



Institute of Islamic Studies, University of the Philippines Diliman
in coordination with
Peace and War Center, Norwich University

PROCEEDINGS

**Seminar on Philippine Muslim History:
A Briefer with Q&A**

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ABOUT THE PROCEEDINGS

These are the proceedings of the "Seminar on Philippine Muslim History: A Briefer with Q&A," which was attended by officer cadets from the Peace and War Center of Norwich University as part of their educational field study in the Philippines to understand Philippine Muslim history, Islamic practices, culture, and its role in the Philippines. Held on May 6, 2024, the seminar provided a platform for the officer cadets to engage in fruitful discourse with faculty members from the Institute of Islamic Studies (IIS), as well as students from IIS and the UP Muslim Association.

The seminar was organized by the Institute of Islamic Studies in collaboration with the Peace and War Center of Norwich University, as part of the institution's mission "to foster deeper understanding amongst people.

Prof. Julkipli M. Wadi, Dean of the Institute of Islamic Studies, served as the seminar's moderator and facilitator. The Research, Publication, and Extension Division (RPED) documented the event and authored these proceedings.

Welcome Remarks

Prof. Julkipli M. Wadi
Dean, UP Institute of Islamic Studies

Prof. Julkipli M. Wadi, Dean of the Institute of Islamic Studies, warmly welcomed the visitors from the Peace and War Center of Norwich University. What began as an exchange of emails between Prof. Wadi and Greyson Meronal, one of the Fellow Cadets, regarding their team's interest in Philippine Muslim History, has now materialized into an academic visit to the Institute of Islamic Studies in the University of



the Philippines Diliman. In response to their inquiry, the Institute, with the support of its esteemed faculty members, has offered expertise in the areas of Philippine Muslim History, Belief Systems, and Culture as resource persons through the conduct of the “Seminar on Philippine Muslim History: A Briefer with Q&A.”

Prof. Wadi emphasized the significance of these subjects, particularly history, in connecting past events with contemporary issues. Given the historical friendship and alliance between the Philippines and the United States, including their engagement with Muslims in the Philippines, he stressed the importance of staying attuned to current trends. He noted that the Institute is equally committed to understanding ongoing developments, highlighting that the United States' involvement in the Muslim world dates back to the 19th century, starting not in Iraq or Afghanistan, but in the Moro land.

In the last part of his remark, Prof. Wadi introduced himself as a faculty member and the current dean of the Institute and expressed that the Institute is happy to host the field study of the officer cadets from the Peace and War Center of Norwich University. He concluded by extending gratitude to Dr. Travis Morris, the Director of the Peace and War Center, and invited him to introduce his team and elaborate on the purpose of their academic visit to the Philippines.

Introduction

Travis Morris, Ph.D.
Director, Peace and War Center
Norwich University

Dr. Travis Morris, Director of the Peace and War Center at Norwich University, commenced his speech by acknowledging the faculty members of the Institute of Islamic Studies, along with the students and guests present. Dr. Morris conveyed that his team are honored to visit the Institute and the Philippines, expressing gratitude for the opportunity. He thanked the Institute for organizing the Seminar on Philippine History: A Briefer and Q&A, which he regarded as an essential platform for imparting crucial knowledge. Furthermore, Dr. Morris congratulated the Institute on its 50 years of academic service within the University of the Philippines Diliman, established in 1973 by presidential decree no. 342. This milestone underscores the Institute's significance, not only within UP but also as a leading degree-granting institution in Islamic Studies nationwide.



Dr. Morris proceeded to draw connections between the Peace and War Center of Norwich University and the Institute of Islamic Studies and provided context for their field visit and outlined key aspects of the Peace and War Center's mission.

Based on his research, Dr. Morris observed a shared objective between the two institutions: "to foster deep understanding amongst people." He emphasized that this resonated with Norwich University's commitment to fostering understanding among individuals, groups, and nations—a principle that motivated their journey of 13,000 kilometers to visit the Institute. Dr. Morris also noted the Institute's vision statement, which aims "to be the premiere institution of excellence, honor, and service," is similar to Norwich University's values of excellence, honor, and service. He also recognized the Institute's publications and programs, including the Master of Arts in Islamic Studies and the Center for Integrative and Development Studies Islamic Studies Program.

Providing context about Norwich University, Dr. Morris described its geographic location in the State of Vermont, surrounded by mountains and known as the oldest private military college in the United States. He highlighted Norwich's role in pioneering

the concept of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) and its focus on producing future military leaders equipped with a deep understanding of culture, the world, and history. Dr. Morris underscored Norwich's leadership in Cyber and its unique opportunities for both military and civilian students.

Regarding the Peace and War Center, Dr. Morris explained its focus on examining the cycle between peace and war while emphasizing a commitment to peace, noting the historical significance of the Peace Corps, which originated at Norwich University. Dr. Morris then discussed the evolving landscape of technology and its impact on global dynamics, emphasizing Norwich's dedication to preparing its students for the challenges of the modern world. He cited Norwich's guiding statement, which emphasizes the cultivation of moral, patriotic, efficient, and useful citizens.

In the latter part of his introduction, Dr. Morris shared their two-week field study in the Philippines and emphasized Norwich's commitment to developing leaders through experiential learning. He highlighted the importance of immersion in understanding complex subjects like war, crime, culture, and hardships.

Dr. Morris concluded by expressing gratitude for the valuable time and expertise provided by the Institute of Islamic Studies, emphasizing the shared journey toward fostering understanding and leadership.

Lecture 1: History of Islam in the Philippines

Asst. Prof. Darwin J. Absari
Faculty, UP Institute of Islamic Studies

Assistant Professor Darwin J. Absari, a faculty member of the UP Institute of Islamic Studies, began his lecture with the "Pre-Islamic Philippines." He started by sharing pieces of archaeological evidence such as the 1365 AD Negara Kertagama and the 320 AD Balangay. The former is a palm-leaf manuscript describing the Majapahit Empire, while the latter is the oldest evidence of Philippine watercraft excavated in Butuan City, which used to be one of the oldest Hindu-Buddhist political entities.

Asst. Prof. Absari further explained the Hindu-Buddhist legacy in Sulu and some parts of the Philippines. Accordingly, the first known contact of Indians with the Philippine South was during the Pallava Dynasty (600-900 AD). Later on, contacts expanded to the rest of the archipelago, with places becoming vassal states of succeeding Hindu-Buddhist empires such as Sri Vijaya (670-1025 AD, Sumatra) and Majapahit (1293-1500 AD, Java). Apart from these, there are also remaining Hindu-Buddhist influences in the literature, traditional dance, governance, religion or spirituality, and even language—with early Tausug leaders having Hindu names like Jamiyun Kulisa and Indira Suga.



He also mentioned some of the earliest contacts of Muslims in the Philippines with China as recorded in Chinese annals. Besides the 1206 AD cotton export from Mindoro, Palawan, and Basilan, three tributary states in the southern Philippines visited Chinese emperors: Sanmalan (present-day Zamboanga City) in 1011 AD, Kumalarang (part of present-day Basilan up to the Kumalarang Municipality in Zamboanga del Sur) in 1420 AD, and Sulu in 1417 AD. During the latter visit, a Sulu Sultan fell ill and died in Dezhou, Shandong Province. His tomb has been preserved by the Chinese government and serves as a "living link" between the Philippine South and China. Asst. Prof. Absari also enumerated other Chinese influences on Filipino culture, such as dress style, martial arts, culinary habits, spiritual and economic practices, and architectural designs. He added that many "Founding Fathers" of the Philippines, including the national hero Dr. Jose P. Rizal, were of Chinese descent.

He then shared the salient points of the Islamization process in the Philippines, noting that Islam did not drastically change the status quo but added to the growing civilization. For instance, in trading, sightings of Arab ships from Mindoro going to China were recorded in Chinese annals as early as 982 AD. From the 9th to the 12th century, Arab and Indian Muslims were major players in Southeast Asian trade.

Framing his talk around leading personalities, he discussed the Islamization process in Sulu. He first mentioned Ahmad Timhar Maqbalu (Tuan Mashayka) of Hadramaut, Yemen, who arrived in Maimbung, Sulu, between 1270-1275 AD. He died in 1310 AD, and his tomb is the oldest physical evidence of Islam in the Philippines. The second figure was Ibrahim Zayn al-Din al-Akbar (Karim ul-Makhdum), who arrived in present-day Tawi-Tawi (historically part of Sulu) around 1360 AD and built the first mosque on Simunul Island. Lastly, the arrival of Sayyid Abubakar (Sharif ul-Hashim) marked the peak of the Islamization process in Sulu. A Muslim preacher of Arab-Royal Malay descent, he taught the Islamic legal system, established Islamic schools, and became the founding Sultan of the Sulu Sultanate in 1405 AD.

In the case of Mindanao, the Islamization process was initiated by Karim ul-Makhdum himself. Known as Sharif Awliya in the area, he married a local princess in Maguindanao and raised a family before returning to Makkah in present-day Saudi Arabia. The second key figure was Sharif Maharaja, the uncle of Sharif Awliya. Sharif Maharaja married Sharif Awliya's daughter and left descendants who later partnered with the next significant personality, Sharif Kabungsuwan. Sharif Kabungsuwan, the younger brother of Sharif ul-Hashim, arrived in Mindanao around 1440 AD and established the Maguindanao Sultanate in 1515 AD. Initially facilitated by Sharif Kabungsuwan, Islam spread further to the Lanao areas in the first half of the 17th century (1601-1650 AD) through intermarriages and alliances between the Maguindanao and Maranao rulers. Additionally, a certain Sharif Alawi also penetrated the area via Misamis Oriental and Bukidnon.

Asst. Prof. Absari highlighted that the overall impact of Islam on the early communities of Mindanao can be understood in two ways: 1) The population was consolidated and connected into the collective global Muslim community referred to as Ummah; and 2) Islam contributed to the elevation and sophistication of the existing civilization without destroying it.

Beyond Sulu and Mindanao, he explained that the introduction of Islam to Luzon and the Visayas occurred from two directions: 1) Via the Tausug traders and preachers at the height of the Sulu Sultanate, and 2) Via the Brunei Sultanate, which took over the Hindu kingdom in Manila. At the height of the Sulu Sultanate, the Tausugs were major players in trading, extending their influence to Luzon and the Visayas, where some areas became tributary states of the Sulu Sultanate. For example, Muslims led the 1405 Mindoro tribute to China and facilitated Magellan's talks with the Cebu King. The Bruneian Muslim principality in Manila, established in 1500 AD, further accelerated the spread of Islam. Being a trade entrepot, Manila facilitated missionary activities, and by the end of the 16th century (1501-1600 AD), Muslim preachers had reached as far as Balayan in Batangas, Cebu, Mindoro, Iloilo, and even Butuan in northeastern Mindanao. It is argued that if the Spaniards had arrived 50 years later, the entire Philippine archipelago might have been predominantly Muslim, or at least most areas would have been under Muslim control or influence, making the Christianization process significantly more challenging.

Continuing the presentation, he shared some salient points on the arrival of Western colonialism. Starting with the Spaniards, he pointed out that their arrival in the 16th century (between 1501 and 1600) halted the spread of Islam to the rest of Luzon and the Visayas. However, the Sultanates in Sulu and Mindanao successfully resisted conquest and Christianization. On the other hand, the arrival of the Americans

coincided with the "weakening" state of Muslim society due to more than three centuries of war with the Spaniards. Officially replacing the Spaniards in 1898 through the Treaty of Paris, the Americans "illegally" annexed Mindanao into the new colonial government. Later, the Americans introduced Western secular values and education, but the Muslims continued to resist America's assimilation and pacification efforts. It should also be noted that the 1946 Philippine Independence included Sulu and Mindanao as part of the present-day Philippines, despite the "Dansalan Declaration" and letters from the Sultan of Sulu to the U.S. President protesting the inclusion.

Toward the end of his presentation, Asst. Prof. Absari highlighted the connection between the American colonial period and the contemporary problems of the Muslim South. According to him, it all started with the inclusion of Sulu and Mindanao in the 1946 Philippine Independence. The neo-colonial policies of Filipino politicians, including mistreatment, double standard policies, and reduced opportunities and rights for the Muslim population, were historical injustices in the making. Thus, in 1968, the grievances and sufferings of the Muslim community were triggered by the Jabidah Massacre, the killings of Muslim military recruits on Corregidor Island. This event gave birth to contemporary Muslim resistance over time, from the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) to the Maute Group. Recently, the newly organized political entity in the Muslim South called the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) has been seen as a promise of peace and development.

Lecture 2: Beliefs and Practices of Islam in the Philippines

Asst. Prof. Darwin J. Absari
Faculty, UP Institute of Islamic Studies

The second lecture on the Beliefs and Practices of Islam in the Philippines was also delivered by Asst. Prof. Darwin J. Absari. He commenced his presentation by discussing the Islamic core principles, beginning with *Tawheed*, also known as monotheism. According to Asst. Prof. Absari, *Tawheed* is the belief in One God, inspired by a verse in the Qur'an which states "*Allah is one*" (*Surah Al-Ikhlās 114*). He further explained that the implications of *Tawheed* extend beyond the belief in one God; it also pertains to interpersonal relationships with other human beings. The concept of *Tawheed* allows Muslims to perceive others as part of their identity—there is a sense of interconnectedness with others. This entails respecting and, more importantly, being kind towards others as they are integral to one's existence. Other implications of *Tawheed* include serving as the foundation or core of Islam, serving as the basis for human devotion to God, and providing guidance to humankind on how to establish harmonious relationships among themselves. Inspired by the concept of *Tawheed*, there exists a vertical relationship between Allah and Man. Additionally, there is a horizontal relationship between man and fellow humans.

Asst. Prof. Absari proceeded with his discussion by presenting the prophetic mission. The birth of Islam was accomplished by Prophet Mohammad (SAW), the revered prophet of Islam believed to be the last prophet among Muslims. According to

Asst. Prof. Absari, the primary teachings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) revolved around moral development, which is why the focus of Filipino Muslims is on moral development. The prophetic mission, particularly of Mohammad (SAW), aimed at formulating ideas for the liberation of mankind from the shackles of servitude, and promoting solidarity and equality among mankind. Asst. Prof. Absari contextualized "shackles" as referring to the experiences of the Meccans being oppressed by the elites, who imposed numerous tasks upon them. He went on to discuss that there are two primary sources of knowledge among Muslims: the Qur'an as divine revelations and prophetic traditions. These serve as guidance for the liberation of mankind and for living with dignity, solidarity, and equality.

Another core principle of Islam is *Khalifa*, also known as vicegerency. This refers to mankind's primary role to live on earth as described in the Qur'an. Connecting these three Islamic principles—*Tawheed*, Prophetic Mission, and *Khalifah*—constitutes the essence of Islam. He further elaborated that the essence of Islam includes it being a Way of Life, embodying humanistic values, acknowledging that all human beings are created equally, and enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil.

Asst. Pror. Absari continued to discuss the five pillars of Islam: 1) Hajj (pilgrimage), 2) Zakah (alms), 3) Shahadah (profession of faith), 4) Salah (prayer), and 5) Sawn (fasting). These pillars signify the testimony that there is no God except Allah and that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger, the establishment of salah, the fasting of Ramadan, the payment of zakah, and the performance of Hajj.



In the concluding part of his lecture, Asst. Prof. Absari presented a diagram explaining the articles of faith, which are fundamental principles of Islam. The articles of faith comprise six types of beliefs: belief in God as the foremost, followed by belief in the Prophets, belief in the Day of Judgment, belief in the Angels, belief in the divine book, and belief in Qadar. Lastly, he discussed the Islamic influences in the Philippines which are evident in psychological and linguistic aspects. According to Asst. Prof. Absari, the psychology of "*kapwa*" or fellow human beings, and "*asa*" or good attitude are some of these psychological influences manifested in both Christianized and Muslim Filipinos. The indigenous definition of "*kapwa*" is an extension of one's identity, while the concept of "*asa*" or good manners is recognized by many Filipinos despite the diversity in culture. In terms of language, there are words that continue to survive and are being used, which are largely influenced by Islam, such as "*simba*" or worship and "*hukum*" or judgment. These are just a few examples of words that originated from Malay or Arabic.

Lecture 3: Philippine Muslim Cultural Traditions

Nefertari A. Arsad, Ph.D.

Faculty, UP Institute of Islamic Studies

Associate Professor Nefertari Arsad, a faculty member of the UP Institute of Islamic Studies, delivered a lecture on Philippine Muslim Cultural Traditions. She began by discussing the various elements of cultural practices and traditions within Philippine Islam. These elements stem from diverse sources, including pre-Islamic indigenous cultures, regional influences such as those from the Nusantara region, which encompasses the Malay archipelago, and historical interactions with China. Additionally, Islamic culture, initially introduced by Sufis who emphasized monotheism, spiritual purity, and moral excellence, became increasingly institutionalized with the establishment of sultanates, leading to the incorporation of Shariah law. Associate Prof. Arsad explained how these elements collectively form the rich tapestry of traditions within Philippine Islam. She noted an ongoing discourse among Muslim communities regarding the acceptance or rejection of these elements, with some viewing it as syncretism while others perceive it as a dichotomy of cultures.

Moving forward, Assoc. Prof. Arsad explored the intersection of Islamic values with traditional Filipino culture. Using a diagram, she illustrated the composition of the Philippine population, highlighting the Christian majority, indigenous peoples, and Muslims. She emphasized that Filipinos are often associated with Asian or oriental characteristics, such as spirituality, hospitality, reverence for tradition, and a preference for collectivism over individualism. However, she noted that these traits can be moderated by various factors, including experiences of conflict, migration, and modernity.

Regarding Islamic values vis-à-vis traditional Filipino culture, Assoc. Prof. Arsad underscored the strength of cultural traditions and indigenous knowledge among Muslims and indigenous peoples. She also highlighted linguistic intersections,

such as the Sinug language spoken by the Tausug people, which shares similarities with Visayan languages. Additionally, she noted that Muslims and Christian Filipinos share certain values derived from Abrahamic religions, albeit within distinct cultural contexts.

In the latter part of her lecture, Assoc. Prof. Arsad identified several current challenges. Firstly, she highlighted disparities in education despite existing policies on “education for all.” Drawing from her experience as an external quality assurance assessor in BARMM, she recounted the challenging journey of teachers from remote areas, illustrating the difficulty of accessibility and infrastructure. Secondly, she addressed economic disparities within BARMM compared to other regions. Lastly, she discussed the need for institutional development to meet the demands of an increasingly complex environment, citing initiatives such as the development of Halal and Islamic banks, as well as educational programs like ALIVE (Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education), aimed at enhancing the capacities of Muslims in the Philippines to participate more actively at the national level.

Question and Answer Forum

Moderated by Prof. Julkipli M. Wadi

Prof. Julkipli M. Wadi, moderator of the seminar, facilitated the question and answer (Q&A) portion. Below are the questions raised and the corresponding responses, respectively:

Question 1: During the current conflict in the Philippines, are there Muslim organizations that urge politicians to act in certain ways? If there is, how do they go about it?

Response: Asst. Prof. Darwin J. Absari responded that during the early days of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the group was on good terms with Muslim traditional politicians. In fact, the latter even encouraged the former to make some reforms. The early formation of the MNLF, especially the first two training sessions in Malaysia, was organized by Muslim traditional politicians. However, when the MNLF returned as young cadres, a clash ensued due to disagreements on many aspects of the liberation movement. The young cadres viewed the Muslim traditional politicians as one of the hindrances to Mindanao's development because they had been used as instruments by the national government to advance its interests. Since then, there has not been any cooperation or at least coordination. The scenario was repeated in the case of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). In fact, one of the major advocacies of the MILF is reforming the political landscape of Mindanao, where many of the politicians are warlords. Moving on to more radical Moro fronts such as the Abu Sayyaf and the Maute groups, Muslim traditional politicians are also seen as the same instruments used by the national government. He reiterated that a continuous and similar call from the Moro fronts is very obvious—political reform, poverty alleviation, and development. As a major concern, Moro fronts advocate for either independence, autonomy, or other alternatives. This is why federalism has become one of the important discussions in recent times, as it decentralizes and distributes power and could potentially replace the Muslim traditional politicians.

Response: Atty. Mehol K. Sadain added that generally speaking, there are existing non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs). However, they have not made much impact in terms of influencing politics among Muslims in the Philippines unless the members are themselves politicians.

Question 2: The Philippines is a big tropical country and has a very communal society. It is also a very resilient country. How does the public sentiment change with the growth of the different Moro fronts?

Response: Prof. Julkipli M. Wadi provided insights into the evolution of the Filipino mindset regarding the rise of Moro fronts in the South. He compared this dynamic to a wave: as confrontations between national security forces and Moro fronts escalate, anti-Muslim sentiment among Filipinos also rises. Conversely, when peace talks progress, anti-Muslim sentiment lowers. According to Prof. Wadi, this pattern is evident in numerous surveys and remains consistent. Currently, with relative peace in Mindanao and Moro fronts participating in both the peace process and mainstream political activities, a relatively sympathetic perspective among Filipinos is being observed.

Question 3: During the presentation earlier you spoke about the newly formed Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) as a significant development. In terms of policies, what else do you think still needs to be improved if the government truly wants to help the Muslim Filipinos?

Response: Asst. Prof. Darwin J. Absari responded that there have been numerous policies, especially at the beginning of the contemporary Muslim struggle. The government has introduced many measures to address Muslim grievances. Initially, some policies were not historically grounded, but from 1972 onwards, there has been notable development in addressing the major issues in Mindanao. However, political will is necessary for these policies to be fully utilized. For instance, the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) would not have been approved without President Rodrigo Duterte's strong commitment to its implementation.

Response: Asst. Prof. Absari also discussed the unique case of Presidential Decree 1083, the "Code of Muslim Personal Laws" in the Philippine Constitution. He highlighted the potential expansion of this code to include commercial laws and the establishment of additional Islamic law courts outside Muslim-majority areas. A bill for the establishment of these additional Islamic law courts is currently in its third reading in the House of Representatives. Towards the end of his response, Asst. Prof. Absari expressed his belief that the views of non-Muslims, particularly Filipino politicians, towards Muslims have improved significantly over the decades. Reflecting on the early 2000s, he noted that the era when no taxi would stop for a veiled Muslim woman due to Islamophobia is over.

Response: Atty. Mehol K. Sadain noted that if one examines the Philippine government's policy approach toward Muslims, the focus has shifted over time. Initially, after the era of hostilities—spanning from the Spanish, American, and Japanese occupations to the rampant clashes in Mindanao during the 1960s—the policy aimed at integrating Muslims into mainstream Philippine society, leading to the creation of the Commission on National Integration. However, this approach did not resonate well with some Muslims, such as Nur Misuari, who, after becoming highly

educated and aware of the issues, founded the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). During the height of the rebellion, the Philippine government adopted a policy of appeasement. This included the codification of Presidential Decree 1083 (the Code of Muslim Personal Laws), the establishment of the Ministry of Muslim Affairs (now the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos), the creation of the Institute of Islamic Studies at the University of the Philippines Diliman, the construction of significant mosques like the Blue Mosque in Maharlika Village and the Golden Mosque in Quiapo, and the establishment of Muslim settlements such as Maharlika Village and Salam Compound in the National Capital Region (NCR). Furthermore, peace talks with the MNLF and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) culminated in the creation of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). Atty. Sadain emphasized that Muslims now seek a policy of partnership rather than mere integration or appeasement. He believes that current programs within BARMM and similar initiatives are moving towards realizing this partnership. He added that with recent developments in education, governance, law, and infrastructure, along with support for BARMM from European countries, the US, and Australia, there is a promising trend towards this policy of partnership.

Question 4: What is the concept of war as a foundation of peace from the perspective of Muslims in the Philippines?

Response: Atty. Mehol K. Sadain began by rephrasing the question to “preparedness for war as a means to ensure peace.” He then discussed the essence of the International Humanitarian Law (IHL) book he co-authored with Asst. Prof. Absari, using it as a reference. The book explores the IHL aspects of Islamic law as practiced by Muslim rebels in the Philippines, contextualizing it locally. For instance, the MILF observed IHL based on Islamic law on war, a concept dating back to the time of Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him). Atty. Sadain highlighted some rules established by the Prophet (Pbuh): not to harm women, the elderly, and children; not to destroy farms or sources of livelihood; not to destroy monasteries and other places of worship; among others. He believed that Islam, as taught by the Prophet Mohammad (Pbuh), adapted to local conditions. Although it began with conquest, it evolved into a careful strategy of proselytization, spreading Islam through peaceful means and by example. This accommodation, acculturation, and peaceful proselytization likely contributed to Islam’s rapid spread across the Byzantine and Persian empires, debunking the notion that Islam was spread by the sword. He added that anything spread violently would not endure. While acknowledging the wars during the Prophet Mohammad’s (Pbuh) time, he argued that these conflicts allowed Muslims to live in peace and build peaceful societies. Atty. Sadain also discussed the connection between the fate of Al-Andalus, the Muslim empire in the Iberian Peninsula, and Muslims in the Philippines. Learning about the existence of Muslims in the prospective colony and surrounding areas enraged the Spaniards, prompting them to contain the Muslim presence. This led to conflicts not only in the Philippines but also in Brunei and Malaysia. The first clash between the Spaniards and the natives occurred in the Brunei Sultanate, which was allied with the Sulu Sultanate and Maguindanao Sultanate.

Response: Prof. Julkipli M. Wadi reinforced Atty. Sadain's response regarding the perspective amongst Muslims on matters of war and peace. He highlighted Siyar, a

sub-sphere in Islamic thought that addresses questions of peace and war, diplomacy, treaty-making, and related issues. Drawing from both classical and modern disciplines of Islamic Studies, Prof. Wadi mentioned prominent authors in Siyar such as Imam Shaibani (a classical authority on Siyar), Prof. Majid Kadduri (formerly associated with Johns Hopkins University), and Dr. Abdulhamid Abu Sulayman (a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania). Adding further context, Prof. Wadi underscored Siyar's significance to Norwich University. Given its current popularity as a subject within international law, Prof. Wadi encouraged the Norwich group to explore its materials and potentially incorporate it into their curriculum. He stressed the importance, for a university like Norwich, of bridging Islamic thought with contemporary perspectives on war and peace to cultivate a new mindset among cadets or students. Additionally, he expressed confidence in the availability of American scholars who could assist in developing a curriculum focused on this convergence.

Question 5: How do Islamic educational institutions, specifically in the Southern region of the Philippines, incorporate teachings on peace and war? How do they introduce it to the students who work on peace, domestically?

Response: Prof. Julkipli M. Wadi asserts that the integration of peace education into the Philippine education system across regions is imperative, particularly given the historical context of the peace process and the ongoing integration of Moro fronts into the Philippine administrative framework. Highlighting the example of Notre Dame of Cotabato, which offers undergraduate and PhD programs in Peace Education, Prof. Wadi commends the initiative to incorporate peace education into the curricula of universities and schools in Mindanao. He elaborates on the presence of dialogue centers that address not only religious matters but also issues pertaining to peace, economic development, and more. Additionally, he anticipates that with the development of the BARMM, other academic institutions will likely express interest in integrating peace education into their curricula, not only in Mindanao but throughout the entire country.

Response: Atty. Mehol K. Sadain shared his experience in formulating a peace education module approximately two to four years ago. His group presented it at Mindanao State University (MSU), focusing on three levels of concern for peace: national, regional, and familial. They aimed to reconcile the concept of peace as outlined in national laws with Islamic principles. For example, at the national level, the Constitution declares war as a national policy, while at the regional level, many Qur'anic verses discuss defensive war until persecution ceases, emphasizing the importance of peace negotiation if the enemy shows willingness. Additionally, they emphasized fostering peace within families under the leadership of the father as the head of the household. However, Atty. Sadain noted that the module has yet to be implemented by schools outside of Mindanao, potentially due to cumbersome approval processes. Towards the end of his remarks, Atty. Sadain mentioned Dr. Cesar Majul, the first dean of the Institute of Islamic Studies, who authored a book on peace negotiation. He also suggested that a "convergence" approach, possibly addressing concerns raised by the group from Norwich University, could be beneficial.

Question 6: What impact did the Arab Spring have on the Muslim Filipino community? How was the message perceived, and was there any uprising here?

Response: Professor Julkipli M. Wadi responded that the phenomenon is rooted in geopolitics, where events in the Middle East, both pre and post-Arab Spring, elicit varied responses from Muslim Filipinos. While issues such as the war in Gaza incited protests and demonstrations, the Arab Spring did not evoke a similar reaction. Nevertheless, he noted that the Arab Spring reinforced their perception of persistent issues in the region. He observed a sense of ambivalence among Muslims in the Philippines; while they sympathized with Arab demonstrators, they struggled to comprehend that these protesters were opposing their own leaders. Notably, the resistance now arises from within Arab nations, with several leaders toppling from Tunisia to Egypt, Yemen, Libya, and particularly Syria. Reflecting on the Gaza situation, Prof. Wadi anticipates a potential replication in the Philippines of the robust anti-Israel demonstrations seen among university students in the United States.

Question 7: How do Muslim communities perceive and react to the growing tensions in the South China Sea?

Response: Ms. Baibonn Saguid expressed her perspective on the West Philippine Sea, advocating that the United States should refrain from involvement if it truly seeks to establish itself as a global power. She proposed the necessity of organizing a dialogue on the West Philippine Sea instead. Ms. Saguid highlighted a degree of ambivalence among some Filipinos regarding the sentiment towards the area. She supported her observation by referencing the actions of two former Philippine presidents, Arroyo and Aquino, who permitted the reclamation of Philippine soil in the West Philippine Sea. Furthermore, she mentioned instances where fishermen in Zambales were reported to be selling sand to the Chinese for similar purposes. Ms. Saguid concluded by suggesting that some Filipinos, including high-ranking officials, may be complicit in the establishment of Chinese outposts within areas under Philippine responsibility. In contrast to what she deemed as complicit behavior by some Philippine presidents, Ms. Saguid advocated for each government to maintain an independent policy.

Response: Presidential Adviser Almarin C. Tillah shared insights from his visits to both the US Embassy and the Chinese Embassy. Highlighting the positive aspects of these interactions, Hon. Tillah recounted suggesting to the staff at the US Embassy that Americans focus on their significant contributions to Filipino society, particularly in education reform, rather than engaging in potentially contentious actions such as militarization. To the Chinese Ambassador, he emphasized the historical importance of the Sulu Sultanate as a key mediator on matters related to the West Philippine Sea. Lastly, he recommended that China rekindle the goodwill of the past, particularly its longstanding positive relationship with the Sulu Sultanate.

The question and answer forum delved deeper when Prof. Wadi emphasized the importance of self-reflection, asserting that even a country as powerful as the United States must consider its actions given the significant challenges it currently confronts. These challenges include tensions in regions such as the Middle East, Ukraine, and the South China Sea, as well as the potential implications of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in warfare, which could escalate conflicts onto a global scale. In light of these circumstances, he posed the following points for reflection:

(a) To what extent do Norwich University students engage in self-reflection to develop the American character, which plays a significant role in shaping both domestic and foreign policy, particularly in the Middle East? This character is envisioned to embody principles such as human liberty and rights, reminiscent of the ideals of the founding fathers.

(b) To what degree is self-reflection being sidelined due to the influence of external interests? For example, Professor John Mearsheimer of the University of Chicago suggests that entities like the 'Israel lobby' are shaping American domestic and foreign policy, diverting it from its traditional trajectory towards international Zionism. Is the American character in policymaking being overshadowed by these influences?

(c) Is there ongoing self-reflection within critical sectors of American universities? Are we finding ourselves at the mercy of certain controlling entities because we've allowed their influence to dominate our discourse?

Response: Dr. Travis Morris began his response by expressing his respect and appreciation for the concept of self-reflection. However, he acknowledged the complexity of the questions surrounding self-reflection. In attempting to address it, he began discussing foreign policy and diplomatic relations, which he sees as operating on both micro and macro levels—from the individual to the community, army, and ultimately to the Department of State level, which he considers the highest. According to him, it's important to consider these different levels of analysis when engaging in self-reflection. He believed that history is fluid, citing examples such as Morocco being the first nation to recognize USA's sovereignty, which led Thomas Jefferson to copy the Qur'an. Additionally, he referenced the first stanza of the US Marines' song mentioning Tripoli, Egypt, and how France was the first country to aid the US in winning the Revolution, only for conflicts to arise in World War 1 and World War 2. Moreover, he noted that while the Russia-Ukraine War, Israel-Gaza War, and conflicts in Yemen receive significant attention, there are actually a hundred and twelve ongoing wars globally. He emphasized the lack of discussion about the African continent regarding self-reflection. Dr. Morris also pointed out the problematic nature of history due to its numerous wars. Looking ahead to 2024, he observed the evolving nature of US foreign policies in the Middle East and expressed bewilderment at protests in US universities. Dr. Morris believed that every conflict has multifaceted backgrounds and dimensions, including the Gaza war, which led him to engage directly with stakeholders by visiting Israel, speaking to Palestinians in Jerusalem, Jewish settlers in the West Bank, families of IDF soldiers, and families who lost children to Hamas. He stressed the complexity of such conflicts, which garner global attention. Additionally, Dr. Morris appreciated Ms. Baibonn Saguid's comments on US elections, noting the significant impact of elected officials on the country's trajectory. He expressed concerns about the influence of artificial intelligence and social media on elections, highlighting the potential for polarization and manipulation. He anticipated a unique electoral landscape leading up to November. Furthermore, Dr. Morris pointed out that COVID-19 demonstrated the potential for rapid societal and global change, emphasizing the need to base future projections on various assumptions. As he concluded his remarks, he underscored the weighty responsibility facing Norwich cadets as future leaders who will inherit the consequences of current decisions. He emphasized that they will not only analyze these issues theoretically but

will also be responsible for making real-world decisions. Finally, Dr. Morris emphasized that part of self-reflection involves “contemplating where we have been, where we currently stand, and where we need to go.”

Prof. Wadi posed another self-reflection question aimed at eliciting insights from UP students. To contextualize the question, Prof. Wadi elaborated on the complex nature of the relationship between American colonial history in the Philippines. Initially, there were diplomatic efforts evidenced by treaties such as the Bates Treaty and the Kiram-Carpenter Agreement. Frank Carpenter, a former governor of Mindanao and Sulu, played a significant role in this era. However, there were also instances of adversity, such as the Battle of Bayang in Lanao, the Bud Dajo Massacre in Sulu, and the Bud Bagsak Massacre, also in Sulu. The relationship was not solely characterized by antipathy and tension, as there were positive narratives as well. In recent times, the United States reengaged with Mindanao through the development of military exercises and infrastructure projects across various provinces, under the guise of the "War on Terror." This resurgence of American involvement in Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago suggests that any future engagement by the United States in the Philippines, and indeed Southeast Asia, would likely be tied to issues in the South China Sea.

d) Is there a bridging perspective among Filipinos or Muslims in the Philippines regarding the new instruments of the United States in Southeast Asia, including the Philippines? How can we enhance our self-reflection on the American role in Southeast Asia, including the Philippines?

Response: Mr. Al-Sadid A. Acahul, an MA student at the Institute of Islamic Studies, responded to Dr. Morris's statement, which emphasizes the importance of considering our future direction rather than solely reflecting on our past. Acahul invoked the words of Dr. Jose Rizal, stating, "Ang hindi lumigon sa kanyang pinanggalingan ay hindi makakarating sa kanyang paroroonan" (He who does not look back and reflect on the past will not reach his destination). As he concluded, Acahul posed the poignant question: "Ano ba talaga ang ating destinasyon?" (What is truly our destination?).

Response: Al-Muntazar A. Jamasali, also an MA student at the same institute, emphasized the necessity of leadership certainty in managing both war and peace. He argued that such leadership should originate from within society rather than being imposed externally. Consequently, he viewed democracy as a supplementary concept. Jamasali concluded with a thought-provoking question: "What is the use of peace when you are on the wrong side of the principle?" He further criticized American support for Israel, suggesting that war may be inevitable against oppressive regimes like that of Israel, but condemning the American government's stance in favor of Israel.

Additional inputs: Presidential Adviser Almarin C. Tillah offered further insights on statistics and governance. Firstly, Hon. Tillah highlighted discrepancies in the count of Muslims between the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) and his own research, noting that while the PSA reported 10 million Muslims, his research indicated a figure exceeding 20 million. He attributed this disparity to the PSA's limited survey scope, which excluded rural and isolated areas, focusing solely on urban centers. Consequently, Tillah characterized the PSA's approach as potentially constituting "Statistical Genocide," wherein Muslims are marginalized by inaccurate statistics, with revenue allocation being one significant implication. Secondly, Tillah expressed

skepticism regarding the efficacy of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) in resolving underlying issues, considering it merely a parliamentary entity. He advocated for the serious consideration of establishing a federal state for Muslims to effect meaningful change.

Closing

The seminar concluded with Prof. Wadi expressing gratitude to the Peace and War Center of Norwich University and assuring them of the Institute of Islamic Studies' readiness for future engagements or collaborations. Additionally, the Institute pledged to produce proceedings for the event, which would be shared with Norwich University.

Mr. Greyson Merola, Fellow Cadet of the Peace and War Center of Norwich University, also extended gratitude on behalf of their team. As a token of appreciation, he presented a Challenge Coin and a book on Norwich University to Prof. Wadi. The Challenge Coin symbolizes the United States government, military, and universities, recognizing the significance of the UP Institute of Islamic Studies.



PHOTO DOCUMENTATION



Prof. Wadi delivers a welcome remark during the Seminar on Philippine Muslim History: A Briefer with Q&A held on May 06, 2024, at the 2F, Virata Hall, UP ISSI bldg., University of the Philippine Diliman.



Dr. Morris gives a brief introduction about the Field Study of Norwich University Peace and War Center during the Seminar on Philippine Muslim History: A Briefer with Q&A held on May 06, 2024, at the 2F, Virata Hall, UP ISSI bldg., University of the Philippine Diliman.



A Fellow Cadet from the Norwich University Peace and War Center raises his question during question and answer forum of the Seminar on Philippine Muslim History: A Briefer with Q&A held on May 06, 2024, at the 2F, Virata Hall, UP ISSI bldg., University of the Philippine Diliman.



Attendees of the Seminar on Philippine Muslim History: A Briefer with Q&A held on May 06, 2024, at the 2F, Virata Hall, UP ISSI bldg., University of the Philippine Diliman.



Atty. Mehol K. Sadain, Professorial Lecturer of UP IIS answers a question during the question and answer forum of the Seminar on Philippine Muslim History: A Briefer with Q&A held on May 06, 2024, at the 2F, Virata Hall, UP ISSI bldg., University of the Philippine Diliman.



Group photo of the organizers and attendees of the Seminar on Philippine Muslim History: A Briefer with Q&A held on May 06, 2024, at the 2F, Virata Hall, UP ISSI bldg., University of the Philippine Diliman.

