

**Trading with the Enemy.
Commerce between Spaniards and ‘Moros’
in the Early Modern Philippines**

*Tratar con el enemigo.
El comercio entre españoles y «moros»
en Filipinas en la Edad Moderna*

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Recibido: 23/01/2019; Revisado: 29/08/2019; Aceptado: 04/10/2019

Abstract

The relationship between the Spanish and the Muslim inhabitants of the Philippines and Borneo has always been difficult and depicted as one of enmity. This article, based on a series of published and unpublished sources, sheds light on a more peaceful facet of this relationship and demonstrates episodes of commerce between both sides from 1565 to 1800. Thereby, it challenges the traditional perspective of Manila as exclusively part of the China-New Spain trade axis and advocates viewing the Philippines as part of the polycentric, globally-connected commercial system of Southeast Asia.

Keywords: Philippines, Spanish Empire, Muslims, Commerce, Early Modern period.

Resumen

La relación entre los españoles y los habitantes musulmanes de las Islas Filipinas y Borneo siempre ha sido complicada y representada como una enemistad. Este artículo, basado en una serie de fuentes publicadas y originarias, arroja luz a una faceta más pacífica de esta relación y presenta episodios de comercio mutuo entre ambos lados desde 1565 hasta 1800. De esa manera contribuye a romper con la perspectiva tradicional de ver Manila exclusivamente como parte del eje China-Nueva España y propugna ver las Filipinas como parte de un sistema policéntrico de comercio del Sureste de Asia con todas sus conexiones globales.

Palabras clave: Filipinas, Imperio Español, musulmanes, comercio, Edad Moderna.

1. INTRODUCTION

The encounter between the Spanish colonizers and the Muslim sultanates in the early modern Philippines was bound to be violent. During the Spanish era in the Philippines (1565-1898), Manila was in an almost permanent state of confrontation with at least one of their southern neighbors in Mindanao, Jolo, and Borneo. Such a development was in part due to Spanish perception of the religious 'other' that had been acquired during almost a millennium of Christian-Muslim confrontation in the Mediterranean. Shaped by events such as the *Reconquista*, the Ottoman Siege of Vienna (1529), and the Battle of Lepanto (1571), many European contemporaries had come to believe in the incompatibility of Muslims and Christians and the inevitability of war (BLANKS and FRASSETTO, 1999; BUNES IBARRA, 1989; HÖFERT, 2010). In the Philippines, this view was expressed most vividly by Melchor de Ávalos at the end of the 16th century, advocating the expulsion or eradication of all 'Moros' in the Spanish territories in Asia (ÁVALOS, 1943; DONOSO JIMÉNEZ, 2011-2013; CRAILSHEIM, 2014; SANCHEZ 2016).

A closer look at relations between Spaniards and Muslims in frontier zones of the Mediterranean, though, shows that, at the same time as war raged on, many forms of peaceful cohabitation existed between both groups. Eloy Martín Corrales, for example, states that in the last quarter of the 16th century, Spanish endeavors in the anti-Muslim war in the Mediterranean experienced a drastic change. Against the backdrop of the military confrontation with the Ottoman Empire and the regencies in Northern Africa, mutual commerce started to intensify. Numerous merchants strengthened their commercial relations with Muslim partners, while the Spanish Crown also began to consider trade an alternative to war and booty – and a much better means of generating income through tax revenues (MARTÍN CORRALES, 2001; MARTÍN CORRALES, 2005). Hence, trade and war between Christians and Muslims had a parallel existence in the early modern Mediterranean, and, likewise, in the Philippines.

The expression 'Moro' was introduced by the Spaniards in the Philippines as a generic term to describe Muslims in Southeast Asia analogous to the term applied in the Mediterranean. It did not, however, reflect the actual political (and economic) entities in the region. These largely comprised the three sultanates of Sulu in Jolo, of Brunei in Borneo, and of Maguindanao in Mindanao. On the island of Mindanao, however, political dominion was in flux and, at times, there were four overlords simultaneously (COMBÉS, 1897: 292). Hence, while the term 'Moro' is used in this article as an umbrella term¹ for the Muslims from the Sulu, Maguindanao, and Brunei territories, technically speaking, no such thing as Moro-trade in the Philippines ever existed. Trade was always conducted with individuals, living in certain villages and being part of certain ethnicities, within larger kingdoms or sultanates – just as war was never waged against 'the Moros' but against sultanates or smaller political entities (MALLARI, 1998; DONOSO JIMÉNEZ,

¹ For the ambivalence of the term 'Moro' in today's usage, see ANGELES (2010). In this article, the word is used in the most neutral sense.

2011; LUQUE TALAVÁN and MANCHADO LÓPEZ 2014; CRAILSHEIM 2014). This is one of the reasons why ‘Spanish-Moro trade’ could take place at the same time as ‘Spanish-Moro wars.’²

When the Spaniards inserted themselves in the Southeast Asian world, taking possession of the archipelago and, thereby, creating the political entity of the Spanish Philippines, commercial life was boosted, above all in the new Spanish capital, Manila. The most innovative element to be introduced was the so-called Manila Galleon, which connected Asia and America between 1565 and 1821. This shipping line drastically influenced the Southeast Asian economy in the 16th century, establishing itself as a powerful commercial factor until well into the 19th century (SCHURZ, 1985; LEGARDA, JR., 1999; BERNABEU ALBERT and MARTÍNEZ SHAW, 2013; GIRÁLDEZ, 2015; PÉREZ LECHA, 2018). Its massive loads of silver bullion changed many features of commerce, above all as Manila started to attract more and more Chinese merchants, who exported silver in huge amounts to China. The loss of some of the transpacific galleons in a row has possibly been a factor in the Chinese state crisis and might have contributed to the fall of the Ming dynasty in 1644 (FLYNN and GIRÁLDEZ, 1995: 209).

Even though Spanish Manila is the analytic focus of this article, the commercial network it belonged to was clearly polycentric, with Manila but one node, albeit an essential one. Other such hubs were Amoy, Macao, Malacca, and Batavia, to the west, and Acapulco and Mexico City, to the east. The trade between Spanish merchants and those of Sulu, Maguindanao, and Brunei cannot be understood in isolation and disconnected from the context of the Southeast Asian economic world to which the Philippines belonged (REID, 1988-1993; REID, 2004; WARREN, 2000; FRANK, 1998; TARLING, 2005; LIEBERMAN, 2009; MATSUDA, 2012; WENDT and NAGEL, 2014; TREMMML-WERNER, 2015). On a global scale, Manila’s network of trade included people, ships, and merchandise from New Spain, Peru, China, Japan, India, and the Middle East, as well as from Europe and Africa. Within Southeast Asia, Manila was connected to Cambodia, Tonkin, Siam, Cochinchina, Batavia, Malacca, and the Moluccas Islands, the trade with Jolo, Mindanao, and Borneo also having its place in this mesh. This article will show how the exchange of Spanish and Moro products actually entered these trade circuits and how it fitted into this global commercial network centered on Southeast Asia.

Contrary to James Warren, who holds that no regular commerce existed between the Spanish Philippines and the Muslim sultanates prior to 1787 (WARREN, 1985: 55), this article argues that the Spaniards had commercial relations with these sultanates almost continuously before that year. To justify this claim, it will outline representative cases of trade between Spaniards and Muslims in the Philippines, from the first exchanges in the 16th century to the more developed trade relations at the end of the 18th century.

² As this article covers the long period between 1565 and 1800, no detailed overview can be included about every confrontation between Spaniards and Moros. For a more detailed account see, for example, MAJUL (1973), DERY (1997), or SANCHEZ (2019).

2. THE FIRST CONTACT IN THE 16TH CENTURY

In 1565, the Spanish general Miguel López de Legazpi arrived in the Philippines and took possession of the islands in the name of the Crown. In both his own report and according to the Augustinian chronicler Gaspar de San Agustín, the very first meeting between Spaniards and Muslims took place in March of that year, when the Spaniards landed on the Island of Bohol. The Spanish explorers started to look for provisions³ and tried to fathom the commercial dynamics of the archipelago. When they approached a junk from Borneo, they were fired at because the crew believed to be under attack. After heavy fighting, the Spanish overcame the Borneans and explained the misunderstanding to the surviving seven crewmembers, including the pilot (*piloto mayor*) and the factor of the "King of Borneo."⁴ To the relief of the Borneans, Legazpi set them free and returned them all of their belongings, including the junk and its cargo. The Spaniards gained valuable information from the Borneans and started to understand the commercial situation of the islands. In the Visayas and, above all, on Mindanao, merchants from Borneo sold many products from China, such as copper, tin, and porcelain (see for example MIN, 2014) together with crockery, bells, aromatic resins (*menjui/benjuí*) and cast iron pans; painted textiles from India; and iron spearheads, knives, and other 'trivialities' (*menudencias*). On the other hand, from the natives they bought gold, beeswax, slaves, a particular type of sea snail (*sigueyes*) used in Siam as currency, and large amounts of cheap white blankets. When Legazpi showed him the commodities from the holds of his ships, comprising silk and other valuable textiles, the pilot, who appeared to be best informed about local commerce, was of the opinion that the Spaniards would be able to sell them in Borneo or Siam, but not in the Philippines. He even offered to leave for Borneo and come back with merchandise more suited for sale in these islands. Also, he told Legazpi about Butuan, a prosperous trading post at the northern coast of Mindanao, rich in cinnamon, wax, slaves, and gold (SAN AGUSTÍN, 1698: 92-96; CONCEPCIÓN, 1788-1792: vol. 1, 349-353, HIDALGO NUCHERA, 1995: 170-173).⁵

The reputation of Butuan had already reached Legazpi before the capture of the Borneo vessel and he had sent out Captain Juan de la Isla with the *patache*⁶ *San Juan*, to examine this place. In Butuan, the Spanish emissaries beheld two Moro junks from Luzon (probably from Maynilad, the later Manila), which were anchored in that port to trade with the natives. The Moros immediately started to

3 Apparently, the natives in Leyte, Limasaw, and Bohol were not very hospitable to the arriving Spaniards upon first contact. Later, Legazpi found out from a pilot from Borneo that the Portuguese had landed in 1563 on Bohol and Limasawa, pretending to be Castilians, and slaughtered and captured many natives with the intention to complicate the Spanish arrival in Asia; this was confirmed later by Bohol principalities. HIDALGO NUCHERA (1995: 168, 174, 176, 179), SAN AGUSTÍN (1698: 96-98), CONCEPCIÓN (1788-1792, vol. 1: 353-356).

4 Referring to Saiful Rijal, the seventh sultan of Brunei, who dominated most of the Island of Borneo.

5 As the Moros sold almost exclusively Chinese merchandise, the natives of Butuan used to call the Moros from Borneo and Luzon 'Chinese.'

6 A light sailing vessel with two masts. Most explanations for vessels in this article are taken from the *Diccionario marítimo español* (1831).

negotiate with the Spaniards and showed particular interest in their silver. The Spaniards were offered the very profitable rate of one ounce of gold for six ounces of silver; and two arrobas (11.5 kilograms each) and 16 pounds of wax for 58 *reales de plata*. During the following days, the Spanish treasurer Guido de Lavezaris, who was part of the expedition corps, bought 16 *marcos* (eight ounces each) and six ounces of gold in the form of dust and jewelry, 20 *quintales* (920 kilograms) of wax, and half-a-pound of fine cinnamon (HIDALGO NUCHERA, 1995: 182; SAN AGUSTÍN 1698: 108-109; CONCEPCIÓN, 1788-1792: vol. 1, 356-357).⁷ But subsequently, the Spaniards found out that the Moros from Luzon were repeatedly playing tricks on them (*repetidos engaños*), as the wax was, for example, mixed with dirt (*el corazon era tierra*). Only barely could Lavezaris and the Augustinian Friar Martin de Rada keep the captain and the soldiers back from violent revenge. To monopolize the trade in Spanish silver, the Moros seemed to have spread rumors about the treachery of the Spaniards to keep the natives away from them, even though these showed noticeable interest in selling textiles (*tafetanes y lienzos*). What remained was a bad aftertaste regarding trade dominance and the “vile designs” of the Moros from Borneo and Luzon (HIDALGO NUCHERA, 1995: 182-184, ROYAL OFFICIALS OF THE PHILIPPINES, 1962; SAN AGUSTÍN, 1698: 108-109). Being informed about these dealings, Legazpi himself stated that “the Moros have already started the war with knacks and fraud” (HIDALGO NUCHERA, 1995: 183).⁸

Later, when the Spanish ships arrived in the village of Dapitan, on Mindanao, which had been founded by migrants from Bohol, friendship was established with Chief Pagbuaya. During their stay there, two ambassadors from Borneo arrived to negotiate commercial affairs. But soon they had to accept that the Spaniards had become commercial competitors. This time, the Spaniards had more leverage and Pagbuaya sent the Borneans away, stating that because of his new friendship with the Spaniards (*hermandad con los Castillas*) he desired no further alliances (CONCEPCIÓN, 1788-1792: vol. 1, 360-361; COMBÉS, 1897: 85-87).⁹

Once the Spaniards had erected their settlement on Cebu, where they had arrived on April 27, 1565, they used their newly gathered knowledge to formulate a strategy for the conquest of the whole archipelago. Being aware of the potential rivalry with the Moros, some leading Spaniards suggested to King Felipe II (ruled 1556-1598) a certain way to proceed:

We beseech his majesty [...] that, inasmuch as the said Moros and others take all the gold, pearls, and jewels, precious stones and other things of which we have no information – thus injuring the natives, both by giving us no opportunity to plant our

⁷ Some months later, the Spaniards bought another hundred *arrobas* of cinnamon on account of the king to send it back to New Spain. CONCEPCIÓN (1788-1792: vol. 1, 392).

⁸ In Bohol, at this time, Legazpi realized that his Moro acquaintances from Borneo were tough negotiators and would trick him when it came to business (*engañando y disimulando*) – although proving themselves valuable allies in all other regards. HIDALGO NUCHERA (1995: 180), SAN AGUSTÍN (1698: 106).

⁹ Even though Francisco Combés and Juan de la Concepción locate this event chronologically before the arrival of the Spaniards in Cebu, it does not seem to fit in the chronology given by Legazpi or San Agustín. HIDALGO NUCHERA (1995: 186), SAN AGUSTÍN (1698: 113).

holy faith among them, and by taking the said gold – they should if they continue the said trade, lose their property and be made slaves, for they preach the doctrine of Mahomet (ROYAL OFFICIALS OF THE PHILIPPINES, 1962: 182).¹⁰

In the first years on the Philippines, it seemed that the eradication of Muslim influence was indeed very high on the Spanish agenda. W.H. Scott understands and reformulates the Spanish strategy in this initial phase in exactly this way:

First, Mindoro must be neutralized to give access to Manila [accomplished in 1570]. Then, Manila must be taken to capture the China trade [1571]. Next, Borneo must be reduced to break the Malaccan connection [1578]. And lastly, Jolo and Maguindanao must be neutralized for direct access to the Spice Islands to the south [1578 and 1579 – Moluccas Islands in 1582] (SCOTT, 1985: 47).

Hence, after some initial commerce with the Moros – necessary for Spanish survival at first – the Spaniards attempted to get rid of their competitors in the intra-island trade and consolidate their own political, military, and commercial power.

Having accomplished commercial dominance over many islands and founded the new capital Manila in 1571, the de facto monopolization of all commerce with China was established there, facilitated by the nascent trade line with Acapulco. The Manila Galleon trade became the dominant feature of the Philippine economy until the end of the 18th century, much to the detriment of other economic sectors in the archipelago, such as mining and agriculture (DÍAZ-TRECHUELO, 1963-1966; SCHURZ, 1985; CORPUZ, 1997; LEGARDA, JR., 1999; YUSTE LÓPEZ 2007; BERNABEU ALBERT and MARTÍNEZ SHAW, 2013).

While many of the lowland communities in Luzon and the Visayas were soon paying tribute to their new Spanish overlord, the areas that were ruled by Muslim sultans – which were better organized militarily – resisted Spanish attempts to conquer more territory and opposed the Spanish rule from Manila during most of the colonial period. This confrontation, which in the 19th century was labeled the 'Moro Wars,' persisted with varying intensity and determined the Spanish defensive policy in the Philippines to a great extent (SALEEBY, 1908; MAJUL, 1973; CRUIKSHANK, 1979; WARREN, 1985; SCOTT, 1985; MALLARI, 1990; COSTA, 1992; DERY, 1997).

Scott's assessment of Spain's game plan, quoted above, corresponds to what Cesar Majul has classified as the first two phases of Spanish-Moro confrontation (MAJUL, 1973: 108-116). The clash between the two sides would continue until the end of Spanish rule and beyond. It would take various forms, involve a large number of people, and affect most parts of the Philippines. Spanish attacks were brutal and their measures often draconian: entire cities, villages, and fields were burned, and their populations slaughtered or taken as slaves. Equally, the Moros killed, burnt, and destroyed villages under Spanish rule and deliberately undertook slave raids in the Spanish Philippines. One would be mistaken,

¹⁰ The petition was signed by leading Spaniards such as by Martin de Goiti, Guido de Lavezaris, Andres de Miranda, and Juan de la Isla. HIDALGO NUCHERA (1995: 203-205).

however, to regard Spanish-Moro coexistence as a constant state of war. Peace agreements were made and honored, and even Christian proselytization was able to take place over many years in a relatively undisturbed environment. Nonetheless, two constraints should be pointed out. First, peace agreements seldom concerned all of the Moro sultanates and Spain was hardly ever not at war with at least one of them. And second, even if peace prevailed with a sultan, some of his subjects would still undertake slave raids in the Visayas or Luzon and plunder Spanish trade vessels. Hence, even if Spain was not constantly at 'war' with 'the Moros,' relations were overall strained and Spanish trade to the south was always a dangerous venture. Nevertheless, in spite of this almost perpetual climate of confrontation, commercial interaction did take place between Spaniards and Moros, often in clandestine ways.

3. WAR, PEACE, AND TRADE IN THE 17TH CENTURY

Already in the first descriptions, the islands of Mindanao, Jolo and Borneo were commended as being extremely fertile and rich in natural resources. The Jesuit chronicler Francisco Combés described the wealth of Jolo's and Mindanao's fauna and flora and the potential for mining, also praising the fruits of the land, its mineral resources, and the opulence of its fishing grounds (COMBÉS, 1897: 7-26). Also his fellow Jesuit Pedro Chirino mentioned the abundance of Mindanao and the prospect of getting cinnamon and *algalia*, a fluid derived from the cat-like civet (*viverrina*) and used in perfumes (CHIRINO, 1604: 81). In later accounts too, the riches of Mindanao were praised, in particular by Jesuits, who had an inherent interest in the island because most of Mindanao was 'Jesuit territory' (though with some parts of the island being allotted to the Augustinian Recollect order) and more Spanish engagement there would have meant greater influence and possibilities of proselytization. In regard to Borneo, the Catalan chaplain Bartolomé Leonardo de Argensola wrote that it had all necessary for a copious life, produced camphor and diamonds, and cultivated many horses. He compared its capital, counting 23,000 houses, to Venice and praised the abundant commerce of its ports. He even shed light on consumer patterns: "They have no certain fashion of cloths. Many of them wear cotton shirts, and others of white common single Tabby, with red lists" (LEONARDO DE ARGENSOLA, 1708: 67-68; LEONARDO DE ARGENSOLA, 2009).

During these early years, information regarding Spanish-Moro trade is scarce. Yet, already at the turn of century, the judge Antonio de Morga mentions the trade between Manila and Borneo. The Borneans sold fine mats from palm trees, sago bread, earthen jars, black glazed earthenware of good quality, fine camphor, and slaves, all of which was bought rather by the natives than the Spaniards. On their way back the Borneans took wine, rice, cotton blankets, and cheap metal ware from the Philippines (MORGA, 2007: 291). In the 1620s, it appears that Sultan Muhammad Dipatuan Kudarat of Maguindanao (r. 1619-1671) was trading intensely with Manila, Cebu, and other Spanish settlements. Ruurdje Laarhoven has shown that he sold wax, cinnamon, and forest products, and also smuggled

spices and slaves. In return, he bought cloth and Chinese products (LAARHOVEN, 1989: 28). It can be assumed that this trade between Mindanao and Manila was linked to and influenced by the traffic and spice shipments between Manila and the Spanish strongholds in the Moluccas Islands until their abandonment in 1662 (SANCHEZ, 2013).

3.1 The 'Presidio trade' and first governmental initiatives (1635-1662)

Between 1635 and 1662, one of the most intense phases of confrontation took place between Spaniards and Moros. In 1635 Governor Juan Cerezo de Salamanca (r. 1633-1635) ordered the construction of the fortress Real Fuerza de Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Zaragoza at the westernmost part of the Island of Mindanao, in Zamboanga. It was designed as a forward post in the defense against raiders from Mindanao and Jolo. The project was supported energetically by the Jesuit order and the Bishop of Cebu. The following years saw a strong Spanish offense, with Governor Sebastián Hurtado de Corcuera (r. 1635-1644) celebrating major victories in Mindanao and Jolo (MAJUL, 1973: 132-168; COELLO DE LA ROSA, 2019).

During these years of active warfare, trade between the opponents seems to have been non-existent, but shortly after direct hostilities had subsided, mutual commerce developed with some verve. After the 'crusades' of Governor Corcuera, the incoming governor, Diego Fajardo Chacon (r. 1644-1653), adopted a slightly different stance, as described by Francisco de Combés. While the general opinion prevailed in these years that peace and commerce with the Borneans were not possible, because they were considered too barbarous a people, it was felt that peace with the sultanates in Mindanao and Jolo should be negotiated, above all to free Manila's back for the escalating war against the Dutch (1621-1648). Together with the governor of Zamboanga, Francisco de Atienza, the Jesuit Alejandro López was instructed to approach the two sultans. Together, on July 24, 1645, they successfully concluded a peace agreement with the most powerful ruler of Mindanao, Sultan Kudarat of Maguindanao. One of the articles of the concord concerned commerce: the subjects of the Spanish king were to be allowed to trade freely in Mindanao, while subjects of the sultan could also trade in Zamboanga and other parts at will. Depending on the location, the laws of the respective sovereign were to apply and no merchant would be forced to convert. Furthermore, a church would be established in Mindanao for the Christian merchants. As a sign of "friendship," all Mindanao merchants in Zamboanga had to pay a fee of five percent of their sales to the Spanish king. Nine months later, on April 14, 1646, López managed also to negotiate peace with the Sulu sultan, Raja Bongsu (r. 1610-1650). Trade was not mentioned explicitly in this treaty, but in return for Spanish services and as a sign of brotherhood between the sovereigns, the sultan committed himself to send three *joangas*, eight arms long, full of rice to Zamboanga each year for the sustenance of the fortress. It is quite conceivable that these shipments – or tribute – triggered commercial interchange between Jolo and

Zamboanga (COMBÉS, 1897: 430-433, 443-447; CRAILSHEIM, 2015).

While these measures could be seen as cautious steps toward commercial opening, in 1654, the new governor, Sabiniano Manrique de Lara (r. 1653-1663), vehemently criticized his predecessor – whom he otherwise praised for his integrity – for having closed Manila to “universal commerce with the kingdoms of this archipelago”, which he saw as the prime reason for its economic decay. More specifically, he was referring to Macassar, Cambodia, the Island of Tidore, Calonga and Manados (both Christian realms in Sulawesi), Mindanao, Jolo, and in a lesser degree also Tonkin, Siam, and Cochinchina. But Manrique de Lara’s argument did not stop there; he went on to outline how commerce would be the best promoter of the Catholic faith in these kingdoms – which again indicates the closeness between religious, economic, and military priorities. By 1654, Manrique de Lara had already approached the rulers of the aforementioned kingdoms and started trade negotiations to reopen mutual commerce just as it had previously existed “under the best of the Philippine governors.”¹¹

Although we have no detailed information as to whether Manrique de Lara’s policies were successful, it can be assumed that Spanish-Moro commerce advanced to a certain degree. In 1660, an unknown amount of wax was transported on three Maguindanao *prahus* from Spanish-ruled Butuan, in northern Mindanao, to the Maguindanao Sultanate, in the southwest of the island. In June 1661, forty-to-fifty *korakoras*¹² full of “Butuan wax” were exported from Maguindanao to “foreign places.” Two years later, a load of sulfur (fifteen bamboos of five-span-length) was acquired by Sultan Kudarat in Butuan, as well as an unknown amount of wax and gold by a Maguindanao trader called Serilamma. Also in that year, Sultan Kudarat made a gift to the Dutch merchant Casparus Bouwer, which consisted of four bundles of cinnamon from Zamboanga of good quality (LAARHOVEN, 1989: 53, 214-218).¹³

3.2 Moros in Manila at the turn of the century and Torralba’s complaints

Between 1662 and 1663, the Manila government abandoned its strongholds in the Moluccas Islands and on Mindanao since it was amassing its troops in Manila against an imminent Chinese attack (COMBÉS, 1897: 610-621; CONCEPCIÓN, 1788-1792: 69-104; ANDRADE, 2008; POTET, 2016). As influential interest-groups in Manila were opposed to the reconstruction of the fortresses to the south (SANCHEZ, 2019), it took a long time to return, 56 years to be precise. The period between 1662 and 1718 is omitted in the Majul classification and, hence, does not belong to the so-called Moro War phases (MAJUL, 1973: 169-190). However, slave raids took place during these years as well, though with much less frequency (DERY, 2006:

11 Archivo General de Indias (AGI), Seville, Filipinas, 285, N. 1: Libro de cartas de Sabiniano Manrique de Lara (1654) ff. 12r-13r (n. 29-33). Translations by the author. For Calonga and Manados, see COLÍN and CHIRINO (1663: 820).

12 A *korakora* is a long outrigger used in the Moluccas propelled by oar and sail. LAARHOVEN (1989: 255).

13 The presented data for the year 1663 has to be read with care, as that year marked the end of the Spanish presence in Mindanao.

229; MAJUL, 1973: 189-190).

Trade also subsisted between the Spaniards and the peoples of the surrounding sultanates. Based on sources of the Dutch East India Company (VOC), Ruurdje Laarhoven has observed an annual "never-ceasing heavy cloth trade" from Manila to the Sultanate of Maguindanao (probably in the second half of the 17th century), carried out by the sultan himself, the *kapitan laut* (fleet commander), and Chinese merchants. Moreover, between 1687 and 1691, she lists a Castilian vessel, which set-off from Manila for trade with Maguindanao. Besides cloth, the list of imported goods from Spanish ports to Maguindanao contains silk, leathers, brass, scrap brass, war materiel, gold, slaves, and, of course, silver coins. In the other direction, Laarhoven has found an annual delivery by Spaniards to Manila of one *champán* full of second-grade cinnamon (*cassia lignum*) and tortoise shells purchased in Maguindanao. In July 1689, Chinese and Maguindanao merchants transported an unknown amount of wax to Manila, while in the last part of 1693, Sultan Barahaman (r. ca. 1678-1699), Maulano (the brother of the sultan and commander of the fleet), and other officers (*bobatos*) send three large cargos of wax to Manila. At the end of the 17th century, Lieutenant Meynard de Roy, a chief representative of the VOC in Ternate, learned that the Maguindanao wax trade with Manila was monopolized by the sultan and his family and yielded a profit of up to 150 percent. The VOC was always very interested in the Spanish trade with Mindanao¹⁴ and De Roy further noted that there was a permanent trade between Manila and Maguindanao, in which wax was traded for cloth (LAARHOVEN, 1989: 56, 76, 147, 150, 155, 213-221, 235, 255).¹⁵

Similar observations were made by the English adventurer William Dampier, who visited Mindanao in 1686 on a privateer-turned-merchant ship. Almost all of the wax and gold that Maguindanao could get from the peoples of the Mindanao highlands was sent to Manila. With the revenues therefrom, they bought calicoes, muslins, and China silk and returned to Mindanao (QUIASON, 1966: 115, 133; DAMPIER 1697). Furthermore, in 1701, as the Augustinian Recollect chronicler Juan de la Concepción reported, Spain was at peace with Mindanao and Jolo, which made Christianity thrive there. In this environment, the Moros sold their "abundant fruits" freely and were admitted to trade ("de buena feè") in all Spanish ports.¹⁶

In 1704, judge-and-later-governor José de Torralba (r. 1715-1717) complained about the presence of Moros in Manila, who alongside Armenians and Malabars ("enemigos de nuestra sancta fee Catholica") had come to trade with the Spaniards ("trato y comercio"). They lived outside of town - "extramuros" - in Santa Cruz, el Rosario, and San Gabriel, alongside Christian Chinese mestizos

14 Since the Peace of Munster in 1648, Spain had been forbidden to trade south or west of the occupied lands in the Philippines. Little attention was paid to this clause by the Spaniards, but the Dutch repeatedly referred to it when defending their rights in Asia, as late as 1734 and 1768, for example MARTÍNEZ SHAW (2009).

15 The Dutch and the English had their own interest in trade with Mindanao. AGI Filipinas, 17, R. 1, N. 11: Carta de Fausto Cruzat sobre comercio de enemigos en Mindanao (Manila 25/5/1697).

16 "En paz estaban las Islas con los Moros de Mindanao y Jolo, la que conservaba la quietud de nuestras Christianidades, y el Comercio de sus frutos abundante, y libre; logrando tambien los Moros, siendo admitidos de buena feè en todos nuestros Puertos:" CONCEPCIÓN (1788-1792: vol. 8, 301).

and Christian natives. Their houses were at the riverside and open for business without restriction. Their leaders (*capitanes* and *cavesillas*) were rich and powerful merchants, not following any regulations. Torralba feared the non-believers' negative influence ("malos efectos") on the unstable beliefs of the native and Chinese neophytes. Moreover, he criticized their special status and argued for the application of the same laws that dictated the business of the *sangleyes* (the Chinese community in the Philippines) in the *parián* (Chinese quarters and market), such as the selection of leaders with certain responsibilities, the appointment of guards, and the obligation to live in certain barrios. In principal, Torralba declared, he wanted the same rules that applied to Christians in foreign territory to be imposed in Manila on the non-believers.¹⁷ Given that this issue arose several times during the following years, the presence of Moro merchants in Manila ("moros [...] joloos, mindanaos y borneyes") seems to have been a permanent factor in the city, with Moro trade an apparently constant component in the commercial life of Manila.¹⁸ Finally, all the aforementioned groups were to resettle in the *parián*; however, the relevant laws were barely followed and the Moros in nearby villages were able to delay their resettlement with ease.¹⁹ Further restrictions forbade foreign merchants – in this case the legislation included Moros as well as Lascars, Armenians, Portuguese and *sangleyes* – to enter the houses of natives, *sangleyes*, mestizos, creoles, Japanese, or Spaniards.²⁰ Furthermore, women of any origin were forbidden to enter Moro shops and houses, whether alone or accompanied by men.²¹ In spite of these restrictions and onerous terms, Moro trade continued in Manila.

4. ZAMBOANGA AS TRADING HUB WITH THE MOROS IN THE 18TH CENTURY

In 1718, the Presidio of Zamboanga was reestablished in Mindanao – much to the delight of the Jesuits – and old enmities flared up to their full extent. Consequently, trade yet again became more complicated between Spaniards and Muslims of the Philippines, as shipping in the archipelago's waters became more difficult. Yet, trade appears to never have ceased entirely.²²

17 AGI Filipinas, 165, N. 8: Carta de Torralba sobre convivencia con infieles (Manila 20/7/1704); for the Armenians see also QUIASON (1966:63–65) and BAENA ZAPATERO and LAMIKIZ (2014).

18 AGI Filipinas, 294, N. 27: Carta de José de Altamirano y Cervantes sobre convivencia con infieles (Manila 5/7/1707). The vicar general of the vacant archbishopric of Manila, José de Altamirano y Cervantes, even wanted to oblige the Moro merchants to stay on their ships while in Manila. See also AGI Filipinas, 168, N. 7: Carta de la Audiencia de Manila sobre separación de infieles y cristianos (Manila 27/7/1713); and AGI Filipinas, 130, N. 10: Carta del conde de Lizárraga sobre separar cristianos de infieles (Manila 8/6/1713).

19 AGI Filipinas, 130, N. 10: Carta del conde de Lizárraga sobre separar cristianos de infieles (Manila 8/6/1713), boque 3, imagen 72.

20 The source indeed includes the paradox (or rather inaccuracy) that *sangleyes* could not enter the houses of *sangleyes*.

21 AGI Filipinas, 130, N. 10: Carta del conde de Lizárraga sobre separar cristianos de infieles (Manila 8/6/1713), boque 5, imagen 85.

22 For the project of Padre José Calvo to establish a Spanish settlement in Zamboanga and start the cul-

4.1 El *Buscón* en Zamboanga

Spanish-Moro trade is also mentioned in a picaresque novel from the middle of the 18th century. In a sequel to Francisco de Quevedo's *La vida del Buscón* (Zaragoza 1626), the Jesuit priest Vicente Alemany (1729-1817) wrote about the further adventures in the Philippines of the protagonist, Don Pablos from Segovia. Alemany lived on the archipelago between 1754 and 1768 and hence knew at first-hand what he was writing about; he distinguished himself for his patriotic altitude, for which he was praised by Governor Simón de Anda y Salazar (r. 1762-1764 and 1770-1776). For many years, Alemany was a missionary in Zamboanga and a keen observer of the Spaniards' habits – and their frequent misconduct – (GARCÍA VALDÉS AND ALEMANY, 1998: 18). Following Quevedo's example, his novel is a presentation of Spanish corruption, viewed through the eyes of the rascal Don Pablos.

By happenstance, Don Pablos becomes the governor of the fortress of Zamboanga and misses no opportunity to enrich himself. Once ensconced in his new area of activity, and after having defrauded his soldiers by withholding their salary for some time, he sends two ambassadors to Jolo and to Sibuguey in Mindanao. They carry a message expressing his desire to live in harmony with the Moros and to forget about past conflicts. He encourages them to send their ships, "as was habitual in past times." The merchandise Don Pablos sends with the ambassadors sells well and they come back accompanied by Moro merchants, who start a flourishing commerce – in spite of its being "strictly forbidden." In addition, Don Pablos profits handsomely, as the Moros frequent the illegal gambling houses which are run by Don Pablos himself (GARCÍA VALDÉS and ALEMANY, 1998: 146). Even taking account of the fictitious character of Alemany's novel, its descriptions are barely exaggerated, shed light on the factual situation, and give a useful picture of the actual state of affairs – just as Quevedo revealed much about his time a hundred years earlier. And, indeed, later Spanish writers such as José García Armenteros would confirm the trade of Zamboanga's officials with Sulu and Mindanao.²³

4.2 Alexander Dalrymple' report

Another contemporary to comment on Spanish-Moro trade was Alexander Dalrymple, the British scholar and geographer, who worked for many years for the British East India Company (EIC). In his *Oriental Repertory*, he quoted an account of Oranky Ogoo from Jolo concerning the Sulu rulers. Oranky Ogoo

tivation of cinnamon, see BARRIO MUÑOZ, 2012: 281-293. However, the opposition of the city of Manila prevented it to be realized (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico City (INAH), G.O. 56, *Colección de 7 piezas manuscritas, relativas al comercio de las Islas Filipinas*, ff. 54-81).

23 For the actual trade of the Zamboanga governor, see Armenteros, *Discurso*, ff. 12v, 15v. For a similar line in illegal trade of the *alcaldes mayores* with Maroon communities in Cagayan and the organization of illegal gambling houses at the end of the 17th century, see AGI Filipinas 75, N. 18, analyzed more thoroughly in MAWSON (2016: 401).

mentioned that during the early rule of Sultan Azim ud-Din (r. 1735-1748 and 1764-1774), the Spaniards “had Colours on the Fort; which was garrisoned by above 100 Spanish Soldiers, in the Sultan’s Service: There was a Padre named Bastian, allowed to reside here, but no Church.” According to Oranky Ogoo, Azim ud-Din’s government depended on this Spanish support,²⁴ which is why he was so generous and supportive. During these years, the Spaniards (most likely from Zamboanga) traded frequently with Jolo (DALRYMPLE, 1793: 576-578).

4.3 The *residencia* of the Maestre de Campo Antonio Ramon de Abad

The illegal trade with the Moros was also a matter of concern for Juan de la Concepción, who described the lawsuit (*juicio de residencia*) of the Maestre de Campo Antonio Ramon de Abad y Monterde in the early 1750s in full detail (CONCEPCIÓN, 1788-1792, vol. 13: 36-85).²⁵ In the end, Abad, who was accused of much illegal trafficking, was almost completely exonerated by the court and Concepción utterly disappointed, still being convinced of Abad’s guilt. The charges he faced were close to the narrative regarding the regime of Don Pablos in Alemany’s novel.

Antonio Ramón de Abad, who had been sent to Zamboanga for a particular mission,²⁶ was accused of having engaged illegally in private commerce – forbidden to royal officers – many times. One of the most prominent products was sea slug (*balate*), probably from the Sulu region, which he was alleged to have traded for Philippine blankets and other merchandise; at least once, it was claimed, he used a Chinese *champán* (a light East Asian sailing vessel with three masts) for his business. Furthermore, he was said to have sent one of his captains on a ship of the royal armada to purchase 1,100 *canvas*²⁷ of rice (ca. 82,500 liters) in Sibuguey, which was part of the Moro-territory on Mindanao. Such provisioning trips would have taken place repeatedly and Abad then sold it back to the king at double the price or more.²⁸ While benefiting from these sales to the king, it was alleged that Abad also made considerable profit from selling other merchandise to the Moros and buying wax and cacao in Tuboc, a village close to the heart of the Maguindanao Sultanate. The journey to Tuboc was supposedly made in three armed vessels: a galley, a *champán*, and a *panco* (an enhanced canoe with masts). The staples of wax and cacao were sent to his business partners in Manila right away. Besides the aforementioned provisioning trips, Abad also supposedly used diplomatic envoys to the Maguindanao Sultan for his personal business ventures.

²⁴ In this regard, see also CRAILSHEIM (2013).

²⁵ Besides dealing in contraband, other charges were the capture of a Chinese vessel and misconduct in the re-installment of Azim ud-Din as sultan in Jolo. Cf. CRAILSHEIM (2013) and CRAILSHEIM (2015).

²⁶ AGI Filipinas, 458, N. 17, Duplicado de carta del marqués de Ovando sobre restitución del rey de Joló (Manila 15/7/1751).

²⁷ One canvas is about 25 *gantas*, i.e. 75 liters.

²⁸ For the borders of the Spanish dominated part of Mindanao see the “Carta Hydrographica y Chorographica” of Pedro Murillo Velarde (1696-1753), for example the 1734 map in the World Digital Library of the U.S. Library of Congress: <https://www.wdl.org/en/item/10089/> (18/10/2018).

On another occasion, he sold fifty *piculs*²⁹ of iron, blankets, *sarampulis* (native textiles) and other goods to Pakir Maulana Kamsa, the sultan of Maguindanao (r. 1748-1755).

In his defense, Abad said that he was merely helping and generously supplying the starving troops and advancing money to the king. All other commerce was, in his words, for the benefit of the king and for the common good. Furthermore, the trip to Tuboc was solely for the acquisition of rice, while the small amount ("la bagatela") of wax (one hundred *piculs*, i.e. 6,330 kilograms) and cacao (about ten *fanegas*, i.e. a total of 555 liters) was for his personal use only (CONCEPCIÓN, 1788-1792, vol. 13: 66-68, 75-78, 85).

4.4 Joaquín Martínez de Zuñiga's *Estadismo de las Islas Filipinas*

Fifty years later, the situation with regard to illegal trade did not appear to have improved. Accompanying and guiding General Ignacio María de Álava y Navarrete on his inspection tours of the Philippines at the turn of the 18th century, the Augustinian friar Joaquín Martínez de Zuñiga also observed the Spanish-Moro trade. In particular, he condemned the involvement in this trade of high-ranking Spanish officials who were neglecting their obligations. Very much in line with Alemany's observations and Concepción's assessment, Martínez de Zuñiga blamed the *alcaldes mayores* (the regional Spanish administrators) and the governors of Zamboanga for embezzlement and misappropriating funds for their personal gains. These officials had no monopoly for trade in these waters, they did not even have the right to trade at all. However, they had the will, the power, and the connections (including the Spanish friars) to intimidate most potential competitors. It was them who dictated prices and made a fortune in this trade, sending the *vintas* (outriggers, between five and fifteen meters long) of the marine units to barter instead of patrolling the waters. During a service period of three to five years, each of these high-ranking Spanish officials could gather between 20,000 and 50,000 pesos, in particular by trading rice, abacá, wax, cacao, textiles, and gold (MARTÍNEZ ZUÑIGA, 1893, vol. 2: 75, 82, 86, 97, 112). In addition, some of them even sold cannons and other weapons that were intended for their own troops to their potential enemies (DERY, 1997: 131; WARREN, 2002: 116-117).

5. MANILA TOWARD THE END OF THE 18TH CENTURY: COMMERCIAL PLANS AND THEIR REALIZATION

At the beginning of the second half of the 18th century, hostilities between Spaniards and the Muslim sultanates intensified. During the following years, commercial shipping in Philippine waters became more and more dangerous, and Moro slave raids increased, representing a troublesome obstacle to mutual trade relations (MAJUL, 1973; CRUIKSHANK, 1979; WARREN, 1985; MALLARI, 1986).

²⁹ A *picul* or *pico* was about 63.3 kilograms. LEGARDA, JR. (1999: 60).

At the same time, and inspired by ideas of the European Enlightenment, reformist projects were developed for the Philippines' economy, and the archipelago's commercial situation changed (DÍAZ-TRECHUELO, 1963-1966). The late 18th century saw a partial opening of the port of Manila to the outside world. Since 1764, direct voyages between Spain and Manila were allowed, following the route around the Cape of Good Hope. The war frigates that were employed in these ventures in the following twenty years reserved some cargo space for European merchandise and had permission to load local goods in Asian ports for the Manila merchants. The return cargo to Cádiz comprised Chinese merchandise and spices from the Moluccas, but it also included Philippine products – as well as tortoiseshell and mother-of-pearl, which probably derived from the Moro trade – (LEGARDA, JR., 1999: 59-60).

In 1785, the Royal Philippine Company was founded by Carlos III (r. 1759-1788), while, simultaneously, Manila was opened for all Asian shipping – basically legalizing existing practice. While the ventures of the Company – set up in principle to stimulate the economic development of the archipelago – might not have been of immediate relevance for the economy of the Philippines (even if laying the groundwork for later developments), the liberalization of the port of Manila was. In 1787, trade with Dutch, English, and French merchants in Asia was allowed via Portuguese or Indian ships, and, from 1789, via their own ships, although European merchandise remained forbidden. In spite of these regulations, mistrust reigned and commercial exchange with other Europeans was still often carried out through intermediaries and fronts.³⁰ When war broke out with England in 1796, the situation grew even worse (LEGARDA, JR., 1999: 77-88; SCHURZ, 1985: 53). Nevertheless, these changes in the legal structure of Manila's commerce and its partial reorientation meant new opportunities for Spanish-Moro commerce and greater demand for products from Jolo, Mindanao, and Borneo.

5.1 First attempts to systematize the Moro trade to Manila (1765-1785)

Among the many reforms that were proposed in the second half of the 18th century, some included the intensification of trade with 'oriental countries' (DÍAZ-TRECHUELO, 1966: 254-261; LEGARDA, JR., 1999: 53-59). Francisco Leandro de Viana, general attorney (*fiscal*) of the *Audiencia* (the royal court of justice) of Manila from 1756 to 1765, for example, presented in 1764/5 a project to the governor which aimed at making the Philippines self-sufficient, based on its own production and direct trade with Spain.³¹ Among the products he proposed to load in Manila for

30 In the 18th century, the so-called English free traders had developed the habit of using Moros, Armenians, Malabar Hindus, and Portuguese as fronts for their Madras-Manila trade to evade Spanish restrictions. However, it may be assumed that the Spanish authorities were well aware of the true identity of these merchants and got a share of the profits (QUIASON, 1966: 62-66, 90).

31 Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE), Mss 17859: *Documentos relativos al estado de las Islas Filipinas*: Francisco Leandro de Viana, "Demostracion del misero deplorable estado de las Yslas Philipinas," ff. 28r-120v (10/6/1766). A valuable edition has been done by LLOBET (2000). See also FRADERA (1999: 71-90) and BLANCO (2009: 34-72).

the Chinese market, he included edible bird's nests, mother-of-pearl, seashells, and sea slugs, much of which was probably purchased in Jolo. For the return voyage from Manila to Spain, he listed tortoiseshells, which might also have been bought from Moro traders. Parts of Viana's plan would be adopted and put into practice later (LEGARDA, JR., 1999: 54). Following on from these ideas, Governor Simón de Anda y Salazar was probably the first to explicitly suggest the trade of Philippine manufactured goods with the sultanates in Jolo and Mindanao in 1772. His plans sought not only commercial benefits, but also the military and political wellbeing of the colony, as trade with the Moros, in his eyes at least, had the potential to appease the raiders and to weaken the English in the area. The prospect of getting easier access to the Philippine market, including commerce from New Spain and stronger ties with the *sangleyes*, must have been of interest for Sultan Mohammad Israel of Sulu (r. 1773-1778). In his negotiations with the Sergeant Major Manuel Álvarez, the governor of Zamboanga, he even offered the Spaniards part of the output of a planned mining venture in exchange for technical assistance and better access to trade with Manila and Zamboanga (WARREN, 1985: 32, 53).

In the end, the planned trade agreements came to nothing but Mohammad Israel's successor Sultan Azim ud-Din II (r. 1778-1789) re-opened trade negotiations with Spain, offering a treaty of friendship and commerce. Governor José Basco y Vargas (r. 1776-1787) accepted the offer but it took Spain several years to ratify the deal and to systematize these commercial relations. In 1785, the tribunal of the recently founded Royal Philippine Company, in accordance with instructions from Madrid, gave a positive evaluation of peace and commerce with Jolo and Mindanao. Trade agreements were implemented and Taosug³² noblemen from Jolo started to frequent Manila more regularly. Already in 1786, a Taosug *vinta* arrived with merchandise worth 8,000 pesos, starting a commercial cooperation that continued over the following decades (WARREN, 1985: 54).

5.2 José García Armenteros' *Discurso* (1786)

In that same year, one of the most prominent projects to promote trade with the sultanates was published by the secretary of the *Intendencia de Exército y Real Hacienda* of the Philippines, José García Armenteros. His *Discurso [...] sobre la utilidad del comercio de Filipinas con reinos vecinos, y los medios de establecerlo y practicarlo* was about the utility of the islands' commerce with neighboring realms (considered as easy and lucrative) and the means to bring it about.³³ He presented a commercial history and recommendations for the rejuvenation or intensification of Spanish trade with the Moluccas Islands, Cambodia, Siam, Mindanao, Jolo, and Borneo (DÍAZ-TRECHUELO, 1966: 258, 261; MARTÍNEZ SHAW, 2009). Referring

³² The ethnicity of the Taosug represented the political elite within the Sulu Sultanate.

³³ García Armenteros, José, *Discurso de José García Armenteros sobre la utilidad del comercio de Filipinas con reinos vecinos, y los medios de establecerlo y practicarlo, presentado a la Sociedad Económica de Manila*, AMN 0122 Ms.0136 / 001 (15/2/1791) from <http://bibliotecavirtualdefensa.es> (18/10/2018). Quote from f. 9r. Translation by the author.

to the trade with Mindanao, Jolo, and Borneo, Armenteros was well aware of the problematic situation, with its military struggles and constant slave raids. Nevertheless, as he pointed out, even trade with countries in warlike situations had the potential to render economic benefits and, furthermore, to bring about peace between nations, because recognizing the benefits of commerce – “for the good of humanity” – would help to overcome a noxious raiding mentality.³⁴ In line with Governor Anda y Salazar, he was of the opinion that trade between Mindanao and Spain had the “incomparable advantage” of setting hostilities aside and ending the Mindanao “piracy”.³⁵ While military action and other means had failed in pacifying the Mindanao realms, commerce remained a viable option and the proper “remedy against this strain”.³⁶ The example of Jolo, in the eyes of Armenteros, showed how this change might be effected. Slave raiding had long been a business of Sulu, the slaves intended for work in the houses and fields or for sale in neighboring countries. But by this time, the Sulu sultan and most aristocrats (*datus*) had stopped raiding the Visayas, whether because of the recently established commercial relations with Manila, or because they found better raiding grounds in Borneo, or that they were afraid of Spanish retaliations.³⁷

To the critics of this proposal for trade with neighboring realms, who feared losses to the traditional Acapulco trade, and to the sceptics of the feasibility of his plans, Armenteros pointed out that both the *alcalde mayor* of Iloilo and the governor of the fortress of Zamboanga had already been involved in trade with these kingdoms for some time, carrying special letters of permission from the Manila government. The profitability of this trade, therefore, was already self-evident and had not hitherto disturbed the Galleon trade.³⁸

Armenteros considered the island of Jolo to be commercially more important than Mindanao. In particular, its sea products were of interest to the Spaniards, such as mother-of-pearl (*concha de naçar*), sea turtle (*carey*), and sea slug, but edible bird’s nests and wax were also in demand. These products were gathered from Jolo and its surrounding islands as well as from the coast of Borneo, where the Sulu Sultanate had established outposts. The rather mediocre pearls which they likewise collected would be of interest to the Chinese from Amoy (called “Emuy” in Spanish sources, today Xiamen), who arrived annually in Manila on their junks. The return cargo from Manila to Jolo should be composed of Philippine rice, which would always render a profit there, but sugar even more so, with Philippine textiles also in great demand. In recent years, trade with Jolo had

34 “[...] aleja la desconfianza y los temores con que miran los hombres no civilizados a los extranjeros como si fuesen enemigos, son ventajas que para bien de la humanidad se deven al comercio.” Armenteros, *Discurso*, f. 5v.

35 The term ‘piracy’ has to be read with care in historical sources, as it is a complex concept, reflecting a subjective and judgmental view, often containing strategic intentions to delegitimize competitors or enemies. BOHN (2007: 17-18), ANTONY (2007: 5).

36 Armenteros, *Discurso*, f. 15r. “[...] con el tiempo que aumentera la comunicacion ganandonos amigos, se desminuya el corso, pasando los enemigos a otras costas [...]”, f. 16r.

37 Armenteros, *Discurso*, f. 15v. This description neglects that some ethnicities, like the Iranun, under nominal control of the Tausug sultan, continued their raids under Taosug ‘patronage.’

38 Armenteros, *Discurso*, f. 15v.

already started to regain strength and Manila ships travelled there, while Sulu *datus* also arrived in Manila with their *pancos* for trade.³⁹

Indian and Chinese goods were of the highest demand in Jolo. One or two *champanes* arrived there annually from Amoy, which covered Moro-Chinese trade. With regard to India, after the destruction of the English factory and fort in Balambangan in 1775 (CRAILSHEIM, 2017: 403-405), only some residual trade existed, carried out by the frigates of the English East Indies Company (EIC). The EIC sold Indian goods in Jolo in exchange for local products, which it then sold in China.⁴⁰ As Indian merchandise was also available in Manila, and for a low price, Armenteros suggested selling Indian products in Jolo to compete with the EIC merchants.⁴¹

The most outstanding product from Mindanao – Armenteros refers here to the southern part, which was controlled by the sultans of Mindanao – was beeswax; the commerce could reach up to 150 *quintales* (6.9 tons) per year. Long before Armenteros' analysis, the Spaniards in Zamboanga were already involved in trade with the Moros in Mindanao, as explained above. Yet, while trade with Jolo had been intensified in the second half of the 18th century, this had not been possible with Mindanao, due mainly to the ongoing hostilities. However, in the early 1780s, the sultan of Sibuguey and Prince Quibad – two of the rulers of southern Mindanao – were interested in and actively promoted trade with the Spaniards.⁴²

Armenteros was convinced that the trade with both Jolo and southern Mindanao could be carried out together in a single *balandra* (a small long boat, like a sloop, with cover and one mast) per year. A keel of about twenty-five ells would be the right size for such a medium-size cargo.⁴³ Instead of administering the trade from Manila, Armenteros argued that Iloilo, on Panay Island, should be the port of choice, as it was already the hub of the Manila-Visaya trade.⁴⁴ He also warned his readers that certain precautions were needed for the trade with these southern realms. Trading with “vicious infidels” entailed the risk of fraud (*trampas*) by the nobles (*principales*). In addition, Armenteros attested a lack of diligence of the *principales* and their “unreliable” suppliers, which frequently led to delays in deliveries and, hence, to deferral of departures.⁴⁵ In any case, one always had to have the necessary reserves to overcome losses in this kind of

39 Armenteros, *Discurso*, ff. 11r-13v; cf. WARREN (1985: 60).

40 For the attempts of the English to trade with Mindanao and Sulu, see QUIASON (1966: 112-138).

41 Armenteros, *Discurso*, ff. 12v-13r.

42 Armenteros, *Discurso*, ff. 12v, 13v, 15v-16r.

43 Armenteros, *Discurso*, f. 12r-v.

44 In the early 19th-century trade between Jolo and Manila, Iloilo would continue to be the dominant trading post, where merchants from Jolo could purchase: sugar, rice, tobacco, coconut oil, locally woven fabrics, and other handcrafted items. Even though it was forbidden to sell these goods outside of Manila, the prospect of bypassing Manila taxes gave Iloilo a strong advantage. WARREN (1985: 56).

45 “Los Principales toman al fiado los efectos para ir à trocarlos por los frutos de la Tierra, y assi por que su diligencia no es la mas activa, sabiendo que no se les ha de obligar a la paga como porque la gente de otro [sic] Pueblos o Rancherias con quienes contratan no cumplen del Tiempo ofresido se dilata, ò se impocibilita la cobranza de los reditos.” Armenteros, *Discurso*, f. 14r.

commerce. Furthermore, in the commerce with the Taosug in Jolo, the bestowal of gifts was required for the sultan and the major *principales*, which, as argued by Armenteros, should be regarded as a sort of taxation, which would leave the rest of the cargo free from harassment.⁴⁶

In the 1780s, the island of Borneo was considered a place where especially dangerous ‘pirates’ lurked and preyed on Spanish ships. Still, Armenteros pointed out that trade with Borneo had flourished at first, until an increase in ‘piratical’ activities in the 17th century. Trade returned when Governor Juan de Vargas Hurtado (r. 1678-1684) sent an embassy and, in 1682, peace was established “clear as water,” which broke down commercial barriers between them “as if there were one land only”.⁴⁷ Yet, the opportunity was not fully seized and trade came to a standstill again until the “king of Borneo” (Sultan Muhammad Alauddin of Brunei, r. 1730-1745) was dragged into a war with Sulu, during the government of Governor Valdés Tamón (r. 1729-1739). In those years, the sultan petitioned Manila for gunpowder, which was indeed supplied. Shortly afterwards, Manila solicited for copper from Borneo for its cannon foundries, which they also effectively received. Referring to these deliveries, Armenteros deduced that the people of Borneo were well disposed towards trade with the Philippines in the 1780s. He considered trading from Manila to Borneo via Palawan, but preferred the trade via Iloilo, because thereby the Borneo-trade could be connected with the Jolo-traffic. The trade volume, in any case, would be higher than the Jolo-trade because the capital of Borneo was bigger and more populated than that of Sulu. While Chinese products would not sell well in Borneo – direct trade relations existed with Amoy – products from India would be a better option. In Armenteros’ view, Indian merchandise would be an easy sell, because the Dutch had abandoned their commercial factory in Borneo years ago and the natives had to search for Indian products in Batavia. Overall, the products that were considered of interest for Spain consisted of copper, *calain* (a brass-like metal), diamonds from Sukadana at Borneo’s west coast, camphor, aromatic balsam (*benjuí*), *Sangre de Draco* (croton, a flowering plant for medical purposes), *palo de Calamba* (agarwood for incense, possibly from Calambac in today’s Vietnam), *palo de águilas* (another type of agarwood), and above all wax and pepper. To carry these products, in the eyes of Armenteros, a medium size ship would be enough. The risks and inconveniences of this trade were similar to those mentioned for the Jolo and Mindanao trade, but less grave, as the sultan of Brunei was stronger than the Sulu sultan and the aristocracy had less power to intervene in commerce.⁴⁸

Armenteros’ proposal, which opposed strict concentration on the Manila Galleon trade and Chinese business – the two main lines of Manila’s commerce – was awarded the Gold Medal by the Royal Economic Society of Manila and served as the basis for the amplification of commerce within the realms under discussion here. This increase would take off in particular after the opening of the port of Manila in 1789.

46 Armenteros, *Discurso*, f. 14v. As late as the 19th century, Spanish merchants complained about the arbitrary character of the Sulu tax/bribery/gift-system (WARREN, 1985: 58).

47 Armenteros, *Discurso*, f. 16r-v.

48 Armenteros, *Discurso*, ff. 16v, 17v-18; cf. MARTÍNEZ SHAW (2009).

5.3 Actual commerce at the end of the 18th century

James Warren has observed a steady trade between Manila and Jolo between 1787 and 1848. He estimates that profits from trade for merchants in Manila were particularly high until about 1820, with the possibility of returning investment twenty-fold. Trade voyages went both ways; at first, it was above all the Sulu merchants who came to Manila for business, but later on, it was the Spanish and Chinese merchants who sailed to Jolo. Warren developed a statistical series from the annual port books of Manila (*estados*) and listed a detailed account of the Manila-Jolo trade between 1786 and 1830. In the last 15 years of the 18th century, he counted 32 ships in that commerce in the port of Manila, among which were many Chinese and Spanish ships, and some Moro and one Portuguese vessels (WARREN, 1985: Appendix F, 265-278).

It can be understood as a sign of the institutionalization of mutual trade that special passports were issued during the era of Félix Berenguer de Marquina (r. 1788-1793) from Sultan Sharap ud-Din (r. 1789-1808), for all of his subjects who wanted to trade with Spanish lands:

I, Sultan Sharap ud-Din, son and grandson of innumerable sultans of Jolo and its obedient possessions give my favorable license to ... so that he can transport merchandise to Manila and I ask my dear Philippine governor and all officers he might encounter on his way over land and sea to clear the way to his vessel, which is my wish; as proof, my seal follows.⁴⁹

A report, covering the time from January 1792 to April 1793, lists ten Spanish and twenty-seven foreign vessels leaving Manila, out of which six were bound for Jolo. Among those six were the Chinese *pontín Nuestra Señora de Soterraña*, the foreign galley *Animas*, the *panco Quemponan*, and three *pancos* from Jolo (see Table 1). While the total value of the exported goods (only Philippine products were listed) amounted to almost 600,000 pesos, the cargo destined for Jolo was worth only 4,795.8 pesos throughout that entire time, i.e. 0.8 percent of total exports.⁵⁰

According to this list, the goods that were exported from the Philippines comprised rice, sugar, wooden boxes, bricks, and salt.⁵¹ On other occasions, Philippine textiles and indigo were exported to Jolo. The information regarding

49 "Yo soy el sultán Majumat Sarpudin, hijo y nieto de innumerables sultanes de Joló y sus posesiones obedientes. Concedo mi favorable licencia á para que pueda transportarse á Manila á efectos de comerciar, y ruego á mi muy caro el gobernador de Filipinas y cuantos oficiales encontraren por mar y por tierra, abran el camino, á la embarcación, que asi es mi deseo; en prueba de lo cual pongo este sello." (MONTERO Y VIDAL, 1888, vol. 1: 356).

50 Based on official *almojarifazgo* tax data of the port of Manila, Pierre Chaunu found ships from Jolo in the years 1699, 1717, 1718, and 1787 and from Borneo in 1690-1692, 1709, and 1757. Condensed in 5-year-sections, the share of the Jolo trade compared to the complete *almojarifazgo* revenues was 0.02 percent (1696-1700), 0.015 percent (1716-1720), and 0.47 percent (1787); the Borneo trade represented 0.43 percent (1686-1690), 0.14 percent (1691-1695), 0.19 percent (1756-1760), and 0.038 percent (1766-1770). CHAUNU (1960: Série 13 and 14). The data from 1792/3, therefore, seems to indicate a rise in the Manila Moro trade.

51 AGI Estado 47, N. 14 Comercio de Manila (1793).

Spanish imports from Jolo to Manila, on the other hand, is not as clear before the year 1805. However, it can be estimated that the Taosug ships' cargos consisted of sea slug (*tripang*), shark's fin, mother-of-pearl, bird's nest, tortoise shells, wax, and cacao, and, as James Warren adds, Chinese porcelain, Bengal textiles, and – illegally – European manufactures. Many of these goods did not stop in Manila, but continued their way to China. Wax, on the other hand, which was on most of these trading vessels and came from Mindanao and Borneo via the Jolo marketplace to Manila, was used in the production of candles in the Philippines. Cacao from Jolo was also consumed locally in the Philippines, competing successfully with cacao from Acapulco. While sea slug and wax might have been most present in ships' manifests, bird's nests were the most valuable good from Jolo. Procured from the limestone caves from the coast of East Borneo, the small swiftlets' nests were available in two sorts (black and white) and were used in China as a delicacy as well as for medical purposes. The large demand in China for sea products from Borneo, Mindanao, and the Sulu region triggered an intensification of the Manila trade to Canton and Macao.

TABLE 1

Selection of the "Account of outgoing vessels from Manila Bay to foreign ports between January 1792 and April 1793, including the Philippine products for export, according to the declarations at the Manila customs office," containing six vessels going to Jolo

Date	Vessel	Port of Call	Products, measurement, and quantity						Total value
			Rice	Powder sugar	Biscuits	Bricks	Salt	Wooden Boxes	
			Quintales	Quintales	Quintales	Pieces	Quintales	Pieces	Pesos
11/12/1792	Panco de Joló	Sulu Kingdom		77	25				280
17/12/1792	Panco de Joló	Sulu Kingdom		30	20				145
22/12/1792	Pontin Chino N.S. de Solterraña	Sulu Kingdom				8000	206		406
10/2/1793	Panco de Joló	Sulu Kingdom		275					687.4
15/2/1793	Panco Quemponan	Sulu Kingdom		261	25			50	940
29/4/1793	Galera Animas	Sulu Kingdom	275	825					2337.4
<i>Total</i>			275	1468	70	8000	206	50	4795.8

Source: AGI Estado, 47, N. 14, "Comercio de Manila" (1793).

A *quintal* equals 100 pounds or 46 kilograms.

Between 1796 and 1808, war with England reduced commercial opportunities for Manila and hampered the Manila-Jolo trade. As Spanish ships were prone to

English attacks, this trade was increasingly carried out on Chinese vessels and, hence, commerce between Jolo and Manila went on. In 1798, for example, the Chinese coasters *Guing Fin*, *Gua Jap*, and *Sing Yap Di* carried sugar and indigo from Manila to Jolo. By then, the trade seemed to have been predominantly in the hands of the Chinese of Manila, the *sangleyes* (WARREN, 1985: 55-56, 60-62, 65).

6. CONCLUSIONS

The episodes of this study give evidence that 'trading with the enemy' was a common feature in the early modern Philippines. In spite of the prevailing view that 'the Moros' were a permanent enemy of 'the Spaniards' and of the fact that indeed Spaniards often lived in a very tense relation with some Muslim ethnicities, Moro-Spanish trade could be traced from the first contact until the end of the 18th century. Even though the trade volume seems never to have reach vast dimensions, it can be maintained that it was present long before the opening of the port of Manila. In the last third of the 18th century, encouragement of this trade was, moreover, a matter of state. The years between 1787 and 1848 can be considered the heyday of the Manila-Jolo trade. During these years, however, the ambivalent character of Spanish-Moro relations persisted and slave raiding in the Philippine coastal regions increased. James Warren explains this ostensible paradox in terms of the intimate relation between slave raiding and the production circle of the Sulu economy. To meet the demands of Spanish, English, and Chinese merchants, more and more workers, i.e. slaves, had to be employed to gather sea slug, mother-of-pearl, etc. Hence, European and Chinese demands indirectly increased Sulu slave raids and the so-called piracy in Philippine waters (WARREN, 1985: 53, 55-56, 60).

One anecdote might, in conclusion, illustrate the risky situation in which merchants found themselves when engaging in the Jolo-Manila trade. In his *Historia de la piratería malayo-mahometana en Mindanao, Jolo y Borneo*, the Spanish writer and politician José Montero y Vidal gives an account from the end of the 18th century. In April 1794, the Portuguese merchant Juan Carvallo, who was based in Manila, concluded his business negotiations in Jolo with his Taosug partners, some of whom were close relatives of the Sulu sultan. When he left Jolo for Manila, his frigate *Constante* drifted off course and was forced to shelter at an island close to Iloilo. All of a sudden, eight Moro *pancos* appeared and started to attack the frigate, intending to capture it. While the attack appears to have been repelled by the crew, Carvallo identified the assailants as being the very same merchants who previously had been doing business with him in Jolo, including the relatives of the sultan (MONTERO Y VIDAL, 1888: vol. 1, 361). This story illustrates the complexity and paradox of the Spanish-Moro trade in the early modern era. Moreover, it shows that the lines between peace and war, or 'piracy' and trade, were rather blurred and frequently transgressed. Despite all the potential profit, the 'Sulu Zone,' to use a term coined by James Warren (WARREN 1985), was always a dangerous place to trade.

Spanish-Moro trade in the early modern period has to be seen as part of the whole commercial system that existed in Southeast Asia in the time of the Galleon trade. While the Manila Galleon was an essential part of this system, by no means can it explain the complex structures of the commercial universe of the Philippines. Instead of focusing solely on Manila and Acapulco as the ends of this line, one should rather take a polycentric view and consider other places as well as 'players,' such as Mexico, Lima, Seville, Cadiz, Canton, Macao, and Malacca, as well as the Moluccas Islands, Japan, India, Persia and also, as this article has shown, Jolo, Mindanao, and Borneo. Taking a look at the products that were bartered, the entanglement of local trade becomes evident: while textiles, rice, and sugar were predominantly from the Spanish Philippines, the essential silver coins came from New Spain. The Moro goods, on the other hand, such as sea slugs, bird's nests, or shark's fins, made only a short stop in Manila (or even made it only as far as Iloilo) before continuing their way to China. In addition, Spaniards also bought Bengali textiles and European goods from Moro traders, which shows even more the interconnectivity of commerce and the complexity of trade networks in that region. European influence on the Southeast Asian commercial system can be seen in the VOC trade between Mindanao and Batavia in the 17th century and in the so-called country trade of EIC merchants, which was a considerable factor for Jolo's merchants in the 18th century (QUIASON, 1966).⁵² The Spanish-Moro trade, hence, must be seen as part of a larger regional trading system and its global connections; only then the Spanish 'appetite' for sea slugs and bird's nests is explicable.

Two different spaces of Spanish-Moro trade are outlined in this article, one centered on Zamboanga and the other on Manila.⁵³ The Zamboanga trade was comprised mainly of commerce carried out by the governors of the presidio and the other high local administrators of the region, the *alcaldes mayores*. It was bound to local circumstances, such as the proximity to Jolo's and Mindanao's markets and production centers and the weak power, benevolence, or ignorance of the governors in Manila. Despite being subject to many restrictions, because of the difficult communication with the capital, these officials had much freedom of action and used the system to their advantage and profit – thereby reducing the actual military capacity of their districts. Taking advantage of regional price differences, these officials sold Philippine products in Jolo and Mindanao and introduced Moro products on the Manila market, thereby stimulating the commercial life of the capital.

Trade between the Moros and the Spaniards in Mindanao and in the southern Visayas had ups and downs but was overall a relatively constant factor. Given that much of this trade eventually found its way to Manila, it is obvious that a permanent market existed there for Moro products. Also, in the years between

⁵² Strategic political factors have, of course, to be included in the commercial conduct of these players. Cf. MAJUL (1973: 250), WARREN (1985).

⁵³ In addition, commercial connections existed also between the natives under Spanish rule and the Moros. The inhabitants of the island of Capul, for example, were accused of being overly friendly with the Camucones (a Spanish term for the animist Tidung from northeastern Borneo and the nomadic Bajau from the Sulu archipelago). JOSÉ (2013a: 375-376).

1663 and 1718 when no Spanish stronghold existed in the south, this demand did not cease, as complaints about Moro merchants in Manila at the turn of the century showed. In the second half of the 18th century, Manila started to organize the trade with the southern sultanates in a more orderly way. Plans for a systematization of commercial relations were developed and trade intensified. With the opening of Manila as quasi free port in 1789, the Moro trade increased and more vessels from Jolo entered the port. By then, Spanish interest in commerce with Jolo and Mindanao might have been one of the reasons why Spanish attempts to fight Moro slave raids were not always fully supported by the commercial elite of Manila at the end of the 18th century (CRAILSHEIM, 2017: 407).

Another feature of the Spanish-Moro trade in the second half of the 18th century was the increasing involvement of the *sangleyes* and Chinese mestizos in commerce with the sultanates. Chinese products were always of interest to Spaniards and Moros alike; both traded frequently with China; and the Chinese market was most often the end market for Moro-products passing through Iloilo or Manila. But since 1750, it seems also that the Spanish-Moro trade itself was more and more in the hands of *sangleyes* and Chinese mestizo merchants. This was true for the trade with Manila, but also in Zamboanga, as already in 1750, the Maestre de Campo Antonio Ramón de Abad relied on the support of a Chinese mestizo middlemen for his illegal ventures, as well as using Chinese *champanes* (CONCEPCIÓN, 1788-1792, vol. 13: 67, 75).

Ultimately, it has to be admitted that this article has raised many more questions than it has answered. While a series of illustrative episodes regarding the Spanish-Moro trade in the early modern period have been presented and analyzed, much remains to be seen. Who were the merchants involved?⁵⁴ How many of them were actually Spaniards? What about the merchants from New Spain? Who were the *sangleyes* interested in this commerce? How much were other European merchants involved? What was the role of the Moro merchants in Manila and how dominant were the royal families in the sultanates' trade? Moreover, the illegal trade in Zamboanga and Iloilo and its connection with Manila raises further questions regarding the alleged 'corruption' of the Spanish colonial system, as well as about the involvement of friars in this game of power and profit at the fringes of the Spanish Empire. One might also look for the cultural implications of this trade for both sides. Spanish and Chinese elements might be found in Jolo, such as the existence of a *parián*, for example. On the other hand, Moro influence in the Philippines can be found in Sulu Islamic artistic motives in church art in Bohol or Islamic ornaments on church bells in Luzon (JOSÉ, 2013B; JOSÉ, 2001). Such a view would connect the economic sphere of Spanish-Moro relations with another largely neglected dimension, the mutual cultural influence between Spaniards and Moros in the Philippines.

⁵⁴ An answer to this question is partially given in Kristie Flannery's article in this special issue of *Vegueta*.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The investigation for this article was supported by the Spanish national research project HAR 2015 66511-P (Mineco-Feder). I would like to thank Ricky José, Jürgen Nagel, and the anonymous reviewers for their support and their comments on this article.

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165, N. 8: Carta de Torralba sobre convivencia con infieles (Manila 20/7/1704).

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