

DEVELOPMENT OF THE RANAO PENGAMPONG AND ISLAM : A THEORETICAL ESSAY

Nagasura T. Madale

The writing of this essay has been prompted by the following questions: (1) Has the Ranao *pengampong* really attained the sultanate stage comparable to that of the Tausog and the Maguin-danao? (2) What are the prevailing theories to explain its development? (3) Are there other possible explanations for its development?

With the above questions for its bases, this essay intends to follow this methodology: (1) re-examine the prevailing theories in the development of the Ranao Pengampong based on existing documents; (2) present alternative theories to explain such development; (3) discuss the role of Islam in its development; and, (4) draw some inference for further discussions and other areas of research in the near future. This essay, therefore, is descriptive-analytical and exploratory in nature but is not conclusive.

Theories on the Peopling of Ranao

In his paper, "The Iranun: A Study of Maranao Pirates," M. Tawagon (1979) discusses the origin of the name "Iranun" or "Illanun" and concludes that the name refers to the Maranaos, if not to their ancestors. To quote Tawagon (1979:7): "Illanun was first used by F. Combes (1667:21), N. Dampier (1697), Kuder (1945: 123). It refers to the shoredwellers, first to become known to sea-borne visitors, invaders, etc. Hence, their name Illanun came

to be applied to all the Mindanao Moros.”

The Illanun occupied coastal areas of Illana Bay, from Sibuguey – Punta de Flechas in Zamboanga Sur, to Malabang and the coast of Cotabato.

Referring to the Maguindanaoan *tarcila* Majul agrees that the Iranun communities around Illana Bay were the first scene of Sharief Kabungsuwan's missionary activities and his marriage alliances. Actually, some *tarcilas* explicitly state that Sharief Kabungsuwan first landed in the area of Malabang before proceeding to the Pulangi basin. All these suggest that the ancestors of the Iranun *datus* were already Muslims by around the time that the chiefs of the Pulangi embraced the faith (Majul, 1978:71-2; in Tawagon, 1979: 15).

These data reveal that: (1) there were Iranun communities around the Illana Bay where Sharief Kabungsuwan first landed; (2) these communities along the coast could be Muslim communities before his arrival. The fact that Sharief Kabungsuwan, a Muslim, first landed in the area without any resistance or hostility from the native population may be explained by the theory that the natives were themselves already Muslims. Kabungsuwan was therefore most welcome, being a brother from a faraway place.

Also, informants claim that the word *Malabang* is taken from two words, *mala*, meaning, big or loud and *bang*, meaning, call for prayer. As the story goes when Sharief Kabungsuwan landed on the coast, he heard a loud *bang* or call to prayer. Thus, the place was called Malabang or a “place where the loud *bang* [was first heard].”

Based on written records, primarily Spanish documents, it is now established that the Iranun/Illanun were the earliest settlers of the Illana Bay. Incidentally, the name Illanun/Iranun should not be considered the same and contemporaneous with the word “Maranao.” Judging from its root word and placed in an historical perspective, the name Illanun/Iranun appears to have come before the name Maranao (properly, M'ranao), as the peopling of the lakeshores of Ranao must have occurred later in time.

Tarling (1963:248) argues that the word *Ilanaw-on* is of Maguindanao origin, which means "people from the lake." Popularized by the coastal inhabitants of the Philippines, the Malay peninsula, Java and Sumatra and their European rulers, the name Illanun (or Iranun, Illaneon, Lanon, Illanos) was erroneously extended to include the non-Maranao speaking peoples of southern Philippines, the Tausogs of Jolo, and the Samals of the Sulu archipelago.

However, the name Illanun or Iranun may have been derived also from the word Illana (Tawagon, 1979) which means coast. On the other hand, it could have been derived also from the Darangen classical word *Iliana* (as in *Iliana Bembaran*) which means gulf or bay (as in Bay or Bembaran). The word Bembaran comes from the root word *bembar*, which means to spread. Symbolically, therefore, Iliana Bembaran, in relation to Illana Bay, may mean the "place of origin where people began to spread out." Thus, the word Illanun/Iranun would mean "people of the coast."

On the other hand, the name Maranao may have come from the root word *ranao* (lake) and could be a later development. Theoretically, the great Lake has been peopled by waves of migration from the coastal areas. Whether or not this theory makes sense may be supported by studies in linguistics and of the Maranao phonological system, as well as by archeological evidence. At least what is certain is that both the Maranao and the Maguindanao can trace descent from the Iranun/Illanun and that their language are mutually intelligible.

Radia Indarapatra/Darangen and Ranao Pengampong

Both the "Radia Indarapatra" and the "Darangen" epic are seen as *salsila*, that is, as genealogical accounts of the peopling of Ranao. The former is a narrative "prose" tale, and the latter, an epic in "verse." In terms of language, the former is in contemporary Maranao, while the latter is in classical Maranao/Iranun

which can be understood only by few of the older people. In relating either of these Maranao oral traditions, the narrator, particularly the *pananalsila* (one who recites the 'chain of descent lines') tends to link together the characters of the two tales, those of the "Radia Indarapatra" being considered "foreign" while those of the Darangen are more or less indigenous.

To illustrate my points further, let me cite a portion of the "Radia Indarapatra" (N. Madale, 1973:97, 158-9): after the death of their father, all properties including the sultan's throne were inherited by the sons. Yet, because of their in-laws' intrigues, a dispute ensued over who among the brothers would occupy the throne.

However, because Allah is just, three of the brothers were blown away from Mantapuli by a strong wind. Arabdarawi fell into the sea but managed to reach Bongkarongkabos. Diamil Khan was carried away to the Kingdom of Antar a Langit. Radia Kaharab reached the kingdom of Bogdad. Saik Langgawi, the eldest, was left in Mantapuli. All the brothers became sultans in their respective places. Thus was established the basis for future successions. The eldest son succeeded his father to the throne because this was the will of Allah (lines 11-25).

In the Darangen, Aia Diwata Mokom married Paramat a Pisi-gi of Pormosa and had three children: Diwatanda o Gibon, the eldest, followed by Awil-awil o Ndao and Amialongan Simban. An argument arose among the three over the distribution of inherited properties, causing them to separate. Diwatanda o Gibon remained in Bembaran while Awil-awil o Ndao lived in Kadaraan. Amialongan Simban settled in Minirigi a Rogong.

Diwatanda o Gibon married Aia Paganai Ba'i of Minirigi a Rogong and had the following children: Tominaman sa Rogong, M. Linog and Maniasa Boisan. Tominaman married Lallawanen of Slog. Their children were Pasandalan sa Morog, Paramat a Bantogen, Pinarisai Romaging and T. Masaleg, popularly known as Lawanen.

The genealogical account above reveals some kind of pattern

in the peopling of an area/kingdom: (1) the settling reveals places of mythical origin; (2) there is an attempt to link mythical places with real places; (3) the idea of being blown by the wind and falling into the sea may mean *sailing*; and, (4) the brothers are believed to be real brothers by blood, having common ascendants. This pattern is characteristic of what one may call "lineage segmentation," which is explained below.

There is also the question regarding the exact number of *pengampong* of the Ranao area. Saleeby and Bullard account for five, including Baloi and the Iranun *pengampong*. Landor (1904) enumerates three, Forrest (1775) enumerates 17 styled rajahs and 16 who took the titles of sultans, besides those in the coast (Mednick, 1965). This controversy may suggest that the development of the *pengampong* took several stages, and that the *pengampong* may be characterized as multi-centric.

Concept of Budding and Segmentation

Manuel (1973: 175) in his study of the Manuvu social organization gives us some insights into the formation of villages which follow two principal processes, *budding* and *segmentation*. Budding involves the pioneering activity of one family, starting with one household. The group enlarges gradually from influx of other families from neighboring or other villages. The main motivation for settlement is kinship, although this motivation did not necessarily produce a village of kinsmen.

The other process, segmentation, may be just a larger aspect of budding. Many families start the village at once from one definite parent village. The new village is likely to have village authorities right from the start.

With these processes described, which explain the growth of villages, let us discuss two cases of Maranao villages which followed a similar pattern.

Case No. 1: Madaya

Originally the *apo*, ancestor who now resides in Madaya, a suburb of Marawi City, came from a nearby village, Bangon which is also within the City suburb. Our informant claims that there were six elders (*lokes*). Other accounts claim there were 10 elders. It was the tradition of these 6/10 elders to go on their bancas following the flow of the Agus river. They paddled down the river and stopped at the place which they call "Rapitan," meaning, "where one passes by," to gather wood. Upon clearing the place, they found that they liked the flatness of the area and decided to divide it among themselves. Later they called the place Madaya, meaning, clean, clear and flat area.

One time, there was an argument because the elders could not decide on when to observe the Fast. Two conflicting groups emerged and they decided to split the village into two. Raya Madaya (Downstream Madaya) was ruled by Amai Manabilang, while Lilod a Madaya (Upstream Madaya) was ruled by Diator. The latter being a new village established its own mosque and imitated all the titles of the original village. Note that originally they were brothers (from an interview with Azis Panda, September 1980).

Case No. 2: Marinaut

Originally, Marinaut was one village called Ibango. Some informants claim that the place got its name from the word *marinaut*, a species of a medicinal citrus fruit that abounds in the area. This village or agama was large, so that elders in due time split the village into two: Marinaut and Dansalan. Each agama established its own leaders as well as its own *masgit* (mosque). From an interview with Manuel Tawagon, September 1980. Cf. Salsila of the village — appendix A).

The two cases above fairly illustrate the degree of similarity of the growth or development of villages which can either be cha-

racterized as budding or segmentation. Note that the elders who established the new villages were related by blood. This brings us to another concept – one agama (village), one datu, and one mosque.

The Concept of One Agama, One Datu and One Mosque

Unlike Christians, Muslims make no distinction between the state and the church. This can be traced back to the time of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) when he was considered both a temporal and a religious leader.

In Southern Philippines, the sultan is regarded as a temporal and a religious leader. Among other rights, which include ecclesiastical rights, and as head of the community, he is responsible for the appointments of religious leaders, and he has the right to have his name included in the *khutba* [(Friday sermon) - Majul cited in N. Madale, 1976:13] .

Thus, one can draw a conclusion that in a unitary state (e.g., highly centralized state such as the case of Sulu and to some extent the Maguindanao area), there exists also a centralized place of worship, a mosque, which was not only a political and religious center in the community but was a symbol of the sultan's centralized power and authority over the people he ruled.

On the other hand, in a state or community which can be characterized as multi-centric, as in the case of the Ranao pengampong, there exists multi-religious centers.

The sultan would never allow the construction of a mosque without his permission because it represents the political and religious center in the village where the sultan is the central figure of authority. As a religious edifice, it symbolizes the sultan's centralized and unitary power, the center for political and religious activities within a village or community.

This fact can probably explain the development of the mosques as identified from early sources: one is Picon, near Malabang

Area (1597); one in Watou (Watu, Balindong) which is a mosque of stone; another in Taraka called Babo Rahman (door of Mercy), which was built by *apo* Balindong; and one in Ditsaan-Ramain built by Buadi Alao, descendants of Alao, (Cf. Pires, 1971:296, Mastura, 1979:146, Abbahil, 1980:89 and N. Madale, 1976:12).

Indeed the construction of a mosque can provide us a clue in the establishment of a new agama. Abbahil (1980:89) gives us an account which runs this way: The sister of Olao and Olok had an accident on her way home in Ramain to attend the Friday prayer. Her boat capsized in the river (Ramain) and she nearly drowned. She begged her brothers, rulers of Bayabao, to permit her to have a *masgit* (mosque) in Ramain.

Three implications can be drawn from the above account: (1) permission to construct a mosque is possible upon approval of a sultan; (2) the holding of Friday congregation in a mosque is possible if two conditions are met: (a) there are at least 40-44 men who constitute the *jama* (people who pray) – according to the Shafi-i school; and, (b) at least four males including the Imam – according to the Malik school; (3) the construction of a mosque implies one village, one agama, and one leader. My observation then is that the establishment of a mosque suggests an increase of population which is enough to constitute a community and therefore the need of a leader, a datu or sultan as the case may be.

Bilangan and the Observance of Fast in Ramadan

Bilangan comes from the word *bilang*, meaning, to count. It refers to the counting of days when one starts to observe the Fast in Ramadan. According to the Iadith (Traditions of the Prophet), two schools of thought emerged in the observance of the Fast: that of the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) and of Ali, his son-in-law. The former observes the appearance of the new moon before starting the Fast while the latter does not. He does

this by mere calculation and he is sure that on such date the new moon appears.

In the Ranao area aside from the two schools, a third school emerged which observes the start of the Fast after the first two groups have begun the Fast. The existence of these three groups may suggest three groups of Muslim missionaries who came to the area at different periods. The present day observers of any of these three groups could probably be the remnants of the group with the same period of observing the fast. It is also possible that the third group decided not to follow either of the two schools of thought and established its own in the observance of the Fast. (Cf. N. Madale, 1975:15-24).

However, the type of mosques on the eastern side of the Lake may shed light on this controversy. These three groups are mainly located on the eastern side of the Lake. These types of mosque can be roughly classified as follows: Pagoda type, Javanese type and Buddhist temple type. The latter type resembles the mid-eastern mosque. This is another good area recommended for further research which may explain the development of the Ranao pengampong. Unluckily however, these different types of mosque no longer exist. Most of them were reconstructed to give way to modern architectural types.

Eastern: Concentration of Population

An earlier account narrates that in the eastern side of the great Lake a big concentration of people settled. The inhabitants generally got their name from the lake on which they reside. Most of the islanders dwell towards the east where there are said to be 30,000 men who intermingled with the Haraforas who seem to be the pioneers of the island. Near Moraway (Marawi) is Watou (Watu), where a mosque of stone with a remarkable height can be observed in fine weather from Byang (Bayang) which is on the opposite side of the lake (Pires 1971:295).

Another possible explanation which prompted the peopling of the area is the explosion of Mt. Makaturing in Butig. The eruption in 1765 destroyed whole villages. The devastation forced groups of Maranaos to abandon their heartland and move south and west. Some went to a relatively short distance which is on Maguindanao territory. Others settled on considerable distances in Sulu and on the northwest coast of Borneo (Tarling, 1963: 249).

Remarks and Observations

So far, we have re-examined the theory or theories in the development of the Ranao pengampong. Evidences show that its development is different from that of the Tausog and the Maguindanao which have attained the sultanate state. While the two groups can be characterized as unitary (although the Maguindanao split into two at a later period), the Ranao pengampong developed into a multi-centric power state. Such development can be explained by the fact that it is an inland settlement and that it has all the attributes contributory to the development of a sultanate state: the indigenous leadership, and the existence of a datu.

Islam has had an impact on the political institution of the Ranao pengampong. The "*pat a pengampong ko ranao*," four states of Ranao, were consolidated into one. The unifying factor: the concept of brotherhood which is inherent both in the indigenous system and the Islamic concept of "dar ul islam." This indigenous concept was reinforced and strengthened by a foreign concept which finally found its way into the salsila, that is, that the four founding ancestors were brothers. Such a pattern is common among the three Muslim groups.

The development of the Ranao pengampong should therefore be seen in the context of the Islamization process. In the case of Abu Bakr in Sulu (Majul, 1973: 57) what Abu Bakr introduced was not Islam as such but Islam as a form of state religion with its attendant political and social institutions.

The development of the Ranao pengampong can possibly be

explained as a process which evolved or developed from the growth of the agama villages into the inged, suko, the sub-pengampong and finally the largest geopolitical unit, the pengampong.

The structuring and ordering of these geo-political units or territories may have taken several stages, too. What the Maranao pananalsila calls "*miyakapira maalin so taritib*" (e.g., the taritib social order) underwent several changes. Changes should be interpreted as stages of development towards a unitary state which ultimately developed into the *pat a pengampong ko ranao*, four states of Lanao. Considering the fact that the *apos* of the founding villages were believed to be "blood brothers," it was not difficult to consolidate these different agama into a unitary state or pengampong.

Agama is not only a religious term. It refers to a definite territory with defined boundaries, occupied by certain kin groups. Also, it is considered a political unit in the sense that it has a leader (datu) and a mosque where the believers pray together.

To summarize, the development of the Ranao pengampong must have followed : (1) the earliest settlers were found along the coastal area down to the great Lake; (2) the earliest Maranao communities were in the Butig area and because of natural phenomenon, they moved from south to east following the lake contour; (3) the growth of the centers of communities were along the lake-shores, especially along river banks because these areas were fertile and the riverine served the villagers many purposes; (4) communities continued to expand : based on the principle of budding and segmentation, new settlements emerged; (5) Islam came into these communities through the inland route which were already linked by kind relations and endogamous marriages; (6) ruling datu in these key communities embraced Islam and Islam penetrated these communities through the process of lineage segmentation; and, finally (7) Islam consolidated these principalities (e.g., communities) into one unitary state as manifested in the *pat a pengampong ko ranao*, four states of Lanao.

Thus, studies on the growth of villages like that of the Manu-

vu should be undertaken especially in the Lanao area to shed light on the development of the pengampong. As observed by this writer, there has been no studies of this nature. Such a study may unearth many of the answers to our questions regarding the Lanao Pengampong, the land of the one thousand and one sultans.

Selected References

Baradas, David. "Maranao Law: A Study of Conflicts and Its Resolution in a Multicentric Power System," *Mindanao Journal* III, 3-4 (January-June 1977), 187-196.

Demetrio, Francisco. *The Village; Early Cagayan de Oro in Legend and History*. Xavier University, August 28, 1968.

Far Eastern Quarterly 4/2 (1945), 123.

Majul, Cesar A. *Muslims in the Philippines*. PCAS, Quezon City, 1973.

----- . "Mosques in the Philippines," *Filipino Heritage*, 3 (1977), 779-84.

Manuel, E. Arsenio. *Manuvu Social Organization*, CRDC, UP., Quezon City, 1973.

Madale, Nagasura T "Radia Indarapatra: A Study on Maranao Folk Narrative." MA. Thesis, Asian Center, UP., Quezon City, 1973.

----- . "Aspects of Maranao Taritib and Adat as Reflected in Radia Indarapatra," *Mindanao Journal*, III, 3-4 (Jan. - June 1977), 162-172.

----- . "Ramadhan as Observed in Lanao," *Mindanao Journal*, 1/3 (Jan. - Mar. 1976), 12-24.

Mastura, Michael O. *The Rulers of Maguindanao in Modern History 1575-1903: Continuity and Change in a Traditional Realm in the Southern Philippines.* Research Project No.5, PSSC Modern Philippine History Program, January 1979, 528 pp.

Pires, Tome et al. *Travel Account of the Islands 1513-1737.* Filipiniana Book Guild, Manila, 1971.

Saber, Mamitua. *The Transition from a Traditional to a Legal Authority System: A Philippine Case.* Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 1967.

Saleeby, Najeeb M. *Studies on Moro History, Law and Religion.* Filipiniana Book Guild, Manila, 1976.

Tarling, Nicholas. *Piracy and Politics in the Malay World: A Study of British Imperialism in 19th C. Southeast.* Helborne: F.W. Cheshire, 1963.

Tawagon, Manuel. "The Evolution of the Lanao Sultanates: A Theoretical Study on the Multi-centric Power System." Typescript, (Oct. 1979), 37 pp.

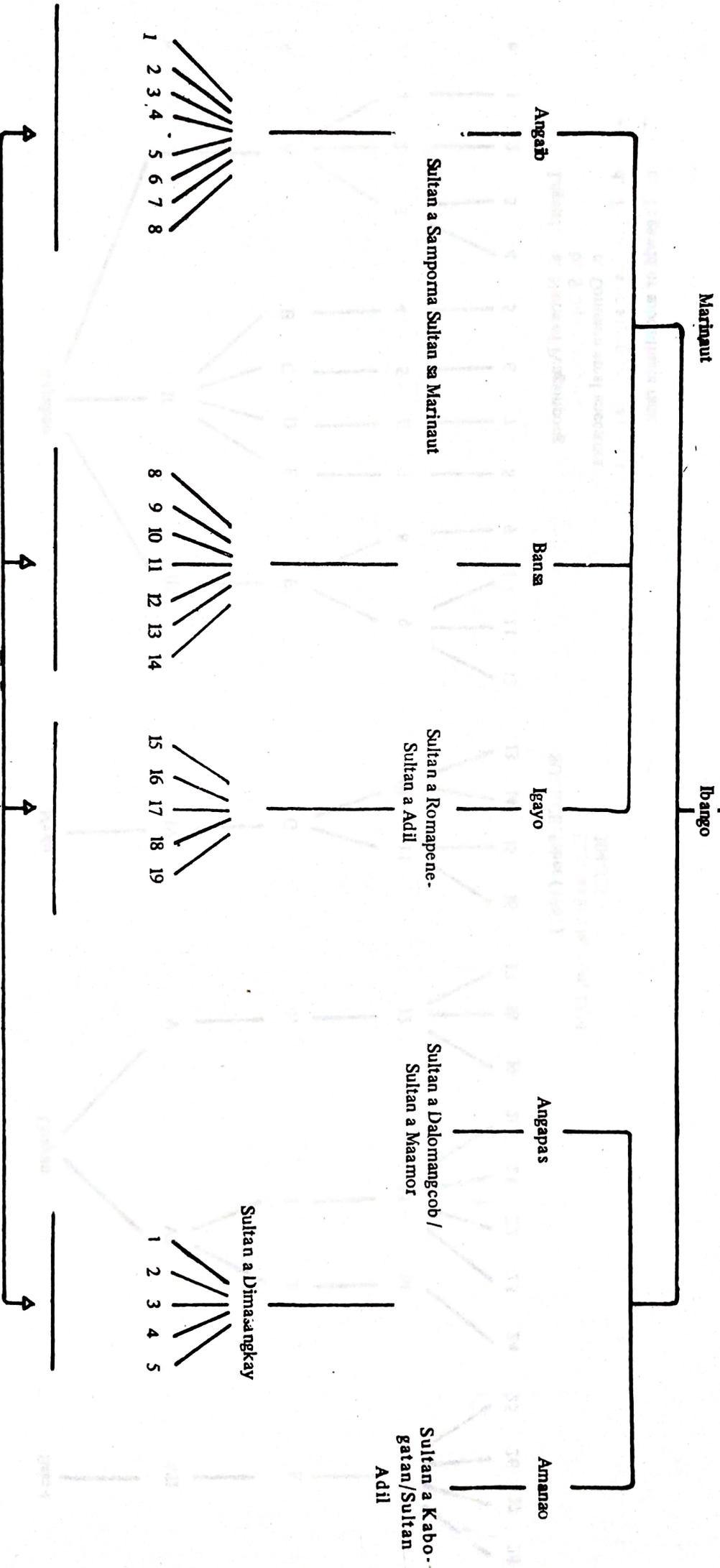
-----."The Iranun: A Study of Maranao Pirates." Typescript, (Oct. 1979), 57 pp.

Tiamson, Alfredo T. (ed). *On the Codification of Muslim Customary (Adat) and Quramic Laws,* 1974.

Vansina, Jan. *Oral Tradition: A Study in Historical Methodology.* Trans. by H. M. Wright. Penguin Books, 1965.

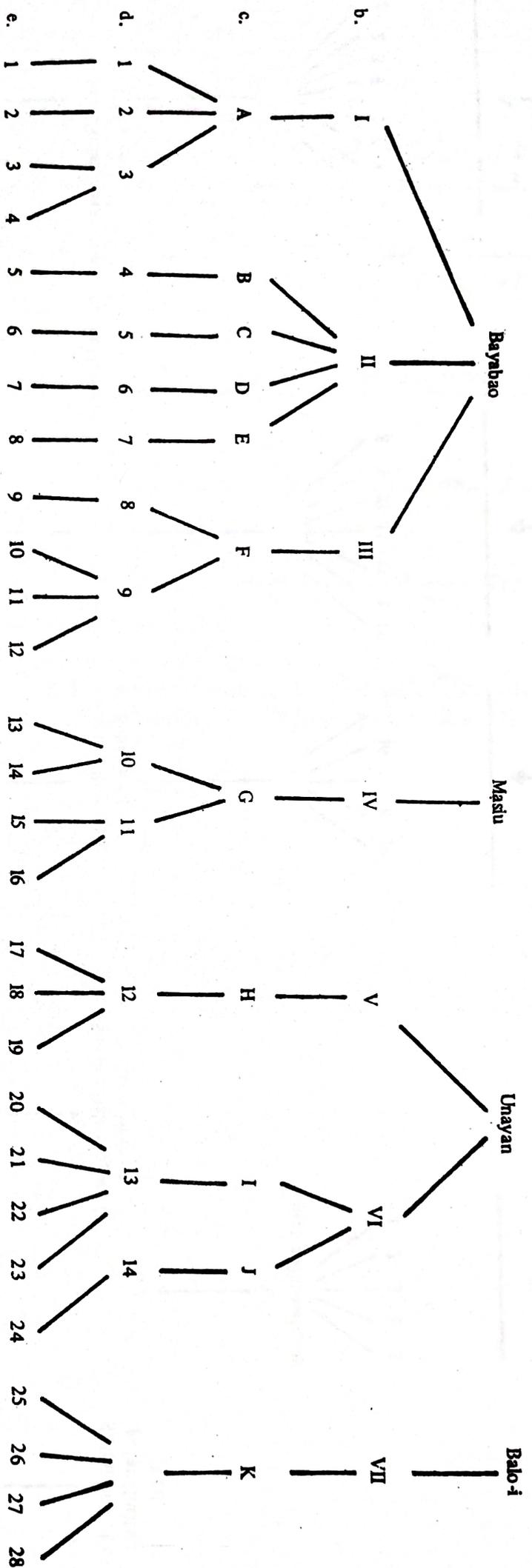
Abbahil, Abdulsiddik. "The Maranao Mosque: Its Origins, Structure and Community Role," *Dansalan Quarterly*, 1/2 (Jan. 1980), 85-103.

Appendix: A Marinaut Sultanate



Each number stands for one Eldership/ancestry from whom a sultan is elected, selected, or chosen. Each Eldership comprises several nuclear families. Each of them is represented in the Council of Elders - Tawagon (n.d.), 72.

Appendix B: Ranao Pengampong



- Legend:
- a. Name of Pengampong
 - b. Sub-pengampong
 - c. Common areal ancestors
 - d. Pegawidan or superordinate rank :
 - e. Pegawid or subordinate rank

SOURCE: Saber (1967).
 Baradas in Transactions, 1974:
 304-325.