

Inventory of *Rido* in Lanao del Sur (1994 –2004)

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1. Background/Rationale

We live in, by and around---but never without---conflict. It is as much a part of us as the clothes we wear and the food we eat. Everywhere and at all times, conflict emerges whenever men interact; it persists even if solidarity among people is at its highest. It pits persons, families, ethnic and racial groups, formal associations and countries against one another (Magdalena, 1990).

Individually, each of us has a unique history and character, born either male or female, born into a particular way of life, with our own values that guide our thinking and behavior and which motivate us to take certain actions and to reject others. Thus, it is not surprising to notice that when we interact and work with others, we often discover that we have different perspectives over many things.

Differences in viewpoint are inevitable. In addition to these “natural” differences there are those that are brought about by a range of other dimensions like power, status, wealth, age, race and ethnicity. This arrangement in the society leads to varying needs and desires or wants within the same situation. When the goals of these different sectors become incompatible or clash with each other, conflict is therefore created.

The Muslim communities of Mindanao have been observed as conflict-ridden due to the “on-and-off” wars they have fought against foreign invaders and recently with the Philippine government forces.

Some Moro (Muslim Filipino) historians claim that the Moros were not afforded a “breathing-space” to live in peace. They were continuously subjected to violent armed confrontations since the time of the Spanish arrival and until recently. Through this constant exposure to violence, the socialization process of the Moro children has been naturally affected. Consequently, it is not surprising to find the Moros of today, ready at all times to defend themselves.

The experience of subjugation and violence is not peculiar to the Moros. It was noted by various researchers that *rido* or vendetta is also common to other Filipino indigenous tribes, as in the case of the tribes in the Mountain Provinces of Luzon and Mindanao. Even some lowland Filipino cultures practice *rido* for the reason that Philippine values have been influenced by the Chinese and other Asian cultures that place emphasis on blood relations.

Writers on the Meranao Muslim society of the Philippines assert that Meranaos are more prone to conflict than other Philippine ethnic or tribal groups. It has been observed by some writers that conflict is more prevalent in the Meranao society as compared to other Moro groups in the Southern Philippines. Bentley (1982) notes the Meranaos display extreme sensitivity to personal threats. They are unwilling to fall under anyone’s power, either individually or collectively. Because of this trait, family feud, *rido* in the Meranao, is rather common whenever a member of the family is offended verbally or physically.

Rido is the Meranao generic term for conflict. For some, however, *rido* is a circular system of vengeance carried out by members of a family or clan. It is invariably characterized by a series of retaliatory acts of violence inflicted on the enemy as object of the *rido*. The retaliation sequence is sometimes known to last up to three generations (Saber, 1960). The goal of *rido* is to obtain justice and regain family honor. Among Meranaos, the family of someone who has died from a *rido* always carries with it a sort of “trademark of cowardice” (*boring a paras*) until said family succeeds in exacting proper revenge or retaliation. Essentially, *rido* means that a killing of a member of a family or clan can only be compensated for by taking the life of another from the aggressor family or clan. Consequently, the family of

whoever is killed defines justice and “face saving” in the manner that may lead to endless counter-killings.

While the Philippine legal system may define the incidents as simple criminal act of murder or homicide, the Meranao in Lanao define the act as retributive justice. *Rido* among Meranao has brought about serious dilemma in their society and is difficult to overcome. Problems such as the loss of lives, destruction of property, immobility for economic survival and absence of peace and order are just some of its crippling effects. *Rido* is a hindrance to socio-economic, political and spiritual development of the people.

1.a. Research Objectives

This study aimed at gathering baseline data (a comprehensive list) of the existing *rido* in Lanao del Sur, including Marawi City, for an eleven-year period: 1994 to 2004. Specifically, the study attempted to provide answers to the following:

1. What were the common causes of *rido*?
2. What were the consequences of *rido* on the family, clan and the community?
3. What municipalities, families or individuals have been prone to *rido*?
4. Who were the personalities involved in attempts to settle *rido*?
5. What processes and methods were employed to settle *rido*?
6. What were the conditions and processes that made *rido* active, inactive, settled or led to its suspension?
7. If efforts to settle *rido* failed, what were the processes/methods so far undertaken and the reasons for these failures?
8. If the aggrieved party retaliated, what were the conditions and processes that led to the retaliation?

1.b. Significance of the Study

The conflict in the Mindanao region has been tagged as one of the major causes of its underdevelopment and Mindanao State University (MSU) was specifically created in 1961 to assist in addressing the problem.

This exploratory study on the existing *rido* in Lanao del Sur in the past decade is another contribution of the researcher and MSU in the effort to understand the nature, scope and dynamics of *rido* as it functions in Meranao society. Though descriptive in nature, it can provide first-hand information on the prevalence of this problem, the causes, number of persons killed, injured and other related information, like the mode of conflict resolution and the profile of people involved in its resolution.

Furthermore, the findings of this study may prove useful to: (1.) National leaders in drafting policies and programs for the Muslims; (2.) Local Executives in devising structures and mechanisms to prevent, manage or transform emerging *rido* and to resolve those that are in existence; (3.) NGO's, government agencies and schools in re-orienting their peace and development programs, and finally, (4.) the local population and its traditional and religious leaders who might have deficient information on the number of people who have died and the unpleasant consequences of this societal "menace" known in the vernacular as *rido*, to individuals, families, clans and communities. It is the hope of this study to reduce the destructive effects of *rido* when the general population seriously addressed the problem.

1.c. Scope and Limitation

No one really knows the exact number of *rido* in Lanao del Sur. Even this study cannot claim "completeness" for the inventory it has made for the eleven-year period (1994-2004). The incompleteness can be explained by the limited knowledge and/or memories of the key informants we found. Some informants probably even hid the *rido*, which they considered "shameful" to discuss. Other respondents flatly refused to give information on specific *rido* due to fear that by

giving any information, it may rekindle or escalate old *rido*. These respondents explained that circumstances or causes leading to *rido* usually have two versions: the version of the aggressor and that of the aggrieved party. Giving story on the cause, which may not coincide with the version of the aggrieved party, can only escalate the *rido* and the number of casualties.

Rido as mentioned elsewhere in this report is the Meranao generic term for conflict. As such, the term can be applied to marital quarrels, misunderstanding between individuals or to any form of disagreement. There are even times that Meranao uses the term to refer to personal problem like “*ika rirido a ginawa ko*” (“I am in conflict with myself”). It is because of this general application of the term *rido* to varied situations of disagreement, that a “limit” or scope should be specified. In this study, only those conflicts between individuals or families that have resulted death in any of the conflicting parties have been included in the enumeration within the eleven-year period (1994-2004).

Incidents of killings between brothers have not been included in the enumeration as case studies, as the relatives of the assailant were not subjected to threats of retaliation. Incidents of retaliation clearly associated with a *rido* already counted were tallied as part of the casualties of that particular *rido*. They were not treated as separate *rido*.

However, some cases of retaliation were listed as separate *rido* when the retaliation occurred within the study period (1994-2004) and the original *rido* happened prior to 1994.

1.d. Definition of Terms

Rido – is the generic term for conflict. In this study however, *rido* is created when the conflicting parties resort to violence that results in death or deaths to either side of the conflicting parties.

Inactive rido – When one has died on either side but the aggrieved party suspends retaliatory attack due to inability to launch

a strike, or a conflict mediator has intervened or family influence is so strong as to forestall immediate retaliation.

Active rido – when one or either of the parties involved show readiness to strike any time.

Suspended rido – are partially settled *rido* that imposes penalties on either side if they made another move to escalate the *rido*.

Settled rido – *rido* settled by mediators with the conditions complied to by both parties with a promise to end the conflict.

2. Research Design/Methodology

Research Design

This is a descriptive study that employed both quantitative and qualitative data collection strategies.

The first phase of the research was devoted to the enumeration (inventory) of *rido*: its causes, parties involved, year it happened, mediators, number of dead, injured, imprisoned and other related information, in the following political units of Lanao del Sur:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Marawi City | 15. Kalanogas |
| 2. Bubong | 16. Kapatagan |
| 3. Buadi-Puso Buntong | 17. Lumba-Bayabao |
| 4. Bumbaran | 18. Lumbac a Unayan |
| 5. Butig | 19. Lumbayanague |
| 6. Balindong | 20. Lumbatan |
| 7. Bacolod-Kalawi | 21. Masiu |
| 8. Balabagan | 22. Mulondo |
| 9. Binidayan | 23. Maguing |
| 10. Bayang | 24. Marantao |
| 11. Ditsaan-Ramain | 25. Madalum |
| 12. Dumalundong | 26. Madamba |
| 13. Ganassi | 27. Marogong |
| 14. Kapai | 28. Malabang |

29. Poona-Bayabao
30. Piagapo
31. Pualas
32. Pagayawan
33. Saguwaran
34. Sultan Gumander
35. Tagoloan II
36. Tamparan
37. Tugaya
38. Taraka
39. Tubaran
40. Wao

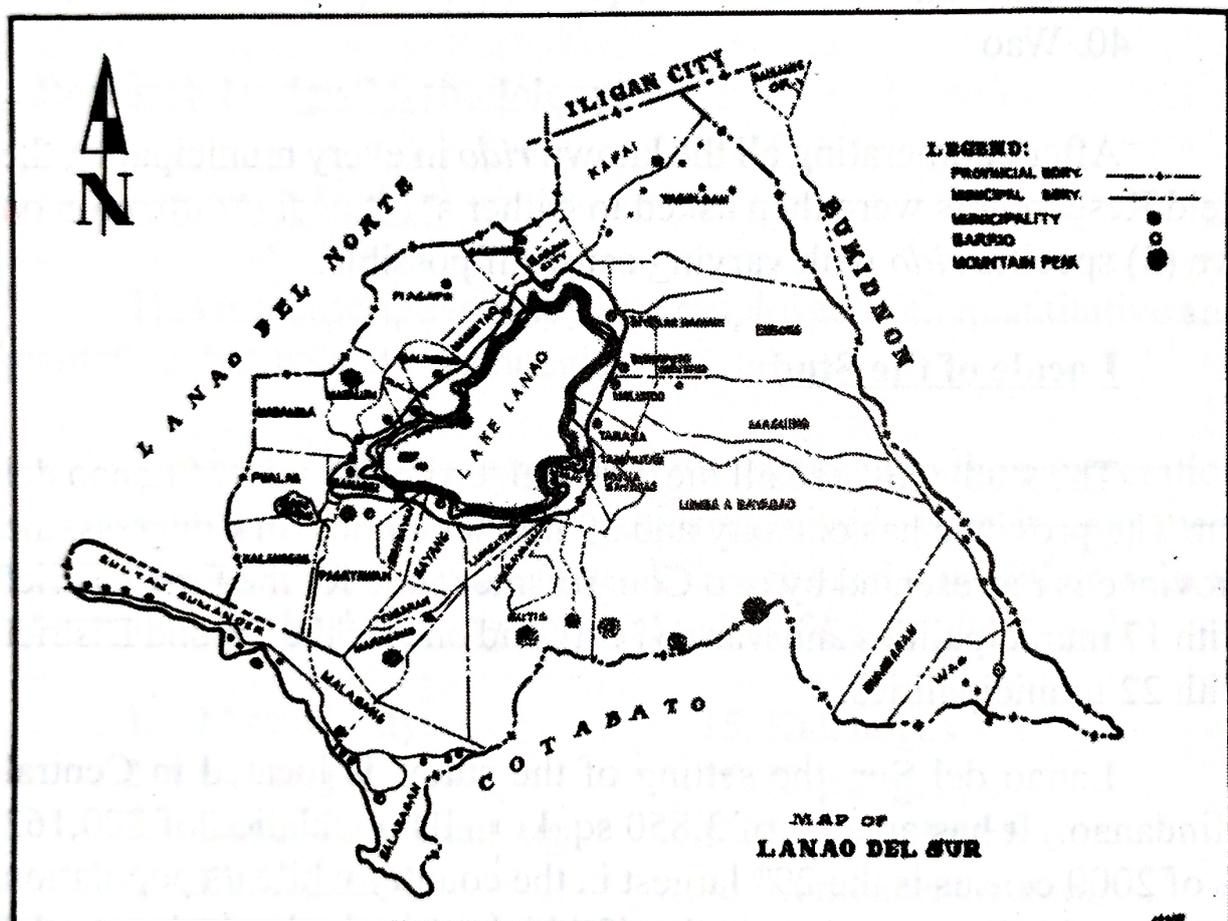
After enumerating all the known *rido* in every municipality, the Field Researchers were then asked to gather additional information on five (5) specific *rido* with varying causes if possible.

Locale of the Study

The study covered all the political territorial units of Lanao del Sur. The province has one city and 39 municipalities. In Congress, the province is represented by two Congressmen: one for the First District with 17 municipalities and Marawi City and one for the Second District with 22 municipalities.

Lanao del Sur, the setting of the study, is located in Central Mindanao. It has an area of 3,850 sq. km. Its population of 800,162 as of 2000 census is the 29th largest in the country while its population density of 207 per sq. km. is the 43rd highest in the land. Lanao del Norte bounds it on the north, on the east by Bukidnon, on the south by Maguindanao and Cotabato, and on the southwest by Illana Bay, an arm of the Moro Gulf. Its capital is Marawi City where the Mindanao State University Main Campus is located. The famous Aga Khan Myseum, the repository of indigenous material culture of the people is located at the University. Marawi City and the province, together with Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, and Maguindanao, constitute the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

At the heart of the province is the famous legendary Lake Lanao, one of the seventeen oldest lakes in the world. With an area of 35,000 hectares at normal water level, the lake is the second largest lake in the Philippines. It is however the deepest lake in the country, with a maximum depth of 112 meters. The only outlet of the lake to the sea is the Agus River. From 702 meters above sea level, the river “flows northward through about 30 kilometers towards Iligan Bay.” From its mouth down to Iligan Bay, six hydroelectric power plants have been built by the National Power Corporation to generate and dispatch electric power to the whole island of Mindanao.



Due to the relatively bigger circumferential area of Lake Lanao, 19 of its 40 towns (including Marawi City) have direct access to the lake. Except Kapatagan, Balabagan, Malabang, and Sultan Gumander that are located along the Illana Bay, and a handful of other towns like Wao, Bumbaran, Kapai and Tagoloan II, all the other towns of the province are virtually connected to the Lake through their rivers.

The location of Lake Lanao at the center of Lanao del Sur, the topography of the area, the remaining forest cover, and the rainfall,

which is evenly distributed throughout the year, presumably make the climate of the province invigorating. This is also the reason why the American administrators of Mindanao in the early 1900 made the place the “summer capital” of the south. The Officers Lane (residential houses built for American officials) around Camp Keithley and establishment of kilometer 0.00 in Dansalan (now Marawi) as the reference point for all roads on Mindanao further attest to the inviting beauty of the place.

It is a paradox that while the province is rich in natural and human resources, its socio-economic profile is one of the lowest in the whole country. Looking at the socio-economic and demographic profile of the ARMM in 1998, to which Lanao del Sur and Marawi City are component units, the 1998 Annual Poverty Indicator Survey of NSO, the DECS Report (1997-1998), the 1998 National Nutrition Survey of DOST, and the 1998 DOH Report are very revealing. Table I below summarizes this profile.

TABLE I
ARMM socio-economic and demographic profile (1998)

Socio-Economic and Demographic Indicators	ARMM	NCR	Cordillera	National Average
Poverty Incidence	63.5	13.7	48.0	40.6
Per Capita Nominal Income	13,503	59,463	28,266	27,105
Per Capita Nominal Expend	10,651	48,711	19,301	21,000
Per Capita Real Income	9,476	43,120	21,596	19,799
Per Capita Real Expend	7,723	34,183	16,243	15,661
Functional Literacy Rate (1994 Data)	61.2%	92.4%	78.6%	83.8%
Dropout Rate in Primary School	19.8	4.4	11.7	7.4
Dropout Rate in Secondary	16.1	8.4	9.7	9.9
Life Expectancy at Birth (1995 Data)	56.1%	69.3%	65.0%	68.1%
Infant Mortality Rate	55.1%	23.7%	42.7%	36.0%
Child Mortality Rate	45.9%	15.3%	10.1%	19.7
Access to Safe Water	29.0%	85.8%	76.7%	78.1%
Access to Electricity	55.1%	98.7	94.9%	72.3%

The preceding table shows that in all the socio-economic and demographic indicators, the ARMM registers either the highest or the lowest incidence as compared to those of the NCR, Cordillera, and the National Average. For instance, on the poverty incidence, ARMM registers 63.5% as compared to 13.7%, 48.0%, and 40.6% of NCR, Cordillera, and the National Average, respectively. On access to safe water, ARMM registers 29.0% as against 95.8%, 76.7% and 78.1% of NCR, Cordillera, and that of the National Average, respectively. On the basis of Table 1, Lanao del Sur and Marawi City are certainly among the most depressed areas in the Philippines. On access to electricity, the situation is very ironical on the account that Lake Lanao is the source of hydroelectric power that supplies electricity to the whole island of Mindanao. On this indicator, the ARMM registers the lowest incidence of 55.1%. On the other hand, NCR and the Cordillera register 98.7% and 94.9%, respectively. The National Average here is 72.3%.

Marawi City, the capital of Lanao del Sur, is located in the northwestern side of Lake Lanao. With its 131,090 population (2000 Census of Population and Housing NSO), it is the smallest among the 16 highly urbanized cities in the Philippines. It is predominantly Meranao in almost everything. Government offices, schools, business establishments, public utilities, and other service-oriented establishments are all managed or controlled by the Meranao. Perhaps, it is the only city in the whole country that does not have any Chinese store. The main campus of the Mindanao State University, the premier university in Southern Philippines, is located in the city. Being the capital and strategically located in relation to the other towns in the province, the city has become the center of industry, education, culture, politics, and religion not only of Lanao del Sur but also of the whole of Meranao society.

In the past (1940-1960), Marawi was in the heart of Mindanao's travel route by land. People from the two Misamis provinces and Lanao del Norte who wish to go to Cotabato and Davao have to pass through Marawi. The economy of the city was then dynamic with fine hotels and restaurants. But with the deteriorating pace and order and the construction of new networks of roads in Bukidnon, that role was taken over by Cagayan de Oro City.

The Meranao

The Meranao is one of the thirteen Muslim ethnolinguistic groups in the Philippines. They predominantly inhabit the whole province of Lanao del Sur, a large portion of Lanao del Norte, and some small parts of Zamboanga del Sur, Maguindanao, Misamis Oriental, and Cagayan de Oro City. A few hundred thousands of them can also be found scattered all over the country as businessmen, government and private employees and students at different schools and universities.

The word Meranao, which is initially pronounced with the peppet vowel e, is popularly translated to mean “people of the lake, referring to Lake Lanao (*Ranao* in the Meranao). This is the reason why the Meranao in some parts of Sabah, Malaysia, who are officially called Iranun in that country are presumed to have originated in Lanao del Sur because of their language and culture. Linguistically, the word Meranao refers either to the aforesaid ethnic group or their language.

Long before the advent of the Republic, the Meranao were already enjoying a relatively well-organized indigenous political organization. The nation-state equivalent of this political organization was the *Pat a Phangampongang ko Ranao*. The late Dr. Mamitua Saber and other writers translated this name to “Four States or Principalities.” The territorial jurisdiction of this indigenous political organization includes the provinces of Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte, and some small portions of the present Zamboanga del Sur, Bukidnon, Misamis Oriental, and Maguindanao. Although it has become nominal in many aspects, this indigenous organization is still functional to date.

While the Philippine Constitution functions as the fundamental law of the land, in the *Pat a Phangampong* (in short), the so-called *taritib a go Igma* serves as the fundamental law of the community. In the Taritib, the Pat a Phangampong is divided into four *phangampongs* (encampments): Bayabao, Onayan, Masiu, and Baloi. Each *phangampong* with the exception of Baloi is further subdivided into “*suku*” or sub-*phangampong*. Bayabao is subdivided

into Poona Bayabao (“Where Bayabao Begins”), Lumba a Bayabao (Central Bayabao), and Mala a Bayabao (Greater Bayabao); Masiu into East and West Masiu; and Onayan into East and West Onayan. It is interesting to note that the first three *Phangampong* (Bayabao, Masiu, and Onayan) are made bound in the *Taritib* by the “*inged*” or communities of Sawir, Dalama, Bacayawan and Madamba. Each sub-*phangampong* is also further broken down into several *inged* (township) and each *inged* is again further subdivided into several *agama* (village community).

In the *taritib*, the four *phangampong* has 15 *panoroganans* (supported *inged*) and 28 *mbabaya ko taritib inged*. Through consensus-making or consultation process (*opakat*), these *inged*s rule the *Pat a Phangampong*. However, because centralized authority structure did not much develop in the *Pat a Phangampong*, each *inged* and in some cases each *agama* functions independently of all other *inged* and *agamas*. It is on this score that the *Pat a Phangampong* is considered a segmentary society.

Unlike in a centralized sultanate system, where the judicial function of the government is hierarchically institutionalized, in the *Pat a Phangampong*, each *inged* or *agama* functions independently in regard to conflict resolution. Before the advent of the Republic, with its different forms of secular laws, indigenous and Islamic Law constituted the substantive and procedural laws of the Meranao indigenous political system. The indigenous laws are embodied mainly in the *taritib* and *igma* of the *Pat a Phangampong*. Islamic Law, on the other hand, was, as usual in all Muslim societies, based mainly on the Qur’an and Hadith – sayings and practices of Prophet Mohammad (s.a.w.). Parenthetically, it is an item of note that Islamic Law functions not through the instrumentality of an Islamic institution like that of an Islamic Government but through the indigenous political structure of the Meranao society. This situation is over and above the fact that the indigenous laws of the Meranao are continuously influenced by Islamic Law. In fact, the word *taritib* and *igma* are said to be adopted from two original Arabic terms: *taritib* and *ijma*. The former means arrangement or order, while the latter refers to the consensus of jurists about a question of law at a particular point in history.

With the advent of the Republic, the system of political structure of modern state has been superimposed on the Meranao society. Consequently, the Meranaos have become organized according to two types of political organization at the same time – that of the modern state, on the one hand, and that of the indigenous type, on the other hand. Under the modern legal system, the people are organized into provinces, city, municipalities, and barangays. Under the indigenous system, they are organized into *phangampongs*, *sub-phangampong*, *inged*s, and *agamas*. Likewise, in the field of conflict settlement, “modern” or legal mode of conflict settlement, which is primarily channeled through our regular courts of justice, co-exist with the indigenous modes of conflict resolution, as well as along with the Islamic mode of settlement that used to be called *kitab* in the Meranao society. In other words, given a dispute, there are alternative modes of conflict resolution with which the conflict may be resolved. The co-existence of the aforesaid different modes of dispute settlement is one peculiarity that the Meranao society has in the modern world.

In terms of influences from outside, it is Islam that has left a lasting effect in virtually all aspects of life to the Meranao. In fact, Islam is continuously transforming the Meranao society along Islamic lines; however underpinned it may be by the forces of secularization that is universally going on. Of course, Islam being partly an embodiment of general principles deduced from the Qur’an and Hadith, gives freedom to the Meranao to define the general form of their own Islamic way. Like democracy that has several variants, Islamic political organization can have also varying forms. The same is true with other institutionalized ways of doing things like education; the Meranao can also have their own system of Islamic education. Being a complete way of life, Islam demands that the life of its adherents (individually and in many group ways of living life), from birth to death, should be spent in accordance with Islamic way. This is one aspect of the Moro armed struggle, which is less understood in Philippine scholarship.

Competing with Islamic influences in transforming the Meranao are the so-called Western influences, which are mainly exemplified by everything that is American. The democratic form of government that the Filipinos have been enjoying since our independence day, our

civil service system in public governance, and our educational system, among others, are essentially American in orientation.

In the fields of political system and governance, it is obvious that governmental powers have been divested from the indigenous political system by the modern politicolegal organization of the modern nation-state, the Republic of the Philippines. On economy, the free-market system that is dominated by private enterprises, with all its usurious qualities, has become our economic order. In almost all modern out-posts of life, the Philippines, to which the Meranao area is a component part, is westernized not to a lesser extent.

Throughout the westernization process that has been transforming the Meranao and their society, the so-called western education has been very instrumental. Because presumably of the use of English language as medium of instruction in schools, westernization process is not only transforming the Meranao society in terms of westernized ways of doing things, but also in terms of what may be called mind-set. To some extent, the Meranao, more particularly those who are educated in secular schools, also think like the way an American thinks. In other words, western or secular education, while it educates the Meranao, with all that it entails in terms of consequential benefits, also alienates him from his society, culture, and religion.

In response to the alienating effects of western education, the Meranao, side by side with the secular schools in their society, established and has been organizing *madaris* (singular: *madrrasah*). In these schools the Meranao formally learn their religion, Islamic Law, Islamic history, Arabic language, among others. Today, hundreds of *madaris* co-exist side by side with our public and private schools in the Meranao area.

Because the government does not accredit the *madaris*, their graduates could not make use of the qualifications that they earned from their alma maters in applying for government jobs. Moreover, it is interesting to note that the curricular offerings of the *madaris* are virtually bereft of pure and applied sciences, which can be made use of by their graduates for gainful self-employment. In response to this

problem, adventurous *ulama* and some western educated individuals have organized integrated schools in Lanao del Sur and Marawi City. The most successful of these schools, which earned the respect of the public and the government, is the Ibn Siena Integrated School in Marawi City. The school was organized by a group of *ulama* and a group of professionals in 1995. The idea of an integrated school came out in response to the alienating effects of western education and at the same time addresses the weakness of the *Madrasah School*.

Meranao Kinship System

Kinship, the network of consanguineal and affinal ties, which has been a universal feature of human society and culture, shows some peculiarities in the Meranao society. Owing probably to the isolation of the Meranao in Central Mindanao for centuries, which made them survive with only their own internal resources, they have developed a kinship system in ways that are now peculiar to them as a group of people. For instance, the equivalent of *mbatabata'a* or *thothonganaya* (a group of individuals who are blood relatives) in other ethnic groups may only be appreciated in terms of kinship relationships involved and the kind of reciprocity of aid and services within. In Meranao society, the group is found out to be a separate authority structure in the village level, which, together with the barangays and the *agama*, makes the Meranao village a trichotomous authority structure (Sumaguina, 1988).

It is interesting to note that as an authority structure, the *mbatabata'a* or *thothonganaya* is more effective than the *agama* or the barangays in conflict management. The late Dr. Esmail Sumaguina discovered this in his "Distributed Political Competence and Stress On Village System: The Case of Three Meranao Village Communities in Muslim Mindanao," which he undertook in 1988. He found out in the study that in very stressful situations, which involve homicide or murder, the other two authority structures (the *agama* and the barangays) could not cope up. He discovered that in many cases that involve homicide or murder, the only remaining authority structure that functioned in conflict resolution processes was that of the *mbatabata'a* or *thothonganaya*. The other two authority structures virtually collapsed.

It is also of note that in terms of conflict resolution, *kokoman a kambhatabata'a* functions as a distinct mode of settling dispute. As a mode of conflict settlement, *kokoman a kambhatabata'a* is fundamentally based on kinship. The principle behind the use of the mode of settlement is the promotion and maintenance of harmonious relationships between members of a kinship group. Prof. Intuas M. Abdullah first articulated this in his article, "Two Notes on Meranao Law," published in the *Unirecent* of the Mindanao State University in 1977. With the three other modes of conflict resolution in the Meranao society: *taritib a go igma, kitab* or Islamic Law, and that which is provided by our regular courts of justice, the Meranaos are torn between three different modes of conflict settlement whenever there is a dispute or conflict.

The indigenous or traditional political organization of the Meranao, from its nation-state equivalent (the *Pat a Phangampongan o Ranao*) down to the *agama* (village) level, is also largely structured and organized in terms of kinship principles. Political and religious titles are generally ascribed and open only to individuals who descended from the original holder of the title (*grar*).

Another feature of the kinship system of the Meranao is the *awidan*. Literally, it can mean carry or burden. As a reciprocity system, it refers to the established scheme of mutual help between members of a kinship group or between kinship groups. Its scope is generally defined by the phrase, "*rido-kapiya'an*" (problem-benefit or conflict-benefit). *Rido-kapiya'an* explicitly categorizes two general areas in which *awidan* operates: problem and benefit. It shows that the kind of reciprocity system that developed in the Meranao society is far greater in scope than what one usually encounters in other ethnic groups.

The nature of reciprocity system that researchers usually come across in the field has to do almost always with problematic situation. George Peter Murdock, as illustrated in the kind of cooperation by members of a kinship group in times of crises, succinctly articulates the importance of kinship in his book, *Social Structure*, which he wrote in 1969. Murdock observed:

When a person is in danger or in troubles, when he needs help in the performance of an economic task or a ceremonial obligation, whenever in short, he requires a measure of assistance beyond what his family can provide, he can turn to the members of his larger kin group for aid and succor. Because extended kinship ties bind them to him, their obligation to help him is stronger than that of other members of the tribe or community. He in turn of course is under reciprocal obligations toward them (Murdock, 1969:45; cited in Sumaguina, 1988:38).

What Murdock describes in the preceding citation is only a part of the *awidan* in the Meranao kinship system. In the Meranao society, the first area of the continuum, *rido-kapiya'an*, in which the reciprocity system in the *awidan* applies, includes conflict, more particularly one that involves death such as homicide or murder. In conflict that does not involve death, the kinship group, more particularly the *shokodan* (those who are more or less equally related to the other party in the dispute), can be an effective instrument in settling the conflict. In situations which require a relative to pay damages for purposes of settling disputes, members of his kinship group are readily available to help in raising the needed amount.

In a very stressful type of dispute more particularly that which involves death, either homicide or murder, close relatives are also expected to help not only materially but also in terms of manpower who will bear arms.

Finally, the second part of the continuum *rido-kapiya'an*, which relates to situations in which the individual person or a family (nuclear family) receives benefits, the recipient or prospective recipient is expected to distribute part of the benefits to the other members of his kinship group. In regard to dower or bride gift, this is called *adat*.

Meranao Concept of Maratabat

Maratabat is another feature of the Meranao that has continued to catch the attention of both foreign and local scholars. It is not an ordinary phenomenon in the sense that it is not easily discernible. It

usually springs out when the roles of individuals or groups, which are very dynamic, criss-cross with the psyche (e.g., temperament, emotion, rationality, etc.) and some elements of culture, like values, beliefs and others. That possibility is perhaps the reason why researchers differ in their views of this socio-psychological and cultural phenomenon.

Carlton L. Riemer, in "Meranao Maratabat and the Concepts of Pride, Honor, and Self Esteem," (*Dansalan Research Center Occasional Papers*, May, 1970), believes that from its original meaning in Arabic, the Meranao expanded the meaning of *maratabat* "... from rank to rank sensitivity, status to status seeking and prestige to prestige seeking and enhancement" (1970:8). In terms of substance, he looks at *maratabat* in a continuum in such a way that varying amount of it exists (1970: 3). Saber, Tamano, and Warriner relate *maratabat* to the "folk psychology" of the Meranao. In this regard, they believe that it is an ideology itself. "This implies that *maratabat* is the driving force that guides the actions of the Meranao as 'citizens' of the *Pat a Phangampongan o Ranao*" (Abdullah, 32).

To find a way to properly contextualize *maratabat*, Nagasura Madale suggests that the concept could be understood by relating it to the social structure of Meranao society and the social positions in that structure. Unlike many writers, who equate *maratabat* with pride, honor, status, or self-esteem, Melvin Mednick believes that there is no single English concept that corresponds to it. In the end, he views *maratabat* as the "impulse behind the performance" of duties in relation to one's descent line (1964: 187; cited in Abdullah, p. 31).

In the most recent work on *maratabat*, "Maratabat and Rido (Meranao)," Claribel Bartolome, on the basis of the responses of selected informants, simply confirms the findings of previous researchers about the substance of the phenomenon. Consequently, *maratabat* is appreciated as something that has to do with a universe of many things: rank, honor, status, self-esteem, pride, sensitivity, status-seeking, rank enhancement, and ideology, among others.

Without joining the debate over the substance of *maratabat*, which may not be needed in this work, suffice it to say that the

socio-cultural and psychological phenomenon, *maratabat*, in many circumstances, constitutes a form of reaction out of some social interaction. It is in many cases encountered as a reaction to one's prerogative, crime against person, when one's name, honor, or dignity is tarnished and in many other social interactions that require a person to vindicate his name, honor, dignity, or protect or fight for his rights, or privileges. As a reaction it is usually laden with anger. However, not all angers are expressions of *maratabat*.

Data Collection

Some Meranao employees (faculty and administrative staff) of MSU-Marawi and other colleagues were recruited as enumerators and/or field researchers in their own municipality/city of origin. As "insiders" in the area, the researcher was confident that these individuals can easily establish rapport with the prospective Key Informants who may turn out to be their relatives.

The Field Researchers were given a two-day orientation for the job. After the orientation, they were sent out to the field with the following instructions:

In the data gathering, we will be using two forms: (a) a matrix for listing the *rido* in the municipality, their causes and other related information and (b) the interview schedule for the five cases of *rido* per municipality. Please take note that *rido* is defined in this study as "conflict" that resulted in the death of a member of either party. The ideal respondents for the inventory of *rido* in the municipality are the traditional/religious leaders or those who ran for an elective office. The researcher hypothesized that a clever candidate must have practical knowledge on the existing *rido* in his municipality so he can devise means to win the support of both sides or to whom to avoid. Take note also that the matrix form is only good for five (5) cases. If more than five *rido* exist in the municipality, use another sheet. Do not forget to mark the succeeding pages as sheet 2, 3, and so on for that municipality.

After completing the list, you can then choose 5 cases to study. At this stage, you will then be using the interview guide. Please select cases with different causes.

In selecting your respondent, please choose a friend or relative who is knowledgeable on specific *rido*. Do not interview

people who are closely related to the *rido* especially the aggrieved party. They may misinterpret the research as reminding them to retaliate. We do not want this situation to happen.

In the interview, allow your respondents to narrate the history of the *rido*. You will be surprised to know that most of the things we wanted to know about the *rido* will be accounted for. You may ask later for the names and the socio-demographic characteristics of those involved including the mediators.

In documenting your interview (which can be done later), please give emphasis on the mediation and resolution process. We wanted to know how *rido* involving women, politics, land, etc were resolved. We also wanted to know the names and socio-demographic characteristics of successful mediators. We are also interested in knowing why *rido* cannot be settled, how the leaders are able to suspend or make the *rido* inactive for a certain period. Please assure your respondents that their names will be kept in strict confidentiality. We will be using pseudo names in their behalf including the names of their barrio and municipality in the report or write-up.

In our attempt to gather detailed additional information on 200 cases of *rido*, we seek the approval of our key informants for the use of tape recorders. Few respondents agreed to the request but the majority refused.

Data Analysis

The data collected at the enumeration stage of the study was processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to yield general information on the causes of *rido*, year it happened, parties involved, number of people killed, injured and imprisoned, status of the *rido*, mediators, whether the aggrieved party filed a case in court, reason for non-settlement and if the aggrieved party retaliated. The enumeration data, however, is limited, as it did not ask for details.

The 200 cases of *rido* that were subjected to further inquiry were also processed by the SPSS computer software. After analyzing these two sets of data, the findings were presented in a Validation Seminar/Workshop attended by carefully selected participants from the 40 localities studied. In this seminar/workshop, the participants who were selected on the basis of their knowledge on the *rido* in their areas and familiarity with Meranao conflict resolution methods, were

given ample time to critically examine the findings and to provide additional information on items that were probably overlooked.

3. Presentation of Findings and Analysis

Because the research drew data from three sources at the different stages of the study (the inventory, key informant interviews on the 200 cases and the validation seminar/workshop), the findings are presented based on the research questions posited by the study. When the research question is answerable by the inventory findings, that set of data is given preference. If the research question was not addressed by the inventory due to needed details, the findings on the 200 cases studied and those provided by the participants to the validation seminar were used.

Part I. Inventory Findings: Number of *Rido*, Common Causes & Other Related Information

The inventory aspect of the study yielded information on the number of *rido*, its causes, year it happened, number of people killed, injured and imprisoned, status of the *rido*, whether the aggrieved party filed a case in court, and other related information. The inventory, however, did not ask for details for it was a mere enumeration of cases.

The study found a total of 337 cases of *rido* in the Province of Lanao del Sur from 1994 to 2004. It can be gleaned from Table 2 that more than fifty percent (22 out of the 40 political units of the province) has ten (10) or more than ten cases of *ridos*. Marantao and Butig registered the highest frequency at 26 and 17, respectively. However, the 26 *rido* cases in Marantao claimed 32 lives while Butig lost 69 lives from the 17 *ridos* identified. These figures suggest that though Marantao has the greatest number of cases, these were not as "fierce" compared to other places. Marantao ranked number 5, if the number of casualties is to be taken as the criterion. Butig, Balabagan, Pagayawan and Madalum have more casualties in that order (refer to Table 6).

Table 2 – Distribution of *Rido* by Municipality

Municipality	Frequency	Percent
Marawi City	15	4.0
Bubong	5	1.3
Buadi-Puso Buntong	5	1.3
Bumbaran	5	1.3
Butig	17	4.5
Balindong	9	2.4
Bacolod-Kalawi	6	1.6
Balabagan	14	3.7
Binidayan	10	2.7
Bayang	5	1.3
Ditsaan-Ramain	5	1.3
Dumalondong	7	1.9
Ganassi	10	2.7
Kapai	10	2.7
Kalanogas	10	2.7
Kapatagan	5	1.3
Lumba-Bayabao	5	1.3
Lumbac-a Unayan	6	1.6
Lumbayanague	5	1.3
Lumbatan	7	1.9
Masiu	10	2.7
Mulondo	10	2.7
Maguing	10	2.7
Marantao	26	6.9
Madalum	16	4.2
Madamba	11	2.9
Marogong	6	1.6
Malabang	10	2.7
Poona Bayabao	10	2.7
Piagapo	5	1.3
Pualas	11	2.9
Pagayawan	15	4.0
Saguiaran	10	2.7

Sultan Gumander	6	1.6
Tagoloan II	10	2.7
Tamparan	12	3.2
Tugaya	8	2.1
Taraka	12	3.2
Tubaran	13	3.4
Wao	5	1.3
Total	377	100.0

Most of the *rido* events happened in 2004 (86 cases), 1994 (46 cases), 2002 (36 cases and 2003 (33 cases). The national and local election was held on May 2004 and apparently contributed to the rising number of *rido* cases that year.

Table 3 – Year *Rido* Started

Year rido started	Frequency	Percent
1994	46	12.2
1995	25	6.6
1996	25	6.6
1997	25	6.6
1998	30	8.0
1999	16	4.2
2000	23	6.1
2001	32	8.5
2002	36	9.5
2003	33	8.8
2004	86	22.8
Total	377	100.0

Causes of *Rido*

The six major causes of *rido*, as found by this study, were politics (52 cases) land disputes (45 cases) pride/*maratabat* (28 cases) retaliation (27 cases) accident (26 cases) and drug related (25 cases).

According to some key informants and the participants in the validation seminar, the number of *rido* created by political rivalry significantly increased when the Barangays were given IRA (Internal Revenue Allotment) by virtue of the Local Government Law. Prior to the granting of IRA, the Barangay folks were even refusing to be elected as Barangay Officials. Today, they say, brothers and cousins are fighting for these elective posts and even going to the extent of killing their own relatives on grounds that considerable amount of money is available for use there at their discretion.

In the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), to which Lanao del Sur and Marawi City are component parts, elections are theoretically held every year: (1). the national and local election from President, Vice President, senators, congressmen, governors and mayors; (2). the election for Barangay Officials, (3). the election for ARMM Governor, Vice Governor and Assemblymen, and (4). the local election again for congressmen, provincial and municipal officials as their terms were good for three years. One can just imagine the number of conflicts created by these “democratic exercises.” When not properly addressed, most of the conflicts they create eventually escalate to a full-blown *rido* and deaths for many Moros.

The Meranaos have their own concept of land ownership heavily influenced by Islam. For this reason, many land owners do not bother to title their land under Philippine laws. As the old folks pass away and the new generation inherits the land, disputes over ownership and boundaries became a constant problem. There are even cases that an educated member of the family or clan titled their communal land to himself alone and, therefore, creates succeeding conflict among relatives and their offspring. The conflict between the Meranao concept of land ownership and that of the Philippine government “legal system” has been the second major cause of conflict and *rido* in the province.

Affront to *maratabat* as a cause for *rido* may range from unintended verbal insult, perceived disrespect, slight injury and even accident. The assessment whether *maratabat* was touched lies entirely on the evaluation of the individual, his family or kinsmen.

The drug problem is sometimes not acknowledged by political leaders. But it is a public knowledge that some Meranaos have become rich from this illegal business and that the number of young people being addicted to it is rising. Some of the Field Researchers first labeled the cause of *rido* as “illegal business” but when re-checked, they admitted that it is drug-related.

Potential drug-related *rido* cannot be mediated by the traditional, religious and political leaders, friends or relatives because the conflicting parties are hiding the facts of their conflict. Facts are usually known after the conflict has already developed into a full-blown *rido* “war” or when one of the conflicting parties dies. The reported cases under this category were non-payment of debt, non-delivery of paid merchandise, robbing the business partner, killing under the influence of drugs and kidnapping to force delinquent partners to pay or to force a “pusher” to change “supplier.”

Retaliation as a reported cause of *rido* simply indicates that 27 out of the 377 identified *rido* cases happened earlier or prior to 1994. The revenge took place within the time frame of this study (1994-2004) and was, therefore, listed as separate *rido* in the enumeration.

Table 4 – Causes of *Rido*

Causes of <i>Rido</i>	Frequency	Percent
Accident	26	6.9
Accusation	22	5.8
Business	8	2.1
Crime Against Women	24	6.4
Drug Related	25	6.6
Extortion	2	.5
Family Feud	8	2.1
Gambling	9	2.4
Grudge	19	5.0
Kidnapping	5	1.3
Land Dispute	45	11.9
Misconduct	11	2.9

Money Matter	22	5.8
Murder	19	5.0
Politics	52	13.8
Pride	29	7.7
Retaliation	27	7.2
Robbery	18	4.8
Trespassing	5	1.3
Carnapping	1	.3
Total	377	100.0

A total of 798 people died in these 377 cases of *rido*, 104 injured, but only 8 were imprisoned out of the 82 cases filed in court (refer to Tables 5, 7 and 8). Only 64 out of the 377 *rido* cases were settled, 35 became inactive, 10 were suspended, while the rest remain active.

It can be inferred from these figures that the majority of the Meranao (78%) do not report to the government authorities the deaths of their relatives from *rido*. They prefer to place the “law” in their own hands for two reasons: (1.) the aggrieved families who filed cases in court were viewed as “weak and coward” by the society and (2.) they do not subscribe to penalties prescribed by Philippine criminal laws on cases of murder and homicide.

In an interview, one Public Prosecutor (Fiscal) opined that some Meranao only file their case in government courts just to feel that the government is on their side. The filing of the case will also prevent the aggressor from roaming around with his firearm and will help make him easy to find. The others do not file their case, according to the Fiscal, due to the long and tedious process, remoteness from the court and huge expenses required to pursue the case.

Table 5. Number of persons killed

Number of persons killed	Frequency	Percent
1	232	61.5
2	72	19.1
3	23	6.1
4	20	5.3
5	6	1.6
6	5	1.3
7	4	1.1
8	3	.8
9	1	.3
10	1	.3
11	2	.5
12	2	.5
13	2	.5
14	2	.5
17	1	.3
25	1	.3
Total	377	99.7

Table 6. Number of Casualties by Municipality

Municipality	Frequency	Percent
Marawi City	20	2.5
Bubong	6	.75
Buadi-Puso Buntong	8	1.0
Bumbaran	5	.62
Butig	69	8.64
Balindong	16	2.0
Bacolod-Kalawi	11	1.4
Balabagan	62	7.76
Binidayan	24	3.0
Bayang	7	.87
Ditsaan-Ramain	5	.62
Dumalondong	21	2.63

Ganassi	18	2.25
Kapai	13	1.62
Kalanogas	29	3.63
Kapatagan	6	.75
Lumba-Bayabao	5	.62
Lumbac-a Unayan	7	.87
Lumbayanague	12	1.5
Lumbatan	14	1.75
Masiu	19	2.38
Mulondo	14	1.75
Maguing	19	2.38
Marantao	32	4.0
Madalum	37	4.63
Madamba	18	2.25
Marogong	8	1.0
Malabang	24	3.0
Poona Bayabao	30	3.75
Piagapo	10	1.25
Pualas	31	3.88
Pagayawan	38	4.76
Saguiaran	29	3.63
Sultan Gumander	11	1.4
Tagoloan II	14	1.75
Tamparan	29	3.63
Tugaya	8	1.0
Taraka	26	3.25
Tubaran	20	2.5
Wao	5	.62
Total	798	

Table 7. Number of Persons injured

Number of persons injured	Frequency	Percent
1	24	6.4
2	13	3.4
3	11	2.9
4	4	1.1
5	1	.3
None	324	85.9
Total	377	100.0

Table 8 – Number of Persons Imprisoned

Number of persons imprisoned	Frequency	Percent
1	8	2.1
None	369	97.9
Total	377	100.0

Part II. Findings on the 200 cases studied

Socio-Demographic Profile of the Assailants

The average age of the *rido* assailant was 36 years old. The data also showed that some of the assailants were too young (13 years old) and too old (73 years old) for “the act.” Three assailants were aged 10-15, while seven assailants were aged 58 and above. Only one woman (a wife that retaliated for the death of her husband) was identified among the 200 assailants.

Table 9. Assailant Age

	Frequent	Percent
10-15	3	1.5
16-21	14	7.0
22-27	33	16.5
28-33	43	21.5
34-39	38	19.0
40-45	30	15.0
46-51	17	8.5
52-57	15	7.5
58 and above	7	3.5
Total	200	100.0

Most of the assailants obtained grades or graduates in high school and college (Table 11). Majority of them were married with children ranging from 1 to 15 and self-employed (Tables 10 and 12). Around forty seven percent of the assailants have resided in the city. At least 44 out of the 200 assailants were identified with some vices like drug use, alcoholism and that 35 of them were having other *rido* (Tables 13, 14 and 15).

Table 10. Assailant's Marital Status

	Frequent	Percent
Married	161	80.5
Single	33	16.5
Window/widower	6	3.0
Total	200	100.0

Table 11. Assailant's Educational Attainment

	Frequency	Percent
Eastern (Arabic) Education	5	2.0
Masters Degree	1	.4
Some College - College Degree	34	13.7
Some HS - HS grad.	65	26.1
Some Elem. -Elem. grad.	56	22.5
Uneducated	39	15.7
Total	200	80.3

Table 12. Assailant's occupation

	Frequency	Percent
Gov't Employee	32	16.0
Private Employee	10	5.0
Self-Employed	106	53.0
Unemployed	52	26.0
Total	200	100.0

Table 13. Assailant have resided in the city

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	93	46.5
No	107	53.5
Total	200	100.0

Table 14. Other info. on the assailant

	Frequency	Percent
Has vices	44	22.0
A Criminal	2	1.0
Mentally III	2	1.0
None	152	76.0
Total	200	100.0

Table 15. Assailant Has Other Rido

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	35	17.5
No	165	82.5
Total	200	100.0

The Victims

The victims' average age was 37 years old. Some of the young victims were actually subjects of vehicular accident but respondents also considered their cases as part of *rido* when these were not resolved immediately. Eleven of the victims were women while the remaining 189 were men.

In the culture of the Meranaos, women and children are not appropriate targets for retaliation. That unwritten understanding in *rido* engagements seems to be eroding as found by this study. Though some of the children and women victims died from accidents, a closer look at the characteristics of some of those who "intentionally" victimized children and women, revealed that they did the act on different grounds like rape, accusation, robbery, and jealousy but most importantly, some of these assailants were found to be drug users.

The victim number of children and occupation closely resemble that of the assailant. Slight differences were observed in their education, marital status, and experience in residing in cities, their vices and other *rido*. Table 16 below indicates these differences.

Table 16. Comparative Profile of the Assailants and Victims

	Assailants	Victims	Difference
Education			
Eastern/Arabic	5	2	3
Masters Degree	1		1
Some College/College Graduate	34	37	3

Some High School/ H.S. Graduate	65	56	9
Some Elementary/Elementary Graduate	56	62	6
No Schooling	39	43	-4
Marital Status			
Married	161	154	7
Single	33	44	-11
Widower/Separated			
Number of children			
0 – 3	76	61	5
4 – 7	67	68	-1
8 – 11	17	7	10
12 – 15	1	3	-2
16 – Above		1	1
Occupation			
Government Employee	32	30	2
Private Employee	10	8	2
Self-Employed	106	105	1
Unemployed	52	57	-5
Have Resided in the City?			
Yes	93	81	12
No	107	119	-12
Other Information			
Has Vices	44	25	19
Criminal	2	1	1
Mentally III	2		2
No other Information	152	174	-22
Have Other <i>Rido</i> ?			
Yes	35	26	9
No	165	174	-9

It can be discerned from this comparison that the assailants were more educated and possibly affluent as indicated by their experiences in city life. They seemed to be used to “having *rido*” and indulge in vices, which Islam and other religions prohibit.

That the educated and economically well-off were the ones indulging in *rido* may be a disturbing finding. This phenomenon can only be explained by the Meranao concept of *maratabat*. As perceived by some Meranaos and Mednick (1964), *maratabat* has something to do with “status and rank sensitivity.” As the wealth and education of a Meranao increases, his notion of his *maratabat* also increases. Personal incidents which a Meranao regarded as non-offensive when he was poor or uneducated may change as he travels upward in the social ladder of the society.

Consequences of *Rido* on the Family, Clan and the Community

When a family member kills someone accidentally or otherwise, the other immediate members of his family automatically become targets for retaliation and react to the situation invariably. The majority prefers to stay away from the conflict by changing residence. This is one of the reasons why every densely populated area of the country has a “pocket” of Meranao residents. The others prepare for any eventuality while a considerable number make their moves for negotiation and settlement. Those equally related to the conflicting parties said that they were not affected, while a quarter of the respondents claimed that their economic activities were seriously affected.

Table 17. Consequences of *Rido* on the Assailant’s Family

	Frequency	Percent
Out-migration	63	31.5
Neutral Due to Equal Relation to Conflicting Parties (<i>Sokhodan</i>)	36	18.0
Preparing Defense for Possible Attack	20	10.0
Preparing for Settlement	35	17.5

Provide Support to Family Member in Trouble	21	10.5
Economic Activities Seriously Affected	25	12.5
Total	200	100.0

Table 18. Consequences of *Rido* on the Clan of the Assailant

	Frequency	Percent
Provide Support to Relative in Trouble	43	21.5
Neutral Due to Equal Relation to Conflicting Parties (Sokhodan)	28	14.0
Initiating Settlement	27	13.5
Limited Movements	32	16.0
Out-migration	43	21.5
Economic activities affected	27	13.5
Total	200	100.0

Table 19. Consequences of *Rido* on the Community

	Frequent	Percent
Not Affected Due to Distant Relation to Conflicting Parties and not target for retaliation	53	26.5
Neutral Due to Equal Relation to Conflicting Parties (Sokhodan)	56	28.0
Trying to help in the settlement	26	13.0
Alarmed	65	32.5
Total	200	100.0

Table 20. Comparative Figures on Consequences of *Rido* on the Family, Clan and Community

Consequences	Family		Clan		Community	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Out-Migration	63	31.5	43	21.5		
Sokhodan	36	18	28	14	56	28

Preparing Defense	20	10				
Preparing Settlement	35	17.5	27	13.5	26	13
Support Family Member/ Relative in Trouble	21	10.5	43	21.5		
Economic Activities Affected	25	12.5	27	13.5		
Limited Movements			32	16		
Alarmed/Not Affected					118	59
Total	200	100	200	100	200	100

In comparing Tables 18, 19 and 20, it is apparent that a larger percentage of close relatives have been affected and forced or voluntarily leave their hometown (32%) and only (22%) of distant relatives in the clan chose to move out. In the community level, majority (59%) claimed that they were not affected.

It is also apparent in the Comparative Table that only the immediate family members of the assailant prepared for defense. Relatives who helped in initiating settlement tended to decrease from family to clan, but the moral support to family member or relative in trouble increased.

Table 21. Moves Undertaken by Relatives of Assailant When a Conflict Becomes a Full-blown *Rido*

	Frequency	Percent
Buy more firearms	68	34.0
Neutral (related to both sides)	23	11.5
Initiating settlement	58	29.0
Migrated to other places	51	25.5
Total	200	100.0

Municipalities, Families or Individuals More Prone to *Rido*

Some respondents named more than one municipality when asked about the municipalities more prone to *rido*. Table 22 below shows that twenty-five (25) municipalities were identified by respondents as more prone to *rido*. Of these municipalities, Butig,

Masiu, Pualas, Bayang and Lumbayanague were at the apex of the list with frequencies ranging from 21 to 38.

Table 22. Places in Lanao more prone to *rido*

	Frequency	Percent
Bumbaran	1	.4
Butig	38	15.3
Bacolod-Kalawi	12	4.8
Balabagan	8	3.2
Binidayan	1	.4
Bayang	25	10.0
Dumalundong	1	.4
Ganassi	1	.4
Kapai	3	1.2
Kalanogas	12	4.8
Lumba-Bayabao	2	.8
Lumbayanague	21	8.4
Lumbatan	15	6.0
Masiu	32	12.9
Maguing	7	2.8
Marantao	5	2.0
Madamba	1	.4
Marogong	9	3.6
Malabang	7	2.8
Pualas	27	10.8
Pagayawan	1	.4
Saguiaran	1	.4
Sultan Gumander	6	2.4
Tugaya	7	2.8
Tubaran	6	2.4
Total	249	100.0

When asked about the places of individuals with more than one *rido*, respondents identified twenty (20) municipalities. Two municipalities (Masiu and Butig) were at the top with frequencies of 32 and 38, respectively. The other municipalities identified had frequencies from 1 to 7.

Table 23. Places with Individuals Having More Than One *Rido*

	Frequency	Percent
Marawi City	2	.8
Butig	7	2.8
Bacolod-Kalawi	2	.8
Balabagan	1	.4
Binidayan	1	.4
Bayang	7	2.8
Lumba-Bayabao	1	.4
Lumbayanague	3	1.2
Lumbatan	3	1.2
Masiu	13	5.2
Mulondo	2	.8
Maguing	1	.4
Marantao	3	1.2
Marogong	3	1.2
Malabang	3	1.2
Pualas	3	1.2
Pagayawan	1	.4
Sultan Gumander	2	.8
Tugaya	1	.4
Tubaran	1	.4
Total	60	24.1

When asked about the names of the individuals and/or families with more than one *rido*, the respondents were very reluctant to name names. At any rate, they named 32 families and/or individuals in 18 localities (17 municipalities and Marawi City) having more than one *rido*.

It must be noted, however, that the responses to these three questions (municipalities more prone to *rido*, places with individuals having more than one *rido* and names of individuals/families with more than one *rido*) are highly "opinionated." It is possible that the respondents excluded their own municipalities and relatives for reasons only known to them. As noted by this researcher, no municipality was found to have less than five (5) cases of *rido*. It seems logical to

theorize that in every municipality of the province, a researcher can find a family with more than one involvement in *rido*.

The rising number of individuals or families with more than one *rido* is one of the “offshoot” of the recent rebellion (1970 to present) of the Moros against the Philippine government. Some young men who joined the rebellion in the 1970’s and recently and who survived in the battles eventually gained a name by having become “Commanders” or by having claimed to have killed a number of the enemy. These men were considered local heroes of their family clan and community. To maintain their status they keep a sizeable amount of firearms and ammunition.

These are the men usually summoned by relatives in times of conflict with other family, clan or even community. Because big families have members of this type of men, it is not surprising to hear number of casualties when two big families clash with each other especially during election.

Personalities Involved in Settling *Rido*

The respondents were asked if there were individuals who tried to mediate/resolve the *rido* conflict, the status of these mediators in their communities, their reasons for interceding, whether other mediators followed when the first mediator failed and the reason why no one tried to resolve the conflict. These questions were addressed to the respondents when the *rido* was still at the stage of conflict (no death yet) and when the conflict became a full-blown *rido*. Table 24 shows the responses to these questions.

Table 24. Comparison of Mediators Profile

	Still at stage of Conflict	Full Blown <i>Rido</i>
Are there Individuals who Tried to Settle the <i>Rido</i> ?		
Yes	51	115
No	117	85
Don't know	32	

Mediator Status in the Community.		
Educator	2	14
Politician	27	62
Religious Leader	3	10
Traditional Leader	19	49
Military/PNP		2
No answer		63
Special Reason of the Mediator to Resolve the <i>Rido</i> .		
To Stop the Feud	8	60
For Peace and Order	15	45
Related to both Parties (Sokodan)	18	14
Political Reason	8	54
No answer	2	
If failed, are there other Mediators who Interceded?		
Yes	2	44
No	49	156
Reason why no Mediator tried to Resolve the Conflict.		
Political Reason	26	
Wanted Revenge	28	
Big Families Involved	38	21
Parties Involved are Close Relatives	20	6
No Common Mediator (that can be trusted by both side)	11	
Aggressor Did Not Cooperate		8
Both Parties Did Not Cooperate		34
The Case is in Court		58
Dormant/Inactive <i>Rido</i>		29
No Answer	77	

It can be surmised from Table 24 that the mediators come to the scene of conflict settlement when the conflict becomes a full-blown *rido*. Most of the mediators were politicians, traditional leaders,

educators and religious leaders. In the researcher's experience, however, no *rido* have been settled only by one person. The procedure, rather, was that the lead mediator invited other people or leaders to join him. The lead person was usually acknowledged due to his social status, influence and the monetary contribution he can offer or provide in the negotiation process.

With regards to the mediator's reason for interceding, the human instinct to save lives as also enjoined by Islam ranked first. This is immediately followed by political reason; love for peace and blood relations with both conflicting parties.

Methods Employed in Settling *Rido*

Out of the 200 cases studied, 44 were settled. The year 2004 registered the highest number of settled *rido* (9) but at the same time recorded the highest number of *rido* cases or incidences. Amicable settlement was pursued by the mediators through the *igma ago taritib*, payment of blood money and convincing the aggressor family to imprison the culprit. Placing the assailant in prison softened the stand of the aggrieved family which could eventually lead to the beginning of negotiation/mediation.

With the exception of imprisonment, the other settlement procedures were interrelated. All negotiations in the Meranao society use the *igma* and *taritib* as an approach and process for reaching an agreement to pay for the blood money. To justify the payment of blood money, the negotiator tries to establish the fact that the killing was an accident or an act of self-defense. Otherwise, the Islamic and Meranao rule for purposive killing (murder) is *kitas* or killing the assailant with the permission of his family and relatives.

In the settlement, the aggressor family/clan on one hand is forced to raise the blood money or a combination of blood money and imprisonment of the assailant if demanded. The latter is an example of how the traditional and government procedures in imposing penalty can be combined. On the other hand, the victim's family or clan is forced to accept the blood money and other terms imposed by the mediator, like the cessation of hostility or retaliation.

It is interesting to note that even when the conflicting parties have signed a covenant, the details of the terms are kept secret. What can be seen clearly in the covenant are the promises to cease hostilities, bury their differences, and strengthen their blood relationship and to respect the terms of their “unwritten” agreement (refer to appendix A for the sample). Inter-marriage of children as a means of completely “sealing” the *rido* is not mentioned by the respondents. This was a practice in the past that settled celebrated *rido* cases in Lanao in the 1950’s up to 1980’s. The inter-marriage can be in two ways: (1.) the son of the assailant marrying the daughter of the victim or vice versa, and (2.) double marriage with both parties offering male and female members of the family to be married to counterparts in the other party.

When this observation was presented to the participants of the validation seminar, they opined that inter-marriage as means of settling *rido* continues. However, the involved families no longer announce or acknowledge that purpose for fear of rekindling forgotten anger. This reminds the writer of the concept of “public secret” whereby the members of a society knows that a certain practice is going on but they do not tell outsiders.

Conditions/Processes that Make *Rido* Active, Inactive, Settled or Lead to its Suspension

Theoretically a *rido* can only be suspended for weeks or months upon the intercession of the community leaders or other recognized leaders like the Mayor, Governor or Congressman. When the agreed time of “ceasefire” lapses without a settlement the *rido* becomes re-activated and the aggrieved party starts to hunt his enemies. There were cases known to this researcher of *rido* that remained “dormant or inactive.” They could not be called suspended as there were no agreements to cease hostilities. In these cases, both parties did not harm their opponents because:

- Both sides suffered casualties and were at least of equal social rank.

- The aggrieved party is less influential, poor, and with fewer firearms. Retaliating in this case will only do more harm to the family or clan. Sometimes, they invoke the teaching of forgiveness as a means of saving face.
- When the aggrieved party or the recognized leader of the family truly loves peace and delegates to the mercy of Allah the appropriate judgment. or some condition like banishing the assailant in the community.

Reasons for Failures to Settle *Rido*

When the conflict became a full-blown *rido*, 44 out of the 200 cases were successfully settled. Later the other mediators who entered the scene were able to settle another 20 cases. For the unsettled cases the following reasons were cited:

- Both parties did not cooperate.
- One or both of the parties in conflict have no recognized leader.
- The amount required for payment of “blood money” was not reached.
- The pride of the aggrieved party was too high and wants to retaliate.
- The aggressors were hard-headed.
- Instigation of a third party for the non-resolution of the *rido* for his or their own advantage (e.g. in politics).
- The mediators were biased.

The process and methods undertaken by the subsequent mediators are similar to the approaches undertaken by their predecessors. They pursue amicable settlement by invoking the *igma ago taritib* and work for the payment of blood money and imprisonment of the assailant when demanded and/or acceptable to the aggrieved party.

Mediation in Meranao society is purely voluntary in nature. Those who mediate conflicts do it out of concern for the conflicting parties and the community. However, there are also mediators who

enter the scene due to the request of either party or come into the scene due to personal interest.

Conditions and Processes that Lead to Retaliation

As indicated elsewhere in this report, the different mediators settled a total of 64 *rido* cases at different times. But a considerable number of the 200 cases studied claimed more than one life through retaliation and counter retaliations. Those who retaliated included:

Son	5
Nephew	1
Cousin	4
Brother	7
Father	1
Wife	1
Brother-in-Law	1
<i>Total:</i>	20

It is a common knowledge among Meranaos that when retaliation occurs, it is a lot easier to settle the *rido*, especially if the casualties on both sides have equal social standing. In this situation, a *kandori* (thanksgiving feast), usually tendered by the community (if the parties came from the same village), is sufficient to finally close the *rido*.

The circumstances that lead to retaliation include the following:

- ❖ *Kasosongkai, kambobono o mga bae* – Women's quarrel that remind the aggrieved party why they were not able to retaliate.
- ❖ Pride or *maratabat* – The aggrieved party considers *rido* a permanent stain to his/her face (honor) if he is unable to retaliate
- ❖ *Daa a phamamasadan* – when no one intercedes for the resolution of the *rido*.
- ❖ *Kiambabaan* – when the aggrieved family sincerely

believes that they have not been party to the conflict.

- ❖ *Daon so kazabar* - when the value of forgiveness is absent
- ❖ Misinterpretation of Islamic teaching
- ❖ *Kapangondoi* – when somebody encourages the aggrieved party to retaliate.
- ❖ *Miakasilai so rido* – when the victim has nothing to do with the *rido*, is a wrong target victim.
- ❖ *Di pakaataon, di pakanganganinen* – When the aggrieved party feels that the aggressor completely ignores their rights.
- ❖ When the time to retaliate becomes appropriate.
- ❖ When the economic status of the aggrieved party has improved.
- ❖ *Katopo* – retaliation is committed to involve other relatives in the *rido*, contrary to their wishes.
- ❖ Hopelessness, idleness – when an insignificant member of the family decides to retaliate to improve his image and status within the family.

3. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

Summary

This study was aimed at gathering baseline data (a comprehensive list) of existing or continuing *rido* in Lanao del Sur, including Marawi City, in an eleven-year period: inclusively, from 1994 to 2004. Specifically, the study also attempted to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What were the common causes of *rido*?
2. What were the consequences of *rido* on the family, clan and the community?
3. What municipalities, families or individuals were prone to *rido*?
4. Who were the personalities involved in attempts to settle *rido*?

5. What processes and methods were employed to settle *rido*?
6. What were the conditions and processes that made *rido* active, inactive, settled or lead to its suspension?
7. If efforts to settle *rido* failed, what were the processes/methods so far undertaken and the reasons for these failures?
8. If the aggrieved party retaliated, what were the conditions and processes that led to the retaliation?

After the fieldwork, processing and analysis of data and the validation seminar, the study came up with the following findings:

1. A total of 337 *rido* in the Province of Lanao del Sur occurred from 1994 to 2004. Most of these *rido* happened in 1994, 2003 and 2004. A total of 798 people died in these *ridos*, 104 were injured, 82 were filed as cases in court, but only 8 persons involved were imprisoned. More than fifty percent (22 out of the 40 political units of the province) had ten (10) or more than ten *ridos*. Marantao and Butig registered the highest frequency at 26 and 17, respectively. However, the 26 *rido* in Marantao claimed 32 lives, while in Butig 69 were killed.
2. The six major causes of *rido* identified in this study were (1) politics, (2) land dispute, (3) pride and/or *maratabat*, (4) retaliation, (5) accidents, and (6) drugs.
3. The youngest assailant was thirteen years old, while the oldest was seventy-three years of age. Some of them were identified with vices, like drug use and alcoholism, and 35 out of the 200 assailants have other (more than one) *rido*. In addition, these assailants were educated and economically well-off, as indicated by their experiences in city life.
4. The casualties of these *rido* were mostly male, some children and eleven women.
5. The usual consequences of *rido* on the family, clan or community were: (1) transfer of residence, (2) economic dislocation, (3) forced to support the family member in trouble, and (4) involvement in the negotiation to resolve

the conflict.

6. A total of 21 municipalities consistently appeared as more prone to *rido*. Butig, Pualas, Marantao and Balabagan were on the top of the list.
7. The thirty-two individuals and/or families identified with more than one *rido* were mostly connected to clans competing for the political control of 18 municipalities in the province.
8. The personalities who attempted to settle *rido* were mostly politicians, traditional leaders, educators and religious leaders. A Council of Elders that tried to settle *rido* in the municipal, city and provincial levels also existed. Even the Marines under the leadership of General Dolorfino established a Peace and Reconciliation Council in collaboration with the bodies cited.
9. Not a single case of *rido* was settled by the Philippine justice system. Some assailants were imprisoned on their family volition as part of the settlement agreement but not as an act of the state or its authority. All of the *rido* settled went through the *igma* and *taritib* or the traditional way of the Meranao heavily influenced by Islam.
10. *Rido* among Meranaos is either active or inactive. It can only be suspended for a specified time upon the intercession of influential and trustworthy mediators. *Rido* can be inactive when the casualty on both parties are of equal number or social standing, when the aggrieved party is economically not ready for retaliation and when the aggrieved family delegate to the mercy of Allah the appropriate judgement but with a condition like banishment of the assailant from the community.
11. Aside from the non-cooperation of the parties involved in the *rido*, the reasons for its non-resolution includes problem on raising the amount for blood-money, varying interpretation of *maratabat*, plan to retaliate, and when one or both of the parties have no recognized leader who can represent the family or clan in the negotiation and serve as guarantor that their members will respect the settlement agreement.

12. The factors and conditions that lead to retaliation centers on the parties' concept of *maratabat*, their economic status and absence of mediators.

Conclusion

The foregoing finding gleaned by the study lead the researcher to draw the following conclusions:

1. The study confirmed that indeed Lanao del Sur is saturated with *rido* caused by various circumstances like politics, land disputes, *maratabat*, accident, drugs and many more. These causes are aggravated by frequent elections, the proliferation of loose firearms, drug use and the prevailing belief or "value system" that a family or clan must have "robust members" (those who have killed other people) to earn the respect of the society.
2. Along with low economic opportunities in the province, *rido* is one of the "push factors" that encourage Meranao to leave the province and try their luck in other places.
3. The number of *rido* and casualties found by this study suggested that no municipality in the province is free from *rido*. They only differ in number and intensity. Those individuals/families more prone to *rido* have joined the rebel group in the past and earned prestige and status in the process.
4. The transition from the traditional to a legal authority system in Meranao society also changed the mediation role of the traditional leaders. While the traditional leaders dominated that arena in the past, they now play a secondary supportive role to the politicians who have the monetary means to settle *rido*.
5. The indifference of the Meranaos to the Philippine legal authority was exemplified by the fact that majority of the aggrieved party did not report to the authorities the deaths of their relatives due to *rido*. In addition, not a single case of *rido* was solely resolved by the Philippine legal system. Even those imprisoned were so committed at the volition

of the assailant's relatives and not from the action of proper civil authorities.

These observations only indicates that the Meranao *igma* and *taritib* remained the most effective way for resolving *rido*. However, the combination of the traditional ways and the Philippine legal system is possible. This was manifested in the operation of the different Council of Elders in the municipal, city and provincial levels.

6. *Rido* in the Meranao perspective is either active or inactive. It can be suspended for a while upon the intercession of mediators, but becomes active again if a resolution is not reached.
7. The most difficult *rido* to settle is when one party or both have no recognized leader(s) who can be approached by mediators and serve as guarantor that his family or clan members will abide with the settlement agreement.
8. Retaliations, especially in cases of settled *rido*, can be avoided if Meranao society can refrain from reminding the aggrieved party to "erase the dirt on his/her face." This is hard to eradicate in social interaction but it is possible.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are put forward to avoid the devastating effects of *rido*:

1. In Lanao del Sur, it seems that the "long arm of the law" simply does not reach Lanao. The national leadership must monitor the performance of the local government units, especially regarding the proliferation of loose firearms, drug trafficking and criminal acts like murder, homicide, rape and so on. The prevailing notion that only dead persons are apprehended by the military and the police must be changed. It is also an irony that while rewards are being offered and publicized for the arrest of criminals in Luzon and the Visayas, that kind of offer was only made in the case of the Abu Sayyaf.

2. Considering the number of *rido* and the number of people dying from election-related incidents, the Congress of the Philippines must seriously consider synchronizing the election of national and local leaders. If possible, only one election should be held every three years not only in Lanao del Sur but all over the country. Aside from the monetary saving that can be realized, Philippine society can also save money and prolong lives.
3. Since *igma* and *taritib* are the most effective process in resolving conflict, the traditional and religious leaders must be supported in the art of mediation that can be learned from other cultures.
4. On land disputes, the government agencies in-charge of issuing papers on land ownership and rights must devise a scheme to accommodate the Meranao concept of land ownership. Once the policy becomes clear, the next move is to issue documentations that “these and that land” belong to such and such individuals or families.
5. The Meranao concept of *maratabat* must be transformed from that of being merely “saving face, honor, dignity, prestige, status, etc” to the other aspects of social living. In the perspective of this researcher, *maratabat* is usually invoked in the negative manner. If the death of a relative can only be compensated by killing a member of the aggressor family, the cycle of violence may never end.

But *maratabat* can also be invoked in a positive manner. If the Malaysians or the Japanese are known for industriousness and other positive values, the concept of *maratabat* can be invoked to exceed the Malaysian and Japanese record. This is the role, which can be played by the Eastern and Western schools, NGO's, PO's and other government agencies in reorienting their values education courses and peace and development programs.

These recommendations may irritate some politicians and other government officials, but the purpose of research is to come closer to the truth. Whether it hurts or not, recommendations like these must be made to face the real problems confronting a society.

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