

Moro Heroes in Textbooks: The Marginalization of Muslim Filipino Heroes in Social Studies

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ABSTRACT

This paper explored the representation and portrayal of Muslim Filipinos in social studies textbooks and problematized whether the educational system fosters the construction of a national identity that is inclusive in nature. Through a content analysis of eight sets of the most recent Philippine history textbooks produced by various reputable publishing companies, this study uncovered the underrepresentation of Muslim Filipino heroes in comparison with their Christian Filipino counterparts. While the narratives of Muslim Filipinos were generally portrayed in a manner which glorified them, there were still parts of these learning materials that perpetuated certain misconceptions and stereotypes about them. This research argues that the marginalization of Muslim Filipinos in current learning materials may have been influenced by certain factors—such as the scarcity of reference materials on the history of Muslim Filipinos, the limitation of the educational experience of authors and publishers, and the commercial pressures of the privatized textbook publishing industry. While this study recognizes that there is a level of counter-hegemonic resistance that is already taking shape in our educational system, the larger problem of a Filipino national identity that disregards the multicultural nature of society still needs to be addressed.

Keywords: social studies education, Philippine history textbooks, national identity, Muslim Filipinos, multicultural education

Introduction

A particular aspect in which the educational institution contributes to the project of nation-building is through the discussion of “national heroes.” In their examination of hero cults in Latin America, Fallaw and Brunk (2006) observe how nations are usually defined by the kinds of heroes that are mostly represented in their national histories. The posthumous construction and reconstruction of the biographies of prominent individuals, who are then labeled as “heroes,” help simplify and condense the idea of what a nation is and what it stands for—thus promoting unity within the population (p.3). Through a series of meetings held from 1993 to 1995, the National Heroes Committee, created under Executive Order No. 75 of Former President Fidel V. Ramos, named the following historical figures as those which they jointly recommended for recognition as national heroes of the Philippines: Jose Rizal, Andres Bonifacio, Emilio Aguinaldo, Apolinario Mabini, Marcelo del Pilar, Sultan Dipatuan Kudarat, Juan Luna, Melchora Aquino, and Gabriela Silang. Going through this list of names, it is evident that the most important moment in Philippine history is deemed to be the independence movement against Spain, as all these heroes were involved in this struggle in one way or another. It may also be observed that the perceived center of such a struggle is Luzon, as almost all these heroes were geographically located there, except for the lone Muslim Filipino hero from Maguindanao, Sultan Dipatuan Kudarat. Why is Sultan Kudarat the only Muslim Filipino hero represented in the more popular versions of our historical narrative? Do Filipinos consider the struggle of the Moros—the term utilized by the Spaniards during their colonial occupation to refer to the Muslim inhabitants of the archipelago—as an important aspect of the nationalist struggle of the country? If so, shouldn’t more Moro heroes be viewed as “national” heroes?

This paper explores the representation of Muslim heroes in contemporary textbooks used to teach Philippine history in the subject of social studies, while also examining such representation in the curriculum mandated by the Department of Education (DepEd). By focusing on the possible underrepresentation and misrepresentation of these heroes, this study aims to uncover the hidden themes of othering and alienation on the part of Muslim Filipinos. It aims to interrogate whether the educational system fosters the construction of a national identity that is inclusive in nature, or whether it furthers the creation of a Filipino identity

that is Tagalog-centric and is more representative of the historical experiences of Christianized Filipinos, as proposed by various scholars both from within and outside the Muslim Filipino community (Francisco, 2005; Gloria, 2014; Isidro, 1968; Madale 1981; Majul, 1980; Mastura 1984; Milligan 2005; Tan 1982). Ultimately, this paper advocates for the greater elaboration of multiculturalism and cultural pluralism in the teaching of social studies—not only in its implementation and teaching, but most especially in its content.

This study therefore seeks to answer the following research question: How are Moro heroes of the Spanish and American colonial periods, from 1578 to 1913, portrayed in contemporary Philippine History textbooks as they are used in teaching the subject of social studies in basic education?

This study recognizes the evolution of the term “Moro” from a designation made by the Spanish colonial authorities to refer to Muslim Filipinos who were natives of the Philippine archipelago to a label that is utilized pejoratively and imbued with negative connotations both by Spanish and American colonizers and by Christianized Filipinos (Isidro, 1968; Mastura, 1984). In more contemporary times, the “Moro” name has been reclaimed and utilized as a distinction of one’s identity as a Muslim Filipino (Guialal, 1997; Kamlian, 2012). It is in this vein that this present study utilizes the label, as a term that recognizes the distinct cultural identity of the Muslim Filipino.

Muslim Filipinos in History Textbooks of Past Decades

At present, Muslim Filipinos are believed to be divided into thirteen distinct ethnolinguistic groups (Kamlian, 2012). Aside from their belief and practice of the Islamic religion, these ethnolinguistic groups are further united by their experiences of marginalization and disenfranchisement. This current situation is believed to have been brought about by certain historical developments starting from the onset of Spanish colonization that have caused the widening of this “gap of understanding between the Muslim and Christian populations of the Philippines,” a condition which is more commonly known as the “Moro Problem” (Isidro, 1968, p.1).

How does this “gap of understanding” manifest and perpetuate itself in textbooks utilized in the educational system of the country? In his longitudinal study of history textbooks, Curaming (2017) notes how there is a discernible progression from the noticeably unfavorable portrayal of Muslims in the textbooks from the

1900's to the less unfavorable treatment in the 1950's. This gradual moderation of anti-Muslim sentiments in textbooks may reflect the growing sovereign power of the Philippines of this period, marked by the establishment of the Commonwealth in 1935 and the granting of Philippine independence in 1946. For textbooks that were published in the decades after the 1950's, however, Curaming did not observe a clear progression; as the tone and attitude towards the Muslim Filipinos ranged from being slightly suspicious of them, to having a neutral attitude towards them, to being more sympathetic to them, then back to having a more neutral and deadpan stance. On the other hand, the pro-Christian bias was very apparent in history textbooks up until the 1990's—most notable of which was Zaide's "Philippine History and Government" (1999) and her "patently evangelical interpretation" of history (p.431).

Bula (1989), in her study of the prescribed elementary and secondary textbooks in the subjects of Social Studies, English, and Filipino that were made use in public schools and published in the 1980's, notes that much of the information included about Muslim Filipinos still carried "the centuries old colonial prejudices and inaccuracies made on Islam and Muslim history and culture." In general, Bula observed that these textbooks "present and reflect offensive and unacceptable norms on the Muslims" and "reflect Muslims in their primitive conditions and outlooks" (p.189). Bula further reveals that only 18 out of the 39 textbooks she studied integrate the Muslims in their content (p.184).

In analyzing the content of 7 Philippine history textbooks used in teaching social studies in first year high school (published in 1981 to 1987), Salic (1990) pegs a quantitative measure to the underrepresentation of Muslim Filipinos as he revealed that in proportion to the "total number of lessons, contexts, and topics" covered in these books studied, only 1% to 3% were devoted to Muslim history (p.71). Furthermore, most of these topics on Muslim Filipino history discussed in these textbooks belonged predominantly to the distant past, as about 56% were pre-colonial period events (pre-1521), 25% were colonial period events, and only about 19% were post-colonial period events (after July 4, 1946) (p.72-73, 75). Salic therefore concludes that Muslim history and culture is seen to be "relegated to the backwaters of Philippine history" (p.74).

Methodology

This present study sought to undertake a content analysis of contemporary social studies textbooks written for Grades 5 and 6 students, considering the current curriculum has split the discussion of Philippine history into these two grade levels. For the sake of simplicity, this study referred to one set of textbooks written for Grades 5 and 6 by the same publisher as a singular textbook that was separately printed for two grade levels. Table 1 shows the eight sets of social studies textbooks studied.

Table 1
List of Social Studies Textbooks Studied

Year	Title/s	Publisher	Author/s
2000	“Lupang Hinirang: Kasaysayan at Pamahalaan”	Anvil Publish- ing	Olavides-Correa, Habana, Verzosa, & Galvez (Gr.5) Vilorio, Gabuat, Quizol, & Reig / (Gr.6) Torcuator & Gabuat
2014	“Isang Bansa, Isang Lahi”	Vibal Group	Castillo, Langit, Mendoza, & Sarao
2015	“Kamalayang Panlipunan: Kasaysayan ng Pilipinas”	Abiva Publishing House	(Gr.5) Ferrer-Canalita & Lanete-Tubaga / (Gr.6) Delos Santos
2015	“Tuklas Lahi: Serye sa Araling Panlipunan”	Brilliant Creations Publishing	Oliveros, Yumol, & Andaquig
2015	“Araling Panlipunan: Kasaysayan ng Mamamayan ng Pilipinas”	IBON Foundation	Baisa-Julian & Lontoc (Gr.5) Tumbaga- Molave & Diokno / (Gr.6) Tumbaga- Molave & Vasco
2018	“Bagong Lakbay ng Lahing Pilipino”	Phoenix Publishing House	(Gr.5) Fajardo, Belarde, Barcelon, & Daroni/ (Gr.6) Barcelon, Belarde, Concha, Daroni, Fajardo, & Mariano
2018	“Lunday ng Kalinangang Pilipino”	Sibs Publishing House	
2019	“Lahing Pilipino: Kaagapay sa Ika-21 Siglo”	Rex Book Store	

To ensure that there would be a wider range of data to draw conclusions from, textbooks from different authors and published by reputable educational publishers were included. The textbooks studied are currently in print and are available to be purchased in bookstores or by ordering through the in-house store of each publishing company. Such availability implies that these are still in use and are among the most recent reference materials produced by each of these companies prior to the 2023 curricular revision. A limitation of the study is that it was not able to include the DepEd textbook, co-published by Vibal, for Grades 5 and 6 social studies. While some of the authors in these textbooks were also authors in the Vibal textbook studied, the inclusion of these textbooks would have been useful to fully examine how the representation and portrayal of Muslim Filipinos were taught in the public school system. That being said, although the following textbooks were meant for use by private schools, these may still be utilized as supplementary materials in public schools and still reflect the way that history textbooks are written by various authors and published by various educational publishers at present.

Regarding the period of our history which served as the focus of analysis, this study centered on the Filipino heroes who lived from 1578 to 1913. This limitation was made to highlight the overall theme of marginalization of the Moro heroes during the Spanish and the American colonial periods. All Muslim Filipino heroes prior to 1578—such as Lapulapu and Rajah Sulayman—are not included in this analysis since they were seen more as pre-colonial Filipino heroes. The start of the time period coincides with the beginning of the second stage of the Moro Wars, which marked the start of the Spanish expeditions to Mindanao (Majul, 1999). This ensures that the analysis would focus on the Moro heroes from Mindanao and Sulu, outside the mostly Christianized areas of Luzon and Visayas. The endpoint of 1913 coincides with the culmination of the Philippine-American War due to the defeat of the Moro revolutionaries at Bud Bagsak in Sulu.

Marginalization was explored by examining the representation and portrayal of Muslim Filipinos and their historical narratives in the textbooks studied. In this paper, representation refers to a more quantitative value pertaining to the amount of coverage of a particular historical figure or narrative. This study aims to establish the marginalization of Muslim Filipinos by determining their level of representation—i.e. their underrepresentation, in contemporary social studies

textbooks. On the other hand, portrayal refers to the more qualitative and substantive component of the discussion of Muslim Filipino heroes. Any misrepresentation or perpetuation of the negative stereotypes associated with Muslim Filipinos in these contemporary learning materials would thus establish a certain level of marginalization of these heroes and their narratives.

Representation was studied by coming up with quantitative measures that determine the amount of coverage allotted to the discussion of historical narratives involving Moro heroes. In order to provide enough evidence that there is indeed a certain level of underrepresentation of Muslim Filipinos in current social studies textbooks, this study undertook a content analysis of these reference materials in terms of the following variables: (1) the number of words used, (2) the frequency of name mentions, (3) the number of chapters with name mentions, and (4) the number of illustrations used. It is believed that a measurement of these variables would provide a clearer picture on the representation of Muslim Filipinos in these textbooks. Furthermore, this study also measured the representation of non-Muslim Filipino heroes and their historical narratives using the same variables to serve as a point of comparison with their Moro counterparts. In measuring the number of words, a manual word count was carried out where paragraphs and sentences relevant to the biography and life story of each hero were included. If a particular hero belongs to a group or organization, only the paragraphs and sentences that describe their particular involvement in the group were included in the word count. In measuring the frequency of name mentions, any mention of a hero's complete name, first name, last name, or nickname was included. As for the number of illustrations, the following were counted—photographs and drawings of the heroes themselves, illustrations of their statues and monuments, illustrations of their work (such as book covers or paintings), illustrations of places and events that are associated with them, and any illustration with a caption that mentions their name. In order to ensure the dependability of the data, stepwise replication was employed wherein disagreements or inconsistencies between two independent coders were re-counted and resolved.

In addition to these more quantitative measures, this study also investigated the portrayal of Muslim Filipinos by analyzing the potential misrepresentations embedded in the text of the reference materials studied. The pages and paragraphs that were used to depict the historical narrative of each Moro hero and of the

Muslim Filipinos of the given time period were broken down into particular labels or codes in order to examine the broad range of themes that were present in the text. Recurring themes or ideas in the depiction of specific Moro heroes, as well as the overall narrative of Muslim Filipinos, were then identified and analyzed with the aim of investigating the possible perpetuation of Orientalist views or of any misrepresentation of the historical narrative of these heroes in the textbooks studied.

By using both quantitative and qualitative measures in analyzing these textbooks, this study aims to place a mirror in front of the Philippine educational system and how it constructs a form of Filipino national identity that is not inclusive of the minority culture of Muslim Filipinos. It is not the intention of this paper to place the blame on textbook authors and antagonize the educational authorities who constructed these structures, but instead to uncover how such a phenomenon has persisted up to the present.

Results and Discussion

Representation of Muslim Filipinos in History Textbooks

Similar to the work of Bula (1989) and Salic (1990), this present research sought to quantify the amount of underrepresentation of Muslim Filipinos in the eight social studies textbooks analyzed. While these previous studies focused on the quantification of the coverage of Muslim Filipinos in terms of the number of pages (Bula, 1989) and in the proportion of these Muslim Filipino-related topics to the total (Salic, 1990), this current study sought to be more comprehensive in scope by quantifying and analyzing the following variables: (1) number of words used, (2) frequency of name mentions, (3) number of chapters with name mentions, and (4) number of illustrations used.

Table 2 shows the number of words used for the Moro heroes of the specified period. A manual word count was carried out where paragraphs and sentences relevant to the biography and life story of each hero were included. Of the eight textbooks studied, seven textbooks discussed the narratives of Sultan Kudarat, the seventh Sultan of Maguindanao, and Sultan Jamalul Kiram II, the Sultan of Sulu who was the signatory of the Bates Treaty with the Americans in 1899. Kudarat was not mentioned in the Vibal textbook, while he received the most

words written about him in the Phoenix textbook with more than a page of that specific textbook. Next to Kударат, the Muslim Filipino that received the most coverage was Kiram II, who was not mentioned in the Ibon textbook, but was allotted about half a page in the Brilliant Creations textbook. Apart from the two, the social studies textbooks did not have a clear consensus on which Muslim Filipino should be discussed at greater length, as the rest of the Moro heroes were only discussed in one or two of the textbooks studied.

Table 2*Number of Words Used per Muslim Filipino Hero*

Muslim Filipino Heroes	Description	No. of Textbooks (out of 8)	Total Number of Words
Sultan Kударат	Sultan of Maguindanao, 1619-1671	7	1,120
Sultan Jamalul Kiram II	Sultan of Sulu, 1884-1936	7	828
Datu Sirungan	Rajah of Buayan, c1600s	2	278
Martyrs of Bud Bagsak	Sulu, 1913	2	170
Martyrs of Bud Dajo	Sulu, 1906	1	129
Sultan Panguian / Raha Pangiran	Sultan of Sulu, c1578	2	124
Sultan Jamalul Kiram I	Sultan of Sulu, 1823-842	2	122
Datu Salikula	Sultan of Maguindanao, c1599	2	119
Sultan Jamalul Alam	Sultan of Sulu, 1862-1881	1	108
Datu Buisan	Sultan of Maguindanao, c1602-1619	1	102
Datu Utto	Buayan, 1865-1899	1	89
Datu Piang	Cotabato and Tamontaka, c1899	2	74
Datu Tagal	Kapitan Laut of Kударат	1	72
Sultan Alimud Din	Sultan of Sulu, 1735-1748	1	54
Datu Amai Pakpak	Maranao, c1891	1	51
Datu Ali	Buayan, c1899-1905	1	43
Datu Matabalo	Maguindanao, c1900s	1	19

Similar to the data in Table 2, the names of Kudarat and Kiram II were the ones most frequently mentioned in the textbooks studied. However, when the mentions of all heroes from 1578 to 1913 were tallied, Kudarat and Kiram II ranked only twenty-first and thirty-third, respectively, as shown in Table 3. Kudarat was the most mentioned Muslim Filipino hero, but historical personalities such as Francisco Dagohoy, Macario Sakay, Juan Ponce Sumuroy, and Procopio Bonifacio outranked him in terms of name mentions.

Table 3

Frequency of Name Mentions of Each Hero (for heroes with 15 or more mentions)

Filipino Heroes	Number of text-books (out of 8)	Total Number of Name Mentions	Rank
Emilio Aguinaldo	8	465	1
Andres Bonifacio	8	283	2
Jose Rizal	8	198	3
Antonio Luna	8	84	4
Marcelo del Pilar	8	83	5
Graciano Lopez Jaena	8	64	6
Francisco Dagohoy	8	61	7
GOMBURZA	8	61	
Emilio Jacinto	8	58	9
Diego Silang	8	54	10
Gregorio del Pilar	7	51	11
Hermano Pule	8	50	12
Gabriela Silang	8	44	13
Macario Sakay	7	40	14
Miguel Malvar	8	34	15
Gregoria de Jesus	8	33	
Juan Ponce Sumuroy	5	33	16
Apolinario Mabini	8	32	18

Filipino Heroes	Number of text-books (out of 8)	Total Number of Name Mentions	Rank
Procopio Bonifacio	8	30	19
Tamblot	8	30	
Sultan Kudarat	7	29	21
Melchora Aquino	7	28	22
Juan Luna	7	27	23
Pedro Paterno	8	27	
Mariano Ponce	7	25	25
Bankaw	5	24	26
Deodato Arellano	8	24	
Andres Malong	6	19	28
Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo	6	18	
Francisco Maniago	5	18	29
Teodoro Plata	8	18	
Vicente Lukban	8	17	32
Baldomero Aguinaldo	8	16	
Pio Valenzuela	6	16	33
Sultan Jamalul Kiram II	7	16	

Table 4 outlines the representation of the nine national heroes— including Kudarat, the lone Muslim Filipino in the list— as recommended by the National Heroes Committee of 1995, based on the four variables measured in this study. The national hero that received the highest figure in each variable is shown in boldface and highlighted with a double asterisk; while the hero that received the lowest figure is shown in italics and highlighted with an asterisk.

Table 4
Representations of “National Heroes” in the Textbooks Studied

National Hero	Total Number of Words	Frequency of Name Mentions	Number of Chapters with Name Mentions	Number of Illustrations Used
Emilio Aguinaldo	**14,340	**465	29	**46
Andres Bonifacio	9,779	283	29	37
Jose Rizal	7,222	198	**38	42
Marcelo del Pilar	4,065	83	21	21
Gabriela Silang	1,958	44	17	11
Apolinario Mabini	1,662	32	14	*4
Sultan Kudarat	1,120	29	*12	6
Juan Luna	1,078	*27	13	11
Melchora Aquino	*803	28	*12	10

The number of chapters where a hero’s name is mentioned corresponds to how that historical figure affects and impacts different moments of the national historical narrative. In the textbooks analyzed, the names of both Kudarat and Melchora Aquino only appear in a total of twelve chapters, which was the lowest number for this set of heroes. Such a low figure for any historical figure signals that their impact in the history of our country is not felt as much during the time periods before their birth, and subsequently, after their death. Another quantitative measure utilized to illustrate the representation of different Filipino heroes was the number of illustrations used. Considerably, this measure may be heavily skewed in favor of heroes from more recent time periods, since it was only in the later centuries that photography became prevalent.

Portrayal of Muslim Filipinos in History Textbooks

To investigate whether the misconceptions on Muslim Filipinos observed in history textbooks from past decades are still prevalent in contemporary social

studies textbooks, this study sought to identify the common themes explored in the eight textbooks studied regarding Moro heroes and their historical narratives. The common themes written about the Moro Wars and about specific Moro heroes, such as Sultan Kudarat, as well as an examination of certain parts of each textbook that may be interpreted as an expression of biases towards Christianity and the culture of Christianized Filipinos will be presented.

Moro Wars and Other Historical Narratives

The Moro Wars against the Spaniards were covered in seven out of the eight textbooks, portrayed to varying degrees. Among the most common themes that were explored in these textbooks were the ideas that the Moros successfully repelled the attacks of the Spaniards and that they were an obstacle to the success of the Spanish colonial project. Certain themes explored in the textbooks involved how the common belief in Islam served to unite the Moros and how religious differences created a rift between the Christian and the Moro inhabitants of the Philippines. There were six textbooks that acknowledged the occurrence of the Moro raids of coastal settlements in Luzon and Visayas. Regarding these raids, most of the textbooks conceded that these raids were done in reaction to the actions of the Spaniards.

While majority of the themes written about the Moro Wars served to enhance the glorification of the Moro heroes and their struggle against foreign colonizers, certain textbooks still utilized terms and themes that are Orientalist—in the sense that Said (1978) used the term.¹ In certain instances, Orientalist terms were intended to illustrate the “divide and conquer” strategy of the Spanish colonizers. In the Ibon textbook, for instance, the term “pirate” was written in quotation marks, implying that it was the colonizers who used this term to describe the Moros. In other instances, the tone of the discussion was explicitly Orientalist. This was the case in the Rex textbook, which focused on the cost and toll that the Moro raids had on the “economy” of the “country,” specifically due to the acts of piracy and slave raiding involved.

¹ Edward Said defines Orientalism as “a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience” (Said, 1978, p.1). Said notes that the “greatest and richest and oldest colonies” of Europe are located in the so-called Orient; and so, it is also the source of Europe’s “deepest and most recurring images of the Other” (ibid.). Orientalist descriptions that would then separate the colonized Orient from the advanced civilization of Europe would serve to justify Western domination and imperialism.

Mula 1718 hanggang 1762, patuloy na nakibaka ang mga Muslim laban sa mga Espanyol na nagpatuloy hanggang sa tinaguriang “Moro Wars” mula 1850 hanggang 1878. Sinugod ng mga Irranun at Maranao mula Lanao ang Visayas. *Nagbunga ito ng pagbagsak ng ekonomiya ng bansa. Ang mga Muslim ay hindi lamang nagnakaw, bumihag din sila ng mga Pilipinong binyagan.* [From 1718 to 1762, the Muslims fought against the Spanish in a continuous struggle that lasted until the so-called “Moro Wars” from 1850 to 1878. The Irranun and Maranao from Lanao invaded the Visayas. This resulted in the collapse of the country’s economy. The Muslims not only plundered, they also captured Filipino converts.] (Fajardo, Belarde, Barcelon, & Daroni, 2019, p.248; emphasis added)

Furthermore, the Rex textbook utilized the term “juramentados” to describe Muslim Filipinos who were fanatical in their defense of their religious beliefs. This form of fanaticism is portrayed to be deeply rooted in the religious beliefs of the Moros, in a way in which they were authorized—if not commanded—by the Islamic doctrine to learn how to fight, and eventually to fight non-believers.

Noong 1878, ang Sultan ng Sulu ay pumirma ng isang kasunduan na kumilala sa kapangyarihan ng mga Espanyol kapalit ng tulong pinansiyal para sa mga pamilya ng mga Muslim. *Mula noon, ang mga “Moro War” ay nagpatuloy na lamang sa pamamagitan ng paglusob ng mga juramentados, mga Moro na sumumpang magbubuwis ng buhay upang ipagtanggol ang Islam....* Maipaliliwanag ng kanilang relihiyong Islam ang mga prinsipyo at simulain ng mga Muslim. Ayon sa doktrina ng kanilang relihiyon, *mahigpit na ipinagbabawal ng Islam ang pagsuko sa mga hindi sumasamba kay Allah.* Dito natutuhan ng mga Muslim ang mga magagandang asal, *mga pagsasanay na maghahanda sa kanila sa pakikipaglaban,* at mga aral ng Islam na hindi lamang isinasaulo kundi isinasabuhay. [In 1878, the Sultan of Sulu signed a treaty recognizing the authority of the Spanish in exchange for financial assistance for Muslim families. *From then on, the “Moro Wars” continued only through the invasion of juramentados, Moros who swore to lay down their lives to defend Islam....* Their religion of Islam can be explained by the principles and tenets of Muslims. According to the doctrine of their religion, *Islam strictly prohibits surrendering to those*

who do not worship Allah. Here, Muslims learned good manners, *training that would prepare them for battle*, and Islamic teachings that were not only memorized but also put into practice.] (Fajardo, Belarde, Barcelon, & Daroni, 2019, p.248; emphasis added)

In the discussion of the historical narratives involving Muslim Filipinos, there were certain instances wherein the perspective utilized in describing and narrating the events was evidently not from the point of view of the Muslim Filipinos. In the Abiva textbook, the discussion of the Moro Wars is presented in a more general sense, focusing on events in the late sixteenth century (pre-Kudarat) from the point of view of the Spaniards. Similarly, the discussion on the Bates Treaty is written from the point of view of the American general and his compatriots. Furthermore, this textbook indiscriminately mentions that the Bates Treaty applied to the entire Muslim territory—disregarding the fact that its Moro signatories were only aligned with the Sulu sultanate.

Sultan Kudarat and Other Moro Heroes

Of the seven textbooks that included a discussion on Sultan Kudarat, the most common themes explored were his acts of resistance against Spanish colonization and Christianization, as well as his abilities and skills as a leader of the Moros. In some of these textbooks, the term “*jihad*”² was even utilized to describe how Kudarat’s struggle was also religious in nature. Kudarat may be the most unique among Muslim Filipino heroes because of his ability to unite erstwhile disparate groups to his cause. At the height of its power, it was believed that Kudarat’s Sultanate was “the most extensive political entity governed by a native rule in the Philippines,” truly transcending the tribal and group divisions that were believed to be the norm in pre-colonial Philippines (Mastura, 1984, p.24). This fact was mentioned in three out of the eight textbooks studied, where the common theme observed was Kudarat’s ability to expand his sphere of influence and unite the Moro and Lumad communities. The Phoenix textbook mentioned how Kudarat displayed excellent skills in diplomacy in dealing with the Spaniards and Dutch, and how he gained the trust of his followers, which prevented them from betraying

² Jihad is an Arabic word that means ‘struggle’ but is mostly commonly simplified and utilized to refer to a religious “holy war” waged by Muslims (Isidro 1968, p.31).

him. The Sibs textbook added more details, providing further evidence of Kudarat's political savvy, such as his marriage to the daughter of the Sultan of Sulu to forge an alliance with them, and his efforts to elicit the support of Malay rulers in defending Mindanao. The Anvil textbook paints the picture of Kudarat being a "national hero" and one of the greatest adversaries of the Spaniards, thereby emphasizing his importance and valorization as a Filipino hero. Ultimately, one of the most important details of Kudarat's story is that he was able to maintain the freedom of his people until his death in 1671 at the age of ninety. However, his success in repelling the Spaniards and maintaining the freedom of his people was only mentioned in the Anvil and Phoenix textbooks.

While an adequate amount of glorification of Sultan Kudarat was observed in these textbooks, there were still certain issues with his portrayal. In the Sibs textbook, the narrative ends at Kudarat's defeat in 1637, and it does not discuss how he was able to evade capture, regroup from this initial defeat, and eventually drive the Spaniards away to protect his people. Moreover, although the Phoenix textbook mentions of his success against the Spaniards in one chapter of the textbook, in a latter chapter, Kudarat's struggle against the Spaniards is lumped together with other revolts—such as those of Francisco Dagohoy and Diego Silang—in a segment entitled, "*Dahilan ng Pagkabigo ng mga Pag-aalsa*" [Reasons for the Failures of the Revolts]. It was implied that a "lack of nationalism" caused by these revolts being too "personal" or being done solely for the sake of one's "town or province" led to their "defeat." While the very mention of Kudarat's struggle together with the defeated revolts of Dagohoy and Silang may already be questionable, the mention of a lack of nationalist sentiment in Kudarat's case may be even more objectionable and without basis.

Ito ang itinuturing na pangunahing dahilan ng pagkatalo ng mga Pilipino sa mga labanan sa mga unang pag-aalsa. Ito ay sa dahilang *wala pang matibay na konsepto ng nasyonalismo ang ating mga ninuno noon. Ang dahilan ng pakikipaglaban ay karaniwang pansarili lamang o para sa kapakanan lamang ng bayan o lalawigang kinabibilangan.* Katulad halimbawa ni Francisco Dagohoy, siya ay nakipaglaban para sa kanyang mga kababayan sa Bohol, si Diego Silang para sa mga Ilokano, *si Sultan Kudarat para sa mga kababayan niyang Muslim sa Mindanao, at marami pang iba.* [This

is considered the main reason for the defeat of the Filipinos in the battles of these initial revolts. *Our ancestors did not yet have a strong concept of nationalism. The reason for fighting was usually personal or for the benefit of the people or province they belonged to.* For example, Francisco Dagohoy fought for his countrymen in Bohol, Diego Silang for the Ilocanos, *Sultan Kudarat for his Muslim countrymen in Mindanao*, and many others.] (Baisa-Julian & Lontoc, 2018a, p.210; emphasis added)

Perhaps this kind of portrayal best fits the narrative that sets up the “Philippine Revolution” of 1896 as a revolutionary armed struggle driven by nationalist sentiment. But who can truly say whether Kudarat did not have a similar concept of a nation, and that his conflict against the Spanish colonizers were not “national” in scope? Kudarat was known to have the ability to understand certain political realities of his immediate milieu, as evidenced by his pitting of the Dutch and the Spanish against each other (Laarhoven, 1989). Kudarat’s dealings with these foreigners add to the belief that he was indeed imagining a sovereign political community of Moros—using Anderson’s (2003) definition of a nation—that had to deal with foreign powers to maintain its freedom.

Besides Kudarat, certain Muslim Filipino heroes were also represented in some of the textbooks studied. These other Moro heroes were a mix of those who openly collaborated with the Spaniards and the Americans and those who waged wars against these foreign colonizers. In portraying the stories of these heroes, there were some instances wherein the Rex textbook deviated from the accounts of reputable historians as it mentions that Datu Piang acted with Datu Ali in rejecting an alliance with the Americans. This is inconsistent with Samuel Tan’s (2022) historical account that Datu Piang “actively cooperated with the Americans” and that he even provided them with reliable information on the movements of Datu Ali, who was the true leader of the Moro rebellion in Maguindanao (p.171). In another chapter, the Rex textbook mentions that the Moros of Sulu were successful in driving out the American soldiers from their capital of Jolo. In most established accounts, the Battle of Bud Bagsak of 1913 resulted in a “pitiful and senseless massacre of militarily inferior foes,” as the Americans were able to defeat the Moro combatants and capture or seize 500 of their rifles (p.177).

Christian Filipino Bias

In the textbooks analyzed, there were still statements that could be interpreted as expressions of implicit bias towards Christian religious beliefs and the mainstream culture of Christianized Filipinos. The typical practice of describing the Philippines as “the only Christian nation in Asia” persists in the Phoenix textbook, which even utilizes the term “pagano” (pagan) to describe the predominant pre-colonial belief system in the Philippines.

Hindi maikakailang ang Kristiyanismo (Katolisismo) ang pinakamalaking impluwensiya ng mga Espanyol sa mga Pilipino. *Sa Asya, tanging Pilipinas lamang ang kinikilalang Kristiyanong bansa. Ang paniniwalang pagano ng mga Pilipino noon ay napalitan ng mga bagong paniniwalang itinuro ng mga misyonerong Espanyol.* [It cannot be denied that Christianity (Catholicism) is the largest influence of the Spaniards on Filipinos. *In Asia, the Philippines is the only recognized Christian nation.* The *pagan belief* of the Filipinos back then was replaced by new beliefs taught by the Spanish missionaries.] (Baisa-Julian & Lontoc, 2018a, p.210; emphasis added)

While the appropriateness of the term “pagan” depends on whether one views it as a pejorative term or as something that has already been reclaimed and reappropriated, the assertion of the Philippines as a “Christian nation” leads to “confusion and disillusionment” on the part of the Muslim Filipino student, as observed by Disomangcop (1997) and to a “discontinuity” of their learning. The Muslim schoolchild who utilizes these materials would be even more disillusioned by the succeeding passage in the Phoenix textbook, which evidently emphasizes the significant impact that Christianization has on “Filipino” culture and, in the same vein, inconspicuously condemns the Islamic practice of polygamy.

Ang pagyakap nila sa relihiyong ito ay masasalamain sa mga pagpapahalaga at ugali na nabago sa buhay ng ating mga ninuno dahil sa katuruang dala ng mga misyonero. *Ang mga bata ay mas namulat sa pagsunod sa magulang. Mas naging mapagmahal at mapagpatawad sa kapwa ang mga Pilipino. Ang pagkakawang-gawa at pagtulong sa Simbahan at nangangailangan ay parte na rin ng kanilang buhay.* Iminulat din ng Kristiyanismo ang mga Pili-

pino sa pagsunod sa kautusan ng Diyos at pagkakapantay-pantay gayundin ang *di magandang bunga ng pag-aasawa ng marami, pang-aalipin, at paniniwala sa ibang relihiyon*. [Their acceptance of this religion is reflected in the values and attitudes that were changed in the lives of our ancestors due to the teachings of the missionaries. *Children became more obedient to their parents. Filipinos became more loving and forgiving of others. Charity and generosity towards the Church and the needy became a part of their lives.* Christianity also made Filipinos aware of the importance of obedience to God’s laws and of equality; as well as the *bad consequences of polygamy, slavery, and belief in other religions.*] (Baisa-Julian & Lontoc, 2018a, p.173-74; emphasis added)

By explicitly condemning the so-called negative effects of practicing polygamy, engaging in slavery, and believing in other religions—as if each of these conditions were equally inhumane and deplorable—the depiction of Islam in the Phoenix textbook serves to heighten the Orientalist conviction that Islam is simply a “misguided version of Christianity” (Said, 1978, p.61).

The Discourse on Moro Heroes in Social Studies

Through a Gramscian lens,³ any evidence pointing to the underrepresentation and misrepresentation of Muslim Filipinos may be interpreted as a manifestation of the hegemonic relationship that exists between majority and minority groups in our present society. Applying social studies education to Gramsci’s (1971) conception of “traditional intellectuals,” it could be presumed that the actions and decisions of educational authorities—who are predominantly composed of non-Muslims—shape the predominant worldview on Muslim Filipinos, and exercise such a control over them in order to maintain power in society.

³ In his Prison Notebooks, Antonio Gramsci presents the different ways in which a dominant culture asserts itself upon the great masses of people. While the government agencies involved in “political society” may assert their authority by “direct domination” and by exercising their coercive power, the authority figures involved in “civil society”—those that are more concerned with private matters such as religious institutions, educational systems, family structures, and other socio-cultural traditions—utilize hegemonic structures and devices to obtain the consent of the people (Gramsci, 1971, p.239).

One approach utilized to make sure that minority groups give their consent to the dominant culture is by allowing the token representation of any aspect of their culture into the mainstream. In the view of JanMohamed and Lloyd (1987), this kind of tokenism provides a “semblance of pluralism,” conceals the continued “perpetuation of exclusion,” and is a form of indulgence bordering on “exoticism” that refuses to acknowledge the “discrimination and systematic economic exploitation of minorities” (p.9-10). Such a “shallow” form of cultural pluralism is also described by Apple (2000) as perpetuated in the field of education, where “the contributions of women and minority groups” are discussed in a small and usually isolated part of the textbook “without any substantive elaboration of the view of the world as seen from their perspectives” (p.55).

Kudarat’s inclusion in the list of national heroes as selected by the National Heroes Committee in 1995 and his greater inclusion in our national historical narrative are thus seen as a way of accommodating a certain tolerable aspect of the minority culture of the Muslim Filipino while continuing their marginalization in society. Moreover, although Kudarat is included in this list, his contributions to the Filipino nation were still undermined in some of the texts studied (Tumbaga-Molave & Diokno, 2018; Baisa-Julian & Lontoc, 2018a) as discussed in the previous section.

Kudarat’s function as the token representative of Muslim Filipinos in Philippine history may serve to maintain hegemonic control by obtaining the consent of the Muslim Filipinos as a minority. However, it may also be argued that the representation of Muslim Filipinos through Kudarat is already an instance of counter-hegemonic resistance and an advancement in the Gramscian “war of position” being waged by minority cultures (Gramsci, 1971). Furthermore, according to Foucault’s (1980; Mills, 2003) view on power relations, power does not necessarily flow in a unidirectional top-down manner from the dominant culture towards the marginalized ethnic minorities. In the context of the Philippine educational system, Muslim Filipinos are able to exercise such power from the bottom-up through resistance which ranges from absenteeism of Muslim students in schools to the establishment of alternative schools with Islamic education that are better suited for them. Such potential spaces of resistance may also be extended to include the very presence of Muslim Filipinos and their historical narratives in curriculum and textbooks.

The spaces reserved for Muslim Filipinos and their narratives in contemporary textbooks may be attributed to the presence of certain ‘learning competencies’ outlined in the more recent versions of the social studies curriculum released by the DepEd. While the bravery of the Muslims was already acknowledged in the 1998 and 2002 versions of the curriculum for first year high school through the learning competency: “*Naipahahayag ang pagpapahalaga sa kagitingan ng mga Muslim at ng mga katutubo*” [Expresses appreciation for the bravery of the Muslims and of the indigenous Filipinos] (Department of Education Culture and Sports, 1998, p.67-68; Department of Education, 2002, p.13-14); the wording of the K-to-12 curriculum for Grade 5 Social Studies actively requires the students to explain the point of view of the sultanates of Mindanao: “*Naipaliliwanag ang pananaw at paniniwala ng mga Sultanato (Katutubong Muslim) sa pagpapanatili ng kanilang kalayaan*” [Explains the views and beliefs of the Sultanates (of the indigenous Muslims) in maintaining their independence] (Department of Education, 2013, p.54-55; 2016, p.115-116). This emphasis on the efforts of Muslim Filipinos is retained in the most recent Matatag curriculum for the same grade level through the learning competency: “*Nasusuri ang mga pagpupunyagi, kinahinatnan, at implikasyon ng pagtatanggol ng mga katutubong pangkat, kababaihan, at iba pang sektor na mapanatili ang kalayaan sa kolonyalismo*” [Examines the efforts, consequences, and implications of the defense of indigenous groups, women, and other sectors to maintain freedom from colonialism]. Moreover, it is also implied in the content outline of the Matatag curriculum that the Muslim Filipinos were not conquered by Spain through the wording of the lesson topic: “*Tangkang Pananakop sa mga Bahagi ng Mindanao*” [Attempted Conquest of Parts of Mindanao] (Department of Education, 2023, p.27-28). Although it could be argued that the newer revisions of the curriculum did not necessarily make any new accommodations for Muslim Filipinos—as they were already included in the 1998 version—the actual wording of the learning competencies indicates a greater understanding and a more nuanced view of the participation of Muslim Filipinos in the struggle against the colonization of Spain.

Whether or not Muslim scholars and educators were instrumental in these revisions, what is important is that such changes in the curriculum made in favor of better representation of ethnic minorities is possible. This paper contends that the spaces that Muslim Filipinos currently have in the curriculum and in the

textbooks of social studies were not that evident in past textbooks and are thus a product of discourse, in the Foucauldian sense. Such notion compelled this study to look for other factors that may present a more nuanced view of power relations and explain the continued underrepresentation and misrepresentation of Moro heroes in textbooks.

Perpetuation of Orientalism in Textbooks in the Philippines

As shown in the presentation of findings, Orientalist thought persists in the way that Muslim Filipinos are portrayed in textbooks used in teaching social studies. Textbooks are produced to respond to the twin demands of an “increasingly state-controlled education system” and an “increasingly profit-driven textbook industry” (Crawford & Foster, 2006, p.94). In the immediate postcolonial Philippine society, this balancing act was manifested through the DepEd and the National Board of Textbooks from the government side, and the private publishing houses from the private sector. The DepEd first would disseminate the guidelines to the various publishing companies, who in turn would produce manuscripts that would compete to be one of two official textbooks as selected by the National Board of Textbooks (Curaming, 2017; Canieso-Doronila, 1989). A drastic change to this process occurred during the Martial Law era as Former President Ferdinand Marcos entered into an agreement with the World Bank in 1976 to implement the Philippine Textbook Project, which sought to produce all elementary and secondary level textbooks for Science, Math, English, Filipino, and Social Studies (Canieso-Doronila, 1989, p.119-120). This was followed by the creation of the Instructional Materials Corporation (IMC) in 1982, which was a government-owned and controlled corporation that oversaw the production and distribution of textbooks and instructional materials as well as the formulation of policy recommendations and standards (Calingasan, 2015). Through these administrative structures, the production of school textbooks became highly centralized and monopolized. The role of private publishing houses became reduced to mere printing and reproducing of the textbooks created by the IMC. These IMC-prepared textbooks were also automatically approved and prescribed “without the benefit of substantive scrutiny” by various concerned sectors, save for the teachers who field-tested the materials (Canieso-Doronila, 1989, p.121).

While there is a clear substantial risk in monopolizing textbook production, the alternative of being too liberal in the approval and evaluation of textbooks

also holds its own shortcomings. Upon the implementation of Republic Act No. 8047 or the Book Publishing Industry Development Act in 1995, the IMC was stripped of its main functions and the textbook production industry—like other industries then—became privatized. Public schools were given the freedom to choose whichever textbook they wished to use, as long as this was among the pool of textbooks approved by the textbook evaluation committee assigned by DepEd—which was then the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS). After a long time of centralization, public schools were not expected to use the same set of textbooks anymore; and several publishing houses sprouted to meet the demands of the newly privatized and liberalized textbook industry (Curaming, 2017, p.428-29).

The main rationale for this deregulation was the “perceived efficiency of free market competition” and was believed to be a solution to the chronic shortages in textbooks and a way to prevent corruption, since the decision on which textbook to use no longer falls on one person or agency alone (Maca & Morris, 2013, p.230). Ironically, this decentralization of textbook production—which continues up to the present—ultimately led to weak state regulation on education, more shortages in textbooks, and greater avenues for corruption. The DepEd’s system in vetting manuscripts and ensuring that they abide by the prescribed curriculum was believed to be riddled with loopholes (p.232). For instance, DepEd’s guidelines for textbooks focus more on the “mechanics of publishing” (e.g. being camera friendly, being limited to a maximum number of pages, etc.) instead of prescribing certain standards and criteria for the content. The only prescription on the content was the listing of minimum learning competencies enumerated in the curriculum; no appropriate theoretical framework was given that could have helped in guiding the authors and publishers in their preparation of these textbooks (Hornedo, Miralao, & Sta. Maria, 2000). Book production, thus, became dictated by the free market and the role of the state in ensuring the quality of the textbooks became significantly curtailed. Even the textbook evaluation process was observed to be very *laissez-faire*, as one mathematics professor revealed that the recommendations she made to the DepEd after reviewing an “error-filled” Math textbook were completely disregarded (Tubeza, 2010).

Due to the privatization and decentralization of the textbook production industry in 1995, the free market became more of a determinant of whether a

textbook gets published or not. The level of control exercised by DepEd in regulating the content that actually goes into the textbook is now limited to the creation of a list of approved textbooks through a vetting process that is observed to be liberal at best, and negligent at worst. In his study on the evolution of history textbooks, Curaming (2017) argues that textbook production in the Philippines—due to its privatized nature—may actually be more like “an arena of an ongoing contestation, or a random output of textbook production process, rather than a tool for hegemonic control” (p.445). Through privatization, the educational system has now allowed the utilization of different textbooks that are produced by a multitude of publishers, written by various authors of varying levels of expertise, and contain knowledge of varying degrees of accuracy and depth.

With this weak kind of regulation exercised by educational authorities, the determination of the content of a textbook is now heavily influenced by the expectations and preferences of its consumers (i.e. the school administrators and district superintendents) that make the decisions on which textbooks to purchase. While it is still the primary duty of the publishers of educational materials to make sure that each textbook complies with the minimum learning competencies outlined in the curriculum, these publishers would also have to make sure that the materials they produce are acceptable and palatable to the majority of their target market. Therefore, the continued perpetuation and inclusion of certain Orientalist statements in textbooks—such as the Philippines being the “only Christian nation in Asia”—may be better contextualized as a way of aligning with the conventional way of thinking about the country, and ultimately, a way of selling more books. As observed by Hein and Selden (2000), a decentralized textbook production industry could be just as limiting and restrictive as direct state regulation due to the demands of “the market” (p.8). While it may also be argued that such a view would empower the Muslim Filipino consumers since they can—through this privatized system of textbook production—exert some level of pressure to educational publishers, this would still be highly dependent on the actual number and magnitude of such a demand and whether content revision would be as profitable as the status quo. Privatization thus makes it nearly impossible for publishers to change well-established narratives in the country’s historiography, as the continued proliferation of such narratives would likely ensure that their products will be well received and utilized by a greater number of schools and students. Authors and publishers should therefore align them-

selves with more conventional ways of presenting our history.

The Orientalist thought that persists in current history textbooks is a vestige of the colonialist historiography of the past when such hegemonic control was still important to legitimize our former colonizers' imperialist project. Due to the continuation of certain key aspects of the American educational system in our immediate postcolonial society, the perpetuation of such a colonial worldview became reflected in how we view our own history as a way of interpreting our reality. Presently, this kind of Orientalism is no longer willfully and deliberately exercised as an instrument of hegemony; but is rather perpetuated to adhere to a more traditional—and hence more popular worldview for the commercial interests of textbook publishers. Combining this preference for the proliferation of convention on the part of textbook publishers with the assumed dearth of local histories during the late American colonial period when the “Filipino viewpoint” in these textbooks was being developed (Tan, 1982, p.15), any kind of reform that would thereby cause the creation of better representations for Muslim Filipinos (and other ethnic minorities as well) becomes even more implausible. In addition to this, the obvious fact is that offices and publishing houses of most textbook publishers are mostly located in Metro Manila, so it can be assumed that they are not properly incentivized as economic agents to go out of their way and ensure the proper representation of minority groups in their published works. Furthermore, their knowledge about the history of Muslim Filipinos is also limited by what they learned when they were at school. While Republic Act No. 10908, or the Integrated History Act of 2016, mandates consultations with recognized experts on Muslim Filipinos to ensure that their history may be “integrated” in the “grand narrative of Philippine history,” this directive still lacks the power to entice action due to the law being unclear as to where the funds for such consultations be appropriated from.

Conclusion and Recommendations

As a study on the marginalization of Muslim Filipinos in education, this paper uncovered that Muslim Filipinos are still underrepresented and misrepresented in contemporary school textbooks in the subject of social studies. While the presence of Muslim Filipinos and Muslim Filipino heroes were evident in the textbooks included in this study; it was firmly established, based on the data gathered, that such representation pales in comparison with the number of

words, name mentions, and illustrations utilized in the discussion of Christian Filipino heroes. It was also observed that while these textbooks portrayed the narratives of Muslim Filipinos in a manner which generally glorifies their experiences and struggles, there were still sentences and paragraphs published in these texts that cause the perpetuation of stereotypes that further the Orientalist perspective that the Filipinos inherited from their former colonizers. The kind of Orientalism that have been perpetuated in these contemporary history textbooks may not only be described as being anti-Muslim, but as being blatantly pro-Christian. It is thus argued that this kind of representation and portrayal of Muslim Filipinos in the current learning materials required in the study of Philippine history in basic education continues to produce feelings of othering and alienation of Muslim Filipino students who utilize these textbooks.

The acknowledged scarcity of more popular historical sources to be used as reference materials on the history of Muslim Filipinos, the limitation of the educational experience of textbook authors and publishers who are heavily influenced by a pro-Christian bias, and the interest of these publishers in the commercial success of their textbook all lead to a confluence of factors which affect the level of conservatism that these societal actors have in the selection of their subject content. Indeed, why should they change their more conventional—and hence, more popular way of presenting the national historical narrative—when it would not be profitable to do so and when it would take a lot more effort due to the shortage of reference materials to support such a change?

Nevertheless, because of the current spaces wherein Muslim Filipinos are already exhibited, it is not that implausible to believe that further revisions in the curriculum and modifications in the writing of textbooks would lead to better representation and portrayal on the part of Muslim Filipinos. Current social studies educators could alter the manner in which Muslim Filipinos are represented to better portray their historical narratives as equal and parallel segments to the more established narratives of the mainstream—and ultimately, as an important part of the official historical narrative depicting the formation of our modern Filipino nation. A proper archaeology that would unearth such historical narratives needs to be undertaken and promoted for inclusion in the curriculum and textbooks utilized by the mainstream. By focusing on the current spaces wherein the beginnings of a resistance to the continued marginalization of the Muslim

Filipinos can already be observed, current social studies educators may identify how such spaces can be expanded to include even more Muslim heroes and their historical narratives in the mainstream depiction of our country's history.

Based on the findings of this research, the following steps and approaches that would pave the way for greater inclusion and representation of Muslim Filipinos in the educational system are hereby recommended:

Identify and eradicate misrepresentations of Muslim Filipinos. Probably the most important first step that could be taken is the eradication of sentences and paragraphs that could be deemed as misrepresentations of Muslim Filipinos in history textbooks. Such misrepresentations may either be because the said statement (1) perpetuates anti-Muslim and Orientalist perspectives or stereotypes that are degrading or humiliating for Muslim Filipinos, (2) presents a clear pro-Christian bias or a preference for the culture of the Christianized Filipinos, or (3) heightens the othering of Muslim Filipinos in the choice of words that were used and the point of view that was taken.

Support the development and writing of Muslim Filipino histories. To increase the representation of the historical narratives of Muslim Filipinos in textbooks, steps must first be taken to develop reference materials from which these narratives may be obtained. While comprehensive works on the subject of the history of Muslim Filipinos written by notable historians and scholars may already exist—and are used as essential reading in the tertiary level—the reference materials indicated here pertain to those written by Muslim educators for children at the primary and secondary levels. In this manner, the perceived scarcity of Muslim Filipino histories may be addressed and a more genuine and authentic representation may be incorporated into the content of school textbooks.

Develop strategies for integration in the curriculum. The only way to ensure that the narratives of Muslim Filipinos are represented in textbooks is by officially mandating it in the curriculum. When more learning competencies in the social studies curriculum are allotted for the discussion of the stories and perspectives of Muslim Filipinos, the number of pages and words on Muslim Filipinos in social studies textbooks would also increase. One of the challenges of integrating new content like this is deciding on how to go about this process. Would it be sufficient to simply add selected Muslim Filipino heroes and their

stories within the existing chapters of the textbook, or would there be a need for new chapters designated to discuss these narratives? While these may already be deemed sufficient by some, others may argue that what is needed is an overhaul of the curriculum so that there is no misconception that these stories from minorities are mere add-ons or appendages to the national narrative. To this end, DepEd should take the lead in actualizing the mandate of Republic Act No. 10908 by sponsoring consultation meetings among Muslim Filipino experts, curriculum developers, and textbook publishing houses.

In its essence, this research seeks to problematize the larger issue of the construction of a Filipino national identity that is deemed to disregard the cultural pluralism of Philippine society. The concept of inclusive education becomes all the more imperative especially in a society with a high level of cultural diversity such as the Philippines. A recognition of multiculturalism and cultural pluralism in the field of education is very important to establish a kind of worldview within the minds of young Filipinos that encourages them to accept that the parallel development of various ethnolinguistic groups are all component parts of the complete story of our nation as an imagined political community. Through a more authentic representation of various ethnolinguistic groups, students become more aware of the expansive bounds of the concept of Filipino national identity and not relate “Filipino-ness” simply with the experiences of the mainstream.

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