Slave Markets and Exchange in the Malay World: The Sulu Sultanate, 1770–1878

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The impact of the West’s commercial intrusion in China towards the end of the eighteenth century had significant bearing on the growth of the slave trade in Southeast Asia. It led to the crystallization of a permanent slave traffic around organized markets and depots in the Sulu Archipelago. Jolo Island, as the centre of a redistributive network encompassing the Sulu zone, became the most important slave centre by 1800.1 This had not always been the case. Most accounts of the Sulu Sultanate written before 1780 indicate that the internal demand for slaves at Jolo was on a much smaller scale than it was destined to become in the nineteenth century. These early writers reported that it was often more profitable for the Taosug, the dominant ethnic group in the Sulu Archipelago, to deliver slaves to the Magindanao and Bugis merchants of Cotabato (Mindanao) and Pasir (Borneo) for trans-shipment to Makassar and Batavia, than employ them in their own settlements.2

Sulu’s ascendancy in the late eighteenth century developed out of the expanding trade between India, insular Southeast Asia and China. Commercial and tributary activity became linked with long-distance slave raiding and incorporation of captured peoples in a system to service the procurement of trading produce which made Jolo the Mecca for marine and jungle products for the China trade. Slaves stopped being re-exported to foreign parts by Taosug datu’s (aristocrats) when international trade to Sulu escalated and the large scale use of slave labour in the fisheries and fields and in raiding prahu’s became essential for the growth of the Taosug state. By 1800, the Sulu Sultanate was the centre of an extensive range of commercial, raiding and slave dealing activities concentrated at Jolo.3 To Madi Mahad (Jolo Town) the Iranun and Balangingi Samal, the major slave retailing groups for the Sultanate in the first half of the nineteenth century, brought boatloads

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3 Expediente 2, El Gobierno Politico y Militar d Zamboanga a El Gobernador Capitan General (hereafter cited as GCG), 30 May 1842 PNA, Mindanao/Sulu 1838–1885; Extract from Singapore Free Press, 6 April 1847. PRO Admiralty 125/133.
of captives for barter. In 1814 Hunt described Jolo as the commercial headquarters of these raiders:

Their roving depredations are directed in large fleets of small prawns in the Straits of Makassar, among the Moluccas, but more particularly in the southern part of the Philippines; the whole produce is sold at Jolo, which is the grand entrepot. Jolo Town was the most important outlet for the exchange of slaves, but Samal groups also bartered them directly to datus and Chinese in other communities on Jolo Island like Bual and Parang. They visited other islands in the Sulu Archipelago such as Patian, Pangutaruan, and Tapian Tana and went as far south as Simunul to sell slaves before 1846. Some Balangiwi slavers took their captives to seasonal markets and trading posts situated on Sarangani Island, at the southern tip of Mindanao, and to Marudu, Sandakan and Gunung Tabor on the Bornean coast. Many of the slaves transported to Marudu in repayment for the food, powder, arms and salt supplied to Balangiwi groups under the credit system of Sheriff Usman, were employed in his swiddens and collected forest produce. If they were Brunei Malays, they could be resold at considerable profit to their relations in Brunel.

It was the fate of other less fortunate captives to be taken further down the coast for sale. Riverine tribes on the Kinabatangan, Sambakong, Bulungan and Berau were involved in the slave trade through Taosug merchants and Bugis settlers who had gained a permanent foothold on the east Bornean coast. These Muslim middlemen acquired birds nest and wax for the international trade at Jolo in return for the captives.

The traditional ceremony held among Ida’an, Tidong and Kenyah groups referred to by European observers of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as ‘surmungup’, a ritual sacrifice, accounted for much of the demand for captives by these interior Bornean tribes. Their religious beliefs required the sacrifice of aliens, which were connected with the taking of heads for mamat festivals, and the offering of human sacrifices on the death of a chief or other persons of lesser rank.

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6 Ibid.
9 Numero 7, GCG a Senor Secretario de Estado y del Despacho Universal de Hacienda y Indias, 4 June 1806, AGI, Filipinas 510; William Brownrigs to the British Consul or any European merchant in Sooloo or Manila, 10 Sept. 1844, in enclosure 1, Farren to the Foreign Office, 8 Dec. 1844, FO, 72/663; Alexander Dalrymple, Oriental Repertory (London: 1808), pp. 559, 564; Forrest, Voyage to New Guinea, pp. 368–369; and Barrantes, Guerras Piraticas, p. 161.
The development of the slave trade on the Bornean rivers appears to have altered ceremonial practice surrounding ritual sacrifices. In earlier periods preference had been given to killing young warriors or slaves captured from rival tribes in warfare, but the coming of the Taosug traders enabled the widespread purchase of aliens, particularly the elderly and infirm, for ritual purposes. The availability of cheaply priced aliens in large numbers who could be purchased for forest produce, made popular participation in the ceremonies easier. Now mourning commoners, in remembrance of the deceased, were able to subscribe. The slave was purchased, bound with cloth and tied up, and speared to death. The number of slaves killed at a ceremony was small and varied with the rank of the deceased from a single individual to a small household.

Slaves who were not purchased for sacrificial purposes fulfilled important economic roles among interior tribal groups. They were absorbed into the slave class and procured forest produce for the coast-hinterland trade. It was estimated that from four hundred to five hundred people were brought to the Kinabatangan for further distribution each year by Taosug datus and the Iranun and Balangangi in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Between 1770 and 1848 Jolo had attracted Samal speaking groups from surrounding villages on the southern Mindanao coast, the southern shore of Basilan and on a series of low, coral and sand islands flanking the northeastern side of Jolo, of which Balangangi was dominant, and it remained a focal point of trade for certain Samal populations after the destruction of Balangangi by Spanish steamships in 1848. But as a consequence of combined colonial interference in the zone after 1852, the area of Samal settlement and trade was broadened, as the action of Spanish and Dutch cruisers tended to scatter the Balangangi throughout the Sulu Archipelago and on the coasts of southern Palawan, North Borneo, and beyond, and the independent raiders from Tawi-Tawi and Sibutu (dispersed Balangangi) frequently took their slaves to Parang, Basilan, Palawan, the Kinabatangan and Bulungan.

Bulungan became the principal market for slaves of the Balangangi once the Spanish inaugurated the blockade of Jolo in 1871. Slaves were retailed at villages on southern Tawi-Tawi (Sulu Archipelago) and moved in Samal prahus to Bulungan via Omaddal Island. Slave raiding was thoroughly commercial and the Balangangi Samal brought captive peoples, both 'infidel' and Muslim, to be sold there. 'All was fish that came into their nets', Governor Treacher wrote, 'Bajaus, Bruneis, Manila men, natives of Palawan, and natives of the interior of Magindanao.' These slaves replenished the work force of the Sultan of Gunung Tabor's coal mine and gathered gutta percha and wax to be loaded on the vessels of William Lingard (The Tom Lingard of Joseph Conrad's novels of the Eastern Seas) and the Singapore Arabs, or were sold for ritual purposes. Several thousand slaves were taken to Bulungan from the Sulu Archipelago during the famine in 1879 alone, when owners who could no longer afford to support their slaves were compelled to sell them to get food.

14 Alcalde Mayor de Zamboanga a Senor Gobernador General de Mindanao y Adjacentes, 9 Nov. 1868, PNA, unclassified Mindanao/Sulu bundle; Numero 180, El Gobernador Politico y Militar de las Isla de Mindanao y adyacentes a GCG, 28 July 1872, PNA, Piratas I; and * Straits Times Overland Journal*, XX, 31 Oct. 1879.
15 William Treacher, "Sketches of Brunei, Sarawak, Labuan and North Borneo" *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, XXI (1890), 90.
The demand for imports on the west coast of Borneo was equally great. The owners of Marudu district were unable to prevent their slaves from fleeing to Labuan and slaves were landed as replacements by the Balangingi in Marudu Bay and at Sulamen and Mengkabong. It became increasingly difficult for the Balangingi to sell their slaves, however, owing to the approach of the Spanish from the north, the British from the southwest, and the Dutch from the southeast. In the 1880's, most Balangingi were forced to give up slave trading as a profession and settle down as island traders and the principal suppliers of jungle and sea produce in the Sulu Archipelago and North Borneo.

After the Spanish blockade closed Jolo to the Balangingi in 1871 there was a large gap left in the Sultanate's slave supply that was never filled satisfactorily. Now the Magindanao, inland dwelling agriculturalists of the Cotabato basin, attacked neighbouring people for sale in Jolo's market to replace wholesale captures by the Balangingi. The Taosug relied on Magindanao datus such as Uto and the Chinese of Cotabato, Glan, and Lalabuan to supply them with slaves from among the upland tribes of eastern Mindanao, predominantly Tiruray and Bilaan, in exchange for guns to halt the Spanish advance.

The movement of slaves to Jolo in this period frequently occurred outside the regular channels of the captive trade. Slave theft and confiscation could and did occur on a large scale between 1878 and 1898 with the decline of the slave trade and there was considerable movement of slaves from one part of the zone to another as owners transferred them under duress or for payment of debts.

Slave Trading

Slave holding was the primary form of investment for the Taosug. As a form


Numeri 151, Carlos Cuarteron, prefecto apostolico, a GCG, 25 Dec. 1878, PNA, Isla de Borneo 1; Witti to Treacher, Nov. 1881, CO 874/229; Treacher to Chairman of the British North Borneo Company, 8 May 1882, CO 874/230.

Pryer to Treacher, 15 Oct. 1881, CO 874/229; and Treacher, "Sketches of North Borneo", 91.


In 1881 it was said that half a dozen able-bodied Bilaan Men could be purchased from Magindanao or Iuran dealers for one picul (23 dollars). Witti to Treacher, Nov. 1881, CO 874/229.


Pryer claimed that many of these slaves were being transported on European vessels: 'Stopping the importation of slaves should not be a difficult matter. It is very clear that British ships are in nine cases out of ten, the means by which they are introduced...', Pryer to Treacher, 5 Oct. 1881 CO 874/229.
of wealth slaves were a tangible asset in easily transferable form. They played a major role in the economy both as a unit of production and as a medium of exchange. The accumulation of wealth and the transmission of power and privilege in the Taosug state was facilitated by the ownership of slaves. This was even more the case after the advent of European trade in the Sulu Archipelago in the late eighteenth century.

In Sulu a great many factors were taken into consideration when determining the value of individual slaves. The prices varied with sex, age, ethnicity and personal condition, as well as demand. The highest prices were for young women, who could be offered as wives and concubines to recruit fighting men to a datu's retinue, and youths, who were considered tractable and, therefore, more readily incorporated into Taosug society than men.23

The market price of slaves was apt to be influenced also by the cultural characteristics of their group. The Tagalogs or 'Manila men', had great powers of endurance and thus made good rowers, as well as being skilful helmsmen and boatbuilders, but were prone to escape.24 Visayans were unsurpassed as divers and considered superior to the Tagalogs as sailors. Papuans and Flores islanders always found a ready sale, particularly the latter who were supposed to be good artificers and uncommonly faithful to their masters.25 The courageous reputation of the Buginese as traders and soldiers, with a talent for learning the use of arms, made them favoured in the trade.

Visayan women were reputed to be superior weavers. Tagalogs were desired for their business ability and as wives of datu were often entrusted with the management of accounts.26 Most esteemed for their beauty were mestiza Chinese.27 Women from the Aru Islands and Papua were also considered attractive and sold without difficulty at higher than average prices.28

Other considerations such as education, high status, or poor health might add or detract from a slave's value. C. Z. Pieters, the captain of the cutter Petronella, was seized by the Balangini in 1838:

Before I was taken by the pirates I had learned from persons that had made their escape from them, that whenever they found any of their captives were of superior origin, they sold them for larger prices. On this account I warned my people and slaves, on the day we were sold to be careful not to show me any marks of respect

23 Extract from Singapore Free Press, 6 Apr. 1847, PRO, Admiralty 125/133.
24 United States Senate Documents, 56th Congress, 2nd Session, 1900–1901, document 218, p. 26; Spenser St. John described his Tagalog steersman, who was captured by the Balangini when a young boy and raised as a Muslim: 'Musa, though modest and gentle in his manner, was brave as a lion, and would have followed me anywhere. Though very short, he was squarely built, and exceedingly strong, a very powerful swimmer, and good boatman.' Life in the Forests of the Far East, II (London: Smith Elder and Company, 1862), 163; and Emilio Bernaldez, Resana Historic de La Guerra a Sur de Filipinas (Madrid: Imprenta del Memorial de Ingenieros, 1857), p. 36.
25 D. H. Kolf, Voyage of the Dutch Brig of War Dounga, through the southern and little known parts of the Moluccan Archipelago and the previously unknown southern coast of New Guinea performed during the years 1825 and 1826. Translated by George Windsor Earl (London: James Madden, 1840), p. 300; and "Short Accounts of Timor, Rottii, Savu, Solor", Moor, Notices of the Indian Archipelago, 11.
26 Hunt, "Some particulars relating to Sulo," p. 37; United States Senate Documents, Vol. XV, document 218, 64; and St. John, Life in the Forests of the Far East, I, 250.
28 Kolf, Cruise of the Dutch Warship Dounga, p. 300.
Slave Trade in the Sulu Sultanate, 1770–1878

and not to call me by my real name. They were only to give me the name of Junaat, or if they should forget that, then that of Domingo. 29

The major determinants of the composition of slave intake were external forces affecting raiding patterns. Until 1848 a larger percentage of the captives (perhaps as high as 65%) were from the Philippines, particularly southern Luzon and the central Visayas, 30 while the rest came from various parts of the Malay world — the great majority from Celebes (Tontoli, Amurang, Menado, Gorontalo) and the Moluccas. 31

Table 132

A list of slaves taken on board the Santa Filomena at Jolo and Tawi-Tawi in September and October of 1862

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indios</th>
<th>Time in Captivity</th>
<th>Malays</th>
<th>Time in Captivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marimiana</td>
<td>20 yrs</td>
<td>Dunman</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salustinani Martinita</td>
<td>10 yrs</td>
<td>Numan</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francisco Mateo</td>
<td>7 yrs</td>
<td>Tiang Lon</td>
<td>1 yr, 2 mths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feliz Dieznoible</td>
<td>6 yrs</td>
<td>Simayasin</td>
<td>1 yr, 2 mths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoriano Pedrosa</td>
<td>6 yrs</td>
<td>Aminudi</td>
<td>1 yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramon Acento</td>
<td>6 yrs</td>
<td>Amat</td>
<td>7 mths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leonardo Garin</td>
<td>5 yrs</td>
<td>Jadaman</td>
<td>7 mths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominga Marcelo</td>
<td>5 yrs</td>
<td>Masikit</td>
<td>7 mths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurencio Aguilar</td>
<td>5 yrs</td>
<td>Panacajuan</td>
<td>5 mths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santiago Sale</td>
<td>5 yrs</td>
<td>Sidi</td>
<td>5 mths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholas Rafael</td>
<td>4 yrs</td>
<td>Aduluman</td>
<td>4 mths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matio Gomora</td>
<td>4 yrs</td>
<td>Pagarin</td>
<td>4 mths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilario Conde</td>
<td>4 yrs</td>
<td>Mohamed</td>
<td>4 mths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geranimo Marco</td>
<td>4 yrs</td>
<td>Ragitul</td>
<td>4 mths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gregorio Pena</td>
<td>4 yrs</td>
<td>Mananal</td>
<td>3 mths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alejandro Canonega</td>
<td>4 yrs</td>
<td>Camo</td>
<td>46 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcelo Dugalo</td>
<td>4 yrs</td>
<td>Mojamontanac</td>
<td>46 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andres Lampioni</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td>Manaquil</td>
<td>46 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florentino Ballot</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td>Albubocal</td>
<td>33 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Anillo</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td>Sirano</td>
<td>15 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Malandal</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pascual Asia</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcos Marquis</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leoncio Eliazar</td>
<td>3 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florentino Rivera</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vincente Hugate</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedro Angel</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pauline Vico</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pablo Vinaso</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eugenio Ballete</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cristobal Magalun</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuel Boson</td>
<td>1 yr</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marinao Masancan</td>
<td>2 mths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30 Expediente 12, 4 Oct. 1836, PNA, Mindanao/Sulu 1803–1890; see also statements of Evaristo Pinto and Francisco Xavier and Appendix XVIII in Warren, thesis cit., 461–483.
32 Table 1 has been compiled from two sets of statements. Numero 52, GCG a Senor Ministro
Table 1 reveals the extent to which the source of Sulu’s slave supply changed in the second half of the nineteenth century. Of the fifty-four captives who escaped to the Spanish warship, thirty-four were indios (Filipinos), principally from the western and southern Visayas, whose period in captivity had ranged from twenty years to two months; twenty-eight out of the thirty-four slaves had been imported between 1856 and 1860. Only three had been brought to Sulu since 1860. In marked contrast, all twenty ‘Malays’ had been imported within the last year or two. It is clear that as the slave trade to the Sulu Sultanate began to decline at mid-century an even larger percentage of imported slaves were brought to Sulu from Celebes, the west coast of Borneo near Pontianak, and Bangka. This trend became more pronounced after 1860 with the stationing of canonero (Steam Gunboat) flotillas in the Philippine seas.33 After 1870 most of the people brought by slave mongers to Jolo were Pacific, tribal people from the hill regions of eastern Mindanao.34

There appears to have been a standard schedule of prices for various categories of slaves, but the basic price level varied according to Sulu’s political and economic situation. In 1726 the value of slaves was as follows: a man or woman in excellent health, forty pesos; a man or woman with a weak constitution, thirty pesos; boys and girls, twenty pesos; and small children ten pesos.35 By the start of the nineteenth century the price of female slaves was much higher than male slaves indicating the important role they played in the recruitment process and the difficulty in obtaining them: in general, the price of a male slave varied according to his age and qualifications from twenty to thirty pesos; the price of a female slave ranged between sixty to one hundred pesos according to her age and ability to work, and occasionally more, and small children were estimated to be worth half the price of a man.36

The value of slaves rose considerably after 1850 as imports to Jolo began to taper off. The most important factors responsible were the Spanish campaigns conducted against the Balangingi on Tawi-Tawi from 1860 to 1864 and the blockade of Jolo, which had the effect of creating an acute slave shortage in the northern half of the Sulu archipelago in the 1870’s. By then the price of slaves in Sulu was as follows: a man, three piculs (a picul was equivalent to twenty to twenty-five dollars in the 1870’s and 1880’s); a young woman, three to five piculs; a young couple, seven to eight piculs; a middle-aged person, about $\frac{1}{2}$ picul; a middle-aged couple up to five piculs; a boy, two piculs; and a girl, three to four piculs.37 Evidently young couples were most desired to help foster a hereditary slave class on a larger scale than had previously existed once Balangingi traffic dwindled.

The common payment for slaves was a variety of Western trade goods, including

de la Guerra y de Ultramar, 4 Sept. 1862, AHN, Ultramar 5190; and Numero 105, GCG a Senor Ministro de la Guerra, AHN, Ultramar 5192.

33 For a shorter list of captives (14) that reinforces the trend in the table but concentrates on the pre-1855 period, see Relacion de los cautivos presentados abordo de las faunas del crucero a las Islas Samalese en la noche del 5 del mes de la fecha, Gobierno Politico y Militar de la Provincia de Zamboanga, 26 Mar 1853, AHN, Ultramar 5172; and Numero 56, El Ministro de Estado manifiesta que Embajador del Rey de los Paises Bajo ha dirigido una nota dando gracias a la autoridad superior de Zamboanga, por haber rescatado de porder de los piratas a nueve subditos neerlandeses, 20 Apr. 1854, AHN, Ultramar 5161.

34 Witti to Treacher, 1 Nov. 1881, CO 874/229.

35 Testemonio del expediente mandado instruir por real Cedula de 22 Octubre de 1799 enclosed in Numero 7, GCG a Senor Secretario de Estado y del Despacho Universal de Hacienda y Indias, 4 June 1806, AGI, Filipinas 510.

36 Extract from Singapore Free Press, 6 Apr. 1847, PRO, Admiralty 125/133.

37 Witti to Treacher, Nov. 1881, CO 874/229.
opium, iron bars, and Bengal cloth, and natural products of the Sulu Sultanate. Recognized mediums of exchange throughout the zone were used frequently to purchase slaves: bolts of coarse cotton cloth, brassware in the form of lantanca (cannon), gongs, and trays, and rice.38

The evidence in Table 2 shows that the price of individual slaves could fluctuate greatly in a relatively short space of time depending on the preferred market value and scarcity of the objects to be exchanged.

Rice was the most important natural product used for purchasing slaves from the Balanginj. Their islands lacked cultivable soil and there was little or no provision made for the storage of rice on them.

Table 239
Some prices of indio slaves in kind (1822 to 1847)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slave</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Year of Purchase</th>
<th>Price/goods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pedro del Remidio</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1822</td>
<td>20 cavans padi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustin Juan</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1826</td>
<td>10 lagas padi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose Reales</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1831</td>
<td>a bundle of coarse cotton cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Sabala</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1834</td>
<td>a lantaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria Gertrudiz</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1834</td>
<td>a lantaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francisco Feliz</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1834</td>
<td>5 bundles of Ilocos cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Teodoro</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1834</td>
<td>30 pieces of coarse cotton cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angel Custodio</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1835</td>
<td>3 balls of opium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaristo Pinto</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1835</td>
<td>70 pieces of coarse cotton cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domingo Franciscio</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1836</td>
<td>3 bundles of coarse cotton cloth, 2 carafes, 2 plates, 2 cups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Salvador</td>
<td></td>
<td>1836</td>
<td>5 pieces of coarse cotton cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuel de los Santos</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1836</td>
<td>assorted goods worth 60 pesos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Monico</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1836</td>
<td>6 lengths of gauze and a Visayan bell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francisco Xavier</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1836</td>
<td>5 bundles of coarse cotton cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eusebio de la Cruz</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1836</td>
<td>2 painted boxes, 3 pieces of coarse cotton cloth and a carafe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casimiro Santiago</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1838</td>
<td>a piece of cotton cloth and 100 chapas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucas Baracel</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1838</td>
<td>6 pieces of white cotton cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domingo la Cruz</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1840</td>
<td>5 pieces of cotton cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francisco Aquino</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1844</td>
<td>109 cavans padi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eluterio de Juan</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1845</td>
<td>5 pieces of black cotton cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedro Gregorio</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1846</td>
<td>50 cavans padi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Feliz</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1847</td>
<td>90 cavans padi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Balanginj were forced to rely on the Taosug credit system to sustain their food supply.40 Rice was either brought directly to the Samal islands in Taosug

38 Cautivos rescatados en el Rio de Pandasan por la mision de Labuan y Borneo, Numero 18, 1877, PNA, Isla de Borneo 2; Forrest, Voyage to New Guinea, p. 229; and "Adventures of C. Z. Pieters among the Pirates of Magindanao"; 309.

39 This Table has been compiled from captive statements in the following sources: Expediente 12, 4 Oct. 1836; PNA, Mindanao/Sulu 1803–1890; and Relacion jurada de los seis cautivos venidos de Jolo sobre el bergantin Espanol San Vincente enclosed in Numero 1673, Capitania del Puerto de Manila y Cavite a GCG, 14 Jan. 1850, PNA, Piratas 3.

40 See the statements of Domingo Candelario, Augustin Juan, Mariano Sevilla and Juan Santiago in Expediente 12, 4 Oct. 1836, PNA, Mindanao/Sulu 1803–1890; and Expediente 2, El Gobierno Politico y Militar del Zamboango a GCG, 30 May 1842, PNA, Mindanao/Sulu 1838–1885.
trading prahu or obtained in Jolo at the advanced rate of thirty cavans per slave in 1836. The extent to which the Balangingi were at the mercy of their environment is reflected in the annual turnover of large numbers of captives and slaves by them to the Taosug for advances (or payment of previous advances) of rice and war stores. In 1836, Mariano Sevilla estimated that the Balangingi had seized more than a thousand captives by September of which two-thirds had already been taken to Jolo.

Rice and cloth continued to be the principal items exchanged by Taosug for Balangingi slaves in the second half of the nineteenth century. According to Jansen, the Dutch Resident of Menado, the value of a slave, depending on his sex, health and skills, in 1856 was worth on average ten kayus (pieces of coarse cotton cloth twenty fathoms in length), or two bundles of coarse kain (sarongs), or 200–300 gantangs of rice.

Generally the Balangingi retailed their slaves at Jolo within weeks of their return to the Sulu archipelago. The statements of fugitive captives taken on board the Spanish brigantine Cometa in 1847 demonstrate the rapid turnover. Of the forty-four slaves brought to Balangingi (thirty-five) and Tunkil (nine), twenty-seven remained in residence less than two weeks before being taken to Jolo; eight less than a month; six less than two months; three less than a year; and two less than two years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slave's name</th>
<th>Place of Origin</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Year of Captivity</th>
<th>Period of time on board prahu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carlos de los Santos</td>
<td>Cebu</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1846</td>
<td>2 days at Balangingi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eulalio Composano</td>
<td>Albay</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1844</td>
<td>2 days at Balangingi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angel Manuel</td>
<td>Leyte</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1841</td>
<td>3 days at Balangingi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augustin Bernado</td>
<td>Bohol</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1845</td>
<td>4 days at Balangingi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Pedro</td>
<td>Cebu</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1846</td>
<td>4 days at Balangingi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jose de la Cruz</td>
<td>Cebu</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1844</td>
<td>5 days at Balangingi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Jose</td>
<td>Iloilo</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1845</td>
<td>6 days at Tunkil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacinto Diomesso</td>
<td>Iloilo</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1846</td>
<td>1 week at Tunkil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dammaso Soledad</td>
<td>Cuyo</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1846</td>
<td>1 week at Balangingi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plieto de la Cruz</td>
<td>Cebu</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1844</td>
<td>2 weeks at Balangingi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabriela Santiago</td>
<td>Ilocos Sur</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1842</td>
<td>2 weeks at Balangingi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Velano</td>
<td>Iloilo</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1846</td>
<td>1 month at Tunkil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

41 Statement of Juan Santiago in Expediente 12, 4 Oct. 1836, PNA, Mindanao/Sulu 1803–1890.
42 Statement of Mariano Sevilla in Expediente 12, 4 Oct. 1836, PNA, Mindanao/Sulu 1803–1890.
44 Relacion jurada de los cuarenta y cinco cautivos venidos de Jolo sobre el Bergantin Espanol Cometa, 19 Mar. 1847, PNA, Piratas 3.
45 Table 3 has been compiled from statements of fugitive captives in Relacion jurada de los cuarenta y cinco cautivos venidos de Jolo sobre el Bergantin Cometa, PNA, Piratas 3; see also the statements of Juan Monico and Francisco Feliz in Expediente 12, 4 Oct. 1836, PNA, Mindanao/Sulu 1803–1890.
Further, more than a quarter of the slaves were sold right out of the boats, having spent up to a month on board without ever setting foot on shore at either Balangingi or Tunkul. The slaves were the principal source of the prosperity of the Balangingi and were used to pay all their outstanding debts.

Taosug *datus*, European traders, Chinese merchants, Visayan *renegados* (Renegades) and Tidong chiefs all gathered in Jolo's public market to purchase captured slaves. In 1774, Cencelli claimed Jolo's slave market operated on a preferential basis with the Iranun reserving all Spaniards and friars for the Taosug, who also had their pick of the *indios* before the Chinese and other prospective customers were allowed to purchase their human cargoes. The Taosug involved in trading, procurement activities and rice cultivation dominated the purchase of slaves in Jolo throughout most of the nineteenth century as well.

Slaves were sold over and over again. *Datus* rarely sold their own followers, but they trafficked extensively in slaves who were given to them in payment of debts or as captives by Iranun and Balangingi. It was not at all uncommon for a slave to have had two, three, and even possibly four masters in his lifetime, to have lived among several ethnic groups in very different parts of the zone, to have fulfilled a variety of economic functions and experienced varying degrees of hardship and servitude. For example, Si-Ayer was seized by an Iranun squadron in 1847:

I was ... carried first to Sibat, then to Makawau (Borneo), two small rivers immediately above Tunku. Makawau, which is between the two others, was the residence of the (Iranun) Raja Muda. I was sold two months after my arrival, to a Lanun who lives at Sooloo, named Matalissi, who made me pull (an oar) in his boat, he was going on a piratical cruise in the neighbourhood of Brune (Brunei) when Matalissi was told that the English had settled in Labuan, and that his intended cruising ground was not safe. He sold me to a man named Sindeko, in part exchange for a boat to make up the price. Nakodah Ursup, a Sambas man, bought me from him, and Mr. Meldrum freed me, and I am his servant for wages.

The fate of Mariano, a Samareno, who was carried off by the Balangingi from a sea coast village in 1853 when he was ten years old is another case in point. He entered upon a career as a slave that spanned twenty-five years and five masters:

I was seized by Balangingi pirates ... while fishing with my father on the bank of the river near our village. My father managed to flee but I was taken prisoner and brought to Jolo where I was sold. After three years on Jolo Island my master took me to the Kinabatangan River and sold me to a Taosug called Ujou who in turn, brought me to be sold at Mengkabong on the northwest coast of Borneo. I stayed with my new master Amimudin in Mengkabong for five years. He then took me to Brunei and sold me to a Kadayan called Raja who took me to his household in the interior. I remained in the custody of Raja, my master, for twelve years until I escaped to Labuan.

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47 Juan Cencelli a Senor Conde Aranda, 16 Apr. 1774, AHN, Estado 2845, caja 2.

48 Enclosure 12, deposition of Si-Ayer in St. John to Viscount Palmerston, 19 Feb. 1852, P.P.H.C., XXXI, Borneo Piracy, 487.

49 Prefettura Apostolico de Labuan Su Dipendenze ECC. nella Malesia Orientale, Carlos Cuarteron, 10 Nov. 1878, PNA, Isla de Borneo 1; see also statement of Simona Plasa in Expediente 34, Gobernador Militar y Politico de la Provincia de Zamboanga a GCG, 1 Feb. 1852, PNA, Mindanao/Sulu 1838–1885; and Verklaring van Chrishaan Soerma, 10 Aug. 1846, ANRI, Menado 50.
The ease with which slaves could be moved about the economic system is reflected in these transfers.

There are no statistics on the overall number of slaves imported into Jolo in the period under consideration except the divergent estimates of European observers. These range from 750 to as high as 4000 captives per year for the Philippines alone from 1775 to 1848.\(^{50}\) It is possible to reconstruct a clearer picture of the pattern of slave imports to the Sulu Sultanate on the basis of the captive statements and other sources by using a sample of boatloads of slaves to determine the average number carried by an individual prahu, and multiplying this figure by the number of raiding prahu possessed by Samal and Iranun groups to establish an estimate of the overall number of slaves imported during a particular period. From 1770 to 1835 the raiding populations had 100–150 prahu; from 1836 to 1848, 150–200 prahu; and from 1852 to 1878, 60–100 prahu.\(^{51}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slave informant</th>
<th>Year of Captivity</th>
<th>No. of Prahu</th>
<th>No. of Captives</th>
<th>Total Average Figure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mariano Domingo</td>
<td>1826</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Benedicto</td>
<td>1833</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domingo Candelario</td>
<td>1833</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Florentino</td>
<td>1835</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariano Sevilla</td>
<td>1835</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francisco Basilio</td>
<td>1836</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan de la Cruz</td>
<td>1840</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuel Mozo</td>
<td>1842</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felix Torres</td>
<td>1842</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francisco Vincente</td>
<td>1843</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucas Felis</td>
<td>1843</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin de la Cruz</td>
<td>1844</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francisco Aquino</td>
<td>1844</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicolas Antonio</td>
<td>1844</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedro Armero</td>
<td>1846</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerapio Parenas</td>
<td>1846</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satarino Martin</td>
<td>1846</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Pablo</td>
<td>1847</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francisco Santiago</td>
<td>1847</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mateo Francisco</td>
<td>1847</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^{51}\) El Gobernador Politico y Militar de Zamboanga a CCG, 30 May 1842, PNA, Mindanao/Sulu 1838–1885; Expediente 12, sobre haber sido la expedicion contra Balangingi, 17 Feb. 1845, PNA, Mindanao/Sulu 1836–1897; information obtained by Charles Grey at Singapore from Mr. Wyndham relating to Sulo, 24 Feb. 1847, PRO, Admiralty 125/133; and Van Hoevell, “De Zeerooverijen der Soloerezen”, Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch Indie, II (1850), 102.

\(^{52}\) This Table has been compiled from the following sources: statements of captives in Expediente 12, 4 Oct. 1836, PNA, Mindanao/Sulu 1803–1890; Relacion jurada de los cuarenta y cuatro cautivos venidos sobre el Bergantin Cometa procedente de Jolo y Zamboanga, 8 Feb. 1848, PNA, Piratas 3.
On the basis of the statements of slaves seized between 1826 and 1847 (Table 4) an average of twenty-one slaves were carried on a vessel. This sample supports St. John’s calculation of twenty slaves per prahu in 1849. Slave imports to the Sulu Sultanate during the first sixty-five years probably averaged between 2,000–3,000 per year. The steepest rise in the number of slaves annually brought to Sulu, between 3,000 and 4,000, occurred in the period from 1836 to 1848 during which foreign trade was most intense at Jolo. The trade reached its apex in 1848 and slackened considerably in the next two decades with imports ranging between 1,200–2,000 slaves per year until it collapsed in the 1870’s. The figures appear to show that between 200,000 and 300,000 slaves were moved in Iranun and Samal vessels to the Sulu Sultanate in the period from 1770–1870.

SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

AGI — Archivo de Indias, Seville
AHN — Archivo Historico Nacional, Madrid
ANRI — Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, Jakarta
CO — Colonial Office, London
FO — Foreign Office, London
IOL — India Office Library, London
PNA — Philippine National Archive, Manila
PRO — Public Records Office, London
PPHC — Parliamentary Papers House of Commons

WEIGHTS, MEASURES, CURRENCIES

Cavan — grain equivalent to 75 litres. 1 cavan of palay (unhusked rice) is 126 to 128 lbs.
laga — 10 gantang; 2½ laga = 1 picul
100 Spanish Pesos = 224½ Company Rupees
= £20.16s.8p
= 208.35 florin

54 Farren to Palmerston, 16 March 1851, CO 144/8.
55 For a precise calculation on slave imports to Sulu between 1770–1870 I have used the figure 20-5 slaves per boat based on the statements of slaves seized between 1826–1847 minus 4,800 to 8,000 slaves (1,200 to 2,000 per year) for the period 1848–1852. From the calculations it, therefore, follows that the number of slaves imported over the period 1770–1870 varied from a low estimate of 201,350 to a high estimate of 302,575.