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ENDURING *BAWGBUG* OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS OF THE SULTANATE OF SULU

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Tausug have 1000 years *adat* and further enriched by Islam in the middle of the 13th century. Their greatest political contribution was the establishment of the Sultanate of Sulu or the *Sultaniyyah sin Lupa Sug* in 1450 A.D. The era of the sultanate was the golden age all over Sulu. This was the era the sultanate's founding fathers developed their *padduman* or political ideology as reflected in the Tausug concept of state known as *hula-bangsa-agama*. This concept however is something shrouded from the minds of the modern Tausug and is no longer actively advocated despite the fact the concept of *hula-bangsa-agama* is the enduring *bawgbug* (principles) of the Tausug. *Sultaniyyah sin Lupa Sug* can be likened to a building. The foundation was destroyed but its materials are still intact.

The history of the *sultaniyyah* and the rise of the Bangsasug have always been connected to Islam and the enduring *bawgbug* of the sultanate's founding fathers is the key to the Bangsasug renaissance. The objective of this paper is to explore the importance of *bawgbug* to nation-building and political reform of Sulu.

This study is based on historical records, ancient narratives, interview and political analysis.

II. BANGSASUG RENAISSANCE

Bangsasug renaissance is a social concept and approach to awaken the consciousness of the masses through renewal of commitment to *hula-bangsa-agama* and the strengthening of national band reuniting the diverse ethnic groups in the Sulu archipelago into a nation. The principal approach is to enlist the masses into a social movement whereby they will learn and expose to challenges and issues affecting the stagnation of the Tausug as nation. There are four thrusts necessary to nurture the Bangsasug renaissance: 1). Reeducation – addressing the miseducation of the youth especially on history and politics 2). Reorientation – addressing the political leaders on the enduring *bawgbug* of the *kamaasan*, the Tausug culture and society 3). Political socialization – addressing the ignorance of the masses and 4). Returning to Islam – inviting and winning back the people to the basic teachings of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*.

Cultural revival is the essence of renaissance. This is to examine, utilize and develop the existing Tausug epistemology. Ziauddin Sardar described epistemology “as an expression of a world-view which permeates to all aspects of individual, societal and civilizational behavior. Without a distinct epistemology, a distinct civilization is impossible. It is vital because it is the major operator which transforms the vision of world-view into reality. Failure to activate epistemology there shall be little hope of Muslim civilization in the future.” (Ziauddin Sardar, 1998: 102)

In other words, the Bangsasug renaissance requires the utilization of the Tausug epistemology useful for nation building. Tausug leaders and scholars should look into these indigenous concepts of *banuwa*, *parinta*, *pamarinta*, *pagmilik*, *pagnakura*, *pagdadungan*, *sara*, *padduman*, *agama*, *kaadilan*, *pakaradjaan*, *pangahagad*, *tu'lus-ikhlas*, *pagsalassay*, *tukmati*, *hangla*, *pagtaayun*, *pananggungan*, *pagsawi*, *pagdangin*, *pagsangsa*, *siril ma'sun*, *martabat*, *amanat*, *pagtayakkup*, *kasambuhan*, *tataisan*, *mayran-majilis*, *pagbaktul*, *pag-ayura*, *paghamparu*, *pagmumus*, *paghambuuk*, *kagawgut*, *kasilasa*, *pagtulung-tabang*, *gausbawgbug*, *papanaw*, *pagtaat*, *bilma'rup*, *pangandul*, *kamahardikaan*, *katumpat*, *kahanungan*, *pamaratsaya*, *kalimayahan*, *kusug-kiyaun*, *buddi*, *kawasa*, *kusug*, *panali*, *pangita*, *angan-angan*, *kalagihan*, *kagunahan*, *pagparuli*, *karayawan*, *kahatulan*, *hanunut*, *kaagi*, *diyaraut*, *panara*, *parsugpatan*, *palindung*, *kabangsahan*, *hula*, *pag-inumpung*, *pangalta*, *kahalan*, *matilag*, *kakayaan*, *maksud*, *katiblukan*, *katangkuran*, *kabaya*, *parakala*, *kabansagan*, *katatas*, *kamaruwan*, *hambara'ayat*, *pipul*, *pag-agsu*, *kawajiban*, etc. (See the glossary on the last page)

Ziauddin Sardar of Malaysia recommended 185 Qur'anic words for deep studies by the Muslim intellectuals. He said the use of those words should be retained in order to safeguard the originality of their meanings. They should not be translated into other languages because they already formed the foundation of Islamic epistemology. The study and development of Islamic epistemology is always necessary to make the Muslim society advanced and updated with the modern trend. Islamic epistemology is a seed that produces future development. Islamic epistemologies are as follows: *din*, *amanat*, *ibadah*, *khilafa*, *shar'iyah*, *iman*, *ihsan*, *taqwa*, *sabar*, *salah*, *zakat*, *zikr*, *tawba*, *salam*, *takhara*, *dawla*, *mulk*, *Sunnah*, *ta'at*, *amir*, *ittihad*, *i'tiqad*, *maslaha*, *ummah*, *sultan*, *hudud*, *qasas*, *ta'zir*, *hikma*, *khalifa*, *siratal mustaqim*, *adlun*, *zulmun*, *nurun*, *tawhid*, *aqida*, *fiqh*, *muamalat*, *imam*, *adab*, *khusu*, *wazir*, *millat*, *shahada*, *sadaqa*, *ikhlas*, *tafsil*, *mustad'afin*, *kibr*, *qadar*, *qada*, *yawmal hisab*, *yawmal qiyama*, *rabb*, *alam*, *haqq*, *ayat*, *furqan*, *bayyinat*, *munkar*, *ma'rufa*, *fisq*, *jihad*, *huda*, *balagh*, *riya*, *halal*, *haram*, *mubah*, *makru*, *qist*, *batil*, *fardh*, *wajib*, *shirk*, *hasad*, *shayatin*, *iblis*, *ilahun*, *azab*, *kufr*, etc. (See the glossary on the last page)

III. ADAT-CENTRIC TO ISLAMIC-CENTRIC

Adat is the way of life of the Tausug. It is the uniting factor of society and a form of social control that regulates the behavior and action of the people. *Adat* is a set of standards by which the people view the world. The important function of *adat* is giving guidance and uniting the society. It is the basis of the Bangsasug to exercise their right to self-determination. It is the people's distinct symbol for nationhood.

Adat is also the integrating factor that holds the society together. It persists and continues to further enrich itself with the teachings of Islam. Nation whose *adat* is weak will surely perish. *Adat* will always become stronger as the people continually socialize themselves into it. Family education, *masjid*, *madrassa*, schools are effective instruments for socialization of people to *adat*.

From the Tausug point of view, *adat* refers to the customary practices of the Muslims in Mindanao and Sulu, which include belief, morality, ethics, arts,

laws and government, which have been practiced and developed for a long period of time and become the ideology of the society. *Adat* is an integrating factor as the people continue to preserve and transmit it from generation to generation.

Bahasa (language) is the greatest symbol of *adat*. It gives meaning to the essence of *adat*; it is the medium by which the people understand each other. *Sinug* is an example of the *bahasa*. It was the language of the ruling elites and owing to its dominant use it became the *lingua franca* of most diverse ethnic groups under the Sultanate of Sulu. Until to this day this *bahasa* is still preserved and used as medium either in public speech or literary. A Bangingi proverb says: “*Bang alungay na bahasa alungay na bangsa.*” “Once language is dead, it affects the nation.”

Under the *Shari’ah*, *adat* is considered a source of law although inferior to *ijma* (consensus) but superior to *qiyas* (analogical reasoning). It is considered silent *ijma* of the community. Not all customs of the *jahiliyyah* period were abrogated by the Qur’an. For instance, it was the custom of the Arabs before Islamic period to impose the following as forms of punishment: stoning to death, cutting off the hands of the thieves, flogging and payment of *diyat* or blood money. (Abdurahman I. Doi, 1984:88)

We know that in any society, which has no Prophet or away from the center of civilization, had always the tendency to develop its own culture. The Bangsasug are one of the nations, which have no Prophet coming from themselves. For thousand years, they were isolated and had no direct access to the teachings of the Prophets before. The only civilization, which penetrated the Bangsasug society were the Indian and the Chinese culture. There is no record in which the Bangsasug people came under the influence of the Roman or the Persian civilization.

The evolution of the Bangsasug *adat* 500 years before Islam reached Sulu, evolved along the influence of the Indian and the Chinese cultures. This was due to its earliest contact with neighboring societies in the Malay world. Indian influence filtered first into the Malay world in the 7th century then into Sulu.

In Indonesia, practically all people had been Indianized. The glaring evidence of the Indian influence was the rise of the Sri-Vijaya Empire in early 7th century, then followed by the Madjapahit Empire in the 14th century. These two Empires became the instrument for the spread of the Hindu and Buddhist ideology across the sprawling islands of Southeast Asia. Indeed, the whole Sulu archipelago (covering the whole Philippines) had once become the province of the Sri-Vijaya Empire. Our ancient social structure where the *rajah*, *pandita* or the *datu* as being the elites of the society, was actually the remnant of the Indian influence.

In the Bangsasug homeland, Indian influence was very much dominant in political organization and religious belief. At that time the *rajahs* were the ruling elites. They were the sovereign leaders of each village. They also functioned as chief of the religious ceremonies. They formulated and imposed laws upon the people.

Guru played also vital role in the overall guidance and education of the society. They were the teachers and advisers of the *rajahs*. Under Indian culture, the people revere their leaders by paying *bakti* or special homage to them. This

practice is still observed by the Muslims in Mindanao and Sulu. During ancient India, the *sudra* (lower caste people) was always destined to serve or make *bakti* to the *Brahman* or the upper caste people. The *Brahman* were always the leaders and guide of the society.

Similarly, the *kadatuan* in Mindanao and Sulu were always held as leaders by the people. Because at that time only the *kadatuan* had the access to learning and knowledge of *adat*. Most people were ignorant of the traditional laws and various ceremonies. Whereas the families of the *kadatuan* always maintained the teachings of the *adat* to their children.

The *kadatuan* before were actually the forerunners in the long evolution of *adat*. Their behaviors, practices, ethics, morality and policies had made up the development of *adat*. The *datus* had both created and imported *adat* and later became the cultural pattern of the succeeding generation. *Adat* as embedded means the formation of *adat* was the direct impact of the vision of the succeeding *datus* who ruled from generation to generation. Then, in the course of historical development *adat* became standards and spread nationwide.

Adat as imported is referred to adaptation of some norms and values of other societies. *Panulak bala*, prayer celebration for the dead and governance of the *maharajah* are all Indian origin, which then imported into our society. Likewise, today, we can see foreign values and norms being imported by the modern Muslim elites. The use of Western dress by the bride and the groom during the marriage ceremony, the so called “sponsors” who are invited to grace the occasion and even the adoption of English language in our legal and academic transactions are among the examples of imported values which now gradually reinforces if not endangering the present day *adat* of the Tausug.

In the past, however, with the introduction of Islam in 1250 A.D. (circa), *adat* underwent transformation from Indian centric or traditional centric to Islamic. This was the era *adat* began under the influence of Islam. Elements of un-Islamic practices in *adat* were gradually replaced or Islamized or re-directed to the spirit of Islam. The greatest triumph of Islam was the dissipation of the root of *shirk* or polytheism from the *adat* of the Bangsasug. Only some people who are slaves of the misguided *jinn*s still hold on to the old superstitious belief.

Elements of Adat

Adat and constitution are the basis of the ideology of the state hence the people should be socialized into it. Without effective political socialization, *adat* will decline and finally cause disunity among the people which in turn destroys the nation, society and country. There are seven elements of *adat* of the Bangsasug:

1. *Pangahagad* (belief system). The fundamental belief of the Tausug is based on *Arkanud Din* or Pillars of Religion composed of *Iman, Islam, Tawhid and Ma'rifat*. These pillars of religion are the established pattern of the Muslim thought which every Tausug is supposed to learn and follow as guide in the conduct of life.
2. *Pangaddatan* (values). The ethical values of the Tausug are based on their indigenous concepts such as *kasilasa, kasipug, kamura, kahanunut, kalanu, kapatibaba, kaluman, kapatag, kalut, kati'but, kaisug, kabuga, katatas,*

kahatul, katawkasi, janji, pangandul, kabuntul, pagtulung-tabang and buddi. The observance of *pangaddatan* keeps principles closer to practice. Corruption in governance is the result of non-observance of *pangaddatan*.

3. *Diwan* or *Sara Adat* (traditional laws). This covers the political laws of the sultanate, *sara pagtiyaun* (marriage laws), *pagmustahak* (property ownership), *sara tungbas* (remedial laws), and *hukuman aturan* (court procedure).
4. *Manis* (arts and artifacts). *Manis* is divided into three categories such as *ilmu kamaasan* (literary arts), *kalangan* (music), and *bungalima* (artifacts). *The ilmu kamaasan* includes *arkanud din, kissa, katakata* and *tarasul*. *Kalangan* refers to *lugu, kissa, sindil, and ta'ta*. The examples of *bungalima* are *ukkil* (carving), *luhul* (ceiling cloth), *kikitilan* (hanging wall), *panamung sug* (traditional attire), *buras* (rattan décor), *pakukus* (traditional weapons), and *pamulawan* (jewelry).
5. *Banuwa* (leadership practice). Among the leadership practices of the Tausug are the *sirilma'sun* (consultation), *pagtaat* (obedience to the leaders), *paghangla* (delegation of authority), *paghambuuk* (unity), *pag-addat* (respect), *kaadilan* (justice), *kalimayahan* (freedom), *pagtulung-tabang* (help one another), *maslaha* (public interest) *kawajiban* (responsibility), *pananggunganan* (accountability) and *karayawan sin ra'ayat* (public welfare).
6. *Duwa'a* (rituals). The major *duwaa* ceremony of the Tausug are *duwaa kaja, duwaa pataas, Ashura* (prayer in commemoration of the martyrdom of Imam Husayn), *nisfu Sha'ban* (prayer for good health), *aqiqa* (Thanksgiving Day for the newly born child), *pagtammam* (graduation ceremony), *duwaa Salamat* (prayer for peace and mercy of Allah), and *duwaa aruwa* (prayer for the souls of the dead people).
7. *Kissa* (heritage). This refers to the six divisions of the Bangsasug history.

Cultural Change

There are several forces that influenced the cultural change in the Tausug society. These are the natural environment, wars, ideology, man's own family or social structure, culture and technology, which provides comfort to life. But, the most crucial factor is the ideology, which the person learns from his parents during his early childhood growth. From age seven to adolescent is the period where the child forms his *aqida* or worldview or belief system. The Prophet said: "All children are born *fitra* or Muslims but it is their parents that make them either Christians or Jews."

However, the greatest factor that brought about the transformation of the Bangsasug *adat* was the annexation of the Bangsasug homeland to the political geography of the Philippines since 1946. With the imposition of new superstructure upon the Bangsasug homeland, *adat* loosened its influence, particularly when the Sulu Sultanate could no longer wield its sovereignty. Eventually, this transformation overpowered the traditional leaders such as the *panglima*, the *maharajah*, and the whole *kapala* of the *Ruma Bitsara* by the new leaders under the new political arrangement. The decline of the traditional leaders from political scene not only endangers the future of *adat* but at the same time provoked rebellion against the Philippine nation-state.

Social Structure

Social structure is the hierarchical arrangement of the members of the family; each of them has an assigned role to fulfill in order to maintain mutual cooperation and respect. Generally, male assumes the heavy work; female for domestic activity.

Pagbakti represents the vital norm to which every member is ought to observe. Key-decision usually rests on the father or the well-grown son, however, consultation is to be done among the members.

Kamataan or family is the smallest unit of the Tausug social organization. The father acts as the head, bread winner and guide for the whole members. The mother takes care the domestic activities including child-rearing and moral teaching. All children are ought to assist or help in the realization of house activities.

The immediate relatives are known as *liud* (family), which is composed of *usba* and *waris*. *Usba* represents the relatives from the father side, and *waris* for the mother side. Under the Tausug social law, the *usba* has a great role in the upbringing of the child. Any decision concerning the welfare of the ego like marriage and other problems shall always emanate from the *usba*. The *waris* is there only to assist.

IV. Origin of the Sultanate

According to Abul 'Ala Mawdudi, the political system of Islam is based on *Tawhid* (Doctrine of monotheism), *Risalah* (Prophethood) and *Khilafa* (Caliphate). *Khilafa* means "representation." It is a form of government, which was introduced by Hazrat Abubakar (R.A.) after the death of Nabi Muhammad (S.A.W.) in 633 A.D. Abubakar chose the term *khilafa* as the official government system of Islam so that it conforms to the political nature of man. As the Qur'an mentions, man is appointed as vicegerent or *khalifa* on earth. Thus, Allah endowed man with knowledge and limited will in order to enable him to exercise the God-given authority. Here, the *khilafa* is viewed as necessity and as an instrument for men to attain their collective goals.

The purpose of the *khilafa* is to succeed the leadership of the Prophet as leader of the Muslim *Ummah* and not on Prophethood. The early *sahaba* or companions of the Prophet (S.A.S.) recognized the fact that Islam could be effectively safeguarded and promoted through the machinery of the *khilafa*.

Through the power of the *khilafa*, Islam spread rapidly as far as Asia minor, North Africa, Central Asia and Sind or India, as well as Spain in Europe. These countries became provinces of the Islamic Empire. The Muslims however did not do away the existing political structure of the conquered nations. Such political structure was allowed to continue with certain degree of autonomy, except the *amir* or governor should be Muslim who was to be appointed by the *khalifa*. But, as the years went on, these provinces whose inhabitants wanted to retain their national power, demanded political autonomy. For instance, the *amir* of Spain, Abd ar-Rahman the nephew of *Khalifa* Hisham of the Umayyad dynasty was the

first *amir* to call himself as sultan in 750 A.D., and at the same time asserted independence of his government from the central power of *khilafa*. Persia followed later during the reign of al-Ma'mun (813-833) the 7th Abbasid caliph.

Indeed, the continuous political struggle among the Arabs, Turks and Persians had weakened much the central power of the *khilafa*. According to ibn Khaldun, this situation prevailed down to the time when Arab group feeling was completely destroyed and the *khilafa* lost its identity. Non-Arab clients (like the Buwayhid who rose to power from 945 A.D. until 1055 A.D. and the Seljuqs (1055-1100) gained power over the Abbasids. Then the Mamluks gained power over the Ubaydid (Fatimids) in Cairo; the Sinhajah gained power over the realm of Ifriqiyah; the Zanatah gained power over the Maghrib; and the *reyes de taifas* in Spain gained power over the Spanish Umayyads. (Each of) these (groups) took over part of the *khilafa*. The Muslim empire dissolved. The rulers in the West and the East called themselves by the name of sultan.

In the Qur'an, sultan means authority granted by Allah to whom He wishes. By the end of the 10th century, Abul Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn Habib al-Mawardi a great jurist of the Abbasid dynasty developed this term in his book, *al-Ahqam al-Sultaniyyah*, into a full blown political concept. This book which consists of four volumes, discusses the principles, functions, organizations, qualification of the leaders and relationship of the three major organs of government. Al-Mawardi mentions six qualifications of a leader such as 1. *Adalah* (integrity) 2. *Ilm* (knowledge of *Shari'ah*) 3. *Salamah* (physical and mental fitness) 4. *Ra'y* (sound judgment) 5. *Shuja'ah wa najda* (courage and determination) and 6. *Nasab* (Quraysh line age). He also mentions ten conditions, which a person taking charge of governmental affairs in the Islamic state should adhere to:

1. Preservation of faith in its established principles and in the form in which *al-Salaf* (the predecessors) of the *Ummah* had unanimously agreed.
2. Enforcement of judgments among contenders and resolving cases among disputants.
3. Security of territory so that people may live in their homes safely and travel in security.
4. Enforcement of punishments prescribed by the *Shari'ah* to safeguard the limits set by Allah and preserve the rights of His people.
5. Fortification of borders with preventive equipment and repelling aggression.
6. *Jihad* against those who oppose Islam after calling upon them to embrace it, or to accept protection as non-Muslims, so that the right of Allah is upheld in proclamation of the religion in its entirety.
7. Levying taxes and collection of *zakat* and charity according to the provisions of *Shari'ah*.
8. Budgeting salaries and other necessary expenditures from the treasury without being extravagant or stingy.
9. Appointing the honest and competent to positions of trust in order to preserve (state) wealth and to administer (governmental) affairs.
10. Personal supervision and examination of public affairs to be able to lead the nation and protect the religion.

Finally, when the Ottoman Empire rose to power in 1326 A. D., the Osmanlis institutionalized the sultanate within the Ottoman Empire. Since then,

the institution of the *khilafa* became relegated to the shadow. The Ottoman sultan became the *de facto* ruler throughout the Islamic Empire. The Ottoman used the title sultan instead of *khalifa* because under the tradition, only the Quraysh descendants are eligible to succeed as *khalifa*. This is the reason why the term sultan became popular title among the Muslim rulers throughout the Muslim world. The entire successive Osmanli leaders adopted the title sultan as the official title of the head of the Ottoman Empire. This Empire which started in 1326 A.D., ended only in 1924 when the Ottoman Empire disintegrated with its defeat during the First World War.

The sultanate system spread in Southeast Asia as the culmination of the Islamization process, which began in the middle of the 13th century. As soon as Islam spread to distant land, the Muslim missionaries also introduced the concept of *sultaniyyah*. The idea was to solidify the unity of several people and communities under single political entity. As mentioned earlier, the nature of the political system of Islam requires *khilafa* or *sultaniyyah* to enforce its laws. This was the logic that led to the rise of different *sultaniyyah* in different places of Southeast Asia such as in Southern Burma, Sumatra and Java of Indonesia, Malacca and the rest of sultanates in the nine states of Malaysia, Brunei in North Borneo, Patani in Southern Thailand and also the birth of the Sultanate of Sulu in 1450 A.D, and the Sultanate of Buayan and Sultanate of Maguindanao 55 years later from the rise of the Sulu Sultanate.

Clearly, the rise of the Sulu Sultanate was part of the process of Islamization of the entire Bangsasug society. It was not accidental. It was part of the determined program of the early *Makhdumin*. *Sultaniyyah* was seen as a guarantee for the survival of the infant Muslim communities in the whole Sulu archipelago. It follows, therefore, that the strengthening of the *sultaniyyah* in this country is necessity.

Sultaniyyah constitutes the main political norm of our ancestors. This is our highest political achievement. It is our bridge to the glorious past. It is a fundamental component of the Bangsasug society. It was the success of the whole Muslim ethnic groups in the Sulu archipelago and Zamboanga peninsula. The Sama, the Yakan, the Kalibugan, the Jama Mapun, the Palawanin were all *gausbawgbug* (main force) and were at the forefront in the early years of the formation of the Sulu Sultanate. A great number of them became top officials of the *sultaniyyah*.

The Sultanate of Sulu was actually a multi-ethnic kingdom founded on the basis of *asabiyya* or tribal solidarity. It is a legacy of the Bangsasug people in their claim as the first people to organize a central government in what is now the Philippines. The Sulu Sultanate was the first island empire in this country. It has a territorial jurisdiction encompassing Zamboanga peninsula, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Palawan. While Sabah came under the sultanate rule only in 1608 when the Brunei sultan ceded Sabah to Sulu Sultanate as a gift for the latter's help to crush the local revolt in Brunei.

Sharif al-Hashim Abubakar was the first sultan of the Sulu Sultanate. He founded the *sultaniyyah* in 1450 after the death of his father-in-law Rajah Baginda a Muslim prince from Minangkabaw, Sumatra. The Sulu Sultanate is patterned after the Ottoman Empire. Its power is divided into three such as the *Ruma*

Bitsara, the *Kawazilan* and the *Paghuhukuman*. The *Ruma Bitsara* represents the parliament of the sultanate. It is headed by the *panglima mahabassar* or speaker of the house as in the Western polity. The *Kawazilan* being the executive body is headed by the sultan. At the height of its power, particularly during the reign of Sultan Muizz ud-Din (1748-1763), the Sulu Sultanate has 10 *Diwans* or departments. Each *Diwan* is headed by the *wazir* or minister. While the *Paghuhukuman* or the judiciary is headed by the *Imam Muallim* or the *qadi*.

According to Thomas Keifer an American anthropologist who did a study on the Tausug culture in the early 1950s, described the functions of the sultanate officials. He said the rights and duties of authority figures were duplicated at different levels of the traditional political system. The primary rights associated with the traditional political system among the Tausug were as follows:

1. Right to perform legal functions;
2. Right to appoint and regulate religious officials;
3. Right to control territory;
4. Right to control over subject people;
5. Right to wage external warfare;
6. Right to collect tribute and legal fees;
7. Right to control over markets; and,
8. Right to mediate warfare and feud.

The history of this country is not complete without touching the historic role of the Sulu Sultanate. The political foundation of this country rests on the *sultaniyyah*. It was the Sultanate of Sulu, which led the struggle against Western colonialism. Had not the armed resistance undertaken by the Sulu Sultanate, the Muslim communities in Southeast Asia could have been uprooted one after the other. The Malay world was saved from the tide of Christianity 400 years ago; perhaps the Sulu Sultanate frustrated the Spaniards from their political dream to bring Southeast Asia under their sphere of influence.

The Fall of the Sulu Sultanate

As mentioned earlier the rise of the Sulu Sultanate in 1450 was the function of the Islamization process, which found its way to penetrate the Sulu archipelago since the introduction of Islam in 1250 A.D. We may say that the fall of the Sulu Sultanate in the 20th century after more than 500 years in power, was also the function of de-Islamization, specifically the breakdown of the “rule of law” and the failure to institutionalize the Islamic educational system.

A. Breakdown of the rule of law. The political law of the Sulu Sultanate is embodied in the *diwan* which is referred to the written laws and the *adat* or the unwritten laws. This *diwan* was enacted by the *Ruma Bitsara* in the early part of 18th century, probably during the reign of Sultan Badar ud-Din I (1718-1732). Unfortunately, this *diwan* ceased as effective law towards the last quarter of the 19th century. The reason could be due to the lingering instability in Sulu as a result of the successive invasions of the Spanish colonial army in 1851 up to the occupation of Jolo in 1876. By 1876, the seat of the Sulu Sultanate was transferred to Maimbung because of the Spanish occupation of Jolo. From 1876 up to 1889 the political instability became widespread because the Spaniards

who already took position in Jolo posed a vital threat to the Sulu sultanate, which finally led to the breakdown of the rule of law.

Consequently, despotism also became widespread. Some *datus* and local leaders such as the *panglima* and the *maharajah* asserted their dominance to the extent of disobeying the command of the sultan. The people saw the leadership of the sultan as devoid of legitimacy owing to the breakdown of the rule of law. The sultan and his key leaders became aristocratic especially during the American period and therefore the people viewed their political behaviors as no longer in conformity with Islamic ethics. The rulers ceased to become a public servant. This was the condition of the governance of the Sulu Sultanate from 1876 up to the time of the reign of Sultan Jamalul Kiram II who ruled until 1936. In this period, the loyalty and obedience of the people to the sultanate waned especially when the ruling elites opted to accept the American sovereignty over the dominion of the Sulu sultanate. For instance, Sultan Jamalul Kiram II acceded to the 1889 Bates Treaty as well as the Kiram-Carpenter Agreement of 1914 without the concurrence of the *Ruma Bitsara*.

B. Failure to institutionalize the educational system. The second factor of the downfall of the Sulu Sultanate is the failure to institutionalize the educational system. The Sulu Sultanate had not formally established *madrassa*. The system of education was confined only to home-based system. Each *guru* organized his own students for the purpose of teaching basic laws. The educational system at this time had really no capacity to produce intellectuals and leaders. We may say also that this traditional system of education did not serve well in the maintenance and promotion of the rule of law. If you notice the Sulu Sultanate had not produced scholars; it produced only warriors.

IV. ENDURING BAWGBUG OF THE KAMAASAN

Kamaasan were the first people of Sulu who directly received the teachings of Islam from the *makhdumin* or the Arab missionaries. Those who studied Islam under the guidance of the *makhdumin* from 1250 A.D. to 1500 A.D. were called *kamaasan*. They are called as such because they became the model Muslims. All succeeding generations followed the tradition of the *kamaasan*. The *kamaasan* can be likened to the *sahaba* who studied Islam under the Prophet (S.A.S.). The *makhdumin* belong to the *tabiit-tabiin* who received Islam from the *tabiin* who in turn got their Islamic knowledge from the *sahaba* and the *sahaba* learned directly Islam from the Prophet (S.A.S.). In short, the enduring principles of the *kamaasan* can be traced to the era of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S.).

a. Inner Bawgbug

The *kamaasan's* inner *bawgbug* is rooted in the principle of *pagtuhan* known as *i'tiqad*. The *i'tiqad* of the *kamaasan* is firmly embodied in the *Sifat Kawwaan* (The Twenty Attributes of Allah) which is a logical discussion about the *sifatul wajiba* (Necessary Attributes), *sifatul mustahila* (Impossible Attributes) and *sifatul jaiza* (Possible Attributes). The *sifatul wajiba* discusses the a). *Wujud* (Existence of Allah), b). *Salbiyya* (Unique Attributes which are only fitted to the

majesty and oneness of Allah), c). *Ma'ani* (Attributes describing Allah), and d). *Ma'nawiyya* (Allah is the possessor of all Divine Attributes).

With clear understanding of the *Sifat* of Allah, the *kamaasan* developed their concept of *tawakkal ilallah* (complete trust to Allah). *Tawakkal ilallah* is an act of entrusting all affairs to Allah who gives life and death, the Sovereign, the bestower of all blessings. At the same time, the *kamaasan* embraced the concept of *kasussihan* (purification of self) comprising four stages: 1). Purification of bodily limbs from sins, 2). Purification of self from *haram* foods and drinks, 3). Purification of heart from *shirk*, *kufr*, *nifaq*, *hasad*, *ghadab* and *riya*, and 4). Purification of mind from evil thought.

Consequently, the *kamaasan* also developed their *pangaddatan* (moral values) which became the foundation of social harmony of the Tausug society. Among the best *pangaddatan* of the *kamaasan* are *kaikhlas* (sincerity), *kabuntul* (honesty), *kaadil* (justice), *kasilasa* (love of humanity), *kamura* (generosity), *katatas* (resilience), *katawkasi* (dedication and responsiveness), *kagawgut* (determination), etc. The Tausug believe that upholding this inner *bawgbug* is the way to gaining *martabat* (spiritual rank) before Allah and mankind. Only people with *martabat* are fitted to be entrusted with leadership and authority in the society.

b. Padduman

The strength of the Tausug society lies on its own *padduman* or political philosophy. This *padduman* is the highest political interpretation of Islam of our forefathers, the *kamaasan*. It guides the society in war and peace.

Islam and *adat* were wielded to form this *padduman*. For instance, the governance of the *banuwa*, the Tausug's earliest political organization became Islamized. The introduction of Islam in 1250 A.D. transformed this *banuwa* into the *sultaniyyah* system.

Under the *banuwa*, the *datus* were the ruling elites. But the non-*datus* could occupy high positions if they have political knowledge and leadership skill. We had the *urangkaya* (wealthy) and the *sawragal* (businessmen) who were used to be the members of the *Ruma Bitsara* or the state council.

The Tausug concept of *banuwa* is patriarchal in nature. The sultan is taken as father of the *banuwa*. The *Fuqaha* like Fadlullah B. Ruzbiham Khunji defines sultan as one who exercises authority over the Muslims by virtue of his power and military dominance. The seat of government is called *lawm banuwa* or administrative center. The sultan administration is called *pagbanuwa*. The *banuwa* is the pillar of the state and *padduman* is the uniting force. This is the view by which the Tausug have ever since believed in the sultanate as builder and pillar of the nation.

Islam added ideological color to the *pagbanuwa*. It had brought system of writing, government, arts, religious doctrine that enable the Tausug to chart their own political way of life. The Tausug *padduman* consists of six major concepts: the concept of *hula-bangsa-agama*, the concept of *martabat*, concept of *mahardika*, concept of *kalimayahan*, concept of *kaadilan* and concept of *siril ma'sun*.

Concept of *Hula*. The Tausug ideal *hula* or state is only composed of three elements, known as *hula-bangsa-agama* [(*hula* (territory), *bangsa* (nation), and *agama* (ideology)]. The term *hula* also connotes country or homeland. The Tausug call Lupa Sug as *hula ta*, which means “our county.” This *hula* which the Tausug claim as the dominion of the Sulu Sultanate includes Zamboanga peninsula, Basilan, Palawan, Sabah and Sulu. These areas have been the provinces of the Sulu Sultanate. These provinces represent the five stars on the Sulu Sultanate’s flag to symbolize ethnic unity of the Muslims in the Sulu archipelago.

Love of country is greatly emphasized in Islam. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.S.) said: “*Hubbul watan minal Iman.*” “Love of country is part of *Iman.*” This *Hadith* encourages the Muslims to be vigilant and concerned with the development as well as the defense of the country from both internal insurrection and foreign invasion. *Hubbul watan* is but a reflection of love of God. Muslims are enjoined to love all God’s creations. This act is the expression of how to love God. Imam Shafi’i said that it is *fardhu ayn* (obligatory) for each Muslim to undertake *jihad* if the invaders with a distance of a night journey poise an attack on the Muslim lands. Under the *Shari’ah*, if the Muslim country faces two situations like a threat of foreign invasion and development, the *Shari’ah* commands the Muslims to deal first with the first situation.

It is understood that any nation will not certainly prosper if it becomes subject to foreign control. This is the reason Islam commands the whole nation to rise up to defend itself from any threat and conspiracy. It categorically condemns the act of treason and all forms of destructive collaboration with the enemy of the Muslims. Anyone who violates this dictum will suffer humiliation as coward and traitor to his own homeland.

The Tausug concept of *bangsa* or nation is unity on the basis of the spirit of *hangkahula*, *hangkaagama*, *hangkaadat*, *hangkapadduman*, *hangkamaksud*, *hangkabawgbug*, and *hangkasalsila*. Munif al-Razzaz an Egyptian writer described nationalism as a social concept that expresses the bond existing between individuals of one nation. As a political tool, nationalism is a creative and powerful force. In the former sense, nationalism is a relationship; in the latter, a power or prime mover. Therefore, what are the bonds that bind people towards nationalism? Certainly, these bonds are referred to the essence of belongingness such as mentioned earlier like the *hangkaagama*, *hangkahula*, and others.

The spirit of *hangkaagama* is so far the most decisive factor, which made strong impact upon the emergence of nationhood among the Muslim groups in Mindanao and Sulu. Since its introduction in the South, Islam created a feeling of national community or a kind of *Ummah* distinct from other groups found in Luzon and Visayas. The Islamized people in the South in contrast to the different groups in the North, called themselves as Bangsa Muslims. When the Spaniards colonized the North in 1565, the people in the South entrenched themselves on their own nationhood. As a result, there developed two lines of historical development: First, the Islamic-Malay oriented which sustains the Bangsa Muslim nationhood and second, the Western-Christian oriented which propels the Filipino nationhood. Since then, the Bangsa Muslims in Mindanao and Sulu

pursued their own separate political aspirations and continued to sustain their culture and their institutions.

It was due to this Muslim identity, the used to be called Bangsa Muslims were later called Moros by the Spaniards. Moro was derived from the term Moors who had once ruled Spain for 785 years. The Moors are the inhabitants of Mauritania in Northwest Africa. They became Muslims since the early part of the Islamic history.

In other words, in the face of the Spanish aggression the emerging Bangsa Muslims in Mindanao and Sulu came to evolve their own nationhood apart from the Christianized groups in the north. The evolution of the Muslim nationhood had been a painful process using Islam as the rallying point of solidarity and brotherhood. This nationhood finally took shape as separate and distinct identity by the name Bangsasug. Historical evidence shows that the various alliances among the political elites in the south led to the birth of this Bangsasug nationalism. Their historical experience against Western colonialism together with adherence to Islam, fueled further the development of the Bangsasug nationalism.

Nationalism as prime mover is best described by Muammar Qathafi. He said: "The social i.e. national factor is the driving force of human history. The social bond which binds together each human group from the family through the tribe to the nation, is the basis for the movement of history. Once the so called social factor explodes, this turns into national struggle. This is also called a historical reality or social reality. Qathafi argued that national struggle – the social struggle – is the basis of the movement of history because it is stronger than all other factors since it is the origin . . . the basis ... it is the nature of a nation. He also said that nationalism is the basis for the survival of nations. Nations whose nationalism is destroyed are subject to ruin." (Qathafi, 1970: 73-75)

Ibn Khaldun, however, describes the so called "national spirit" as *asabiyya* or tribal solidarity. He said *asabiyya* produces the ability to defend oneself, to offer opposition, to protect oneself, and to press one's claims, whoever loses (his *asabiyya*) is too weak to do any of these things.

Nationalism as seen by the Qur'an is a natural creation of Allah. It represents as social identity of each group of which the Qur'an challenges them to know each other and strengthen each other by way of entering the fold of *Ummah*. Nationalism is a natural phenomenon or instinct of a given group. With its *asabiyya*, a group can easily press its collective interest. Islam allows this endeavor.

Nabi Muhammad (S.A.S.) warns only not to wage a struggle for the sake of nation and die for its wrong cause. The Muslims should apply the spirit of nationalism only as an instrument to strengthen the cause of Islam and the Muslim *Ummah* worldwide. In short, nationalism as an ideology is unlawful. But, nationalism as a social concept to build unity among the groups within a country is sanctioned and lawful under Islam. Finally, al-Razzaz defined nationalism as the bond, which people of a nation feel or as the feeling on the part of people of one nation that there is something, which binds them together and which distinguishes them, therefore, from others. It is essentially irrelevant whether the binding factors are culture, economic or political.

Whereas the Tausug viewpoint on *agama* follows this traditional maxim: *Ha Islam, amuna agama, amuna parinta*. “In Islam, both religion and politics are single entity.” To the Tausug, *agama* is interchangeably used as government. The Tausug do not believe in the separation of religion and politics. These two systems are rolled into one and is forever inviolable in the Tausug ideal concept of *hula* or state.

Under the concept of *agama*, sovereignty belongs to the Supernatural Being. Tausug literature says *pagmilik* or sovereignty belongs to *Apu Banuwa*, the local name of God in the pre-Islamic time. The highest *datu* of the state was held as God’s representative.

Islamic worldview, however, surpasses this traditional concept. In Islam, sovereignty belongs to Allah alone. The leader is just a mere *khalifa* or vicegerent. His main duty is to implement the divine command. Neither the *Ruma Bitsara* nor the *Kawazilan* is allowed to legislate laws. Both bodies are there only to make policies that facilitate the implementation of God’s laws. Acknowledgement of Allah’s sovereignty represents the central principle of the Islamic ideology. Allah is the highest *ilaha* or object of worship, submission and obedience. *La ilaha illallah* means there is no *ilaha* (object of worship) except Allah.

This creed represents the social contract in the Tausug society. This means every *ra’ayat* is ought to obey the command of Allah. The Tausug are prohibited to cast their *bay’ah* (loyalty) other than Allah and the duly constituted sultan.

Concept of *Martabat*. To the *kamaasan* the *martabat* of a person whether a mere *ra’ayat* or official of the sultanate lies on his capacity to uphold the principles of Islam and the *padduman* of the state. The person earns respect and dignity before the people if he is able to abide the law and behave properly. A person who fails to uphold such principles is called *babagsara* or transgressor. On the contrary, the man of principles also strives to project his capability in terms of material possession, followers and influence. It is the feeling to have self-*martabat* that a person is inspired to work hard.

Concept of *Mahardika*. The Tausug concept of *mahardika* or independence is referred to freedom to exercise the right to self-determination. To the Tausug, *hula mahardika* or independent state is a state endowed with capability to enforce its sovereignty without any obstacle or external interference in its own internal affairs. Under the Tausug polity, *mahardika* is the greatest symbol of political or national dignity. Perhaps, it can be dominated by other strong nation for quite sometimes but it cannot be erased or extirpated totally from the national spirit of the people.

Every Tausug treasures the spirit of being *mahardika* or free from the servitude of other men. This individual spirit became a national spirit and further developed into the idea of *hula mahardika* or independent state and *bangsa mahardika* or independent nation. In this discussion, there are two essences of *mahardika*. These are the *kalimayahan* or freedom and *kamaruwan* or honor. It is through attaining these two norms, such person or nation will be deserved of

martabat or human dignity in the case of individual person or national dignity in the case of nation.

There is a saying of our *kamaasan* and still alive to this day: “*Way piyagpangkat, ayaw pa lubuhan in pangkat, ayaw magparapat, pa hula, bangsa, agama magtaat.*” “No to subjugation to our race. Be always dependable. And alone to the country, nation and religion submit thy self.”

Indeed, the Tausug never accept defeat even in the face of overwhelming force. Although they had experienced occupation of their land by their enemies, yet they always assert their freedom. Many times, they went to the practice of *parrang sabil* or *jihad*. Up to this period, the Tausug generally believe that the preservation of *mahardika* is a continuing struggle. In all stages of their national life, the Tausug are always guided by their historic motto – “*Marayaw pa muti bukug dayn muti in tikud.*” “Better to die than to run away.” This motto portrays the courage of the Tausug to preserve the *mahardika* of their homeland and Islam. This motto is the living testimony of the firm stand of the Tausug towards the defense of their *kamahardikaan* (independence) against foreign power.

Vic Hurley an American army who experienced the battle in Sulu eulogized the historic struggle of the *kamaasan* against the Spaniards: “In his defense of the religion and customs of Islam against the militant priests of Spain, the Moro set a new historical precedent. He survived, his religion survived. The Mayas, the Aztics, and the Incas fell before the Toledo steel of the Spaniards, and their language and institutions perished with them. Their temples were destroyed, and their literatures burned by the over-zealous bishops of the Romanish church. A few of their cities remain, desolated sepulchers of an ancient civilizations, which melted before the fanaticism of the *conquistadores*. Not so with the Moros; sturdy and intact, their religion still flourishes on the shores of Sulu. The *conquistadores* came, fought vainly and retired. The Moros remained.”

Concept of *Kalimayahan*. This refers to freeing one’s self from the bondage of fellowmen. And this is rooted in *iman* (Islamic belief). *Iman* calls for the elimination of servitude to *Taghut* (evil patron, tyranny and false ideology) to that of one God, Allah.

Therefore, every Tausug is *limaya* or free from any obligation and command except the command of Allah. The Tausug idea of free nation has actually originated from this notion. Under the concept of *kalimayahan*, a person is ought to be free as he is not required to obey other than the command of Allah and the legitimate sultan of the state. Second, arbitrary action by the powers that be is prohibited. The *Shari’ah* provides the principle of *bil haq*, which is more substantial than the concept of due process of law or law of the land. The principle of *bil haq* states that no person shall be persecuted or prosecuted unless it is done based on truth beyond doubt.

Concept of *Sirilma’sun* (Public Consensus). This has been used as a political tool to address major issues. There were two mechanisms existed in the past: the *Majlis* and the *Ruma Bitsara*.

Decision reached through *sirilma'sun* cannot be vetoed by the sultan. It can be revoked or amended only by the same act. *Sirilma'sun* is the expression of the will of the people. It is an instrument to check any aristocratic tendency and abuses in the government.

Based on the political tradition of the Sulu Sultanate, the conduct of *sirilma'sun* had the following rules to be observed:

- People are free to speak without fear of retribution.
- The leader should inform the people about the real condition of the state.
- The state should provide proper mechanism in order to facilitate the conduct of *sirilma'sun*.
- The members of the sultan's advisory council should be men of integrity and have the confidence of the people.

Concept of Kaadilan. By nature, the Tausug are *adil* or just. Their voluntary embracing of Islam speaks that the Tausug are soft-hearted and lovers of justice. Unjust people are difficult for them to accept *adlun* or justice because this is contradictory to their interest. But, when the early founding fathers of Sulu understood the message of Islam conveyed to them by the *makhdumin*, at one instance they embraced Islam together with their people. They discovered the justice of Islam as the easy way towards nation building. A certain Tausug said: "*In kaadilan amuna in kahanungan.*" Justice means peace. There is widespread tranquility on the land, no conflict and the people enjoy abundant livelihood. When there is disruption or violation there are leaders who can patch up right away.

The Tausug concept of *kaadilan* is heavily influenced by Islam as the term itself derived from the Qur'anic word *adl* which means justice. The instrument of *kaadilan* is *sara* or law. The effectiveness of law of a given society speaks the extent of justice that the people enjoy. During the heyday of the Sultanate of Sulu, the Tausug enacted a law known as *diwan* or sometime called *undang-undang sara*. The *diwan* consists of court procedure, remedial law, social regulations, economic and inheritance law. Other laws are not written but they are integrated in the tradition of the Tausug.

To the Tausug *kaadilan* is the ultimate goal of building *qawman* and possible only through *nakura adil* or just leader. There are many idiomatic expressions of the Tausug that can guide how *nakura adil* should be. First, the leader should be "*tindug* Muhammad." Meaning, Nabi Muhammad (S.A.S.) should be held as *de jure* leader and that is all leaders must follow the *Sunnah* and the leadership style of Nabi Muhammad (S.A.S.) who viewed the leader as the servant of the people and the leader is like a shepherd of a flock.

Second, the leader should be *batik* (referring to the three stars as guide in the night journey). *Batik* is always true to its position as a guide. It never errs. Following the *Sunnah*, the leader cannot err in his decision.

Third, the leader should be *bayanbuddiman* (tactful and intelligent). He should become the *pamukuhan addat* or model of good behavior.

Fourth principle is subscribing to the real meaning of *nakura* or leader. By tradition, the person accepting to become *nakura* is tantamount to become like *kura* or horse, the carrier of loads, hence he is *nakura* – you become or he

becomes like a horse. *Nakura* signifies a person who has become the carrier of the responsibility of the community and that the leader must be ready and determined to be of service to the people.

Fifth, the leader should be *mabuntul* or straight forward in applying the law upon the people. He must avoid double standard known as *sara kulampira* (one sided).

Sixth, the leader should be fair and follow the expression of “*way pagbakul, way pagkingking*.” The leader is ought to apply the law or treat people whether near relatives or not with fairness.

Seventh, the attitude of the leader should not be *kulampira* (referring to the fish with has only one side). In other words, the leader according to the view of the Tausug should be fair to all regardless of their status be a rich or poor or be the strong or the weak, they should be treated equally. A leader is *kulampira* when he appears to a person or group with different faces. He speaks with different tone in order to deceive the people. If the leader is found to be favoring, he is guilty of being *nakura kulampira* or unjust leader.

Eight, the leader should not be *duwa dila* or double speak. It is the psychology of the Tausug that once the leader is *natukas* or found guilty of negative behavior such as *duwa dila*, *sara kulampira* and *mangakkal* or deceiver they will lose their confidence and trust in him.

Ninth, the leader should not be *agad lusay* (no stand at all). He must stick to the principles and objectives of justice.

The approach of the Tausug towards building and sustaining *kaadilan* in the society is the observance of the principle of “*himinang sin diyaakan, lumayu dayn ha liyangan*.” Enjoying what is commanded and abstaining from what is forbidden. The concept of *diyaakan* (obligation) is rooted from the Qur’an and *Hadith* of the Prophet. The most basic *diyaakan* is the search of knowledge and the obedience to parents. On the religious level, *diyaakan* includes the performance of *ibadah* such as *salah*, *sadaqa*, *sawm* in the month of Ramadan as well as the conduct of *jihad fi sabillah*. On political side, *diyaakan* also includes obedience to the *imam* and the leaders of the community.

Liyangan (prohibitions) is also rooted on the religious laws. The *ra’ayat* are warned and commanded to stay away from all forms of criminality such as *zina*, murder, oppression, gambling and rebellion to law. The Tausug understood clearly that *kaadilan* cannot exist if criminality prevails in the society.

Kaadilan requires government apparatus to enforce the law of the land and to secure the security of the people. In the Tausug tradition, the *ra’ayat* pay taxes to the sultanate in exchange for protection of their *martabat*, properties and life.

It was through the spirit of promoting *kaadilan* as the means of ensuring the security of the people and their properties as well as the enforcement of *Shari’ah* and the defense of Islam that the Sultanate of Sulu was established. Therefore, the sultan must be *mabuntul* and *rupawan* or just and upright so that the *ra’ayat* will respect him. He must be *halimawan* which means brave to uphold the truth of *kaadilan*. He must be *altaan* or has a considerable wealth so that he may not engage in corruption. He must be *bangsawan* – a member of the royal family, pure Muslim and not slave. Finally, the sultan must be *ilmuan* or

knowledgeable of *sara* so that he can manage effectively the affairs of the government.

The Tausug concept of *sara* is reflected in the *diwan* as well as the *Shari'ah*. It is divided into two: *sara kapatutan* or human rights law and *sara kasaan* or penal law. *Sara kapatutan* includes the right to own property, exercise of freedom or *kalimayahan*, the right to earn a living, the right to travel, etc. *Sara kasaan* is classified into three: *kasaan* (fine), *pagbangun or pagdiyut* (blood money) and *pag-ayn* (compensation).

For the purpose of administration of *kaadilan*, the Sultanate of Sulu was divided into *binaybayan* (province), *pasisil* (municipality), and *lungan* (barrio). The *binaybayan* of the Sulu sultanate was composed of Sambuwangan, Palawan, Utara Borneo, Basilan, and Lupa Sug as the seat of government. The mainland Sulu was divided into five *pasisil* such as Lungan Gi'tung, Lati, Luuk, Parang and Maimbung. Each *pasisil* was governed by the *panglima* or mayor. The *maharajah* or community leader administered the *lungan*. Both *panglima* and *maharajah* were appointed leaders and maintained *tindug* or armed followers. The commander of *tindug* is *nakib* who spearheaded the enforcement of laws. The Tausug understood clearly that *kaadilan* cannot be enforced without the long armed of the law – the armed forces of the state.

c. Enduring Proverbs of the Tausug

Tausug proverbs known as *masaalla* are the popular saying of the *kamaasan*. They reflect the practical life and worth to guide our actions. The following are examples of the Tausug proverbs.

1. *Marayaw pa muti bukug dayn muti in tikud.* (Better death than running from the battle). This proverb speaks about the commitment of the Tausug to defend his *martabat* and his faith. On political, a good Tausug is always ready to sacrifice for the cause of *hula-bangsa-agama*. In the battlefield, the Tausug always prepare to fight to death.
2. *Gampa daghal muka ayaw iman humuka.* (Better breast explodes rather than faith to fade). This proverb illustrates the importance of *iman* in the life of a person. Between two extreme choices – preservation of life and destruction of *iman*, the person prepares preservation of *iman* than preservation of his life. A man of principle knows the life without freedom to practice his faith is useless and of no worthy before Allahu *Ta'ala*.
3. *Sumung kasagnatan simibug kasa'bitan.* (Proceeding is dangerous and moving back is also dangerous). This proverb illustrates the condition of the Bangsasug which has been stuck in the quagmire of colonialism since Sulu became integrated into the Philippine Republic in 1946. The condition of our homeland has worsened under the Philippine Republic. We are a nation under sieged. Internally, we are facing the impact of absolute poverty, illiteracy and disunity. What shall we do? This proverb is a great reminder to all Bangsasug that in this condition the best action is to move on at all cost.

4. *Bang lubug in uhan lubug da in sikan.* (If the upstream is polluted and so its downstream). This proverb describes the top leadership as the root of the problems of the society. Our people suffer because of unjust policies of the central government. Internally, our people have further suffered due to the unjust leadership of the local leaders.
5. *Dila Nabi atay fir'awn.* (Prophet's tongue with Pharaoh's heart). This proverb warns the Muslims to be cautious towards the hypocrite. The Qur'an proclaims that the hypocrite is liar. And the hypocrite pretends to be a loyal Muslim and always takes advantage in all weaknesses of the Muslims. The Prophet said: "There are three distinctive marks of a hypocrite: Whenever he speaks, he tells a lie, whenever he promises he breaks it, and whenever he is entrusted he betrays."
6. *Amuna agama amuna parinta.* (Religion and politics rolled into one). This proverb underscores the principle of unity between religion and politics. Under the Tausug tradition, *agama* or religion and *parinta* or government are the poles of the society that cannot be separated. Once they are separated, corruption will spread in the land. If politics or government operates outside religion, the people will become corrupt. We must understand that religion, politics, and the people are inseparable. It is like a tent, the pole and the pegs and neither one can exist without the support of the other. Religion is the tent, politics and government are the poles and the pegs are the people.
7. *Ayaw in akkal hipangakkal.* (Never intellect becomes tool to deceive). This proverb points out that human intellect is one of the highest gifts of Allah to man. "Verily, We created man from a drop of mingled sperm in order to try him. So, We give him the gifts of hearing and the sight." (Qur'an, 76:2) "It is He who has created for you (the faculties of) hearing, sight, feeling and understanding: little thanks it is you give." (Qur'an, 23:78) What differs man from lower animals lies on faculty. Allah grants faculty to man because he has a mission to accomplish. Therefore, he must make use of his faculty in the service of humanity.
8. *Nakura mabuntul hambara'ayat humatul.* (Honest leader, honest followers). This proverb highlights the role of the just leader in the improvement of the lives of the people. Under the Tausug tradition, the *ra'ayat* pin too much on the leader for support and guidance.
9. *Marayaw pa kara'ganan batu dayn kara'ganan dila.* (Being hit by stone is better than being guilty of double speak). This proverb illustrates the ideal value of sticking to the truth or principle. It is better to suffer physically than to be destroyed morally or your name becomes tainted or your dignity becomes at stake. *Ha adat sin Tausug, malaggu in pamawgbug ha di makurug. Atas dahun tahanan in bu'gat-gaan iban hagkut-pasu bang man in martabat mapalihala iban di mawa in pagktau.* In the Tausug tradition, the person opts to live up to his words rather than becomes a laughing stock. He rather carries the weight of the problem in lieu of sacrificing his dignity.
10. *Marayaw pa tumampnan suba dayn simud sin manusiya.* (Blocking stream is better than blocking gossip). This proverb is a caution about the danger of reaction of the people when a leader is found or perceived to be guilty of immoral or criminal act. For every negative issue a corresponding gossip can

spread like wild fire destroying personality and dignity of a person. Therefore, every individual should be cautious for each step in such a way other cannot find room to lodge their attack or spread gossip against him. Once gossip spreads it is hard to stop as hard as blocking the flow of the river.

11. *Lansuk haguwa bingit halawm.* (Appearing straight but crooked from inside). This proverb illustrates the attitude of a person who pretends to give light to the people and also pretends to be straight forward outwardly. But, inwardly he has a hidden agenda resembling the hook that can destroy people. This is the meaning of *munafiq*. The Qur'an says: There is a type of man whose speech about this world's life may dazzle you and he calls Allah to witness about what is in his heart; yet he is the most contentious of enemies. When he turns his back his aim everywhere is to spread mischief through the earth and destroy crops and cattle. But Allah loves not mischief. (Qur'an, 2:204-205)
12. *In ilmu mutang ha bukun bal-akkal sapantun iyaman panggi maymu bukun mapukal.* (If knowledge resides in an idiot person is like a steam cassava, sweet but not delicious). This proverb describes knowledge to be useless if it is possessed by a person whose intelligent is weak.
13. *Tau mabuhi misan ha batu.* (Person who can survive living on the rock). This proverb highlighted a man of knowledge or a man of principle who can earn a living even he lives on the rock because he can make use of his knowledge and skill to earn money through teaching, writing and through employment. In modern time, expert, analyst and intellectual is paid highly as consultant.
14. *In lingkak biyurakan malawa bang hulasan. Bukun biya sin lingkak ha pangatayan masahaya misan ha katigidluman.* (A madeup beauty disappears when sweating but not the beauty of heart which shines even in darkness). This proverb emphasizes the importance of good morality over artificial beauty which fades under bad weather.
15. *In biat di dumaug ha tabiat.* (Teaching cannot prevail over habit). This proverb tells us that manner prevails over education. It is therefore advisable to teach children on good manner and right conduct at early age so that it will become their habits.
16. *Kawgun mu maglibun sin bukun mu kabbun. Bang sin dugaing dagun sa muna sadja aturun.* (Useless to care orchard not yours; you can only stare when taken by others). This proverb discourages a man to take a girlfriend who is marriageable to other man.
17. *Purukun ku in batu dasalan ku in basi.* (Calming down the stone, seating on the iron). This proverb is invoked when starting a war or if a person is under provoked. He keeps his mind on concentration with the thought that by the power of Allah he will prevail over his enemy.
18. *In balkanan sapantun intan masi'nag misan ha katigidluman.* (Dignitary is like a diamond shining even in darkness). This proverb gives important of building and protecting one's dignity being an important asset of a person.
19. *Mahunit in magpamikit. Misana maabu bangkit di mag-iyana masakit.* (Affiliation by marriage is hard; when tough times come, he never gives up). This proverb tells us the purpose of marriage which is not mere sexual satisfaction but a social fulfillment for social continuity and solidarity.

20. *Bang kiyaluwa na ayaw muna tuna.* (Once you vomit it, never swallow it back). We should not claim back anything we give. We should never retract words once done already.
21. *Hisiyusiyu in matuyu siya in makapusu.* (Whoever is determined shall reap it). This proverb is referred to daily sacrifice looking for earning. Only those who are industrious and patient will succeed.
22. *Hisiyusiyu in matugul siya in makagulgul.* (Whoever is serious shall embrace her). This proverb is referred to courting a woman for marriage. Only those who are decisive and serious will succeed to win woman's heart.
23. *Way burus in di hipag-anak.* (None is conceived but shall come out). This proverb tells us that secret cannot be hidden for long; it will become known in the end.
24. *In pamikit pais tiyan manaykud ha kasigpitan.* (Shaky marriage breaks in hardship). This proverb is to discourage people from viewing marriage a mere sex play only. Marriage is a permanent institution to cherish.
25. *Bungangkahuy maglabay suysuy malugay.* (Fruits season passes by but the impact is lasting). This proverb reminds people the importance of sharing fruits during harvest time. Those who are trifty or refuse to give charity, their names become tainted and will last for long time.
26. *Gampa in pali maluhay manghinuli. Bukun biya sin atay bang mabali mahunit makatawali.* (Wound can easily recover but not the heart when hurts, can hardly recover). The proverb tells us not to hurt people's heart because it takes time to heal and it affects relationship.
27. *Way piyagpangkat in malubu in pangkat. Ayaw magparapat kamaruwan masipak.* (By the token of ancestors, none can destroy us. Avoid dishonesty or honor will break). This proverb is said by a person who already decided to fight and is firmly resolved to carry out the battle. He tells himself to keep his vow to the end and to live up to his own honor.
28. *Bang nakalandu na pa pantay, ayaw na mag-igup sin kamatay.* (If already in the battlefield, think no death). This proverb is similar to the above proverb.
29. *Misan dugaing hula mag-ulan intan iban kumala, ayaw maikag bat in hula di mali'tag.* (Even it rains diamond and jade in foreign land, never leave the country to be trapped). This proverb speaks about patriotism and loyalty to the country. Those who are patriotic prepare to stay on their country and work hard to contribute to the progress of nation.

V. BASIS OF BANGSASUG RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION

Padduman is the basis of the Bangsasug for right to self-determination. It is the lead force of the Bangsasug as a nation. By nature, *padduman* requires political power for its implementation. The process and the exercise of that power is called RSD or right to self-determination. For instance, criminal and religious laws of the *padduman* can only be implemented through the power of the sultanate. Our homeland for the past 50 years has been in the state of anarchy because of the reluctance of the present leaders to exercise the right to RSD. In all these years, the Bangsasug suffered absolute poverty, high illiteracy, family feud and wide spread of ignorance. The reason for these pressing problems has

been due to lack of RSD to make the *padduman* as the guiding force of the Bangsasug society.

The challenge today is how to bring back the *padduman* as political force. The answer is re-educating the Bangsasug about the principles and laws of *padduman*. Right within the family institution, the head of each family should socialize the family members into the *padduman* of the society. Academic institutions play important role in this political socialization. Schools are established in order to preserve and transmit the *padduman* to the people. They are the best instrument in the indoctrination of the young people who eventually take over the reign of leadership of the society.

Making the Sultanate of Sulu functional is also a great challenge for the exercise of right to self-determination. It is therefore necessary to all political officers of the sultanate to undergo re-orientation along the principles of *padduman*. There is a need for them to gain mastery of the different legal terminologies of the *padduman* so that they are in the best position to govern the people. Without complete embracing of *padduman* the Sultanate of Sulu is dead or it may exist only as symbolic entity without power and role in state building. The revival of the Sulu sultanate as an active political entity can only happen if the sultan and his leaders are determined to completely embrace the principles of *padduman*. Without embracing the *padduman* of the *kamaasan* the sultan is only flirting. The proof of embracing is to govern the people.

As a whole our assertion to revive the Sultanate of Sulu as sovereign state sums up the basis of the Bangsasug's claim for right to self-determination.

VII. DRAWING AUTHORITY FROM THE PADDUMAN

The *padduman* of the *Sultaniyyah sin Lupa Sug* is Islam. Islam is the name of the *agama* of Allah. Says the Qur'an, "Truly, the *din* with Allah is Islam." (Qur'an, 3:19)

The essence of Islam is submission to the will of Allah as *Malik* or Sovereign. When Allah ordered Nabi Muhammad (S.A.S.) to address the people at Makkah he said: "Say: O men! I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allah to whom belongs the sovereignty of the heaven and the earth. There is no god but He. It is He that gives both life and death. So believe in Allah and His Messenger, the unlettered Prophet who believes in Allah and His words. Follow him that you may be guided." (Qur'an, 7:158) This *ayat* is the declaration of the vision of Islam for a New World Islamic Order. That is under this Islamic Order *shirk* (polytheism) must be eliminated, being the source of injustice and misguidance. All succeeding leaders are commanded to promote and defend the Islamic Order. Likewise, the whole Muslim *Ummah* must believe unconditionally with sincerity about the Islamic Order. Submission to Allah means acceptance of the Qur'an as the living guidance and following the *Sunnah* of the Prophet. Submission to Allah also means no commission of *shirk*. "Allah does not share His command with any person whatsoever." (Qur'an, 18:26) The Qur'an says: "*Inna shirka la zulmun azim.*" "Verily, joining others in worship with Allah is a great *zulm* (wrong or injustice)." (Qur'an, 31:13)

Revival of the *sultaniyyah* means promoting and defending the Islamic Order as envisioned by Islam. Rallying behind the *Sultaniyyah sin Lupa Sug* in

order to implement the teachings of Islam; applying Islamic justice such as the remedial law; organizing the socio-political life of the people in accordance with the Islamic Order, shall give the Tausug the authority and power in the land. It is only then the Tausug shall deserve divine help of Allah as He promised. Says the Qur'an: "Allah has promised to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds that He will of a surety grant them in the land inheritors (of power) as He granted it to those before them that He will establish in authority their religion – the one which He has chosen for them, and that He will change (their taste) after the fear in which they (lived) to one of security and peace. They will worship Me (alone) and not associate aught with Me. If any does reject faith after this, they are rebellious and wicked." (Qur'an, 24:55)

VIII. CONCLUSION

The rise of the Sultanate of Sulu in 1450 A.D. and the Bangsasug have always been connected to Islam and the enduring *bawgbug* of the sultanate's founding fathers is the key to the Bangsasug renaissance. The enduring *bawgbug* defines the Bangsasug. It is the basic source of political strength and rallying point for unity and solidarity of all peoples in the Sulu archipelago. The study, revival and application of the enduring *bawgbug* is undoubtedly the way to the birth of the Bangsasug renaissance. If we come to understand our *bawgbug* and uphold it, differences shall disappear, disunity will come to end. Through learning our *bawgbug* we may learn the correct insight that leads us to the historical truth and national salvation. If we concentrate on truth we can press effectively our political rights, and none can overcome us *insha* Allah. Divine salvation is possible only if we rebuild or reconstruct the Tausug society in accordance with the Islamic World Order as ordained by Allah and His Messenger. The Tausug proverb says: "*In Islam amuna agama amuna parinta.*" Under Islamic polity, religion and politics are interconnected; their separation means destruction and their unity means strength.

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Glossary

<i>agama</i>	<i>religion, ideology</i>
<i>amanat</i>	<i>trust</i>
<i>angan-angan</i>	<i>vision</i>
<i>banuwa</i>	<i>administration, leadership</i>
<i>bilma'rup</i>	<i>consensus</i>
<i>buddi</i>	<i>token</i>
<i>diyaraut</i>	<i>mission</i>
<i>gausbawgbug</i>	<i>supporters</i>
<i>hambaraayat</i>	<i>citizens</i>
<i>hangla</i>	<i>entrust</i>
<i>hanunut</i>	<i>pacify, convince</i>
<i>hula</i>	<i>territory, country, state</i>
<i>kaadilan</i>	<i>justice</i>
<i>kaagi</i>	<i>approach</i>
<i>kabangsahan</i>	<i>nationalism</i>
<i>kabansagan</i>	<i>pride</i>
<i>kabayaan</i>	<i>interest</i>
<i>kagawgut</i>	<i>determination</i>
<i>kagunahan</i>	<i>needs</i>
<i>kahalan</i>	<i>situation</i>
<i>kahanungan</i>	<i>tranquility</i>
<i>kahatulan</i>	<i>peace</i>
<i>kakayaan</i>	<i>environment</i>
<i>kalagihan</i>	<i>wants</i>
<i>kalimayahan</i>	<i>freedom</i>
<i>kamahardikaan</i>	<i>independence</i>
<i>kamaruwan</i>	<i>honor</i>
<i>karayawan</i>	<i>welfare</i>
<i>kasambuhan</i>	<i>development</i>
<i>kasilasa</i>	<i>love</i>
<i>katangkuran</i>	<i>outcome</i>
<i>katatas</i>	<i>patience</i>
<i>katiblukan</i>	<i>essence</i>
<i>katumpat</i>	<i>contentment</i>
<i>kawajiban</i>	<i>obligation</i>
<i>kawasa</i>	<i>authority, power</i>
<i>kusug</i>	<i>power</i>
<i>kusug-kiyaun</i>	<i>self-help</i>
<i>maksud</i>	<i>objective</i>
<i>martabat</i>	<i>dignity, honor</i>
<i>matilag</i>	<i>transparent</i>

<i>mayran-majilis</i>	<i>congress</i>
<i>padduman</i>	<i>ideology</i>
<i>pag-agsu</i>	<i>consultation</i>
<i>pag-ayura</i>	<i>management</i>
<i>pagbaktul</i>	<i>organizing</i>
<i>pagdadungan</i>	<i>leading</i>
<i>pagdangin</i>	<i>volunteerism</i>
<i>paghambuuk</i>	<i>solidarity</i>
<i>paghamparu</i>	<i>management</i>
<i>pag-inumpung</i>	<i>assembly</i>
<i>pagmilik</i>	<i>sovereignty</i>
<i>pagmumus</i>	<i>organizing</i>
<i>pagnakura</i>	<i>leadership</i>
<i>pagparuli</i>	<i>caring</i>
<i>pagsalassay</i>	<i>settlement</i>
<i>pagsangsa</i>	<i>service</i>
<i>pagsawi</i>	<i>invitational volunteerism</i>
<i>pagtaat</i>	<i>obedience</i>
<i>pagtaayun</i>	<i>cooperation</i>
<i>pagtayakkup</i>	<i>unity</i>
<i>pagtulung-tabang</i>	<i>support, helping</i>
<i>pakaradjaan</i>	<i>program</i>
<i>palindung</i>	<i>support</i>
<i>pamaratsaya</i>	<i>belief</i>
<i>pamarinta</i>	<i>governance</i>
<i>panali</i>	<i>thought</i>
<i>pananggunganan</i>	<i>accountability</i>
<i>panara</i>	<i>policy</i>
<i>pangahagad</i>	<i>creed</i>
<i>pangalta</i>	<i>wealth</i>
<i>pangandul</i>	<i>trust</i>
<i>pangita</i>	<i>perception</i>
<i>papanaw</i>	<i>strategy</i>
<i>parakala</i>	<i>affairs</i>
<i>parinta</i>	<i>government</i>
<i>parsugpatan</i>	<i>relationship</i>
<i>pipul</i>	<i>center pillar</i>
<i>sara</i>	<i>laws</i>
<i>siril ma'sun</i>	<i>consultation</i>
<i>tataisan</i>	<i>challenges</i>
<i>tu'lus-ikhlas</i>	<i>sincerity</i>
<i>tukmati</i>	<i>dialogue</i>