disposed of in one of two ways. Burning is acceptable if conducted with respect. Quranic texts should not be burned with trash that can be buried. Before burying the Quran, it should be wrapped in something pure and then buried where no one may walk over it.^{19, 20}

Religion and Government



Ceremony for the inauguration of BARMM in 2019
Wikimedia / Robinson Ninal Jr. for the Presidential Communi-

The Philippine constitution calls for the separation of religion and state. The Philippine government allows the practice of Sharia law through the Code of Muslim Personal Laws of the Philippines, which came into effect in 1977. All laws, including those of the Sharia code, must conform to the national constitution. In 1973, a task force was set up to consider the difficulties faced by the Moro people as a religious and cultural minority, and to find ways to make Sharia 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 enforceable only in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).^{21, 22, 23, 24,}
²⁵ The Sharia courts also have jurisdiction over criminal matters involving Muslims. The Supreme Court has the right to hear appeals of Sharia court decisions and may reverse, revise, or modify such decisions in accordance with national law.²⁶

A severe lack of access and a disconnected judicial structure in the region has created problems for the administration of Islamic law in Muslim communities. This is reflected in the mix of Sharia and customary legal code (*adat*) currently used to administer justice, which is meted out by a *datu* (headman) rather than Islamic judges seated on the bench of a Philippine Court.^{27, 28, 29}



Sulu Provincial Capitol building in Jolo
Wikimedia / Agtillah

The Influence of Religion on Daily Life



Muslim and non-Muslim students pose together in Zamboanga
Flickr / Andy Maluche

Social patterns of interaction and behavior among the Tausug are informed by Islamic tradition and practices. The Tausug apply their particular understanding of Islamic law and the Quran but are also influenced by the secular Western practices of the Philippines.³⁰

Religious observances include daily prayers and ritual fasting during the holy month of Ramadan. Weddings and funerals are normally conducted in accordance with Islamic tradition. Both rituals are heavily influenced by non-Islamic traditions, making them unique to the Tausug.^{31, 32, 33}

Religious Holidays and Celebrations

The Philippines celebrates several traditional Christian holidays that are of relatively little significance to Muslim communities. In addition to these holidays, several Islamic holidays are commemorated throughout the nation, especially among the Tausug and other Islamic groups.³⁴

Maulid-al-nabi

The Prophet Muhammad's birthday is celebrated in the third month of the lunar new year.³⁵ Each mosque selects one evening for an all-night celebration. Imams chant continuously in Arabic, and special flowers are placed in the center of the mosque. When the imam reaches a certain point in the service, each congregant stands up to hold a flower. The service is noteworthy for its informality; congregants pass the time by smoking, chatting, and gossiping about current events. Around midnight, they enjoy a communal feast to which each family brings a tray of food. Sharing food garners credit for generosity.³⁶



Inside Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mosque
Wikimedia / MarkoDalisay

Lailatul Isra Wal Mi Raj

This holiday, on the 27th day of the seventh month of the lunar calendar, commemorates the night that the Prophet Muhammad ascended into heaven and returned to earth.^{37, 38} Celebrations vary throughout the world, but common traditions include prayers throughout the evening at mosques, candle lighting, and storytelling.^{39, 40}

Ramadan



Homemade cookies to celebrate Eid al-Adha
Flickr / Lehava Maghar

Fasting during the daylight hours of this holy ninth month of the lunar calendar is a requirement for all Muslims, with exemptions granted to the young, old, sick, and pregnant. The lack of food and water may cause grumpiness and fatigue. Often during Ramadan, business hours are erratic and many shops are closed. As in other Muslim areas, non-Muslims should refrain from eating, drinking, smoking, or chewing gum in public during Ramadan. The fast is broken on the first day of the following month with a large and celebratory feast. This day is known as Hari Raya (Eid al-Fitr). People wear their best clothes and visit friends and relatives, as well as venture to

the nearest town to participate in festivals and entertainment. Many also visit cemeteries to honor departed relatives.^{41, 42}

Hari Raya Hadj

Also known as Eid al-Adha, this is the festival of sacrifice. Celebrated at the height of the *hajj* pilgrimage, this day commemorates the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his son. Muslims celebrate with a large feast in which one-third of the meat is given to the needy.^{43, 44, 45}

Pagtulak bala

This holiday, literally meaning “sending away evil,” falls on successive Wednesdays during the second month of the Muslim lunar calendar. It is a ritual held on the beach. Prayers and ablutions are meant to excise accumulated *bala*, a form of supernatural evil believed to accumulate in the body. It may take many forms, including disease, drought, and warfare. Rafts are loaded with various foods and a live chicken before being released into the current in order to lead the spirits away from the land.^{46, 47, 48}



The Taluksangay Mosque, located in Barangay Taluksangay, Zamboanga
Wikimedia / Wowzamboangacity

Places of Worship



*The exterior of the Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkhia Mosque
Wikimedia / MarkoDalisay*

Mosques are places of worship for Muslims. While men and women attend services therein, women must stay in the back, out of sight of the men. Visitors are allowed to observe, but should secure permission to do so.^{49, 50}

The largest mosque in the Philippines, occupying 5,000 sq m (53,819 sq ft) on 5 hectares (12.3 acres), is the Sultan Hassan al-Bolkiah Mosque, also known as the Grand Mosque or Golden Mosque, in Cotabato City. It is named for the sultan of Brunei, who funded its construction. Completed in 2011, the mosque features gold-plated domes and 40 m (131 ft) high minarets.^{51, 52}

The nation's oldest mosque, designated a national shrine, is the Sheik Karim Makdum Mosque on the island of Simunul in Tawi-Tawi Province. It was built in 1380 by Karim Makdum, the Arab trader and missionary who introduced the Philippines to Islam. The building has been rebuilt, but the original wooden pillars remain inside the building. This mosque contains the tomb of Sheik al-Makdum, a popular pilgrimage destination.^{53, 54}

May I enter the mosque?

Soldier:	manjaaree baha koo somood pa lom sin masjid?	May I enter the mosque?
Local:	hoon	Yes.

Exchange 1

Must I take off my shoes inside the mosque?

Soldier:	sobaay ku eegun in tawpa bang somood pa lom sin masjid?	Must I take off my shoes inside the mosque?
Local:	hoon	Yes.

Exchange 2

Although designs vary, all mosques include several elements. Most have four walls; the *qibla* is the wall facing Mecca. In the *qibla* is a small niche called the *mihrab*. To the right of the *mihrab* is a pulpit, or *minbar*, where the imam stands while conducting services. Mosques also have a minaret from which the daily calls to prayer are issued. Many mosques also have an ablution fountain in the center of the courtyard (*sahn*), where Muslims ritually wash before prayers.^{55, 56}

When do you pray?

Soldier:	ko ono kaw magsambahaayang?	When do you pray?
Local:	magsambahaayang kamee sin ogto sooga	We pray at noon.

Exchange 3

Do I need to cover my head?

Soldier:	sobaay akoo magteerung?	Do I need to cover my head?
Local:	hoon	Yes.

Exchange 4

Behavioral Protocols in Places of Worship



Kaum Purnah Mosque, located in Isabela City, Basilan
Wikimedia / Jjarivera

Visitors to mosques should be mindful of several basic rules. Remove hats and sunglasses prior to entering. Refrain from making noise and conversation while in the mosque. Turn off mobile phones. Do not chew gum. Never bring food or drink inside.⁵⁷

When sitting, do not point your feet toward the *qibla*, the wall facing Mecca, or other people. Dress modestly in 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 that covers the hair should be worn. Trousers are appropriate for men, as are plain shirts.

Short-sleeved shirts are acceptable for men. Do not wear brightly colored T-shirts imprinted with slogans or logos. Some mosques may provide appropriate coverings for tourists.^{58, 59}

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 prayers, stand quietly toward the rear of the mosque and do not take 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 daylight hours to avoid intruding on the feasts that often are hosted after sunset.^{60, 61}

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Chapter 2 | Assessment

1. The Tausug resisted efforts to convert to Islam when it arrived in the Philippines in the 14th century.
2. Tausug men are particularly devoted to Islamic practice in their youth.
3. *Mangungubat* are platters of food used for communal feasts during Tausug religious celebrations.
4. The Tausug adhere to a strict interpretation of orthodox Islam.
5. Tausug Muslims practice rituals, such as *pagtulak bala*, that are not strictly Islamic in origin.

Assessment Answers: 1. False; 2. False; 3. False; 4. False; 5. True;



Traditional Tausug dancers perform together
Wikimedia / Jjarivera

Chapter 3 | Tausug Cultural Orientation

Traditions

Introduction

As sailors, pearl divers, and traders, the Tausug, or “People of the Current,” have had a long, rich association with the sea. The “current” (*sug*), which is the second part of their name, refers to the strong currents that flow from the Sulu Archipelago and the China Sea to the Celebes Sea, while *tau* means man.¹ The Tausug were the first group in the region to convert to Islam and one of many Islamic subgroups in the newly formed Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).^{2,3,4}

The Tausug maintain a unique culture that features strong family ties, warrior traditions, and a folk iteration of Islam. The traditional warrior ethos considers retreat as shameful.⁵ In addition to the traditional aspects of Islamic culture, the Tausug have a high regard for nature and the spirit world.^{6,7}

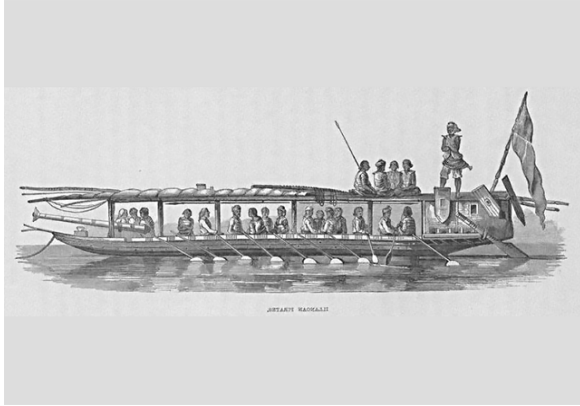


Illustration of Moro pirates of the 19th century
Flickr / U.S. Pacific Fleet

According to recent estimates, about 1,285,000 Tausug live in the Philippines, most of which reside in the Sulu Archipelago.⁸ Worldwide, Tausug numbers reach 1,522,000. Beyond the Philippines, the Tausug are found in Indonesia and Malaysia.⁹

Tausug and other Muslim groups based in the Philippines have been known historically as the Moros, a term derived from “moor” by which Spanish colonists referred to Muslims. Before independence, the term was associated with savagery, piracy, and violence. During the 1934 constitutional convention, delegates from the south implored counterparts from

the north to cease using the term Moros, because it unfairly characterized Muslims as unreal Filipinos.^{10, 11}

In the late 1970s, a form of identity politics emerged as part of the independence movement, and Moro became a term imbued with pride.^{12, 13} However, this term is still perceived as problematic by some because it obscures the cultural and linguistic differences among Muslims who regard themselves as members of distinct ethnic groups. This is especially relevant to the Tausug who feel superior to other Muslims because they are descendants of the Sulu Sultan.^{14, 15}

Honor and Values

The Tausug have a long established reputation for bravery, due to intermittent warfare against various colonists. Their fierceness is exemplified in the *mag-sabil* warriors, also known by the Spanish name *juramentados*, who carried out suicide attacks on enemies, including American troops in occupation.¹⁶

Bravery is a virtue instilled in every Tausug male throughout his life.¹⁷ For him, combativeness or violence is considered bravery. The closest word in the Tausug language for “violence” is *maisug*, roughly approximate to “masculine,” “violent,” or “brave.”¹⁸ If a man is unwilling to exact revenge, he defies a culture that expects adversarial behavior.¹⁹ While men are expected to be courageous bravery and engage in conflict, the Tausug do not endorse looking for trouble, but rather believe that conflict is an essential part of life.²⁰



Three Tausug men socialize together
Flickr / pangitau

Honor is paramount in Tausug culture and experiencing shame has a severely detrimental effect on the people. Shame, or *sipug*, is a component of other communities in the Philippines, but it has greater

significance for the Tausug than for other groups. *Sipug* in Tausug culture is tied directly to the concepts of honor, pride, self-respect and self-esteem and has implications for the individual, the family and society. This meaning of shame is succinctly captured in a popular proverb: *In tau maisug makaminsan da matay sagawa is sipug di makubul* (A brave man dies only once, but shame cannot be buried).^{21, 22}

The concept of reciprocity is important to not only the Tausug but every other culture in the Philippines. *Buddi*, the the Tausug term for reciprocity, embodies the notion of a debt of gratitude. This deference is always used in a positive manner to demonstrate goodwill toward those who offer gifts or favor to the recipient. As with *sipug*, *buddi* extends beyond the individual and reflects upon the family as well. Reciprocation that calls for revenge is known as *tungbas*. In of the context of violence, *tungbas* demands a life for a life.²³



Moro men from the Sulu Archipelago pose together
Wikimedia Commons

Debts of gratitude must be repaid spontaneously or. Ever conscious of reciprocity, the Tausug tend to repay debts with interest to avoid loss of face or esteem. The way to recapture 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 recruit his kinsmen and friends to help.²⁴

Formulaic Codes of Politeness

Tausug-speaking people, like the greater Philippines population, are generally formal in their initial greetings. When greeting someone, it is customary to shake hands, although a handshake is less firm than in the United States, and the hand is often held slightly longer. Occasionally, a person will show enthusiasm or additional respect by covering the handshake with their free hand.²⁵ A stranger may greet a woman, but shaking hands with her is not always appropriate. Women will extend the hand first if they wish to shake hands. If not, a smile and hand wave is a common alternative.^{26, 27} Custom dictates that the most senior or elderly person be greeted first.²⁸



Formal greetings between military representatives
Flickr / U.S. Pacific Fleet

Good morning.

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

Exchange 5



Friends pose together in busy marketplace
Flickr / Phil Warrent

Exercising tact in greetings is important to preserve the honor or standing of others.^{29, 30} Address new acquaintances as formally as possible; it is best to err on the side of formality by using a person's formal title or "Mr.," "Mrs.," and "Miss," followed by the last name. Colleagues can be referred to by their first name.^{31, 32, 33}

Tausug often greet peers by their first names. Kinship terms such as uncle (*bapa*) and aunt (*babu*), are commonly used to address with relatives and non-blood relatives. The basic Tausug kinship group may be categorized as the nuclear family.³⁴

Good evening!

Soldier:	salaam alaykum!	Good evening!
Local:	alaykum was salaam!	Good evening!

Exchange 6

Hi, Mr. Ali.

Soldier:	as salaam alaykum, bapa alee	Hello, Mr. Ali.
Local:	alaykum was salaam!	Hello!
Soldier:	marayaw da saab kaw?	Are you doing well?
Local:	hoon	Yes.

Exchange 7

How are you?

Soldier:	maw noonoo da kaw?	How are you?
Local:	marayaw da eesaab	Fine, very well.

Exchange 8

How is your family?

Soldier:	beeya dee in da in tawta ya nak moo?	How is your family?
Local:	moora mooraahaan, marayaw eesaab seela, magsukool	They are doing fine, thank you.

Exchange 9

Hospitality and Gift Giving



*Pig roast at a beach party near Davao
Flickr / I_dean_m*

Upon entering a Filipino house one, should say something complementary about it. Guests should not arrive exactly on time. Doing so could make the guest seem greedy and place the host family in an embarrassing position. Punctuality is not regarded as polite. Rather, it is better to arrive approximately 15 minutes after the appointed time. In rural homes, shoes are removed upon entering; in urban settings, this custom is less common. Some homes will have slippers available for walking around the house.³⁵

Never refer to your host's wife as "the hostess" because it may be misconstrued as "prostitute." Always address someone's wife as "Mrs." unless given prior permission to use another form."³⁶

I really appreciate your hospitality.

Soldier:	magsukool tood ha panayma neeyo kamoo	I really appreciate your hospitality.
Local:	uwaay day san	It is nothing.

Exchange 10

It is considered offensive to decline food, even if you have just finished a meal. When getting ready to eat, visitors should wait to be instructed where to sit and when to start serving themselves. Typically, all courses of a meal are served at the same time. A spoon in the right hand is used to guide food onto the fork held in the left hand. After a visit, it is a good idea to show gratitude by leaving or sending a thank you note.³⁷

This food is very good.

Soldier:	masaraap tood in pagkaw neenee	This food is very good.
Local:	pee yan gag san eenee	It's byangang.

Exchange 11

Gift Giving

As a rule throughout the Philippines, gratitude for hospitality is acknowledged with the conveyance of small gifts. Since the Tausug are Muslim, flowers and sweets are the most common gifts. Small electronic devices, books, and souvenirs are also acceptable. Food is not a good idea because the recipient might get the impression that the giver thinks he/she is poor. Since pious Muslims do not drink, a gift of alcoholic beverages is out of the question. Chrysanthemums and white lilies are to be avoided because white flowers are associated with funerals. The gift should be elegantly wrapped, as a sign of respect. Filipinos do not generally open gifts in front of the giver, since doing so may be viewed as a sign of greed and may cause embarrassment.^{38, 39, 40}

This gift is for you.

Soldier:	tabooka in pagsampaay namoo kaymoo	This gift is for you.
Local:	maaha paakoo, sa dee ku manjaaree tabookun eenee	I cannot accept this.

Exchange 12

Food and Eating Habits



Chicken kurma and a rice dish
Flickr / Yummy O Yummy

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. Dishes are often accompanied by heavily spiced, coconut-milk based curries or sauces.⁴¹ Examples include *piyanggang*, a chicken dish made with a green curry of coconut, lemongrass, and garlic; and beef *kurma*, a curried stew dish.⁴² Tausug *satti* is a skewer of barbecued chicken or beef, served with rice cooked in young coconut leaves and accompanied by a sweet and spicy sauce.^{43, 44}

Rice is a major staple food and can be served at any meal.⁴⁵ Other staples are seaweed, fish, copra, cassava, and abaca. Pork, while popular elsewhere in the Philippines, is not consumed by the Tausug as it is against their beliefs.^{46, 47, 48} Simple meals often include dried fish and sautéed vegetables added to a starch called *kaunan*. *Lamay* is a popular dish in which fish and vegetables are stewed with onions, tomatoes, ginger, and lemongrass. *Tiyula itum* is a savory beef broth spiced with onions, lemongrass, garlic, chili, turmeric, and burned coconut.⁴⁹ Tausug desserts include sweet cakes (such as *baulu*) made with rice flour. *Putli mandi* are sweet rice balls filled with coconut jam.^{50, 51}

What is the name of this dish?

Soldier:	unee pagko neenee?	What is the name of this dish?
Local:	taahmoo eenee	This is tamu.

Exchange 13

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.^{52, 53}

Coffee is prominent on the Sulu Archipelago and is a staple of the Tausug diet. It is drunk throughout the day and is an essential element or complement to certain meals. The Sulu region was once known for its coffee production, although in recent years armed conflict has stifled this enterprise. Coffee houses are common places for people to meet, drink coffee, and socialize throughout the region.^{54, 55}

The food tastes so good.

Soldier:	maa nanam in pagka un eenee	The food tastes so good.
Local:	magsukool	Thank you.

Exchange 14

Dress Codes



Tausug woman in traditional dress performs a pangalay dance
Wikimedia / Jjarivera

Clothing for Tausug men commonly includes a fitted shirt and pants with a matching waist sash and turban. Locally sourced cotton is the most common fabric used.⁵⁶ In the greater Sulu region, 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 wear a *sablai*, 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. If a man has made the *Hajj* to Mecca, he may wear a white cap.⁵⁷

How should I dress?

Soldier:	beeya dee in akoo manamoo?	How should I dress?
Local:	sooloogha in panamoo bokoon masigpeet eeban dee katampanan in baran moo	Wear loose fitting clothes that cover your body.

Exchange 15



*Family portrait in traditional barong tagalog shirts
Flickr / Antiporda Productions*

Business attire, similar to that worn in Western countries, is common in addition to traditional formal wear. 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.⁵⁸ Suits, ties, and grooming are important considerations. It is recommended that earrings not be worn by men, and facial hair groomed when dressing for business. The *barong tagalog*, or simply *barong*, is the traditional and formal dress shirt for men. The *barong* features intricate embroidery and is worn untucked.⁵⁹

Is this acceptable to wear?

Soldier:	manjaaree ku sologon in bajoo eenee?	Is this acceptable to wear?
Local:	hoon	Yes.

Exchange 16

Celebrations/Holidays

Several national and religious holidays are celebrated in both the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and the greater Philippines area.⁶⁰

New Year's Day

New Year's Day is celebrated throughout the Philippines on January 1.⁶¹ The Islamic New Year, taking place in Muharram (the first month of the Islamic calendar), is celebrated by the Tausug and other Muslim Filipino groups. The date varies by



*Fireworks above Makati City in 2007
Flickr / The Wandering Angel*

year. Worshippers often gather at mosques for special prayers and to reflect on their lives.^{62, 63}

The Day of Valor

The Day of Valor (Araw ng Kagitingan), celebrated on April 9, commemorates the Filipino fighters in World War II. This is a non-working day, part of a long weekend characterized by parades and other festive events.^{64, 65}

Labor Day

Labor Day, observed on May 1, is an international holiday that honors workers.⁶⁶ The Philippines' first labor federation, Union Obrera Democratica (UOD), was established in 1903. Subsequent labor organizations sought to abolish child labor, codify an eight-hour workday, and improve working conditions for women.^{67, 68, 69}



Independence Day celebration attendees
Flickr / Jhun3lle Sardido

Independence Day

This national holiday originated on 12 June 1898, when General Emilio Aguinaldo declared independence from foreign rule. The Philippines' independence was originally recognized on 4 July, the date in 1946 when the Philippines became independent of U.S. rule. The date to celebrate independence was changed to 12 June by President Macapagal in 1962 and signed into law in 1964, in order to inspire greater national pride. The 4 July date is still acknowledged as Republic Day.^{70, 71}

Ninoy Aquino Day

This national holiday acknowledges the date former Senator Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, Jr. was assassinated. A committed opponent of the authoritarian President Ferdinand Marcos, Aquino had just returned from exile when he was shot and killed on 21 August 1983. His assassination provoked widespread rebellion against Marcos and fomented the 1986 EDSA (Epifanio Delos Santos Avenue) Revolution.^{72, 73}



Aquino statue outside the Pampanga Provincial Capitol
Wikimedia / Ramon Fvelasquez

National Heroes Day

This holiday, held on the last Monday of August, officially honors Filipino national heroes who fought for the country's independence throughout its history. Notable people honored are Jose Rizal, Andres Bonifacio, Juan Luna, and Gabriela Silang.^{74, 75}

Bonifacio Day



Bonifacio Day wreath laying ceremony
Wikimedia / Gil Calinga for the Philippine News Agency

Bonifacio Day, at the end of November, honors the birthday of Andres Bonifacio. One of the Philippines' most revered national leaders, Bonifacio led the revolutionary group Katipunan, whose members fought against Spanish rule. Bonifacio was captured by the Spanish and executed in 1897, shortly before the country transitioned out of Spanish rule.^{76, 77}

Rizal Day



Rizal Day ceremony in 1949
Wikimedia / Malacañang Palace

Rizal Day on 30 December commemorates the martyrdom of the national hero of the Philippines, Dr. Jose Rizal, who fought for independence from Spain.⁷⁸ In his youth, he left the Philippines for Spain, where he completed his medical degree. Dr. Rizal then traveled throughout the world, mastered several languages, and became educated in business, education, and agriculture. His pro-reform writings were extremely influential in the Philippines, causing Spanish rulers to fear his influence. On 30 December 1896, Spanish officials executed Dr. Rizal for rebellion and sedition.⁷⁹

Other Cultural Traditions/Norms

Weapons

Much has been made of the Tausug warrior culture, with its historical propensity toward violence and warfare. Tausug men are commonly portrayed as fierce warriors who are always armed with a Moro Kris sword dagger, Barong knife, or in more recent times, firearms. The Tausug male's role as protector is foremost and accounts for the popularized image of a well-armed warrior.^{80, 81, 82} Modern weaponry and firearms did not become readily available until aftermath of World War II, when massive amounts of weapons were left in the region by Japan. Once these weapons were introduced to the culture, they became a mainstay in the region.⁸³ Firearms also have non-lethal, recreational uses among the Tausug and other groups in the region. Guns are commonly fired in celebration during holidays or special events.⁸⁴



The Moro barong short sword
Wikimedia / Filhistorydotcom

Did these people threaten you?		
Soldier:	bakas kaw shangupan sin manga tau eenee?	Did these people threaten you?
Local:	uwaay	No.

Exchange 17

Clan Conflicts

Clan conflicts are known as *rido* in Tagalog and *pagbanta* in Tausug.⁸⁵ Refusal to demand payment of a blood debt from his enemies opens a Tausug male to the charge that he is without *sipug*.⁸⁶ Expectations of bravery extend beyond the individual. The Tausug male must protect and defend not only himself and his family, but his entire clan, as a matter of reciprocal obligation. He is also expected to risk his life for a family member, no matter how distant a relative, to ensure that the clan will rally to his defense should his life be in jeopardy.^{87, 88}

Kinship and Friendship

Kinship holds an essential place in Tausug culture, similar to the concepts of *maisug* and *sipug*. Tausug kinship rules are complex and follow paternal and maternal lines. Loyalty within the culture is directly tied to blood relations and how close the people are to one another. These types of bonds are incredibly strong

and long-lasting.⁸⁹ Kinship traditionally demands action from kinsmen when conflicts arise. A Tausug is expected to know the names of all kin through second and third cousins. Knowing who is close kin is a matter of survival. Kinship in Tausug culture has been characterized as a continuous loop of reciprocity, tied to the concept of *buddi*.^{90, 91}

The Tausug meaning of friendship involves a social contract that demands reciprocity, particularly when dealing with 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 so by village headmen who seek an honorable way to end feuds. Such friends are not required to render assistance but are prevented from committing violent acts.^{92, 93}



A family paying respects at a local cemetery
Flickr / Gary Todd

Conflict Resolution

Tausug culture does not encourage 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.^{94, 95} Issues related to family matters (including marital disputes) are often handled by religious leaders. In other legal matters, religious authorities are secondary to the headmen or *datu*.⁹⁶

Dos and Don'ts

Do

- **Do** get someone's attention by motioning downward gently or making the “psst” sound instead of pointing.
- **Do** demonstrate gratitude for any help received.
- **Do** show respect to elders regardless of their professional and/or educational status.
- **Do** use honorifics or kinship terminology when applicable.

Don't

- **Don't** point at someone. This is considered an extremely rude gesture.
- **Don't** use curse words. Most Filipinos understand enough English to know what you are saying, and cursing is taboo.
- **Don't** touch food or other persons with the left hand. Muslims reserve the left hand for hygienic purposes and consider it improper for other use.
- **Don't** stare at people. Prolonged eye contact is impolite and may be interpreted as 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.

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Cultural Orientation

Chapter 3 | Assessment

1. The term “Moro” is of Tausug origin.
2. The Tausug are strong nationalists who view themselves as the original Filipinos.
3. Weapons are a critical part of Tausug culture and nearly every household has firearms.
4. Honor and pride are tied into the Tausug concept of *sipug* or shame.
5. Kinship obligations strictly follow only the paternal lines among the Tausug people.

Assessment Answers: 1. False; 2. False; 3. True; 4. True; 5. False



A dense seaside town in Tawi Tawi
Wikimedia / United States Navy

Chapter 4 | Tausug Cultural Orientation

Urban Life

Introduction

In 2018, 46.9% of the Philippines' population was urban, with a yearly urbanization rate of 1.99%.¹ In the predominantly rural Sulu Province, the capital Jolo Town is the largest urban center. Major problems confronting urban areas in Sulu Province include flooding and poverty as well as terrorist attacks and armed conflict between separatist groups and government troops.^{2,3,4,5}

Urban and Economic Issues

Armed Conflict and Displacement

The urban areas of Sulu Province, as well as the rest of the southern Philippines, face serious challenges. However, some are not typical urban challenges. One of the largest problems is the ongoing armed conflict between government forces and various insurgent and separatist groups. Between May and October 2017, the capital of Lanao del Sur Province, Marawi, was the scene of the longest urban warfare in Philippine history. The military fought against a coalition of Islamist insurgent groups that had taken control of the city and liberated it after five months. Reconstruction of Marawi is slow and likely to cost more than USD 1.2 billion over several years.^{6, 7, 8}



A structure fire caused by airstrikes in Marawi
Wikimedia / Mark Jhomel



The destruction caused by the Jolo cathedral bombing
Wikimedia / ALBERT ALCAIN/PRESIDENTIAL PHOTO

In Jolo Town, the bombing of a Catholic cathedral that left 22 people dead followed on the heels of the January 2019 referendum on the creation of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). The bombing was likely coordinated by the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), which continues to seek an independent Muslim state in the southern Philippines.^{9, 10, 11, 12, 13} Since the bombing, there has been a steady stream of deadly attacks by the Abu Sayyaf Group and clashes with government forces in Sulu Province.^{14, 15, 16, 17}

The unrest left hundreds of thousands of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the southern Philippines. In 2018 alone, the conflict left 188,000 IDPs.¹⁸ By the time government troops had killed insurgency leaders and regained control of Marawi during the city's siege, 400,000 thousand people had been displaced. While most have since returned, many lack access to basic services like electricity and running water.¹⁹ The ongoing conflict in Sulu Province has displaced over 5,000 people in Jolo, Patikul, Tongkil, Indanan, and Maimbung.²⁰ Other causes of displacement in the area are natural disasters, clan feuds, and land disputes.²¹

Flooding

Flooding is a constant problem. Jolo Town, in particular, sits only about 1 m (3.2 ft) above sea level on a flood plain open to the Sulu Sea. The outdated drainage system serving the city is insufficient to handle the overflow. The problem is made worse by improper waste disposal. Many residents live on stilt houses built on the coastal shelf and simply throw their waste along the coastline or in canals, clogging them and causing more flooding.^{22, 23, 24, 25}



Displaced children eat a meal together
Flickr / Bro. Jeffrey Pioquinto, SJ

Poverty

Poverty is prevalent throughout the nation, but disproportionately affects Muslim-majority areas. In 2018, the former ARMM had the highest incidence of poverty at 54.4%; Sulu was the country's second-poorest province with a 71.8% incidence of poverty.^{26, 27} The primary drivers of poverty are poor infrastructure, a lack of basic services, armed conflict, and a lack of access to education.²⁸

Healthcare



The United Doctors Hospital in Cotabato
Wikimedia / MarkoDalisay

Healthcare in the Philippines has undergone many changes in recent years due in part to reforms and policies aimed at improving access for residents. According to the Department of Health, the Philippines has 721 public hospitals and 1,071 private hospitals. While healthcare is characterized as efficient and affordable, it is not on par with the healthcare of many western nations. Healthcare standards vary dramatically from region to region; urban areas have a significantly higher standard than rural areas.^{29, 30} The quality of hospital services might be substandard since many lack modern equipment and adequate sanitation.³¹

Is there a hospital nearby?

Soldier:	awun hospeetal masook dee?	Is there a hospital nearby?
Local:	awun, ha geetungan sin kawman eenee	Yes, in the center of town.

Exchange 18

Some hospitals require a down payment upon admission and full payment for services upon discharge. Some private and public hospitals will not provide treatment if sufficient payment is not made. Travelers should ensure that their vaccinations are up to date to avoid preventable health threats. Precautions should be taken since mosquito-borne illnesses, such as the Zika and malaria, are present in the Philippines.^{32, 33} Rabies is also a nationwide public health issue. The disease is spread through the bites of infected animals such as cats, dogs, bats, and raccoons. Seek medical treatment if bitten by an animal.^{34, 35} It is recommended to have travel insurance to avoid paying for costly treatment or medical evacuation to the United States.³⁶



The Zamboanga del Norte Medical Center
Wikimedia / Placelover

Is Dr. Omar in?		
Soldier:	bapa, yaaree hee doktol omar?	Is Dr. Omar in?
Local:	hoon	Yes.

Exchange 19

In Muslim-majority areas, the life expectancies of men (58 years) and women (62 years) are considerably below the national average of 69.6 years.^{37, 38} The former 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.³⁹

Education



The gateway to Basilan National High School
Flickr / Freedom House

In 2015, the literacy rate across the Philippines for males and females over 15 years of age was 96.3%.⁴⁰ In Sulu Province, literacy stood at 83% in 2015.⁴¹ The 2008 functional literacy rate, which gauges a person's basic reading, writing, and computational skills, for ages 10 to 64 was 79.6%. The failure of many children to develop basic learning skills by the end of their primary education increases the dropout rate, which was about 51% in 2009–2010.^{42, 43}

Education in the Philippines is regulated by the Department of Education, which mandates six years



Furigay Colleges during the Lami-Lamihan Festival 2008
 Wikimedia / Jjarivera

of schooling beginning at the age of six. This basic elementary education is divided into two components: primary (grades 1–4) and intermediate (grades 5 and 6). Public elementary school is free. Students receive a certificate of graduation upon completing their studies. Secondary education (junior high school) consists of four years of education.^{44, 45} High school consists of two years of education, after which students may choose to attend a vocational school or college.⁴⁶

Tuition is free at 112 state universities and colleges across the Philippines.⁴⁷ Although the Philippines has the highest number of colleges and universities per capita in Southeast Asia, Philippine universities graduate fewer scientists per capita and conduct less scientific research than neighboring countries.⁴⁸ Potential enlistees into the Philippine Army are required to have at least 72 college credits or possess an in-demand technical skill.⁴⁹

Restaurants

Jolo has a variety of restaurants and eateries.⁵⁰ Generally, tipping is not expected.⁵¹

A popular breakfast in Sulu is *satti*, which is made of barbecued beef bits served on skewers and steamed rice balls cooked in *puso* (coconut leaves). These are topped with a curry-like sauce.^{52, 53, 54}



Outdoor dining along the shore in Mindanao
 Flickr / Richard Parker

Put this all on one bill.

Soldier:	manjaaree mo listaahun in katan beenee ku hambook reeseebo	Put this all on one bill.
Local:	o kay	Okay.

Exchange 20

I would like coffee or tea.

Soldier:	mabaaya koo meenum sin kahawa atawa tee	I would like coffee or tea.
Local:	mat tan	Sure.

Exchange 21

Are you still serving breakfast?

Soldier:	maasee pa kamoo nag adjal sin eenuman?	Are you still serving breakfast?
Local:	hoon	Yes.

Exchange 22

I'd like some hot soup.

Soldier:	mabaya akoo sin sabaw mapasu	I'd like some hot soup.
Local:	hoon	Sure.

Exchange 23



Durians in a marketplace
Flickr / Shubert Ciencia

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.⁵⁵

It is said that no Filipino meal is complete without dessert. Fresh fruit such as mangosteens, durians, or lanzones are popular choices.⁵⁶ Favorite desserts include prepared sweet cakes, rice cakes, or steamed *putli-mandi*, which is made from cassava rolled in grated coconut.⁵⁷

May I have a glass of water?

Soldier:	manjaaree mangayoo hangka basoo toobig eenomoon?	May I have a glass of water?
Local:	hoon, manjaaree eesaab	Yes, right away.

Exchange 24

What type of meat is this?

Soldier:	unoo in shin baaya eenee?	What type of meat is this?
Local:	beelee	Lamb.

Exchange 25

Do you have dessert?

Soldier:	awun kamoo bubunglaw atawa pagka un maleemoo?	Do you have dessert?
Local:	awun kamee apam	Yes, we have apam.

Exchange 26

In the Philippines it is customary for the host to pay the bill.⁵⁸

Can I have my total bill, please?

Soldier:	manjaaree ku eengatun bang peela in gastus ku?	Can I have my total bill, please?
Local:	hoon, manjaaree eesaab	Yes, of course.

Exchange 27

Where is your restroom?

Soldier:	haree eenen kasilyas neeyo?	Where is your restroom?
Local:	yadtoo, ha baleek pa tu omoo	That room to your left, over there.

Exchange 28

Markets and Bazaars

Money and Currency

The official unit of currency is the Philippine peso (PHP). In August 2019, USD 1 was equal to approximately PHP 52.⁵⁹ ATMs are readily available in most urban areas but may be less prominent 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 vigilance is advised when using credit cards; always keep cards



Front and back of 100 Philippine peso (PHP) currency
Flickr / Vintage Printery

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.⁶⁰

Do you accept U.S. currency?		
Soldier:	toomabok kaw sin meeleeekan?	Do you accept U.S. currency?
Local:	dee, pagtabokun namoo hadja in peysos	No, we only accept pesos.

Exchange 29

Shopping



Exterior of the Yubenco Star Mall
Wikimedia / Wowzamboangacity

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 in public markets or on the roadside near the commercial area.⁶¹

Aside from offering food and other amenities, markets may also sell local handicrafts. The Tausug are known as fine basket makers, weavers, and potters.^{62, 63}

Those who look to purchase an item should be aware that vendors might only have small change. Therefore, it is important to carry smaller bills in the local currency.⁶⁴

How much longer will you be here?		
Soldier:	beeya dee in pa in loghay mo dee?	How much longer will you be here?
Local:	tung ka jam pa	Three more hours.

Exchange 30

Please, buy something from me.		
Local:	bang manjaaree, awun pabihum ku kaymoo	Please, buy something from me.
Soldier:	maapa akoo, sa uwaay na sin nakapin kakoo	Sorry, I have no money left.

Exchange 31

Is the bazaar nearby?

Soldier:	awun taboo masook dee?	Is the bazaar nearby?
Local:	awun, yadtoo pa to oo moo	Yes, over there on the right.

Exchange 32

Can you give me change for this?

Soldier:	awun heekaahug moo dee?	Can you give me change for this?
Local:	uwaay	No.

Exchange 33

Do you have any more of these?

Soldier:	awun pa eenee kaneeyo?	Do you have any more of these?
Local:	uwaay na	No.

Exchange 34



*A Tausug refugee child sells piyutu on the street
Wikimedia / Yazirajim*

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.^{65, 66}

May I examine this close up?

Soldier:	manjaaree ku keeta oo eenee ha masook?	May I examine this close up?
Local:	kadtoo ee	Sure.

Exchange 35

Transportation

Public transportation modes throughout the Philippines, especially buses and *jeepneys*, are not safe because of pickpockets and theft. Armed robberies have happened and passengers have occasionally been killed.^{67, 68} Jeepneys and tricycles are the traditional forms of public transportation in Sulu and Tawi-Tawi provinces. Used throughout the Philippines, jeepneys were first adapted from World War II U.S. military jeeps. A crowded jeepney can seat up to 30 passengers. Typically, the vehicles are decorated with colorful artwork, often including advertisements or political messages.⁶⁹



*A Jeepney on the road in Mindanao
Flickr / Gary Todd*

Will the bus be here soon?

Soldier:	magdaratung na baha in tarak padjak?	Will the bus be here soon?
Local:	hoon	Yes.

Exchange 36

Is there a gas station nearby?

Soldier:	awun pagbeehan sin gaas masook dee?	Is there a gas station nearby?
Local:	awun	Yes.

Exchange 37

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.^{70, 71, 72}

Is there a good auto mechanic nearby?

Soldier:	awun magdadayaw sin sasakataan masook dee?	Is there a good auto mechanic nearby?
Local:	awun	Yes.

Exchange 38

Where can I rent a car?

Soldier:	haree in in pagpadjakan sin sasakataan??	Where can I rent a car?
Local:	yadtoo hatyangee	Downtown.

Exchange 39

There is no rail service in the Sulu Archipelago.⁷³

Is there a train station nearby?

Soldier:	awun trin masook dee?	Is there a train station nearby?
Local:	uwaay	No.

Exchange 40



A typical ferry boat in the Philippines
Flickr / arcibald

Other than ferries, the main intra-island form of transportation is by air. The European Commission has banned all Philippine-certified air carriers because of an inability to verify compliance with international safety standards.⁷⁴ Similarly, the United States Federal Aviation Administration has found that the Philippines does not comply with international safety standards.^{75, 76}

Ferries are known to be rundown and are often overloaded. Combined with a lack of safety equipment, this has led to fatal accidents, such as the August 2019 ferry capsizing in the Iloilo-Guimaras straits in which 30 people died. Piracy also poses a significant risk to sea travelers in the Philippines.^{77, 78}

Which road leads to the airport?

Soldier:	haree in in dan todjoo pa landing?	Which road leads to the airport?
Local:	in dan todjoo pa sadlopan	The road heading east.

Exchange 41

To minimize problems of safety and security, taxis should be arranged 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.^{79, 80}

Where can I get a cab?

Soldier:	hawnoo akoo makalag sin taksee?	Where can I get a cab?
Local:	daayin deeto	Over there.

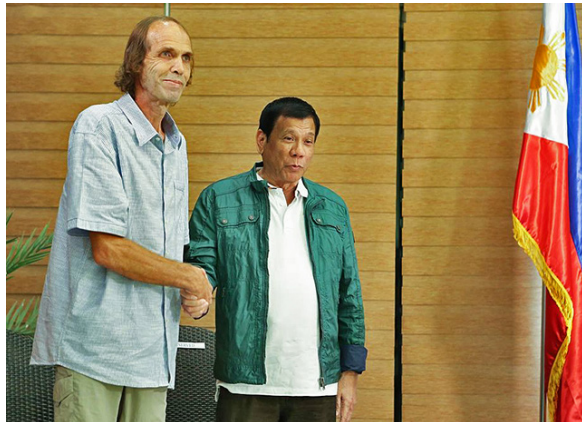
Exchange 42

Can you take me there?

Soldier:	ka agaran moo akoo madtoo?	Can you take me there?
Local:	hoon, ka agaran ta kaw	Yes, I can.

Exchange 43

Street Crimes and Solicitation



President Duterte greets a freed hostage kidnapped by ASG
Wikimedia / KARL NORMAN ALONZO/ PPD

The kidnappers also target Westerners. In 2019, a Dutch man who had been an ASG hostage for seven years was killed during a battle between the militants and Philippine forces on Sulu Island. ASG is believed to have earned millions of dollars from kidnappings-for-ransom and from banditry.^{89, 90, 91} The governments of the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom advise their citizens not to travel to the Sulu Archipelago.^{92, 93, 94}

The Sulu Archipelago has become notorious for kidnappings by armed groups. In Jolo Town, victims are abducted, carried to rural hideouts, and often held for ransom. Residents generally feel unsafe in the city and believe the police are ineffective.^{81, 82, 83} ASG militants target Indonesians or Malaysians along the vast Philippine maritime border with those two countries. In 2018, three Indonesian men were released after being abducted and held at an ASG hideout in Sulu, most likely for ransom.^{85, 86, 87, 88}

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Cultural Orientation

Chapter 4 | Assessment

1. The majority of people in the Philippines live in urban areas.
2. Armed conflict in Sulu Province has created a significant number of internally displaced people.
3. Public transportation, although often unreliable, is generally a safe option.
4. The Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) rarely carries out terrorist operations in Sulu Province, choosing to focus its efforts in other parts of the southern Philippines.
5. Jolo Town is one of the most highly urbanized areas in Sulu Province.

Assessment Answers: 1. False; 2. True; 3. False; 4. False; 5. True



Stilt houses along the water in Basilan
Flickr / SIPAT: Dr.A.Hugentobler

Chapter 5 | Tausug Cultural Orientation

Rural Life

Introduction

Rural Filipinos such as the Tausug speakers face a unique set of challenges and circumstances. The security situation throughout Mindanao is often unstable; terrorism and martial law are prominent issues in every region. The country's education system is well-established, and nearly all Filipinos are literate, but many rural residents are undereducated. Although education is free by law, rural residents face significant barriers such as distance to schools and the cost of supplies. Health threats and mental health problems are coming into focus among all Filipinos. In the Sulu Archipelago, geographic isolation, a lack of development, and decades of economic exploitation are further burdens on the rural population.^{1,2}

Land Tenure and Distribution



*A rice field near Dipolog City
Flickr / Ronnie*

A lasting effect of the Philippines' Spanish colonial period is the concentration of land in the hands of a few wealthy landowners.³ In the early- and mid-20th century, the land tenancy system was still in effect. Farmers worked the lands as tenant farmers, trading their labor and equipment for supplies, seeds, and tenancy rights from landowners. The farmers then planted and cultivated crops, dividing the harvest between farmers and owners. Under this system, tenants had to pay high interest rates and were perpetually indebted to the landowners. The tenancy system continued in modified forms during and after the U.S. occupation. Revolts against the system's

bondage eventually led to a series of land reforms that were sometimes helpful, but more often ineffective, and frequently undermined by practices that favored wealthy landowners.⁴

Do you own this land?

Soldier:	eekaw in tagdapo sin loopa eenee?	Do you own this land?
Local:	hoon	Yes.

Exchange 44

Moro tradition holds that land is community-owned and controlled by community leaders, but ultimately belongs to God.^{5, 6} Land ownership and private property among the Tausug depend on the land's use. Everyone in the community has the right to use pastureland and watering holes, which cannot be privately owned. Tausug custom acknowledges usufruct, which is the legal temporary right to enjoy and benefit from lands belonging to others without altering or destroying them. Older males and headmen may hold titular rights of ownership, yet many individuals are likely to have the right to use that land.^{7, 8, 9}

Since the time of colonial rule, land use policy in the southern Philippines has left the Muslim population at a disadvantage. In the early 20th century, an influx of settlers from the north saw the Moros marginalized in many areas, while strict implementation of private property laws benefitted the settlers and systematically took ever more ancestral lands from the Moros. Post-independence land reform programs meant to address Moro grievances ended up further dispossessing them.^{10, 11, 12}

Do you know this area well?

Soldier:	ka ingatan mo tood in hola eenee?	Do you know this area well?
Local:	hoon	Yes.

Exchange 45

Since the turn of the 21st century, the government has made efforts at equitable redistribution of farmland. Under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program, government land suitable for agriculture but no longer used that way was identified for redistribution. Qualified beneficiaries, often marginalized agricultural workers, received certificates legally securing their land tenure.^{13, 14, 15} In 2014, a former coconut plantation near Siasi in Sulu Province covering 1,300 hectares (3,213 acres) was broken up and distributed to 273 farmers.¹⁶



*Workers harvesting rice in a field
Flickr / Ronnie*

Rural Economy

Almost 22% of the Philippines' population lives below the poverty line, and 60% of those living in poverty are in rural areas. About 40% of employed individuals work in the informal economy, performing labor and services that are described as “off the books” or “under the table.”¹⁷ Rural women often seek employment as domestic workers in the homes of wealthy families.¹⁸ The average family income in 2015 was around PHP 267,000, or about USD 5,119. Government initiatives are targeting poverty with the hopes of reducing poverty to the 13–15% range by 2022.^{19, 20, 21}

Where do you work, sir?		
Soldier:	hawno in pag heenangan moo, bapa?	Where do you work, sir?
Local:	magoma akoo	I am a farmer, sir.

Exchange 46

Daily life in the countryside often revolves around the crowded marketplaces where people come to socialize as well as to conduct business. People sell fish and fish products, vegetables, fruits, and fruit drinks, spices, other consumables in “wet” markets, as opposed to “dry” markets where goods such as household items and clothing are sold. Market customers might include tourists and foreign visitors. Smaller regions hold markets once or twice a week.²²



*Marketplace in Port Holland, Maluso, Basilan
Wikimedia / Jjarivera*

Despite its fertile soils, tropical climate, and stunning natural scenery, the Sulu Archipelago suffers from economic stagnation. In Tawi-Tawi Province, a lack of

paved roads meant that farmers had to transport their produce to market either by wooden carts or on foot. In the markets of Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, prices of goods have been known to increase noticeably due to food shortages.^{23, 24, 25} In Sulu Province, security issues and religious extremism have led to poverty and underdevelopment. In recent years, the local, regional, and federal governments have attempted to boost the region's economic prospects through significant investments in infrastructure. Some projects include roads, deep wells, water supply facilities, and new seaports for island municipalities.^{26, 27, 28, 29}

Are you the only person in your family who has a job?		
Soldier:	ha kamo magtawtayanak, eekaw day in awun heenang?	Are you the only person in your family who has a job?
Local:	bokoon	No.

Exchange 47

Rural Healthcare



*A mother and child receive care after a typhoon
Flickr / Israel Defense Forces*

Life expectancy throughout the Philippines is relatively low; the average Filipino is expected to live about 70 years. Life expectancy in rural areas is particularly affected, as people that live there receive a lower level of investment in medical services than urban areas. High rates of poverty, poor quality healthcare, and a lack of access to healthcare create higher incidences of health risks. The Philippine infant and maternal mortality rates are similar to the median of worldwide mortality rates. Around 6% of Filipino adults are obese, and almost 22% of children are underweight.^{30, 31}

Do you know what is wrong?		
Soldier:	kaynata moo bang onoo sakit moo?	Do you know what is wrong?
Local:	dee	No.

Exchange 48

Is there a medical clinic nearby?		
Soldier:	awun keeleenik masook dee?	Is there a medical clinic nearby?
Local:	awun, deet too	Yes, over there.

Exchange 49



A rural hospital's waiting area
Flickr / Harry Fozzard

Reproductive health is of particular concern for the Sulu Archipelago. The region has high population growth, infant mortality, and maternal death rates, all of which are compounded poor access to family planning resources. Medical personnel, including midwives, have regularly been victims of kidnappings.^{32, 33}

In Tawi-Tawi Province, the remoteness of rural areas and lack of medical resources have contributed to poor health outcomes. In case of medical emergencies, patients from scattered island municipalities face a long boat ride to the nearest health facility or a prohibitively expensive plane ride to a major hospital.³⁴ These remote rural communities are served by dilapidated medical facilities and often depend on international aid efforts for even routine medical care.^{35, 36}

My arm is broken, can you help me?		
Soldier:	naabalee in buktun ku, katabangan mo akoo?	My arm is broken, can you help me?
Local:	hoon, katabangan ta kaw	Yes, I can help you.

Exchange 50

Rural Education

Rural schools in the Philippines suffer from many challenges. There are not enough schools for the number of children. Children may have to get up early to walk a considerable distance to school. It is difficult to recruit teachers for rural areas, as the standards of education are often below that of urban schools. Rural classrooms often lack books, equipment, and basic supplies.³⁷



A rural schoolhouse
Flickr / 3dom

The academic year in the Philippines begins in June with the start of the rainy season. The school year ends in late March and students are on break through May. The nation has a 2–3-week break during the Christmas season in December and a 4–5-day break in early November to celebrate All Saints Day and Day of the Dead.³⁸

Is there a school nearby?

Soldier:	awun iskool masook dee?	Is there a school nearby?
Local:	awun	Yes.

Exchange 51

Do your children go to school?

Soldier:	nag iskool in manga anak moo?	Do your children go to school?
Local:	hoon	Yes.

Exchange 52

Public education is free and compulsory for grades K–12.³⁹ Mandatory ROTC training for high school juniors and seniors is part of the country's National Service Training Program.^{40, 41} Even though primary education is compulsory, about 10% of children ages 6–14 are not enrolled.⁴² Poverty is the main reason behind this high rate—accounting for nearly 30% of dropouts—because many leave school to supplement their family incomes.⁴³

Who's In Charge?



The Mariki Barangay Hall
Wikimedia / Wowzamboangacity

Named after balangays, the Malay sailboats that carried early settlers from Borneo to the Philippines, barangays are the basic political units of local government in the Philippines.^{44, 45} They are constitutionally recognized as governing community units of fewer than 1,000 people and may exist within a larger political unit, such as a municipality or city.⁴⁶ The chief executive officer of a barangay is the punong barangay (captain), who organizes community events, signs payments, and approves contracts. The sangguniang barangay is the legislative body of the barangay. Its members, called kagawad (counselors), include the punong barangay and seven additional elected members.^{47, 48}

Does your mayor live here?

Soldier:	nagbubutang daayin dee in mayul neeyo?	Does your mayor live here?
Local:	hoon	Yes.

Exchange 53

Can you take me to your mayor?

Soldier:	kaybanan mo akoo pa maayul neeyo?	Can you take me to your mayor?
Local:	hoon	Yes.

Exchange 54

Tausug society has traditionally been divided into three hierarchical categories: nobles, common people, and slaves. Nobles were either datu, political leaders, or salip, religious leaders. Commoners made up most of the population. Slaves were required to be subservient to a specific datu. Today, the leadership of municipalities in Sulu province consists of mayors, vice mayors, and municipal councilors.⁴⁹



*A barangay assembly meeting
Flickr / agapbulusan*

Respected mayor, we need your help/advice/opinion.

Soldier:	maayul, kabonan naamo in taban / hindoo / eepameekilan moo	Respected mayor, we need your help/advice/opinion.
Local:	hoon	Yes.

Exchange 55

Checkpoints



*Security outside the Bacolod Grand Mosque
Flickr / micketymoc*

Due to ongoing armed insurgencies by the ASG and other armed groups, both Sulu and Tawi-Tawi provinces are dotted with checkpoints manned by Philippine security forces. The checkpoints may be permanent, as at the entrances of military installations, or temporary, set up in response to emerging security developments. Checkpoints are sometimes the scenes of bombing attempts by militants or shootouts between militants and security forces.^{50, 51, 52}

Where is the nearest checkpoint?

Soldier:	haw noo in chekpoyint masook daayin dee?	Where is the nearest checkpoint?
Local:	yadtoo, puwaas dow a keelomitroo	It's two kilometers.

Exchange 56

Is this ID all you have?

Soldier:	amura eenee aadee moo?	Is this ID all you have?
Local:	hoon	Yes.

Exchange 57

The Philippines first attempted to implement a national ID card system in 1996, but efforts stalled over criticism that it violated constitutional rights. The system is supported by executive orders, but the Supreme Court ruled that legislation must be passed before implementation. In 2008, Sulu Province began implementing its own ID card program on a limited basis, in cooperation with security forces and federal authorities. The initiative was intended to deter crime and terrorism and provide a census database. As of 2017, Sulu's ID system was still not fully implemented.^{53, 54, 55}

Please get out of the car.

Soldier:	manjaaree kaw gumuwa daayin ha sasakataan	Please get out of the car.
Local:	okay	OK.

Exchange 58



A security checkpoint at Manila airport
Flickr / Frank1890

Government guidelines state that checkpoints must be well-lit and manned by properly uniformed police officers from the Philippine National Police. When approaching a checkpoint, 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.⁵⁶

Show us the car registration.

Soldier:	pakeeta kamoo in katas sin sasakataan eenee	Show us the car registration.
Local:	okay	OK.

Exchange 59

Are you carrying any guns?

Soldier:	nagdara kaw sinapang?	Are you carrying any guns?
Local:	hoon	Yes.

Exchange 60

Landmines

The Philippines signed the Mine Ban Treaty on 3 December 1997 and ratified it in 2000, becoming legally bound to the treaty. The treaty is used for leverage in eliminating mines by the Philippines Campaign to Ban Landmines, which seeks to have the government and armed groups commit to a cessation of mine warfare in the future.^{57, 58}

In their decades-long antigovernment insurgency, the MNLF and ASG often plant mines throughout the Sulu Archipelago. Injuries from explosive devices are common. Most of those injured are civilians, but some are security force personnel. Some of these devices are suspected of being used in ambushes of Philippine National Forces. In 2013, the total number of casualties from explosive devices such as mines was 571, with 184 reported deaths.^{59, 60, 61, 62}



*Information displays about the dangers of cluster bombs
Flickr / Cluster Munition Coalition*

Is this area mined?

Soldier:	awun meena haw logal eenee?	Is this area mined?
Local:	awun	Yes.

Exchange 61

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Cultural Orientation

Chapter 5 | Assessment

1. *Barangays* are schools in which classes are taught in Tausug and children learn to read the Quran.
2. Tausug observe strict private property laws and severely punish trespassers.
3. Since the time of colonial rule, land use policy in the southern Philippines has left the Muslim population at a disadvantage.
4. Recent land reform efforts have benefitted corporate interests and further harmed agricultural workers.
5. Most of the Philippines' population that lives below the poverty line is concentrated in rural areas.

Assessment Answers: 1. False; 2. False; 3. True; 4. False; 5. True



*A docked passenger boat in the Philippines
Flickr / burgermac*

Chapter 6 | Tausug Cultural Orientation

Family Life

Introduction

Family is central to Tausug society. The family forms the basis for permanent social relationships and organization. Kinship binds political, economic, and military obligations. Among the Tausug, kinship is determined through maternal and paternal lines. Individuals know the names of maternal and paternal relatives, 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 the immediate family. The degree of relationship among the Tausug determines the degree of obligation. A Tausug relies on kin for economic assistance, political alliances (during blood feuds), and all other support. A Tausug never intentionally does anything to shame the family or tarnish it in the community by a display of cowardice.^{1, 2, 3, 4}

Typical Household and Family Structure

Most Tausug households consist of parents and unmarried children. Extended households are rare.⁵ Some live in what is known as a “stem family,” comprising parents, unmarried children, a married child, spouse, and grandchildren. As a rule, there are few extended families among the Tausug.⁶ Polygyny is allowed but rarely practiced. In such cases, the husband must maintain a separate household for each wife.⁷

Tausug families are often large. In 2000, the average household size in Sulu Province was six.⁸

Tausug women often marry at an early age, sometimes as young as fourteen. Traditionally, Tausug family size was large, and having as many as 10 children was the norm. This attitude is changing, but families are still large since the most popular family planning strategies involve the rhythm method and abstinence. Women are known to use herbs or roots to avoid pregnancy.



*A Filipino family photo
Flickr / Kristin Resurreccion*

Are you married?

Soldier:	awun kaw asaawa?	Are you married?
Local:	Uwaay.	No.

Exchange 62

Is this your wife?

Soldier:	asaawa moo eenee?	Is this your wife?
Local:	Hoon.	Yes.

Exchange 63

How many people live in this house?

Soldier:	peela taw in nag hoola ha baay eenee?	How many people live in this house?
Local:	Hangpoo.	Ten.

Exchange 64

Does your family live here?

Soldier:	nabobotang in tawtayanak moo dee?	Does your family live here?
Local:	Hoon.	Yes.

Exchange 65

Infant and Child Care



A Badjao family in a canoe
Flickr / Bar Fabella

To enhance a newborn's chances of survival and health, infants are secluded after birth and protected by amulets (*hampan*).⁹ The Tausug believe that every child is born with a spirit-twin that must be appeased to thwart bad luck.¹⁰

Since nuclear families are the norm, childcare is the responsibility of parents and older siblings.¹¹ Unlike the norm in other cultures, fathers are the nurturers of Tausug children. At public gatherings, small children often prefer sitting with fathers. Displays of paternal affection are common and reciprocated. Mothers, however, seldom express themselves in an intimate

manner outside the home.¹² Children are taught to avoid shame, respect authority, and honor the family.¹³

Are these people part of your family?

Soldier:	tawtayanak mo seela?	Are these people part of your family?
Local:	bokoon	No.

Exchange 66

Do you have any brothers?

Soldier:	awun kaw taymang hood usug?	Do you have any brothers?
Local:	Awun.	Yes.

Exchange 67

Is this your entire family?

Soldier:	yaree na in katan tawtayanak moo?	Is this your entire family?
Local:	Hoon.	Yes.

Exchange 68

Are these your children?		
Soldier:	manga anak moo eenee?	Are these your children?
Local:	Hoon.	Yes.

Exchange 69

Status of Women

Tausug tradition and customs regarding the status of women do not follow standard Islamic rules. Women may get an education, work outside the home, and mingle with other men without jeopardizing family honor. Many Tausug women are active in politics and some hold elective positions such as mayor and vice mayor.¹⁴ While women do not have to wear a veil or headscarf in public, many do so out of respect for Islam.¹⁵



*A young woman prepares a food table
Flickr / Francesco Veronesil*

Still, there is a tradition of separating the sexes, especially unmarried men and women. This separation does not extend to the seclusion of women. At family celebrations and feasts, women and younger children remain in the house while men socialize on the porch. Muslim tradition also invokes a clear division of labor: Men are responsible for plowing, fishing, tending livestock, and harvesting crops; women tend gardens, raise chickens, perform household chores, and care for the children.^{16, 17}

Marriage, Divorce, and Birth

Marriage

Marriages are still arranged among the Tausug, although it is increasingly common for the young to choose their own spouses. First or second cousins are often preferred as spouses, primarily to strengthen clan relations and simplify issues of inheritance.¹⁸ Still forbidden, however, are unions between half-siblings, and brides and grooms who vastly differ in age.¹⁹ In contemporary culture, restrictions on choosing a marriage partner have relaxed and marriage to a non-Tausug or a non-Muslim is gaining acceptance. This reflects the Tausug's strong belief in *suratan*, or destiny, to which one must surrender. Marriage of Muslim women to non-Muslims, while not preferred, is now tolerated to some extent.²⁰

The Tausug have traditionally recognized three types of marriage: arranged by familial negotiation (*pagpangasawa*), abduction (*pagsaggau*), and elopement (*pagdakup*).²¹ In the arranged marriage, a young man often suggests a girl in whom he is interested to his parents, who then negotiate the bride price

(*ungsud*), wedding expenses and cost of attire with the girl's father or male kin. Once both parties come to an agreement, 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.^{22, 23}
²⁴ The traditional arranged marriage is often regarded as reflecting the wishes of the parents. A *pagdakup* (elopement) is said to reflect what the woman wants, while a *pagsaggau* (marriage via abduction) reflects the man's wishes.²⁵ With a *pagsaggau*, a man takes the prospective bride to the home of the *datu*, who will solemnize the wedding. The man must pay a fine for "abducting" his bride, but the price is often lower it would be for a negotiated marriage.^{26, 27, 28}



A marriage ceremony underway
Flickr / Christian Patrick Almonte

Divorce

The Philippine legal system generally does not permit divorce, but there is an exception for Muslims since Islam permits divorce. The 1977 presidential decree known as the Code of Muslim Personal Laws in the Philippines provides for divorce when the marriage had been conducted in accordance with Islamic law.^{29, 30} Divorce is held in low regard among the Tausug, and only about one-tenth of marriages end in divorce. The most common reasons include female infertility, gambling, maltreatment of children, or a failure to support the family.³¹ 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 *talak*, repudiating the marriage aloud three times in front of a headman (*datu*). This type of dissolution is regarded as shameful (*makasipug*), however, so it is not commonly used. Women generally get favorable property settlements in these cases.³²

The family code requires someone who seeks a divorce to go through *pagbugit*, literally "to discard something unwanted." In such an instance, the husband or wife must specify a reason for the divorce. Marriages typically dissolve due to 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 *datu* or his wife) may ask the husband to swear on the Quran that he will stop gambling, a common source of marital discord.³³

If the issue is not resolved, the *datu* will issue a divorce decree (in Tausug, but written in Arabic script). This document will protect the woman from accusations of bigamy if she remarries.³⁴ Women view the option of divorce as a source of empowerment, enabling them to end miserable unions.³⁵ Children younger than seven generally remain in the custody of the mother. Older children who have not reached puberty may choose the parent with whom they want to live. Unmarried children who have reached puberty must reside of the parent of the opposite sex.³⁶

Birth

Tausug regard children as a form of wealth and a sign of good fortune, and are expected to have children and large families. Because of the importance of kinship relations, large families are often more secure and can develop stronger political alliances than smaller families.³⁷

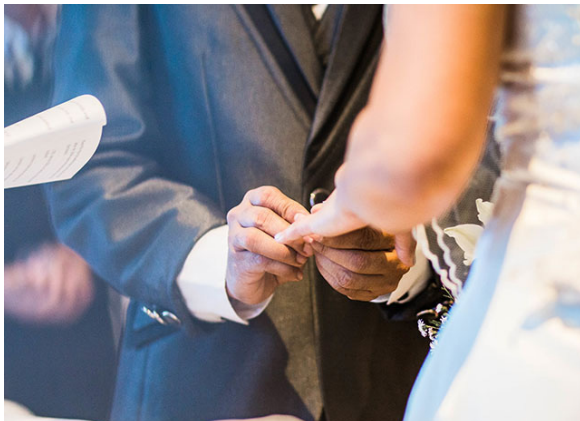
Pregnant women may not go swimming in a lake, sea or ocean because of the belief that doing so increases the risk of stillbirth. Births may occur at home or in a hospital (in some of the larger cities such as Jolo Town). Loud gongs announce the child's birth, and an imam often arrives to offer prayers for the newborn. If the child is a male, the birth may be commemorated by the sounds of guns fired into the air by male relatives.³⁹



Infants cared for shortly after birth
Flickr / Keith Bacongco

Family Social Events

Weddings



Ring exchange at a wedding ceremony
Flickr / Marco Verch

Weddings, which may last two days, blend Islamic and Western influences and occur in two stages. The first day, a wedding ceremony (*pagkawin*) often takes place at a hotel. Brides wear Western-style wedding gowns, and grooms wear coats and ties or traditional outfits. The ceremony is presided over by an imam and ends with the signing of the official wedding contract. On the second day, a more traditional celebration occurs at the bride's home. Both the 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. Once the solemn-faced couple meets the guest, the bride and groom consume food served on a traditional tray (*dulang*). The food often consists of steamed yellow rice, fried chicken, hard-boiled eggs, and traditional Tausug delicacies. The guests are spectators as they share their first meal as husband and wife.^{40, 41, 42}

Congratulations on your wedding!

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

Exchange 70

What ingredients are used to make byangang?

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

Exchange 71

Following the ceremony, the couple generally moves in with the bride's parents. The bond between the father and son-in-law needs to be as strong as that between father and son. After one year or the birth of a child, the couple moves in with the groom's parents or into their own home.⁴³



*A wedding ceremony at a garden in Manila
Flickr / Christian Patrick Almonte*

I wish you both happiness.

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

Exchange 72

Did you grow up here?

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

Exchange 73

Funerals

Islam mandates that the dead be buried within 24 hours of death. The Tausug are usually buried on the afternoon following death. There is a final reading of the daily prayer before the coffin is carried on a bamboo stretcher to the grave, which faces Mecca. A seven-day vigil follows. If the family has the means, it holds memorial feasts on the 7th, 20th, 40th, and 100th days following the burial as well as on the first, second, and third anniversaries of the death.^{44, 45}



*A hearse and its procession make their way
Flickr / moyphotos*

Mourners must maintain their composure throughout the service honoring the deceased. Corpses are thought to be still somewhat aware, so the service is meant to allow the deceased to adjust to a transitioned state before the coffin is lowered into the ground.⁴⁶

I would like to offer my condolences to you and your family.

Soldier:	tabooka in kasoosaahaan ku.	I would like to offer my condolences to you and your family.
Local:	Magsukool.	Thank you.

Exchange 74

Please be strong.

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

Exchange 75

After the burial, water is sprinkled on the grave so that the deceased's spirit may drink and bathe.⁴⁷ The gravestones for men are rounded columns, while those for women are rectangular and wider at the top.⁴⁸ The 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.⁴⁹

At a later time, the entire community turns out to maintain the cemetery plot. Passages from the Quran are read by each grave to ease the suffering of the deceased and to enhance the religious standing of the reader. This is followed by a communal feast at the cemetery. Most Tausug believe that the fate of their forebears in the afterworld partly depends on how faithfully the living adhere to rituals.⁵⁰

Rites of Passage



Rites of passage given to a boy
Flickr / Shubert Ciencia

a cleric who has the requisite surgical skill. During the course of this procedure the boy is encouraged not to cry out in pain. A similar, albeit nonsurgical, ceremony (*pagsunnat*) is held for girls at around the age of six.⁵³

Around the age of two, the child's family holds a ceremony known as the *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 its verses, another ceremony called the *pagtammal* is conducted.^{51, 52}

Sometime around the age of 10, a boy is circumcised (*tuli*) as part of a ceremony called *pag-Islam*. The Tausug place great importance on this rite of male passage, which is an important tenet of the Islamic faith. The ritual is conducted in a private ceremony by

Naming Conventions

Newborn Tausug children are not named immediately. They are frequently given a temporary name until they are one or two years old. Tausug parents often select Arabic names for their children, such as "Ameer" for a boy. They may also choose the names of well-known Americans. Nonsense words may be chosen as names because parents like the way they sound. The father's first name will be the child's last name.⁵⁴



An uncle and a newborn baby
Flickr / Lady May Pamintuan

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Chapter 6 | Assessment

1. Most Tausug households consist of several generations, including parents and grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins.
2. Tausug fathers are the more nurturing parent to their children.
3. The Muslim custom of divorce by verbal repudiation is common among Tausug men.
4. Tausug children are not named at birth.
5. Newly married couples are expected to live with the groom's parents.

Assessment Answers: 1. False; 2. True; 3. True; 4. True; 5. False

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Final Assessment

1. The Tausug comprise the majority of the population of Basilan Province.
2. Jolo Island is the largest in the Sulu Archipelago.
3. The Sulu Archipelago lies outside the typhoon belt.
4. The Tausug are known as the “Sea Nomads.”
5. The Tausug generally align themselves with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).
6. Sharia law is applicable only to Muslims in BARMM.
7. Most Tausug are adherents of Shia Islam.
8. Burning the Quran is an acceptable way to dispose of old or damaged copies.
9. Sharia courts have jurisdiction over all matters involving Muslims.

10. **Zakat** is the third pillar of Islam. It is the obligatory annual payment used for charitable and religious purposes.

11. The concept of friendship has different meanings for the Tausug.

12. Compromise is a common solution to resolving conflict among the Tausug.

13. Reciprocity is a core value among the Tausug.

14. Maize (corn) is a mainstay of the Tausug diet.

15. The traditional head cover of Tausug men is a red cotton cloth wrapped around the head and functions both as a veil and a turban.

16. Less than half of the population of Sulu Province is literate.

17. The Sulu Archipelago is notorious for kidnappings.

18. The Tausug, unlike other people in the Philippines, are averse to spicy foods, and Tausug cuisine is known for its mild dishes.

19. Jolo Town is prone to floods because of its particular location.

20. Jolo Town is a main commercial center for Sulu Province.

21. Daily life in the countryside revolves around mosques and the village square.

22. The economic stagnation and lack of development in the Sulu Archipelago have gone unnoticed by political leaders.

23. Since the creation of Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), reproductive health services in the Sulu Archipelago have improved significantly.

24. *Kagawad* are the traditional units for measuring agricultural land in Tawi-Tawi Province.

25. Checkpoints in the Sulu Archipelago are often unofficial and manned by MNLF rebels.

26. Women in Tausug families are secluded from the rest of the household.

27. Marriages between cousins are common among the Tausug.

28. The Tausug use different gravestones for men and women.

29. Polygyny is common among the Tausug.

30. The Philippines' legal code for Muslims requires a specific reason for obtaining a divorce.

Assessment Answers: 1. False; 2. False; 3. True; 4. False; 5. True; 6. True; 7. False; 8. True; 9. False; 10. True; 11. False; 12. False; 13. True; 14. False; 15. False; 16. False; 17. True; 18. False; 19. True; 20. True; 21. False; 22. False; 23. False; 24. False; 25. False; 26. False; 27. True; 28. True; 29. False; 30. True