

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

- ▶ ISLAMIC MANUSCRIPT: An Inquiry Into The Richness of the Intellectual Archives of Meranaw Muslims in the Philippines

Meranaw is one of the 13 Muslim Ethno-linguistic groups in the Island of Mindanao in the southern part of the Philippines. Historically, the Meranaws are regarded as the most traditional Muslims in the Philippines because they are resistant to change and defensive of their culture. That is why during the Philippine-American war in the early 1900s it took 10 years for the American troops to pacify the Meranaw land.

Moreover, Islam as a religion and way of life among Muslims adds to the system's values and dimension of spiritual community. Relatives and non-relatives are bound together in the name of Allah. This influence came at around 12th century during the Islamization of Mindanao.

According to the 2000 census on population, the Meranaw have an estimated population of 1,142,000 in 2000. .

The Meranaw traditional form of government owes its form to the Sultanate which is unique among Islamic states. This is enclosed in the *pat a pengampong ko Ranaw*. This refers to the co-equal Meranaw states namely, *Bayabao, Masiu, Unayan and Baloi*. It is a Meranaw state that contains one central government and several local government units. The map below shows the territorial jurisdiction of each pengampong and their legal authority.

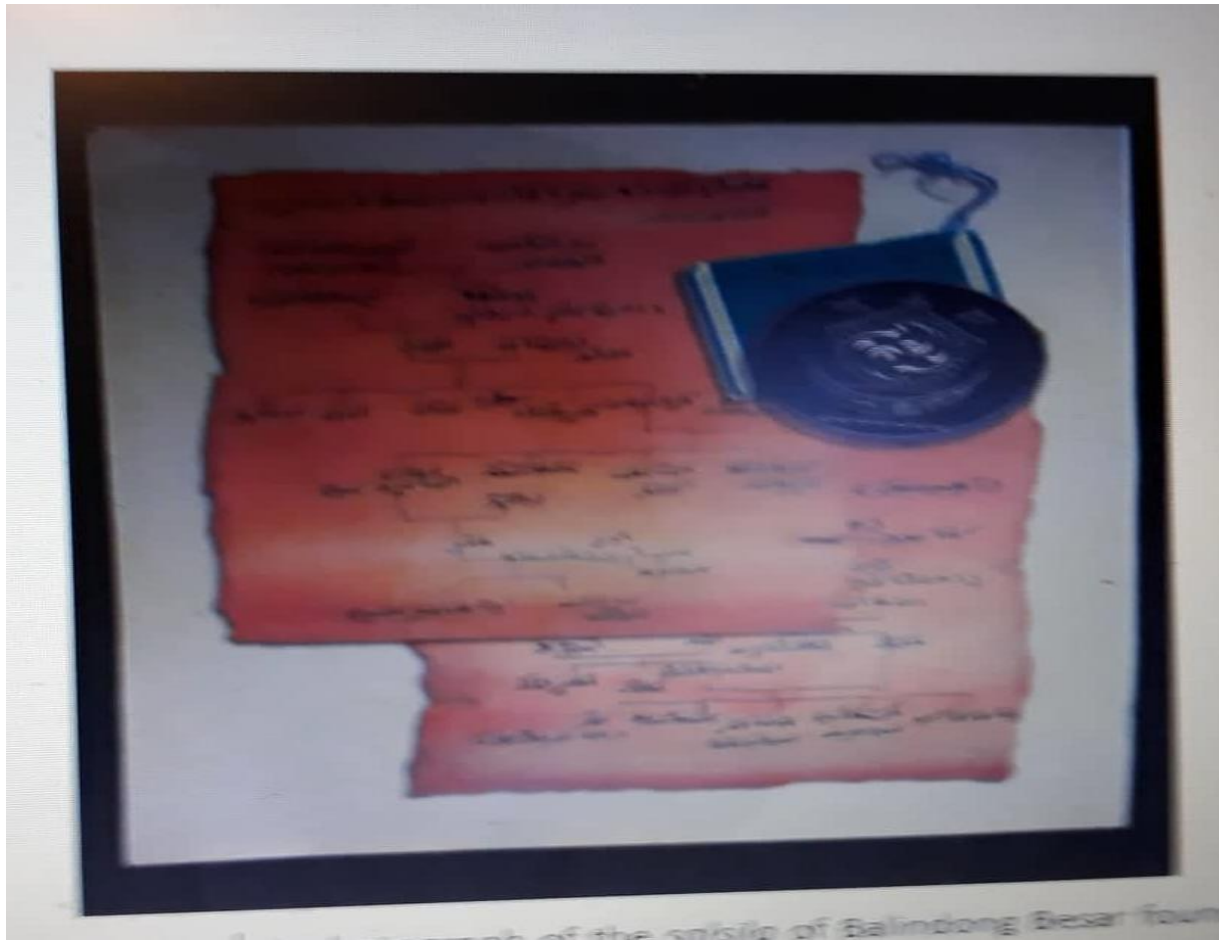
The Meranaw have their own manuscript that is classified into two: the Cultural manuscripts that includes *salsilah, bayok or songs, the epic called darangen and other.*

The Islamic Manuscript includes the handwritten Qur'an, the prayer scroll, kissa or Islamic stories, ilmu or manuscript for extreme unction, book of charm, medicinal book, mawlid/barsindi and the book of prophecy or the *taabir mimpi.*

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Study of these manuscripts are important because it plays an important role in guiding people's lives as a source of religious knowledge that reflects people's thoughts and aspiration. Moreover, these manuscripts can be an important source of knowledge in understanding their culture, history, and their relationship with the other parts of the World. Hence, manuscripts to the Meranaws are family belongings on which they assign great personal value. They are a family treasure handed down from generation to generation and strictly guarded with great care. They cover it with cloth or skin of an animal for protection and are locked in a chest so that it will be privately conserve for their family. Hence, this paper will present the Islamic manuscript of the Meranaw describe its characteristics and contents so that we will be able to know its value.

An example of Salsila written in kalokop a buntong or the cover of the bamboo shoot is shown below.



Another example of Salsila covered with a skin sheep and covered again with a net. This shows the value that is attached to this *salsilah*.



Islamic manuscript, are those that deal with religious matter. Meranaw are very much concerned with the life after death. thus, acquiring knowledge on that aspect is very important to them. The following are the Islamic manuscript of the Meranaw,

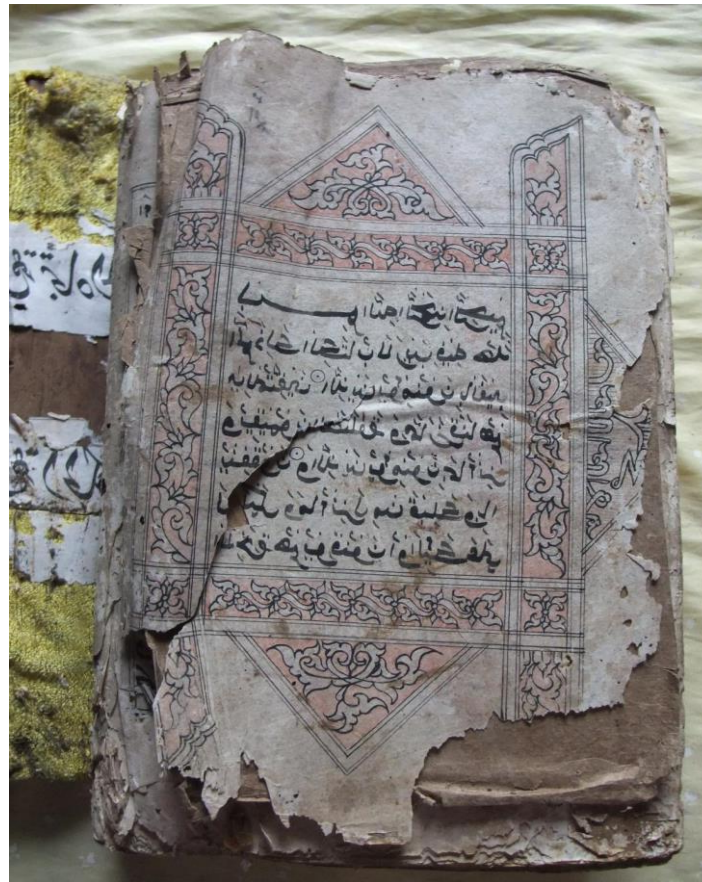
1. handwritten Qur'an

a.. the Qur'an of Guro sa Masiu

b.. The Qur'an of Bacong called Dibolodan

c. the Qur'an of Bayang

Qur'an of Guro sa Masiu covered with yellow cloth and the other side is the Suratul Fatiha of Guro Sa Masiu Qur'an

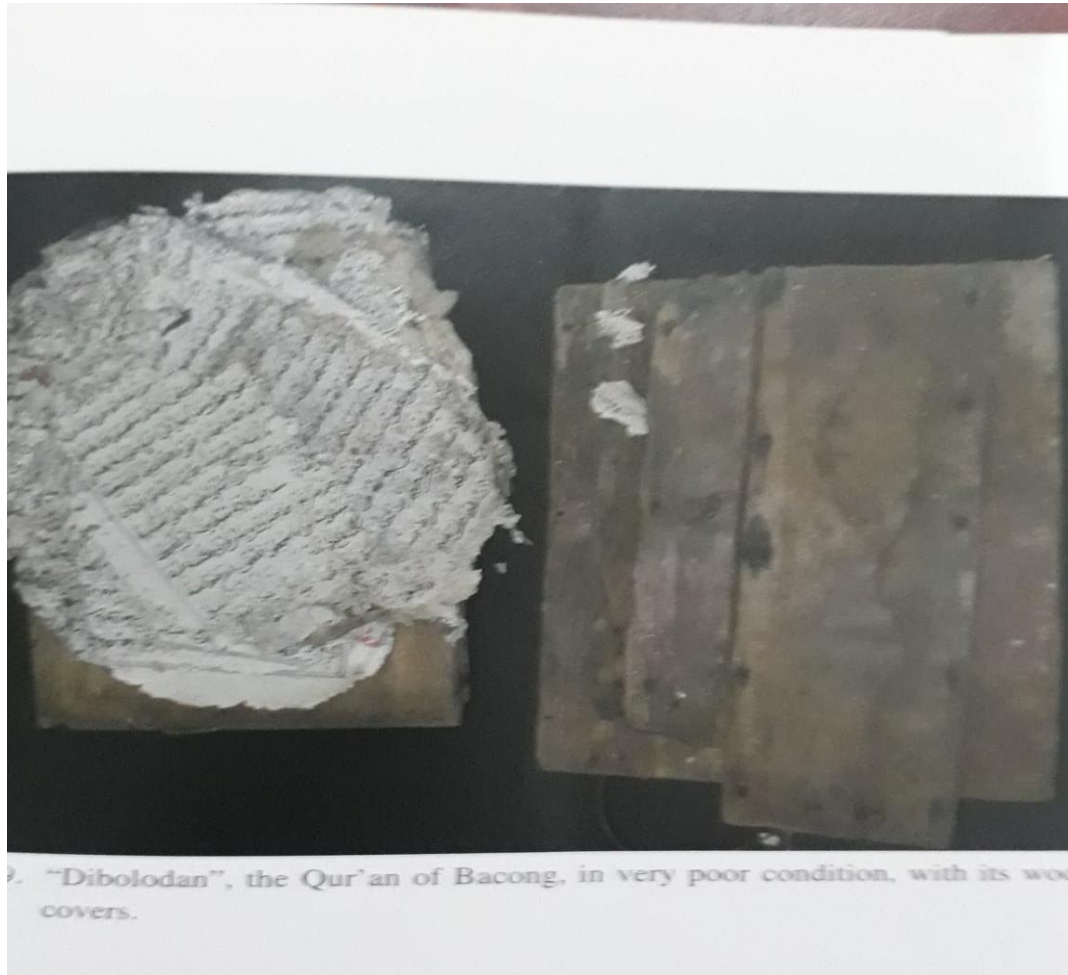


The suratul Fatiha in Guro sa Masiu Qur'an.



Another written Qur'an in the Meranaw society is the Qur'an of Bacong called Dibolodan and the Qur'an of Bayang Called Maradika.

The Qur'an of Bacong



Suratul Fatiha in the Qur'an of Bayang



Another Meranaw manuscript is
the prayer scroll of Guro sa
Masiu



These are some of the manuscript of Guro sa Masiu



Figure 5 another Islamic Manuscript of Guro sa Masiu with the Bamboo tube covering called *Tuntang*

Another handwritten Qur'an is the one from Bacong, Marantao named Diboldan⁵.

Book of charm, medicinal manuscript, Taabir
mimpi, Islamic stories, mawlid / barsindi



CONCLUSION

Based on the data presented, the Meranaw in Mindanao in the southern part of the Philippines have rich cultural and Islamic history that is reflected in their Manuscripts. They are original manuscript but some of them have not been translated yet. Many of which were from Saudi Arabia and other Islamic countries. They are primary sources of information that reveal the history of a certain society. Hence, they are handed down from generation to generation.

Islamic manuscripts mirror the past which are important sources for the history of Mindanao and its relation to the other Islamic countries. The owner guarded them jealousy because they are the work of their ancestors which are irreplaceable. They value it very much because it marks the Islamic civilization of the people in Mindanao. This is shown in the archival materials of the mentioned libraries in the province of Lanao del sur and Marawi City. Islamic manuscripts of the Meranaws are rich because it covers all aspects of life from childhood up to the day of their last breath

I recommend that further studies on Islamic manuscripts should be undertaken.

All these were found at the Maisie van vactor collection of Maranao materials in the Arabic script at the gowing Memorial Research Center, the library of Guro sa Masiu in Taraka , Lanao del Sur, the Library of an Islamic Scholar of Mindanao: The collection of Muhammad Said bin Imam sa Bayang at the Al-Imam As Sadiq Library, Marawi City, still other manuscript can be found in other libraries of Ulama in the Mindanao area.

Thank you and Allah bless us all.
Wasalam.