

Foreword

The history of the Muslims in the Philippines during the American Occupation is a phase of Philippine History that has received scant scholarly interest. That this phase is an important one hardly needs emphasizing since it explains to a large extent some of the present unresolved problems of the Muslims.

Dr. Gowing's *Mandate in Moroland: The American Government of Muslim Filipinos*, the bulk of which was originally written in 1967, is one of the first, and most valuable, works of historical research on the Moros under American rule. It deals with the period of American governance from 1899 to 1920, that is, from the initial establishment of the U.S. Military government up to the abolition of the Department of Mindanao and Sulu which was administered by an American civil governor. American colonial policy, with its various shifts as well as their corresponding responses on the part of the Moros, is thoroughly discussed. Consequently, the military, administrative, educational, social, and other aspects of such policy are dealt with in detail. Moreover, the work deals comparatively with Spanish and American colonial policy in order to reveal their limitations, especially their lack of sensitivity to the religion and cultural institutions of Muslims.

Another important aspect of Dr. Gowing's work is his treatment of the various army officers and civil officials sent to maintain order among, and govern, the Muslims. The policies, strength, and limitations of men like Wood, Bliss, Pershing and Carpenter are shown as reflections of their professional and cultural backgrounds when dealing with a people they hardly knew except in battle or limited social intercourse.

A major conclusion of the work is that the mandate which the Americans originally set out to fulfill among the Moros was not

fully accomplished. The Moros were not raised to that political and educational level which would enable them to govern themselves in a modern world. A reason for this, among others, was that Christian Filipinos took over the administration of the Muslim provinces in 1920. Another stated failure of the Americans was their inability to eliminate the chronic mutual suspicion and distrust between Muslims and Christians — attitudes initially fostered by the Spaniards. The fact is that American officials also had their own biases against Muslims and some of their actions were not devoid of some element of hypocrisy.

The research data to which Dr. Gowing had access was formidable, and he has done his best to keep to the facts as much as was humanly possible. His method is analytical, objective and of the highest scholastic level. His work is a highly creditable one and his treatment of the subject can hardly be excelled.

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Preface

My initial interest in studying the American government of the Muslim Filipinos (popularly called "Moros") grew out of a general inquiry into Moro history. In 1960, as a new expatriate member of the faculty of Silliman University, I learned, in my embarrassing ignorance of the Philippines, that the thirteen Muslim ethno-linguistic groups made up the nation's largest non-Christian "minority". Two years of U.S. Navy service in the Middle East had given me an opportunity to see Islam in the lands of its origin. I thought it might be an excellent entree into an improved knowledge of the Philippines to investigate the history and culture of the Moros and to note how Islam had taken root in a tropical world distant from the sands of Arabia.

Having read a considerable portion of the literature (in English) on the subject available in the Philippines and having made many trips, of varying lengths of time, to Mindanao and Sulu, I produced a number of articles in different journals and magazines and also a small book, *Mosque and Moro: A Study of Muslims in the Philippines*.¹ These writings were more reportorial than scholarly contributions, yet there was such a paucity of current material on the Moros that these publications were well-received.

As an American I had a special interest in my own country's relationship to the Moros. Yet most accounts of American rule in the Philippines give little attention to this subject. The American government of Moroland clearly changed the direction of Moro history and was an important step in the development of Filipino nationality. It was also a significant and exciting aspect of the American presence in

¹ Manila: Philippine Federation of Christian Churches, 1964.

the Philippines. It is a history that has long waited to be told more fully than in the past.

This book is a revision of a dissertation submitted for the Ph.D. degree in the Maxwell Graduate School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University where Professors Oliver E. Clubb Jr., Ismail R. al-Faruqi and Donn V. Hart served as members of my doctoral committee. Their wise counsel throughout the preparation of the dissertation is most gratefully acknowledged.

The period of doctoral study in the United States, 1965-1967, afforded me an opportunity to examine archival material at the Library of Congress and the National Archives in Washington which were not available in the Philippines. The libraries at Syracuse and Cornell Universities provided invaluable services. I am also indebted to the Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Department of the Army, for directing me to some periodical and unpublished material which otherwise might have been overlooked. I thank Professors Charles O. Houston and Melvin Mednick for some further clues as to sources. Dean Cesar Adib Majul of the Institute of Islamic Studies, University of the Philippines System, offered a number of important insights into Moro history and culture shared in an interview at Cornell University in April, 1967, and subsequent correspondence. The Bibliography (updated to include relevant materials published since 1967) is an acknowledgment of those on whose shoulders I have stood in looking back to the years of the American regime in Moroland and for general information about Moro history and society.

At the time the dissertation was written (1967), it was necessary to defend the use of the word "Moro" in the text, for many Muslims and Christians had become hypersensitive to the negative connotations the name had acquired over the years. But now, as the present book is being readied for the press, the defense seems unnecessary. In the

midst of the tragic violence which has once again flared up in Mindanao and Sulu between Muslims and Christians, the Muslims have re-discovered the left-handed compliment the Spaniards paid them long ago when they were labelled *Moros* (after the Islamized people of ancient Mauretania — the Maurus or Moros — who manned the Arab-led armies which conquered and ruled Spain for centuries) as distinct from the *indios* or non-Muslim inhabitants of the Philippines.² Certainly the word “Moro” is used in this book in an entirely non-pejorative sense.

I close these prefatory remarks by noting that I have tried to make uniform the spelling of Filipino words and place-names in the text except in direct quotations. The spelling conforms to the most widely accepted current usage. For example, *datu* (Moro and *barangay* chieftain) is used rather than the other spellings, *dato* or *datto*, which were more popular in the past.

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² Cf. W. C. Forbes, *The Philippine Islands*, II (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1928), p. 3, n. 2. See also my “In Defense of the Name ‘Moro’”, *Philippines Free Press*, LXI/38 (September 21, 1968), pp. 22, 24.