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ARTICLE

Malay magic on the colonial frontier: Ternaten spellcasters and hostages of war in seventeenth-century Manila

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Abstract

Folk magic practices were common across the early modern Spanish Empire, including in seventeenth-century Manila where dozens of Asian herbalists and other practitioners of magic offered magical solutions in affairs of the heart and matters of fortune and divination to their mostly Spanish clients. At the centre of these folk magic activities were a group of Ternaten captives of war, relatives of the Sultan Saïd Berkat Syah, who was taken hostage by the Spanish during their invasion of Ternate in 1606. While the capture of Sultan Saïd by the Spanish in 1606 is well known within the historiography of the Maluku Islands, the presence of the Ternaten hostages within Manila in the early seventeenth century remains absent from the history of the port city. This article explores the lives of these Ternaten hostages, arguing that their spellcasting activities represent a hidden transcript of politics and power among previously marginalised historical subjects.

Keywords: folk magic; empire; Manila; Maluku; Southeast Asia; captives of war

In 1622, the sailor Pedro del Valle fell in love with Isabel de Morales in the Philippine port of Cavite, just across the bay from Manila. Using love charms made of herbs and small pieces of paper, he convinced her to leave her house at night to be with him. Eventually, Isabel came to love him in return. But there was just one problem: Isabel was already married. Her husband, a Corsican sailor named Bernardino Corzo, was away on the long and perilous voyage between the Philippines and New Spain. Wanting to overcome this obstacle, Pedro went to Manila to seek the advice of a well-known Ternaten spellcaster who among the Spanish went by the name of Don Juan. Late one night, Don Juan and Pedro met on a desolate beach where Don Juan lit a candle and raised a spell to see whether or not Bernardino was alive. After all, it would not be unusual for a sailor to perish during the long voyage across the Pacific, whether through illness, shipwreck, or misadventure.[1] But Don Juan's spell suggested that Bernardino persisted stubbornly in life. Still, Pedro remained determined. He asked Don Juan what more they could do. Some nights later, Don Juan painted a figure on an egg and buried it outside the door of Bernardino's house, saying that this would cause Bernardino to die, leaving the lovers free to marry. Isabel and Pedro waited anxiously for the arrival of the galleon to discover, finally, whether Don Juan's magic had worked. Unbeknownst to them, far away on board the ship that plied the Pacific waters, the real-life Bernardino had fallen ill and was on the brink of death.[2]

[1]William Lytle Schurz, *The Manila Galleon* (E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1959), 251–83.

[2]'Supersticiosos. No. 9. Bernardino Corzo y Pedro del Valle', 1623, Exp. 8, Vol. 220, Inquisición, Archivo General de la Nación (México) (hereafter AGN).

More than a decade ago, Tonio Andrade issued an appeal to global historians to adopt the methods of microhistory, to become 'mediums, to bring alive just for a few pages' those people whose stories at times confound the grand narratives that we tell about empire, trade, and power in the early modern period.[3] He urged us to seek out the unexpected figures who 'left an impression in the archives, like [flies] pressed between the pages on an old book'.[4] In colonial outposts like Manila, such figures emerge easily from Inquisition records, their testimonies shedding light as much on the everyday affairs of men and women like Pedro and Isabel as on larger discourses of belief, superstition, and colonial politics. And yet, in the microhistory that unfurls below, it is not the two lovers that concern us but rather the Ternaten spellcaster, Don Juan.

Spellcasting was not an uncommon activity in early seventeenth-century Manila. Dozens of Asian herbalists and other practitioners of magic offered magical solutions in affairs of the heart and matters of fortune and divination to their mostly Spanish clients.[5] By 1622, Don Juan had become the most notorious of them all. His name recurs within Inquisition records as a purveyor of love and luck charms, as a skilled and flamboyant spellcaster, and as a shrewd businessman with privileged access to the intimate lives of those living in Intramuros Manila and its surrounds. Unlike most of his counterparts, Don Juan did not gain access to this world by serving as a slave or servant in the houses of Manila's wealthy nobles. In fact, Don Juan was an outsider to this social world. He had arrived in Manila in 1606 as a captive of war, taken hostage along with his relative, the great Sultan of Ternate, Saïd Din Berkat Syah, and twenty-two other Ternaten nobles. These men were the vanquished trophies of the 1606 invasion of Ternate, which marked Spain's latest entry into what has come to be described as the 'spice wars': the often violent competition between European powers for control over the lucrative trade in cloves, nutmeg, and mace that originated from the Maluku archipelago in what is today eastern Indonesia. No mere herbalist or vendor of charms, Don Juan was a Ternaten noble hostage whose long experience of captivity led him to seek creative ways not only to survive but overcome his situation of interminable exile. Moreover, his story was not singular. While Don Juan became the most sought-after spellcaster in Manila, at least four other Ternaten nobles from the Sultan's house were also active folk magic practitioners in Manila in the 1620s, including Sultan Saïd himself, as well as his cousin, Hamzah, the future Sultan of Ternate.

This article explores the lives of these Ternaten captives of war, arguing that their spellcasting activities represent a hidden transcript of politics and power among previously marginalised historical subjects. It follows a recent trend among historians of early modern Manila who have used the approach of global microhistory to reveal the 'fragile *convivencia*' at the heart of this multicultural city.[6] As Ryan Crewe has shown, seventeenth-century Manila was 'a city of startling hybridity ... where the Virgin Mary coexisted with the Chinese protectress Guanyin', and where

[3]Tonio Andrade, 'A Chinese Farmer, Two African Boys, and a Warlord: Toward a Global Microhistory', *Journal of World History*, 21, no. 4 (2010): 591.

[4]Andrade, 'A Chinese Farmer', 575.

[5]Stephanie Mawson, 'Folk Magic in the Philippines, 1611–39', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 54, no. 2 (2023): 220–44; David Max Findley, 'Of Two-Tailed Lizards: Spells, Folk-Knowledge, and Navigating Manila, 1620–1650', *Journal of Social History*, 56, no. 2 (2022): 294–325; Ryan Crewe, 'Occult Cosmopolitanism: Convivencia and Ethno-Religious Exclusion in Manila, 1590–1650', in *Philippine Confluence: Iberian, Chinese and Islamic Currents, c. 1500–1800*, eds. Jos Gommans and Ariel Lopez (Leiden University Press, 2020), 55–73; Ryan Crewe, 'The Troubles of Global Civitas: Segregation and Convivencia in Colonial Manila, 1580– 1700', *Cheiron*, no. 1 (2022): 162.

[6]Crewe, 'Troubles of Global Civitas', 152. Some recent examples of microhistories focused on Manila include: Birgit Tremml-Werner, 'Rethinking Colonialism through Early Modern Global Diplomacy: A Tale of Pampangan Mobility', *Journal of Global History*, 19, no. 1 (2024): 18–36; Jonathan Gebhardt, 'Chinese Migrants, Spanish Empire, and Globalization in Early Modern Manila', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 46, no. 1 (2017): 167–92; Kristie Patricia Flannery and Guillermo Ruiz-Stovel, 'The Loyal Foreign Merchant Captain: Thomé Gaspar de León and the Making of Manila's Intra-Asian Connections, *Vangueta*, 20 (2020): 189–215; Ryan Crewe, 'Transpacific Mestizo: Religion and Caste in the Worlds of a Moluccan Prisoner of the Mexican Inquisition', *Itinerario*, 39, no. 3 (2015): 463–85; José Miguel Herrera Reviriego, 'Anochece

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'a great tug of war' arose between official Spanish policy—which emphasised segregation and strict Christian moral and social standards—and the reality of a multicultural Asian port city that was built on *mestizaje*, the intermingling of cultures and ways of life.[7] Key to this fragile coexistence were, as Jonathan Gebhardt has pointed out, the 'sorts of people who passed "between worlds" … the individuals who negotiated the cross-cultural interactions and conflicts that occurred whenever different peoples came into contact'.[8]

The Ternaten spellcasters emerge as some of the city's most unexpected cultural brokers. While the capture of Sultan Saïd by the Spanish in 1606 is well known within the history of European intervention into the Maluku Islands,[9] the decades-long presence of the Ternaten hostages within Manila remains absent from the history of the port city.[10] Historians Willard Hanna and Des Alwi wrote that, after Governor Acuña triumphantly marched his hostages through the streets of Manila, Sultan Saïd disappeared into obscurity, the circumstances of his death and his final place of rest unknown.[11] This conclusion is even more stark for the nobles that accompanied the Sultan in his exile, most of whom still remain anonymous, robbed of their own individual histories of exile. And yet, as the evidence collected by the Inquisition demonstrates, the hostages occupied an important place at the heart of the city's social life for the duration of their exile, interacting with elite members of Spanish society as well as ordinary residents. The Ternaten spellcasters at the heart of this story reveal conflicts that are otherwise hidden within Manila's social and political world. As the facilitators of love and luck charms and the purveyors of malevolent spells, they become the locus for a new kind of cultural *mestizaje*, revealing the mingling of Malay, Spanish, and Indigenous knowledge and cultural practices.

The Inquisition records explored here provide new evidence about the lives of these hostages, while also offering new avenues into understanding the history of Malay folk magic practices in a colonial setting. Folk magic practices have a long lineage within the Spanish empire, found within both centres of imperial power like Madrid and Mexico City as well as frontier regions on the margins of imperial control.[12] Across these diverse spaces, folk magic was associated with

en Santa Ana: microhistoria de un barangay filipino y su conexión con el mundo globalizado de la segunda mitad del siglo XVII', *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, 78, no. 2 (2021): 439–68.

[7]Crewe, 'Troubles of Global Civitas', 160.

[8]Gebhardt, 'Chinese Migrants', 188.

[9]Leonard Andaya, *The World of Maluku: Eastern Indonesia in the Early Modern Period* (University of Hawaii Press, 1993), 140–3; Ch. F. Van Fraassen, 'Ternate, de Molukken en de Indonesische Archipel', Deel I, (PhD diss., Rijksuniversiteit Leiden, 1987), 48; Charles Corn, *The Scents of Eden: A History of the Spice Trade* (Kodansha International, 1998), 105–6; Leopoldo Stampa Piñeiro, *Los galeones de las especias: España y las Molucas* (Editorial EDAF, 2020), 369; Antonio Carlos Campo López, 'La presencia Española al sur de Filipinas durante el siglo XVII', (PhD Diss., Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, 2021), 105–8; Manuel Lobato, 'Os *mardicas* de Ternate e os crioulos de origem portuguesa nas Filipinas. Um olhar interdisciplinar sobre as relações entre identidade e língua', in *Tópicos Transatlânticos: Emergência da Lusofonia num Mundo Plural*, eds. Silvério da Rocha-Cunha et al. (Reprografia da Universidade de Évora, 2012), 59–60; Peter Borschberg, ed., *Journals, Memorials and Letters of Cornelis Matelieff de Jonge: Security, Diplomacy and Commerce in 17th-century Southeast Asia* (NUS Press, 2015), 84; Pieter van Dam, *Beschrijvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie 1639–1701*, Tweede Boek, Deel 1 (Martinus Nijhoff, 1931), 32; 'Geschiedenis van Ternate in Ternataanschen en Maleischen Tekst Beschreven door den Ternatan *Naidah* met vertaling en aanteekeningen door P. Van Der Crab', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, XXVI (1878), 381–493.

[10]Vicente Rafael was among the first to acknowledge the importance of Ternaten migrants to the Philippines, but his study focuses instead on the later influx of migrants following the Spanish withdrawal from the Maluku Islands in 1663. Vicente Rafael, 'From Mardicas to Filipinos: Ternate, Cavite, in Philippine History', *Philippine Studies*, 26, no. 4 (1978): 343–62. See also: Crewe, 'Transpacific Mestizo', 463–85.

[11]Willard A. Hanna and Des Alwi, *Turbulent Times Past in Ternate and Tidore* (Yayasan Warisan dan Budaya Banda Naira, 1990), 136–7.

[12]There is a vast historiography of folk magic and superstition in Spain and its colonies which I have summarised previously, see: Mawson, 'Folk Magic in the Philippines', 220–44. Some of the most influential works on this topic include: Laura A. Lewis, *Hall of Mirrors: Power, Witchcraft, and Caste in Colonial Mexico* (Duke University Press, 2003); Martha Few, *Women Who Live Evil Lives: Gender, Religion, and the Politics of Power in Colonial Guatemala* (University of Texas Press, 2002); María Helena Sánchez Ortega, 'Sorcery and Eroticism in Love Magic', in *Cultural Encounters: The Impact of the*

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disorder: the disruption and subversion of gender, racial, and religious-based hierarchies of authority often by subordinate people.[13] Where historians have previously focused on the way in which folk magic incorporated European, Indigenous, and African spiritual, botanical, and medical knowledge, this article brings Malay magical knowledge and practices into this cultural mix. In doing so, it contributes to our knowledge about Southeast Asian forms of magic. The anthropologist Roy Ellen argued in the early 1990s that witchcraft and sorcery had received far less attention among Southeast Asian scholars than their African or Melanesian counterparts simply because there were fewer records of these activities existing within colonial administrative records. He attributed this to the partial permissibility of sorcery within Southeast Asian societies, making it harder for colonial administrators to pass laws that sanctioned them.[14] Recently, art historian Farouk Yahya has explored previously overlooked Malay magic and divination manuscripts, thus revealing for perhaps the first time the full historical array of Malay magical beliefs as well as the technical workings of Malay magical practitioners.[15] When read alongside Yahya's work, the Inquisition records examined here allow us to reconstruct how Ternaten hostages imported Malay beliefs into colonial Manila and how they effectively mobilised these practices to confront their own exile and to recover their own sense of power.

I begin here first with a brief overview of the capture of Sultan Saïd and his coterie of hostage nobles—or '*cachiles*'—analysing the political reasoning behind and implications arising from their exile to Manila in 1606. This history demonstrates the unevenness of Spanish policy towards the hostages, which transitioned from an initial period of harsh imprisonment and active surveillance to one of official neglect and disinterest. Left to endure conditions of poverty, but otherwise allowed a measure of freedom in their daily lives, the Ternaten noble hostages turned to spellcasting as a commercial activity to make a living. In doing so, they found new ways of manifesting power on the colonial frontier. The hostages utilised spellcasting strategically to pursue divergent goals. In the case of Don Juan—who, unlike the others, never returned to Ternate—magic helped him to acculturate to a new society, ultimately finding a life for himself among Indigenous Philippine magical practitioners. By contrast, for the spellcaster Don Pedro—the pseudonym of Cachil Hamzah—magical practices represented a hidden transcript of political opposition that ultimately facilitated his rise to sultanship and rejection of Spanish colonialism.

The invasion of Ternate and the capture of Sultan Saïd

The Maluku Islands—an interconnected archipelago in present-day eastern Indonesia—played an outsized role within the history of European colonial expansion (see Figure 1). The global trade in cloves, nutmeg, and mace were centred on the islands of Ternate, Tidore, Ambon, and Banda. These islands propelled both Portuguese and Spanish imperial ambitions, with the Portuguese first arriving in Maluku in 1512, followed by the Spanish in 1522. While the Spanish Crown

Inquisition in Spain and the New World, ed. Mary Elizabeth Perry and Anne J. Cruz (University of California Press, 1991), 58–87; Juan Blazquez Miguel, *Eros y Tánatos: Brujería, hechicería y superstición en España* (Editorial Arcano, 1989); María Tausiet, *Urban Magic in Early Modern Spain*, trans. Susannah Howe (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

[13]Tausiet, *Urban Magic*, 5; Sánchez Ortega, 'Sorcery and Eroticism', 58–9; Ruth Behar, 'Sexual Witchcraft, Colonialism, and Women's Powers: Views from the Mexican Inquisition', in *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Mexico*, ed. Asunción Lavrin (University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 178–206; Martha Few, 'Chocolate, Sex, and Disorderly Women in Late-Seventeenth and Early-Eighteenth-Century Guatemala', *Ethnohistory*, 52, no. 4 (2005): 674; Lewis, *Hall of Mirrors*; Ramón A. Gutiérrez, 'Women on Top: The Love Magic of the Indian Witches of New Mexico', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 16, no. 3 (2007): 373–90.

[14]Roy Ellen, 'Introduction', in *Understanding Witchcraft and Sorcery in Southeast Asia*, eds. C. W. Watson and Roy Ellen (University of Hawaii Press, 1993), 4–5.

[15]Farouk Yahya, *Magic and Divination in Malay Illustrated Manuscripts* (Brill, 2016). See also: Walter William Skeat, *Malay Magic: Being an Introduction to the Folklore and Popular Religion of the Malay Peninsula* (Macmillan and Co., 1900); Kirk Michael Endicott, *An Analysis of Malay Magic* (Clarendon Press, 1970); Robert L. Winzeler, 'The Study of Malay Magic', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 139, no. 4 (1983): 435–56.

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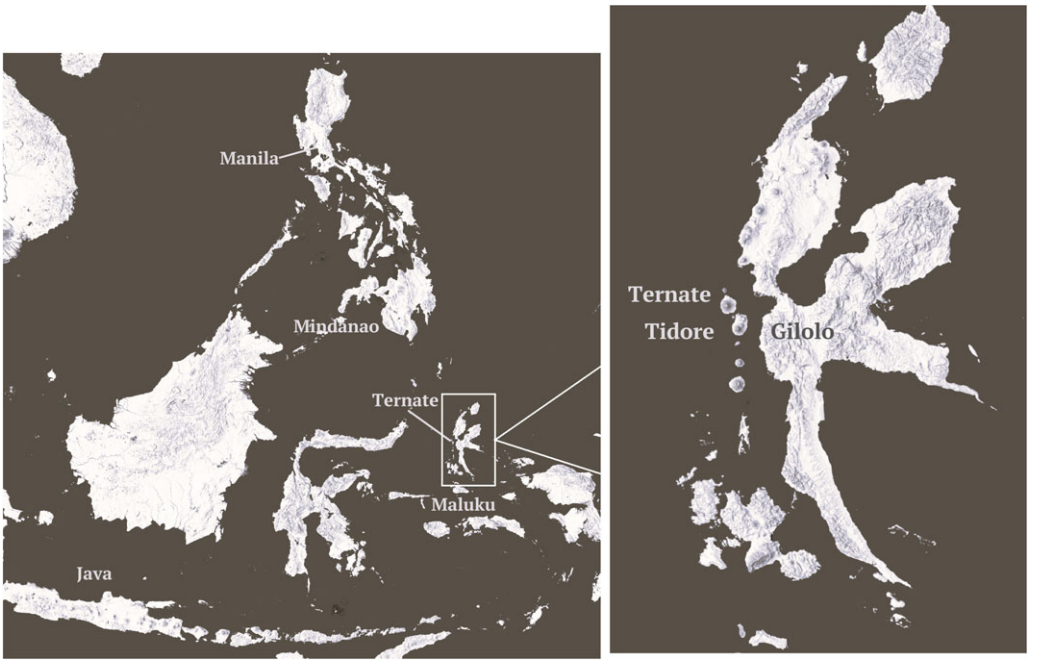

Figure 1. Map of the Philippines and Maluku Islands.

grudgingly ceded their claim over the spice trade to the Portuguese following the signing of the Treaty of Zaragoza in 1529, Malukan populations were less inclined to recognise Iberian authority in the region. In 1570, the Sultan of Ternate, Hairun, was assassinated by the Portuguese, initiating a period of anticolonial rebellion, leading to the eventual expulsion of the Portuguese from the island in 1575.[16] Beginning in the 1580s—following the union of the Portuguese and Spanish Crowns—Spanish officials in Manila launched several unsuccessful expeditions to try to re-impose colonial control over Maluku.[17] At the same time, Dutch and English traders had begun to appear in the region towards the close of the sixteenth century. Following an aggressive yet ultimately unsuccessful invasion of Ternate by the Spanish in 1603, there were signs that the Ternatens intended to ally themselves with the Dutch, granting them privileges over the clove trade that the Spanish desired for themselves.[18]

On 15 February 1606, after many months of preparations, the Spanish governor of the Philippines, Don Pedro de Acuña, set sail for Maluku with an armada of thirty-six vessels carrying

[16]Andaya, *World of Maluku*, 131–4.

[17]'Estado del reino Terrenate', 1584, Ramo 24, Leg. 25, Patronato, Archivo General de Indias (hereafter AGI); 'Carta de Pedro Sarmiento: Maluco', 1584, Ramo 18, Leg. 46, Patronato, AGI; 'relación de Cristóbal de Salvatierra: jornada del Maluco', 1585, Ramo 20, Leg. 46, Patronato, AGI; 'Carta de Tello sobre Formosa, Mindanao, Maluco y Camboya', 1597, Núm. 141, Ramo 9, Leg. 6, Filipinas, AGI; 'Carta de Hurtado de Mendoza a Acuña sobre Terrenate', 1603, Núm. 3, Ramo 1, Leg. 7, Filipinas, AGI; 'Carta de Pedro de Acuña sobre el Maluco y Terrenate', 1603, Núm. 9, Ramo 1, Leg. 7, Filipinas, AGI; 'Carta del oidor Dávalos sobre moros, Terrenate . . . etc', 1584, Núm. 9, Ramo 2, Leg. 18A, Filipinas, AGI; 'Carta de Luis P. Mariñas sobre Maluco, Tidore, China', 1594, Núm. 23, Ramo 4, Leg. 18B, Filipinas, AGI; 'Carta de Tello sobre ocupar Formosa', 1597, Núm. 66, Ramo 7, Leg. 18B, Filipinas, AGI; 'Carta del arcediano Diego Ferreira sobre conquista de Terrenate', 1603, Núm. 115, Leg. 84, Filipinas, AGI.

[18]'Carta de Hurtado de Mendoza a Acuña sobre Terrenate', 1603, Núm. 3, Ramo 1, Leg. 7, Filipinas, AGI; 'Carta de Pedro de Acuña sobre el Maluco y Terrenate', 1603, Núm. 9, Ramo 1, Leg. 7, Filipinas, AGI; 'Carta de Acuña sobre el Maluco y los holandeses', 1605, Núm. 25, Ramo 1, Leg. 7, Filipinas, AGI; 'Carta del arcediano Diego Ferreira sobre conquista de Terrenate', 1603, Núm. 115, Leg. 84, Filipinas, AGI; P. Gregorio de San Esteban, 'Memoria y relación de lo sucedido en las islas Malucas . . .', 1609–1619, 21/12, Archivo Franciscano Ibero Oriental (hereafter AFIO).

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more than 3,000 Spanish and Pampangan soldiers.[19] This invasion force was one of the largest ever mobilised in the history of the Spanish Philippines. The culmination of decades of failed efforts to take control of the Maluku Islands, it was a final attempt to capture the clove trade in the name of the King of Spain. Although a storm at sea caused the Spanish armada to scatter during the crossing, they arrived in Ternate relatively unscathed. On 1 April, Acuña sent the first vanguard of Pampangan soldiers to attack the Ternaten fort. The ensuing battle was relatively short lived as the Spanish forces scaled the walls and seized control of the fort within a few hours.[20] Perhaps caught by surprise, the Ternatens seemed to have made a tactical decision to abandon the site to allow them to regroup in other strongholds elsewhere in the archipelago. Sultan Saïd Din Berkat Syah sought refuge in Sabugo, on the island of Halmahera, along with his son and heir, Cachil Sidang.[21] In the days that followed, Acuña enlisted the help of the Sultan of Tidore, a Portuguese-Ternaten mestizo named Paulo de Lima, and Cachil Hamzah, Sultan Saïd's cousin, sometimes referred to in Spanish sources as Cachil Amuja.[22] These men went to Sabugo to convince Sultan Saïd to return to Ternate and meet with the Spanish governor. On 9 April the Sultan signed an agreement of capitulation, ceding control of all of his forts and artillery to the Spanish.[23] Shortly after this, he found himself taken hostage, compelled on board the Spanish vessels bound for Manila alongside twenty-three other Ternaten nobles.[24] He would spend the next two decades of his life in exile. With only one unsuccessful attempt made to return him to Ternate as a puppet ruler, the Sultan eventually died in Manila in 1627, an old and broken man.[25]

When Sultan Saïd signed the terms of capitulation, he appeared to gift Governor Acuña the long-coveted prize of control over the trade in cloves. Why, then, did Acuña feel the need to take Sultan Saïd, along with many other Malukan nobles, hostage? The Spanish had reasons not only to distrust the word of Ternaten rulers but to fear their ability to mobilise anti-Iberian sentiment across the region. After the Portuguese were ejected from Maluku in 1575, the Ternatens—first under the leadership of Sultan Babullah (1570–83) and later his son, Sultan Saïd (1583–1606)—extended the power and influence of Ternate across the archipelago, building a tributary empire that was said to stretch 'from Mindanao to Flores and from East Selebes [sic] (Manado, Banggai, Butung) to East Seram'.[26] A report from 1584 noted that the Sultan of Ternate ordered that no merchant would be allowed to trade with his vassal states unless they brought artillery with them. By these means, Ternate was able to fortify not only their own forts within the island of Ternate but a large part of the Moluccan archipelago. It was said that the main fort in Ternate alone was defended by 300 canons and other types of artillery, as well as 1,000 Moluccan soldiers, who were equipped with coats of mail, doublets and helmets that they had taken from the Portuguese. Additionally, they were backed by 1,000 Javanese, Chinese, Acehnese, and Turks, the latter of whom were experts in firebombs and other explosive weapons.[27] The spice trade meanwhile continued to thrive outside the control of any European power. A 1603 description of Ternate

[19]'Relación de buques, gentes, bastimentos conquista Terrenate', 1606, Ramo 3, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI. See also: 'Fr. Luis Fernandes, Superior of Maluku, to Fr. Alberto Laerzio, Provincial of Cochin', in *Documenta Malucensia*, Vol. 3: 1606–1682, ed. Hubert Jacobs, S. J. (Jesuit Historical Institute, 1984), 1–10.

[20]'Fr. Luis Fernandes, Superior of Maluku, to Fr. Alberto Laerzio, Provincial of Cochin', in *Documenta Malucensia*, Vol. 3, 1–10; 'Carta de Pedro de Acuña al Rey: llegada a Terrenate', 1606, Ramo 4, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI; 'Consulta sobre victoria en Terrenate', 1607, Núm. 82, Leg. 1, Filipinas, AGI.

[21]'Nombramiento gobernadores del rey de Terrenate', 1606, Ramo 15, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI.

[22]'Carta de Pedro de Acuña al Rey: salida para Terrenate', 1606, Ramo 18, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI.

[23]'Capitulaciones hechas con el rey de Terrenate', 1606, Ramo 5, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI.

[24]'Capitulaciones con el rey de Terrenate', 1606, Ramo 11, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI.

[25]'Carta de Niño de Távora sobre la expedición a Isla Hermosa', 1628, Núm. 12, Leg. 30, Filipinas, AGI.

[26]S.J. Hubert Jacobs, ed., *Documenta Malucensia*, Vol. 1: 1542–1577 (Insitutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1974), 3. See also: 'Carta de L. P. Mariñas con relaciones de Cochinchina, Siam', 1603, Núm. 57, Ramo 4, Leg. 19, Filipinas, AGI; P. Gregorio de San Esteban, 'Memoria y relación de lo sucedido en las islas Malucas . . . ', 1609–1619, 21/12, AFIO.

[27]'Carta de Pedro Sarmiento: Maluco', 1584, Ramo 18, Leg. 46, Patronato, AGI; P. Gregorio de San Esteban, 'Memoria y relación de lo sucedido en las islas Malucas . . . ', 1609–1619, 21/12, AFIO.

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noted the island regularly received traders from Java and elsewhere in the Malay Archipelago, as well as Turks who travelled via Java and Aceh.[28]

A key ambition of the Spanish was to counter dangerous military alliances that Ternate had built across the region. The Spanish attributed blame for their military failures in the 1590s against the Maguindanaos to the support offered by the Ternatens.[29] At that time, Ternate was reported to have sent considerable aid to Mindanao in the form of shipbuilders, armourers, gunpowder manufacturers, artillery, and manpower to help the Maguindanaos resist Spanish invasion into their island.[30] Realising the power of this alliance, the Spanish began to incorporate a clause into their peace treaties which stipulated that the Maguindanaos had to end their alliance with the Ternatens if they ever wanted to reach peace with the Spanish.[31] The demand, however, had the opposite effect; the Maguindanaos instead strengthened their alliance with the Ternatens against Spanish expansionary efforts.

More than just an attempt to seize control of the spice trade, the 1606 Spanish invasion of Maluku was therefore intended to also crush the growing influence of Ternate within the region. In signing the terms of capitulation, Sultan Saïd agreed to give his obedience to the King of Spain and cede control over his expansive tributary network.[32] Yet, decades of war and attempted treaty making with the Moro polities had convinced the governor to distrust the Sultan on his word alone. Writing later to the King of Spain, Acuña explained that he believed the Ternatens to be 'a people without God and without truth' and that it was not possible to trust that they would not ally themselves with the Dutch and return to their former ways.[33] Captivity and hostage taking were elements of warfare common in both Iberian and Malukan contexts.[34] By taking hostage not only the Sultan but also a large portion of the Ternaten noble class, Acuña hoped to compel compliance among those who remained behind. He appointed the Sultan's uncles, Cachil Sugui and Cachil Quipat, as governors of Ternate, to rule in the Sultan's stead.[35]

Captives of war in Manila and the politics of hostage taking

On 9 June 1606, the Sultan and twenty-three Ternaten nobles sailed into Manila Bay in shackles. During the crossing from Maluku, several of the hostages plotted to escape, intending to flee to Mindanao where they had allies. They were shackled to disrupt any further escape attempts. But as the ship slid into sight of the Spanish Fort Santiago, these shackles were hastily removed. The

[28]'Carta de Pedro Sarmiento: Maluco', 1584, Ramo 18, Leg. 46, Patronato, AGI. As the historian Giancarlo Casale has noted, although Ottoman involvement in the Indonesian archipelago is well known, the extent of these connections has remained elusive within Ottoman records. Spanish sources revealing the presence of 'Turks' in the Maluku archipelago thus offer invaluable additional insights into these networks of political, religious, and military aid. Giancarlo Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration* (Oxford University Press, 2010), 145–7.

[29]'Carta de Tello sobre situación general', 1597, Núm. 57, Ramo 7, Leg. 18B, Filipinas, AGI.

[30]'Carta del fiscal Gaspar de Ayala con 41 puntos', 1588, Núm. 36, Ramo 6, Leg. 18A, Filipinas, AGI; 'Capitulación con Esteban Rodríguez: pacificación de Mindanao', 1591, Núm. 79, Ramo 7, Leg. 6, Filipinas, AGI.

[31]'Carta de Juan Ronquillo sobre expedición de Mindanao', 1597, Núm. 60, Ramo 7, Leg. 18B, Filipinas, AGI.

[32]'Nombramiento gobernadores del rey de Terrenate', 1606, Ramo 15, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI.

[33]'Carta de Pedro de Acuña al Rey: salida para Terrenate', 1606, Ramo 18, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI.

[34]The Portuguese had previously imprisoned several other Malukan rulers, while Sultan Saïd himself had previously taken his rival, the Sultan of Tidore, hostage. Andaya, *World of Maluku*, 119, 131; Bartolomé Leonardo de Argensola, *Conquista de las islas Malucas* (En Madrid por Alonso Martin año 1609), 148. For the use of captivity and hostage-taking in Iberian warfare, see: Daniel Hershenzon, '[P]ara Que me Saque Cabesea por Cabesa ... : Exchanging Muslim and Christian Slaves across the Western Mediterranean', *African Economic History*, 42 (2014): 11–36; Ellen G. Friedman, *Spanish Captives in North Africa in the Early Modern Age* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1983); Lisa Voigt, *Writing Captivity in the Early Modern Atlantic* (Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 2009).

[35]'Carta de Pedro de Acuña al Rey: salida para Terrenate', 1606, Ramo 18, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI.

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Sultan was, after all, a hostage and not a prisoner. Overhead, a celebratory salvo of artillery greeted their arrival.[36]

The following day, the Sultan and his *cachiles* were marched into the city by Governor Acuña and his returning soldiers, paraded as spoils of war. At the head of this desultory group, the Sultan carried his kampilan and kris at his side, both sporting hilts in the shape of golden serpents' heads. The rich mantels, turbans, and plumes of the *cachiles* clashed starkly with their position as captives of the Spanish Crown.[37] After all the pomp and ceremony had subsided, the Ternaten nobles were led to one of the best stone houses within the city walls of Intramuros.[38] Governor Acuña promised to provide them with whatever they might need or desire, writing later to the King of Spain that he intended to finance the hostageship of the Ternatens through the sale of goods from their estates in Maluku, thus sparing the Spanish Crown any additional expenses.[39]

Whether Acuña had some grand plan for how to make use of the hostages, we will never know. Only a few weeks after he returned to Manila, the governor died of poisoning. Cristóbal Téllez Almazán wrote that Acuña's illness came on suddenly and that he died in great distress, having refused to take an herbal counterpoison. The audiencia was thrown into a state of turmoil by these events. Téllez Almazán was appointed as interim governor and wrote hurriedly for advice from the King of Spain as to what to do with Sultan Saïd and with the situation in Ternate in general.[40] In Madrid, the Council of Indies appeared baffled by the situation and wrote back to Manila to request more information, instructing Téllez Almazán to conduct an investigation into the crimes and faults of the Sultan against the King of Spain and his vassals, including his confederacy with the Dutch.[41] It appears this report was never made, as two years later the Council of Indies requested it again. Apparently at a loss as to how to advise the Manila authorities, the Council suggested that the Sultan and his nobles might be sent to New Spain.[42] The Viceroy of New Spain, Luis de Velasco, seemed equally bewildered by the situation, but confirmed that he would be willing to receive them and would treat them well, as befitted their noble stature.[43]

While these communications slowly crisscrossed the globe, the Sultan and his *cachiles* grew more restless. By July 1607, the audiencia reported to the King of Spain that the hostages were being kept under constant guard to prevent them from absconding and they were complaining that they had been tricked by Acuña into coming to Manila. According to the audiencia, Sultan Saïd was bitter and sad, his sorrow all the greater for being detained in Manila than for having lost control of his kingdom, since he remained lord of many other islands where he felt he could seek refuge and live in contentment.[44] A year later, Sultan Saïd sent a formal petition to the King of Spain to be granted the right to return to his lands, where he promised to keep his alliance with the Spanish.[45]

The lack of resolve by royal officials in Manila about what to do with the Sultan might be explained by the turmoil that ensued in Ternate and across the archipelago following his capture.

[36]Argensola, *Conquista*, 386.

[37]Argensola, *Conquista*, 388–9.

[38]'Carta de Téllez Almazán al principal de Terrenate', 1606, Ramo 12, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI; 'Nombramiento gobernadores del rey de Terrenate', 1606, Ramo 15, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI.

[39]'Carta de Pedro de Acuña al Rey: salida para Terrenate', 1606, Ramo 18, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI.

[40]'Carta de Téllez Almazán al Rey: llegada Pedro de Acuña: Manila', 1606, Ramo 6, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI. The responsibility for Governor Acuña's death remains a mystery; the *audiencia* suspected two men—the oldor Don Antonio de Rivera Maldonado and his brother, Don Bernardino del Castillo, both of whom had previously had public and physically violent disagreements with Acuña.

[41]'Proposiciones Consejo de Indias al Rey: rey de Terrenate', 1606, Ramo 8, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI.

[42]'Consultas sobre el rey de Terrenate y el clavo', 1608, Núm. 101, Leg. 1, Filipinas, AGI; 'Orden sobre prisión del rey de Terrenate y su hijo', 1608, fols. 66v–68v, Libro 2, Leg. 329, Filipinas, AGI.

[43]'Carta del virrey Luis de Velasco, el joven', 1608, Núm. 58, Leg. 27, Mexico, AGI.

[44]'Carta de la Audiencia de Manila sobre prisión del rey de Terrenate', 1607, Núm. 7, Ramo 1, Leg. 20, Filipinas, AGI. See also: 'Carta de Sáez de Hegoen sobre asuntos generals', 1607, Núm. 11, Ramo 1, Leg. 20, Filipinas, AGI.

[45]'Carta del rey de Terrenate al Rey de España', 1608, Ramo 25, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI.

Despite Spanish claims of a glorious conquest in 1606, the strategy behind the hostage taking seemed to fall apart almost immediately. To begin with, Acuña had not managed to capture all of Saïd's relatives. The Sultan's eleven-year-old son, Mudafar, had remained hidden under the protection of the ruler of Gilolo. Not long after Sultan Saïd was swept away to Manila, Mudafar was proclaimed the new Sultan in his place. The following year, in May 1607, the Dutch Admiral Cornelis Matelieff de Jonge sailed into Ternate's blue waters and negotiated a treaty with the young Sultan which granted the Dutch exclusive rights to the Ternaten clove trade in exchange for military protection by the Dutch. Work began almost immediately on two Dutch forts in Malayo and Tacome.[46] In the meantime, the two governors of Ternate that Acuña had appointed—the Sultan's uncles, Cachil Sugui and Cachil Quipat—demonstrated little interest in complying with the terms of capitulation that their nephew had signed. Both remained stubbornly fortified in Sabugo and Gilolo and had begun negotiations for an alliance with the Dutch, despite Spanish threats of military intervention.[47] In 1609, the Dutch admiral Matelieff wrote that he was hopeful that the Spanish would choose to release Sultan Saïd from prison, saying that this would be a gift to them, binding the Sultan to them because of his 'irreconcilable hatred against the Spanish'.[48]

At the same time, the Spanish had hoped that the capture of Sultan Saïd would force his allies elsewhere in the archipelago to submit to Spanish rule; but any signs of peace in the waters south of Manila were short-lived.[49] In July 1606, Samoroe, a Ternaten noble stationed in the Pulangi River as an ally of the Maguindanaos, wrote to the Spanish governor in Manila, cautioning him to treat Sultan Saïd well, since the eyes of the entire archipelago were upon them. Although Maguindanao rulers signed peace treaties following the Spanish invasion of Ternate, taking the Sultan and his relatives hostage was not seen as an honest way of solidifying friendship.[50] By 1608, all signs of peace in the region were shattered. Slave raiding on Spanish possessions in the Visayas also resumed that year, when seventy-seven Maguindanao *caracoas* attacked the islands of Leyte and Ibabao, enslaving, looting, and burning down churches.[51] In July 1608, the Jesuit Melchor Hurtado reported that the Maguindanaos had made an attempt to free the King of Ternate. They had sent letters to him in secret and had also sent some envoys to Manila with the aim of rescuing him to restore him to the throne.[52] Governor Rodrigo de Vivero noted that the King of Jolo—who had recently allied himself through marriage to the Maguindanaos—had also sent ambassadors to Manila and he believed that they were involved in the same conspiracy to free the Sultan and his vassals. Both Vivero and Melchor Hurtado admitted their greatest fear was that the Maguindanaos would form an alliance with the Dutch and unite in a combined attack against Spanish settlements in the Visayas.[53]

As their strategy for control over the Maluku Islands fell apart, the Spanish made one final attempt to try to use the hostage Sultan strategically. In September 1610, Governor Don Juan de Silva proposed

[46]The treaty was renewed by the Dutch in 1609. Borschberg, *Journals*, 84, 421–2; Steven van der Hagen, 'Generale Nederlandsche Geoctroyeerde Oost-Indische Compagnie 1602–1800', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Deel 57 (1907): 51–3; Van Dam, *Beschrijvinge*, 32; P. Gregorio de San Esteban, 'Memoria y relación de lo sucedido en las islas Malucas . . .', 1609–1619, 21/12, AFIO.

[47]'Relación de las islas Molucas', 1606, Ramo 21, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI; 'Carta de Juan de Esquivel al Rey: progresos islas del Maluco', 1607, Ramo 22, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI.

[48]'Letter of Matelieff to Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, dated 18 May 1609', cited in Borschberg, *Journals*, 330–1.

[49]'Carta de Téllez Almazán al principal de Terrenate', 1606, Ramo 12, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI; 'Carta reyes de Mindanao a Pedro de Acuña: piden misericordia', 1606, Ramo 13, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI.

[50]'Carta reyes de Mindanao a Pedro de Acuña: piden misericordia', 1606, Ramo 13, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI.

[51]'Capítulo de carta de la Audiencia de Manila sobre daños de Mindanaos', 1608, Núm. 37, Ramo 3, Leg. 7, Filipinas, AGI; 'Carta de la Audiencia de Manila sobre asuntos de gobierno', 1608, Núm. 23, Ramo 2, Leg. 20, Filipinas, AGI; 'Informaciones: Armada de Mindanao', 1608, Núm. 10, Leg. 60, Filipinas, AGI; Letter from Juan Domingo Bilancio, 24 April 1608, fols. 235r–235v, Phil. 10, Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu (hereafter ARSI).

[52]Letter from Melchor Hurtado, 4 July 1608, fols. 270r–270v, Phil. 10, ARSI.

[53]'Carta de Vivero sobre su llegada y situación', 1608, Núm. 38, Ramo 3, Leg. 7, Filipinas, AGI; 'Carta de Rodrigo Vivero sobre viaje, Japón, Joló . . . etc', 1608, Núm. 21, Ramo 2, Leg. 20, Filipinas, AGI.

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to lead an expedition to Ternate, taking with him Sultan Saïd and his son, Sidang, with the aim of quelling Ternaten resistance against the Spanish and destroying the Ternaten alliance with the Dutch. Silva intended to place the two hostages in prison in the fort at Ternate and to use them as puppet rulers to convince the rest of the Ternatens to follow them and take up arms against the Dutch. Once matters were resolved, the Sultan could remain in place as ruler of Ternate and a loyal vassal of the Spanish King.[54] But it was not to be. There was no major uprising of Ternatens in support of their returned ruler. Although Silva attacked the Ternaten strongholds of Gilolo and Sabugo with a considerable force, the governor retreated after only a few weeks, taking Sultan Saïd with him back to Manila.[55] An inquiry blamed this failure on the weakness of the Spanish invading force, after Spanish military commander Juan Juarez Gallinato failed to convince Portuguese naval commander Diego de Vasconcelos, stationed in Macao, to supply them with ships.[56] Writing later about his decision to bring the Sultan back into exile in Manila, Governor Silva seemed to have had a change of heart, arguing that the return of the Sultan would do more damage than good to the Spaniards, and risked their alliance with the neighbouring Sultan of Tidore.[57] The Sultan's son, Sidang, remained behind in Ternate and was briefly considered a useful ally by both the Spanish and Dutch.[58] However, his prominence was brief as he died in 1613 when the gunpowder exploded on board his *caracoa* during a skirmish between the Tidorans and Ternatens.[59]

Sultan Saïd was thus returned to exile and remained a hostage of the Spaniards for the next fifteen years, alongside his largely anonymous coterie of relatives and nobles. No one seemed to know what to do with them. In 1619, Governor Alonso Fajardo de Tenza wrote to Madrid for the advice of the King, saying that the hostages were costing the Crown money, and he could not find a reason to keep them there any longer.[60] And yet, no decision was taken. Forgotten and left to fester in their stone house in Manila, the Sultan and his vassals began to complain of worsening conditions. In 1621, Sultan Saïd wrote to the King of Spain, begging for his release, saying that he was by now an old man of more than seventy years and that he lived in great necessity, treated in a way that did not befit his status as a King. He humbly petitioned for an increase in his daily allowance to better provision himself and his vassals.[61] Two years later, he wrote to his son, Mudafar, that 'although the end of my life has come, I cannot yet die', and requested that his son send him some opium, gold, and goats as well as 'some heathen slaves if you can obtain them'. He

[54]'Consulta sobre peligro Holandes en Terrenate', 1611, Núm. 141, Leg. 1, Filipinas, AGI; 'Carta de Juan de Silva sobre los holandeses y el Maluco', 1610, Núm. 38, Ramo 4, Leg. 20, Filipinas, AGI; 'Petición de informe sobre el rey de Terrenate', 1612, fols. 151r–151v, Libro 2, Leg. 329, Filipinas, AGI; 'Fr. Gregorio Lopez, Provincial, to Fr. General, Roma', in *Documenta Malucensia*, Vol. 3, 193–197. See also. 'Fr. Pero Francisco, Provincial', in *Documenta Malucensia*, vol. 3, 239; Andaya, *World of Maluku*, 154; Lobato, 'Os mardicas', 59–60.

[55]P. Gregorio de San Esteban, 'Memoria y relación de lo sucedido en las islas Malucas . . . ', 1609–1619, 21/12, AFIO; P. A. Tiele, 'De Europeërs in den Maleischen Archipel. Achste gedeelte. 1611–1618', in *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, Deel 35, 3de Afl. (1886), 259–60; 'Fr. Angelo Armano to Cardinal Roberto Bellarmino', in *Documenta Malucensia*, Vol. 3, 197–199. See also: 'Fr. Jorge da Fonseca . . . to Fr. Claudio Acquaviva', in *Documenta Malucensia*, Vol. 3, 213–214.

[56]'Información contra Diego de Vasconcelos', 1611, Núm. 111, Leg. 29, Filipinas, AGI.

[57]'Carta de don Gerónimo de Silva á Felipe III, sobre el estado del Maluco. Ternate 13 de abril de 1612', in *Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*, Tomo LII (Imprenta de la viuda de Calero, Calle de Santa Isabel, Núm. 24, 1868), 14.

[58]'Carta de don Gerónimo de Silva á Felipe III, sobre el estado del Maluco. Ternate 13 de abril de 1612', in *Colección de documentos inéditos*, Tomo LII, 14; 'Tanto de carta que el gobernador D. Gerónimo de Silva escribió al príncipe de Terrenate . . . ', in *Colección de documentos inéditos*, Tomo LII, 51–2; 'Traslado de una carta escrita en lengua arábiga . . . ', in *Colección de documentos inéditos*, Tomo LII, 75; Tiele, 'De Europeërs', 262–3.

[59]The ship sank and the entire crew was drowned, taking with it Sidang and Gapi, Sultan Saïd's youngest son. Tiele, 'De Europeërs', 270.

[60]'Carta de Alonso Fajardo de Tenza sobre asuntos de gobierno', 1619, Núm. 58, Ramo 5, Leg. 7, Filipinas, AGI.

[61]'Carta del Rey de Terrenate', 1621, Núm. 20, Leg. 1528, Indiferente, AGI.

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begged his son to remember him and complained that his poverty led him to adopt a 'shame-faced countenance … in Manila before strangers and others'.[62]

From captives to spellcasters: Malay magic on the Manila frontier

It was around this time that the Ternaten hostages began to make a name for themselves as spellcasters and purveyors of love and luck charms. In 1619, the nineteen-year-old Juan de Alcazar confessed before the Inquisitor Fr. Domingo Gonzalez that a Ternaten *cachil* named Don Antonio had supplied him with a series of love charms, first giving him herbs and oils and, later on, some remedies made from the liver of a raven and a coconut which he consecrated with a series of ceremonies.[63] This appearance of Don Antonio in the Inquisition archives was just the first of a series of cases involving one or another of the Ternaten hostages. Between 1619 and 1634, nineteen acts were attributed to members of the Sultan Saïd's household, with a further four likely also involving them.[64] Combined, they were responsible for nearly one-fifth of all acts of folk magic brought to the attention of the Inquisition in Manila during this same period.[65]

For the Ternaten hostages, folk magic came to symbolise their struggle to escape the limitations of exile and recover a new manifestation of power. Folk magic—or *hechicería*—was an almost daily practice among the Spanish community of early seventeenth-century Manila, mirroring similar customs that emerged within Spanish outposts across the empire.[66] *Hechicería* was defined

[62]'Brief van Sultan Sahid aan zijn zoon Modafar uit Manila geschreven', in *Bouwstoffen voor de geschiedenis der Nederlanders in den Maleischen Archipel*, Vol. 1, ed. Pieter Tiele (Martinus Nijhoff, 1886), 354–5.

[63]'Denuncia de Luis de Alcázar sobre unas hierbas que le dio don Antonio para aprisionar mujeres (sic), y otra mujer doña Gerónimo, le daría otro remedio Manila', 1619, Exp. 9, Caja 4052, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN.

[64]The nineteen cases that definitely involved the Ternaten hostages are found in the following archival repositories: 'Denuncia de Luis de Alcázar sobre unas hierbas que le dio don Antonio para aprisionar mujeres (sic), y otra mujer doña Gerónimo, le daría otro remedio Manila', 1619, Exp. 9, Caja 4052, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN; 'Correspondencia de los comisarios y autoridades de Filipinas, refiriéndose a los reos . . . ', 1621, fols. 57, 73, 293, Exp. 1, Vol. 336, Inquisición, AGN; 'Supersticiosos, Nos. 9, 23, 48, 90, 99, 115, 131', 1623, Exp. 8, Vol. 220, Inquisición, AGN; 'El rey de Terrenate adivina. Filipinas', 1626, Exp. 25, Vol. 355, Inquisición, AGN; 'Testificación contra Juan Acacio, por supersticioso. Minondoc', 1626, Exp. 31, Vol. 355, Inquisición, AGN; 'Testificación contra Juan de Carmona, por brujerías. Manila', 1627, Exp. 33, Vol. 362, Inquisición, AGN; 'En la Cd. de Manila, Fray Francisco de Herrera … contra el Bachiller Bartolomé de Vera Encalada, por estafa. Por tratar con brujas', 1634, Exp. 3, Caja 2721, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN; Cases likely involving the Ternaten hostages include: 'Denuncias ante la inquisición sobre … hechizos. Manila', 1620, Exp. 12, Caja 4128, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN; Supersticiosos, Nos. 96, 125', 1623, Exp. 8, Vol. 220, Inquisición, AGN. Although unspecified, the gender, race, and timing of the cases makes it more than likely that the herbalists were connected to the Sultan's house. A further eleven counts of folk magic involved Ternatens between 1619 and 1639, mostly involving female herbalists from Ternate. Where these cases involved men, the men are named and do not belong to the Sultan's house, although one—Alexo de Castro—was a distant relative of the Sultan. See: 'Denuncia de Luis de Alcázar sobre unas hierbas que le dio don Antonio para aprisionar mujeres (sic), y otra mujer doña Gerónimo, le daría otro remedio Manila', 1619, Exp. 9, Caja 4052, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN; 'Correspondencia de los comisarios y autoridades de Filipinas, refiriéndose a los reos . . . ', 1621, fols. 145, 296, Exp. 1, Vol. 336, Inquisición, AGN; 'Supersticiosos, Nos. 21, 92, 114', 1623, Exp. 8, Vol. 220, Inquisición, AGN; 'Lista de testificaciones contra . . . ', 1630, Exp. 16, Vol. 333, Inquisición, AGN; 'Declaración de María de robles ante el santo oficio sobre dos mujeres que se dedicaban hacer hechizos con agua y aceite que mezclaban con hierbas acompaña otras declaraciones Manila', 1634, Exp. 15, Caja 3466, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN; 'Denuncias realizadas ante el comisario del Santo Oficio en Manila . . . ', 1635, fols. 18r–19v, Exp. 50, Caja 3436, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN; 'Joseph de Macaya, notario. Manila. Delación de Hipólita de Carate y Oteguera, viuda de Antonio Carreño, se acusa asímisma de hechicería', 1639, Exp. 27, Caja 1766, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN; 'Testificación contra Diego de Ibarra, por usar hechizos. Manila', 1651, Exp. 8, Vol. 461, Inquisición, AGN.

[65]See: Mawson, 'Folk Magic in the Philippines', 232.

[66]See for example: Lewis, *Hall of Mirrors*; Few, *Women Who Live Evil Lives*; Nicole Von Germeten, 'Sexuality, Witchcraft, and Honor in Colonial Spanish America', *History Compass*, 9, no. 5 (2011): 374–83; Gutiérrez, 'Women on Top', 373–90; Solange Alberro, 'Herejes, brujas y beatas: mujeres ante el tribunal del Santo Oficio de la Inquisición de la Nueva España', in *Presencia y transparencia: la mujer en la historia de México*, ed. Ma. De Jesús Rodríguez et al. (El Colegio de México, 1987), 83–98; Tausiet, *Urban Magic*.

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by the Inquisition as a type of witchcraft or sorcery, however it differed from the more serious charge of *brujería* in that it was not considered to involve an explicit pact with the devil.[67] For this reason, despite the large number of denunciations for acts of *hechicería*, the Inquisition rarely pursued these cases with formal trial or punishment, viewing them as superstitions or relatively minor infractions of religious law.[68] Nevertheless, the interest that the Inquisition had in investigating and keeping records of these practices has preserved a record of a thriving underground industry in colonial Manila. It suggests that many Spanish residents of Manila looked towards Asian herbalists and spellcasters for magical solutions that helped them navigate their interpersonal relationships on an almost daily basis.[69] They went in search of not only simple love and luck charms but also spells that might influence the behaviour of others, such as in the case of Ana Carillo, who in 1623 approached a Ternaten herbalist to help calm her husband's anger towards her.[70] Interactions between herbalists, spellcasters, and their clients reveal in microcosm the way in which Asian practitioners of magic both subverted Catholic religious norms and contested colonial racial and gendered hierarchies on the colonial frontier.[71]

Don Juan is the most frequently mentioned within Inquisition records, appearing within ten different Inquisition cases involving folk magic. This makes him not only the most prolific of the Ternaten spellcasters but also within the wider milieu of folk magic practitioners in Manila in the 1620s. While some other powerful spellcasters emerge within the Inquisition records, no other individual is named in as many cases of folk magic as Don Juan. At the same time, four other Ternaten hostages appear alongside Don Juan as active folk magic practitioners during the same period: Don Pedro, Don Antonio, Don Francisco, and Sultan Saïd, the King of Ternate himself. Their use of Christian names suggests that these men were baptised. While Sultan Saïd notably refused to convert to Christianity in 1608,[72] the Franciscan chronicler Fr. Gregorio de San Esteban records that, around the same year, five of the Ternaten *cachiles* were baptised by the Franciscan Fr. Sebastián de San Joseph. According to San Esteban, 'one of them was called Don Pedro, and the other Don Sebastian, and Don Luis, Don Antonio, and the other I do not remember'.[73] Of these, only Don Pedro can be confidently identified as Cachil Hamzah, cousin of the Sultan, who was baptised and took the name Pedro after Governor Pedro de Acuña.[74] This makes it seem likely that two of the other spellcasters were Hamzah's brothers, Naya and Hafsin (see Figure 2).[75]

Why were the Ternaten hostages drawn into folk magic practices? And what made them so prominent within this world of spellcasters and herbalists? Reading between the lines of the disparate archival records relating to the hostages, it is not hard to see that folk magic offered the

[67]Blazquez Miguel, *Eros y Tánatos*, 249.

[68]Gustav Henningson, *The Witches' Advocate: Basque Witchcraft and the Spanish Inquisition (1609–1614)* (University of Nevada Press, 1980), 9–10.

[69]Mawson, 'Folk Magic in the Philippines', 220–44.

[70]'Supersticiosos, No. 96: Ana Carrillo', 1623, Exp. 8, Vol. 220, Inquisición, AGN.

[71]Mawson, 'Folk Magic in the Philippines', 220–44; Few, *Women Who Live Evil Lives*, 10–11; Gutiérrez, 'Women on Top', 377; Amos Megged, 'The Social Significance of Benevolent and Malevolent Gifts among Single Caste Women in Mid-Seventeenth-Century New Spain', *Journal of Family History*, 24, no. 4 (1999): 420–40; Behar, 'Sexual Witchcraft', 178–206.

[72]In 1608, the Jesuit Gregorio Lopez reported that the Ternaten captives had been brought to the Jesuit temple where the Sultan Saïd was offered the opportunity to convert, but he replied with 'prideful disdain' that he wished to remain Muslim. 'Fr. Gregorio Lopez, Provincial, to Fr. Claudio Acquaviva, General', in *Documenta Malucensia*, Vol. 3, 108.

[73]P. Gregorio de San Esteban, 'Memoria y relación de lo sucedido en las islas Malucas . . . ', 1609–1619, 21/12, AFIO.

[74]Andaya, *World of Maluku*, 158–9.

[75]Thanks to the consistent omission of any of the *cachiles*' names—whether Ternaten or Christian—within Spanish archival records, it is impossible to trace their identities within the archives. Nevertheless, if we accept that Hamzah's activities likely also implicate his brothers, there is reason to believe that Cachil Naya remains a good guess for the identity of Don Juan. Of the three brothers, Naya is the only one that does not appear to have returned to Ternate after the Sultan's death in 1627, disappearing from all records after this date. See Van Fraassen, 'Ternate', Deel II, 18. As discussed below, Don Juan also remained in the Philippines after the other hostages returned to Ternate. See: 'En la Cd. de Manila, Fray Francisco de Herrera . . . contra el Bachiller Bartolomé de Vera Encalada, por estafa. Por tratar con brujas', 1634, Exp. 3, Caja 2721, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN.

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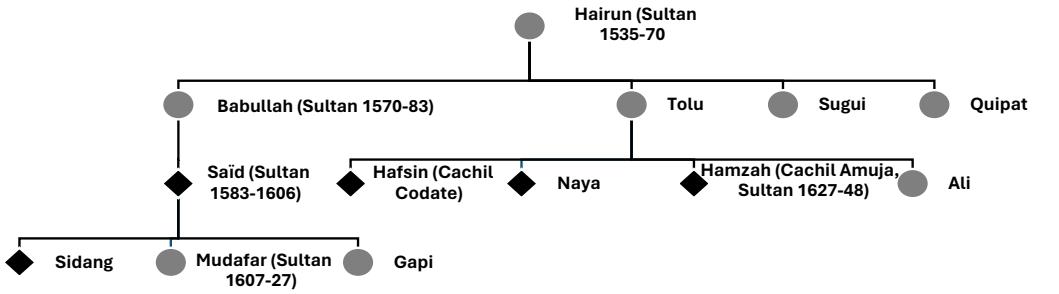

Figure 2. Simplified view of Ternaten royal family tree, based on genealogy collected by Ch. F. Van Fraassen; those taken as hostages in 1606 represented by diamonds. Van Fraassen, 'Ternate', Deel II, 14–30.

Ternatens a financial opportunity to overcome their conditions of poverty in exile. This interpretation is consistent with the broader literature on folk magic across the Spanish Empire. Historians of colonial Latin America have noted that healing professions allowed women the opportunity to establish financial independence while also subverting rigid gender roles.[76] In Manila, Indigenous women similarly used their position as skilled healers and spiritual leaders to build businesses as healers and practitioners of folk magic, sometimes earning considerable sums in exchange for their magical services. Particularly prominent were two Visayan women, Francisca Gómez and her daughter Juana, who ran a business supplying herbs and other charms to noble women of Manila.[77]

The Ternaten hostages—all men—had certain advantages that helped solidify their reputation. As noble hostages housed within Intramuros Manila, they had unrivalled access to both elite Spanish society and the surrounding population of Spanish soldiers and sailors. Several prominent royal officials can be found among their clients. For instance, when the *contaduria* official Lope Cordero wanted to win the heart of a certain woman, he went to visit Sultan Saïd for advice. The Sultan told him to find some yellow roses and to bring them to him along with some of the woman's hairs. The Sultan kept these items in his house for one night and then gave them back to Lope and told him that he was to give the roses to the woman to put in her carriage and that he was

[76]'Denuncias realizadas ante el comisario del Santo Oficio en Manila . . . ', 1635, fols. 12r–12v, Exp. 50, Caja 3436, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN; 'Declaración de Francisco de Contreras sobre la consulta que hizo a María la pedrosa para que le ayudara a saber quién robo unos diamantes y ella se lo dijo gracias a un Terrenate Manila 31 de marzo 1635', Exp. 25, Caja 3466, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN; 'Declaraciones ante el santo oficio referentes a excomuniones, renegar de dios, robo a los marineros, tratos con una Terrenata, Manila', 1635, Exp. 26, Caja 3466, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN; Joan Cameron Bristol, 'From Curing to Witchcraft: Afro-Mexicans and the Mediation of Authority', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, 7, no. 1 (2006); Megged, 'Benevolent and Malevolent Gifts', 420–40.

[77]'Proceso contra Doña María de Zaldivar, por hechicera y comer de las cosas ofrecidas al demonio. Manila', 1613, Exp. 10, Vol. 298, Inquisición, AGN; 'Testificación contra María Zaldivar, por judaizante. Manila', 1614, Exp. 29, Vol. 293, Inquisición, AGN; 'Casos seguidos en la inquisición en la ciudad de Manila por . . . uso de hierbas . . . Manila', 1619, Exp. 29, Caja 4052, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN. For other examples of successful folk magic businesses, see: 'Joseph de Macaya, notario. Manila. Delación de Hipólita de Carate y Oteguera, viuda de Antonio Carreño, se acusa asímisma de hechicería', 1639, Exp. 27, Caja 1766, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN; 'Denuncias realizadas ante el comisario del Santo Oficio en Manila . . . ', 1635, fols. 12r–12v, Exp. 50, Caja 3436, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN; 'Declaración de Francisco de Contreras sobre la consulta que hizo a María la pedrosa para que le ayudara a saber quién robo unos diamantes y ella se lo dijo gracias a un Terrenate Manila 31 de marzo 1635', Exp. 25, Caja 3466, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN; 'Declaraciones ante el santo oficio referentes a excomuniones, renegar de dios, robo a los marineros, tratos con una Terrenata, Manila', 1635, Exp. 26, Caja 3466, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN; 'Testificación contra da. Catalina de Guzmán, por supersticiones y haber matado a dn. Juan de Cañedo, su marido, con hechizos. Manila', 1627, Exp. 8, Vol. 362, Inquisición, AGN; Romain Bertrand, *Le long remords de la conquête: Manille, Mexico, Madrid. L´affaire Diego de Ávila* (1577–1580) (Seuil, 2015), 258.

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to put the hairs beneath her pillow. Lope took these things back to his house but lost his courage and did not follow through with the plan.[78]

Soldiers and sailors were the most common clients to seek out the services of the Ternaten spellcasters, reflecting in part the demographic profile of Manila at the time and suggesting that the Ternaten hostages were able to socialise outside of the confines of their own house and even outside of the city walls.[79] Soldiers and sailors came predominantly in search of love and luck charms. For instance, in 1623, Don Juan provided the soldier Martin Trujillo with some ground up roots mixed with musk, telling him that dabbing this on a woman's clothes would make her love him well.[80] In 1627, the soldier Juan de Carmona consulted Don Francisco for a love charm and was advised to scrape his finger- and toenails, mix them with a bit of civet and betelnut and give this to his desired love.[81]

The prominence of the Ternatens in the Inquisition archive also suggests that they developed a reputation that placed their services in higher demand among the Spanish community.[82] Michael D. Bailey argues that magic is a common feature of most societies, 'a system for comprehending the entire world', and 'for navigating among the varied forces that comprise and shape material creation', which is nevertheless 'a profoundly unstable category'.[83] Across the Malay world, cultures of magic blended historical practices derived from both Indigenous traditions—local beliefs in an active spirit world connected to local environments—and traditions brought from elsewhere, particularly via Islamic connections.[84] This blending of local traditions from Southeast Asia with magical practices introduced from the west via contact with the Islamic world may have heightened the appeal of Ternaten magic to Spanish clients, as both more exotic and more accessible and legible.

Early Iberian accounts of the region emphasise the centrality of magic among many Muslim communities south of the Spanish Philippines. A number of Portuguese chroniclers make mention of magical and divinatory practices such as the use of amulets for invulnerability and the existence of sorceresses with the ability to kill or control other beings.[85] The figure of the Suanggi—an evil spirit able to possess a person and transform them into a witch capable of harming or killing others—also features prominently in early Portuguese accounts of the region.[86] The Spanish chronicler, Francisco Combes, wrote that the Moros of the southern archipelago held *hechicería* and its practitioners in high esteem. Common magical practices included the

[78]'Correspondencia de los comisarios y autoridades de Filipinas, refiriéndose a los reos . . . ', 1621, fols. 57r, Exp. 1, Vol. 336, Inquisición, AGN. In another instance from 1622, Don Juan performed a spell on behalf of the noble Doctor Luis Arias with the intention of killing a man ('Supersticiosos, No. 36: Luis Arias de Mora', 1623, Exp. 8, Vol. 220, Inquisición, AGN).

[79]Ramón Gutiérrez has studied similar practices among Spanish soldiers stationed in New Mexico in the eighteenth century. Gutiérrez, 'Women on Top', 376.

[80]'Supersticiosos, No. 23: Martin de Trujillo', 1623, Exp. 8, Vol. 220, Inquisición, AGN.

[81]'Testificación contra Juan de Carmona, por brujerías. Manila', 1627, Exp. 33, Vol. 362, Inquisición, AGN.

[82]Crewe, 'Occult Cosmopolitanism', 65.

[83]Michael D. Bailey, 'The Meanings of Magic', *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft*, 1, no. 1 (2006): 1–2.

[84]Jennifer W. Nourse, 'The Meaning of Dukun and Allure of Sufi Healers: How Persian Cosmopolitans Transformed Malay-Indonesian History', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 44, no. 3 (2013): 402–3; Howard M. Federspiel, *Sultans, Shamans, and Saints: Islam and Muslims in Southeast Asia* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 69–70; Ellen, 'Introduction', 11; Yahya, *Magic and Divination*, 29–32.

[85]Yahya, *Magic and Divination*, 42–3. See also: Genie Yoo, 'Wars and Wonders: The Inter-Island Information Networks of Georg Everhard Rumphius', *British Journal of the History of Science*, 51, no. 4 (2018): 559–84; Nourse, 'The Meaning of Dukun', 414.

[86]Gabriel Rebelo, 'Informação sobre as Molucas, Texto I', in *Documentação para a historia das missões do padroado português do Oriente: Insulíndia*, ed. Arthur Basilio de Sá (Agência geral do ultramar, Divisão de Publicações e Biblioteca, 1954), 290; 'Br. Manuel Gomes SJ to the Jesuits in India. Hatiwi, April 15', in *Documenta Malucensia*, Vol. 1, 448; 'Fr. Fernando Álvares SJ by order of Fr. Superior Luís de Góis to the Jesuits of the Goa college. Bacan, April 20', in *Documenta Malucensia*, Vol. 1, 578; 'Fr. Nicolau Nunes' General Survey of Maluku by request of Fr. Martim da Silva, SJ, Goa. Goa, January 4', in *Documenta Malucensia*, Vol. 1, 688–689. The anthropologist Nils Bubandt has noted the continuation of beliefs in Suanggi across eastern Indonesia. Nils Bubandt, *The Empty Seashell: Witchcraft and Doubt on an Indonesian Island* (Cornell University Press, 2014), 26.

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interpretation of auguries, the use of powerful poisons, and spells involving figurative representations or incantations. According to Combes, the ruler of Borneo was rumoured to be able to kill someone just by uttering their name, while the Maguindanao ruler, Cachil Kudarat, was a well-known sorcerer skilled in divination and could convince fish to jump into his boat.[87] Elsewhere, Combes noted that the Ternatens were famous sorcerers, renowned for their knowledge of both herbs and powerful curses.[88]

Despite this, as Manuel Lobato has argued, most of these early Iberian accounts of Malukan culture remain 'generally rather superficial' as Iberians were 'too focused on issues most directly affecting them'.[89] It is not possible to garner a deep understanding of Malukan magical beliefs from chronicle accounts alone. Inquisition records relating to the activities of the Ternaten spellcasters thus offer a unique insight into the importance of magical beliefs within Malukan culture, particularly when read against recent work on Malay magic,[90] and particularly Farouk Yahya's groundbreaking study of magic and divination in Malay illustrated manuscripts. While Yahya concentrated on manuscripts that date from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries, he notes that there are references to similar books in existence from earlier periods. Sultans and royal families were often key patrons of magic and divination.[91] While no similar manuscript has been brought to light from Ternate, the Jesuit Fr. Nicolau Nunes noted in 1576 that Malukan nobles collected books related to sorcery and the reading of auguries, suggesting that magic played a central role within Ternaten courtly culture in the sixteenth century.[92] Moreover, many of the magical elements that Yahya has studied for the Malay peninsula correspond to the practices of Ternaten spellcasters in Manila in the seventeenth century.

Love magic, often one of the most substantive topics covered by magic and divination manuscripts, was also the most sought-after form of *hechicería* among Europeans in Manila.[93] The Ternaten hostages brought with them detailed knowledge of love magic techniques that found a ready and willing audience within Manila's social milieu. Yahya notes that sorcerers often relied on perishable goods within their spells, with typical items including 'water, candles, lime, eggs, salt, betel leaves, palm-blossom (*mayang*), toasted rice (*bertih*), multicoloured threads and cloths, as well as many others'.[94] In much the same way, the Ternaten spellcasters made use of everyday items such as pincushions, hairs and other body parts, threads, leaves, and flowers. They also used oral incantations in Arabic or Malay, often writing these incantations down on paper and teaching their clients how to say them.[95] For instance, in 1623, Don Pedro instructed the deacon Luis Mendez on how to recite certain words that he did not understand while placing four small, stitched bundles around his bed and on his person.[96] In another instance, Don Juan gave Antonio Garcia Cuevas a paper with unknown characters on it and told him to write down the name of the woman that he desired beside these characters and to pin them to a pincushion.[97] In 1621, Don

[87]Francisco Combes, *Historia de las islas de Mindanao, Jolo y sus adyacentes. Progresos de la religión y armas catolicas. Compuesto por el padre Francisco Combes, de la compañía de Iesus, Cathedratico de Prima de Theologia en su Colegio y Universidad de a la Ciudad de Manila* (Madrid: Por los herederos de Pablo de Val, 1667), 41–3.

[88]Combes, *Historia*, 51.

[89]Manuel Lobato, 'Sultans, Rajas, Sangaji, and Khimalaha: Culture and Power in the Maluko Islands According to the Early Portuguese and Spanish Sources', *Revista de Cultura*, no. 42 (2013): 48.

[90]See for example: Skeat, *Malay Magic*; Endicott, *An Analysis of Malay Magic*; Winzeler, 'The Study of Malay Magic'.

[91]For instance, the late seventeenth-century *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (*The Epic of Hang Tuah*), written in Johor, depicts the protagonist as carrying and consulting a magic and divination manuscript as a source of divination, spells, and potions. Yahya, *Magic and Divination*, 6–7, 246–7.

[92]'Fr. Nicolau Nunes' General Survey of Maluku by request of Fr. Martim da Silva, SJ, Goa. Goa, January 4', in *Documenta Malucensia*, Vol. 1, 688–9.

[93]Yahya, *Magic and Divination*, 94–5.

[94]Ibid., 28.

[95]Ibid., 28, 86–7.

[96]'Supersticiosos, No. 48: Luis Méndez', 1623, Exp. 8, Vol. 220, Inquisición, AGN.

[97]'Supersticiosos, No. 99: Antonio García Cuevas', 1623, Exp. 8, Vol. 220, Inquisición, AGN.

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Juan tried to help the soldier Juan de Carmona kill a crow so that they might use its liver as a luck charm.[98] Associated with the heavens, birds formed a common part of Malay magic, often used symbolically within divination thanks to their association with auguries and the foretelling of good or bad luck by the sound of their calls.[99]

Charms, including amulets and talismans—small, magical objects that can be used for protection, healing, love, or luck—were also frequently found within Malay magic.[100] Talismans might be worn or consumed. They typically incorporated different elements such as 'letters, numbers, words, geometric designs, drawings of spirits or any combination of these ... inscribed on to materials such as paper, cloth, metal or leaves'.[101] The Ternaten herbalists made various charms and talismans for their clients with ritualistic rules that accompanied them, such as attaching a hair to the leaf of a flower so that it might be hung by a window,[102] hanging a small, wrapped piece of paper in some smoke,[103] or placing a small bundle tied with black thread beneath a pillow.[104]

Don Juan, in particular, made use of effigies, depictions of humans or animals that were meant to stand in place of a person, taking on the individual's *semangat* or lifeforce.[105] They could be drawn or sculpted—often out of wax—and incorporated elements that belonged to the individual, including nails, hair, or saliva. The effigy would then be activated through the use of incense, fire, or a sharp object.[106] Don Juan's preferred vehicle for effigies was an egg, such as the one he buried outside Bernardino Corzo's house in an attempt to conjure his death.[107] But this was not the only such example of this kind of magic. In 1622, Doctor Luis Arias de Mora was also in the market for a spell that would kill a man. Don Juan wrote the name of the intended victim on an egg and tied it with some wax threads before burying it in the cemetery of San Francisco, saying that it was necessary to do this on sacred ground. He said that as the egg began to dry out so would the man. After the egg was buried for seven or nine days, Don Juan dug it up and threw it in the sea to complete the curse.[108]

At the same time, the Ternaten spellcasters incorporated local traditions from the Philippines, including the use of *buyo*, or betelnut. In the Philippines, *buyo* was an important part of many cultural activities prior to Spanish colonisation. It was frequently used within religious and familial ceremonies and was gifted to solidify friendships or as part of courtship culture between men and women. In the colonial period it became one of the most common ingredients in love charms, often mixed with semen, fingernails, and hairs or flakes of skin from various parts of the body in elaborate charms that sometimes involved invocations and other rituals or the smearing of the chewed remains of the *buyo* on the desired lover.[109] The Ternatens evidently adopted these traditions. For example, Don Francisco gave Antonio Fuentes Falcon a *buyo* with some shavings

[98]'Correspondencia de los comisarios y autoridades de Filipinas, refiriéndose a los reos ...', 1621, fol. 73r, Exp. 1, Vol. 336, Inquisición, AGN.

[99]Yahya, *Magic and Divination*, 123–5, 150, 181.

[100]Ibid., 87.

[101]Ibid., 90.

[102]'Supersticiosos, Nos. 115: Bartolomé Saavedra', 1623, Exp. 8, Vol. 220, Inquisición, AGN.

[103]'Correspondencia de los comisarios y autoridades de Filipinas, refiriéndose a los reos ...', 1621, fol. 293r, Exp. 1, Vol. 336, Inquisición, AGN.

[104]Ibid.

[105]Yahya, *Magic and Divination*, 28.

[106]Ibid., 91–2.

[107]'Supersticiosos, No. 9: Bernardino Corzo y Pedro del Valle', 1623, Exp. 8, Vol. 220, Inquisición, AGN.

[108]'Supersticiosos, No. 36: Luis Arias de Mora', 1623, Exp. 8, Vol. 220, Inquisición, AGN.

[109]Mawson, 'Folk Magic in the Philippines', 235–7; Francisco Ignacio Alcina, *La historia de las islas e indios visayas*, ed. María Luisa Martín-Merás and María Dolores Higueras (Instituto Histórico de Marina, 1974), fol. 65v; Juan J. Delgado, 'Historia General Sacroprofana, política y religiosa de las yslas de le Poniente llamadas philipinas' [1751], fol. 435r mss. 7427, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid.

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from the sole of Antonio's feet and armpits, which he was to gift to his desired lover.[110] In 1620, the soldier Luis Velasco reported visiting a Ternaten herbalist for help with a love affair and was instructed to take some hairs from the woman and mix it with the chewed residue of her *buyo*. Luis brought this mixture to the herbalist, who mixed it with some civet and told him that he had to smear it on the woman.[111] Thus, the Ternaten hostages were not only transporting their own practices into Manila but combining these with local traditions to create a new culture of folk magic in the frontier city.

Bernardino Corzo and the downfall of Don Juan

The frequent appearance of the Ternaten spellcasters within Inquisition records suggest that their activities were well known to the Manila authorities. Yet—at least while Sultan Saïd remained alive—there is little evidence that anything was ever done to punish them or prevent them from offering their magical services. While the clients of the Ternatens who came to the attention of the Inquisition were sanctioned and obliged to repent their sins, the Inquisition did not take action against the hostages themselves. Whereas their political status likely protected them, the Inquisition also lacked the authority to pursue neophyte converts to Christianity in the same way.[112] Their status as Christian converts was never brought into question, despite the paranoia among the Inquisition of false converts and secret Muslims.[113] This suggests that their activities as spellcasters was viewed as consistent with the *hechicería* practices common to folk Catholicism that their clients were accused of engaging in by the Inquisition.

The activities of Don Juan were recorded in detail by the Inquisition thanks to the efforts of Bernardino Corzo, the Corsican sailor that Don Juan was hired to curse on behalf of Isabel and her lover Pedro. Don Juan had buried an egg effigy in front of his door in 1622, and Bernadino was meant to die. But, to the dismay of Bernardino's wife and her lover, this spell did not work. Bernardino recovered from his ailment at sea and returned to Cavite alive and well. Isabel then confessed to her husband what she had done and begged him for forgiveness, claiming that she had been bewitched by Pedro by means of a small bag containing some herbs and small papers which he wore in the sleeve of his doublet. Bernardino decided to investigate what had happened, and before long, the trail led him to Don Juan.

Bernardino began with the question of whether his wife could have been bewitched by Pedro del Valle and decided to experiment for himself. He asked Isabel to go in search of a woman called Maria de Messa who gave her some roots or herbs that were to be used to make a woman fall in love with a man. Bernardino then went to Manila to court a woman and he claimed to have considerable luck by chewing the herbs with *buyo* and spitting them out beneath her window. Impressed with these results, Bernardino decided to go and see Don Juan himself 'so as to make the same proof'. He paid Don Juan three pesos and in return received some herbs and some scorched papers with words written in the Malay language, along with some civet. Don Juan instructed him to place these within the clothes of the woman that he wanted to woo and told him that, if this did not work, he should come back and he would give him another remedy.[114] Clearly impressed with Don Juan's knowledge of herbs and love charms, Bernardino then sent his slave, Pedro, to summon Don Juan to Cavite. Don Juan brought with him certain roots, which he said represented the male and female organs. He scraped them with a piece of horn and mixed them

[110]'Supersticiosos, Nos. 90: Diego Hernández Macaiba', 1623, Exp. 8, Vol. 220, Inquisición, AGN.

[111]'Denuncias ante la inquisición sobre … hechizos. Manila', 1620, Exp. 12, Caja 4128, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN.

[112]J. Jorge Klor de Alva, 'Colonizing Souls: The Failure of the Indian Inquisition and the Rise of Penitential Discipline', in *Cultural Encounters: The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World*, eds. Mary Elizabeth Perry and Anne J. Cruz (University of California Press, 1991), 4; Patricia Lopes Don, 'Franciscans, Indian Sorcerers, and the Inquisition in New Spain, 1536–1543', *Journal of World History*, 17, no. 1 (2006): 27–8.

[113]Crewe, 'Transpacific Mestizo', 463–85.

[114]'Supersticiosos, No. 9: Bernardino Corzo y Pedro del Valle', 1623, Exp. 8, Vol. 220, Inquisición, AGN.

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with some scented water and then told Bernardino that if he touched a woman with this water, she would come in search of him at his house.[115]

Bernardino then sprung his trap. He invited Don Juan to his house and in the meantime asked three witnesses to hide behind a screen where they could hear everything without being seen. One of these witnesses, the artilleryman Manuel Brito, reported that Bernardino began by asking for a love charm and Don Juan wrote certain characters on a paper and gave them to Bernardino along with some roots saying that he was to wet them and dab them on his hands and to write on the paper the name of the woman that he desired. They continued talking and Don Juan admitted that he had given the same remedy to Pedro del Valle so that he could court Bernardino's own wife, Isabel. Bernardino then asked for a remedy to undo the spells so that his wife would return to loving him. Don Juan instructed him to take an egg and place it in a chamber pot, to urinate on it and leave it soaking for a night. In the morning, he should wash the egg in the sea and then give it to his wife to eat. This would undo the old spell, and she would forget Pedro del Valle. Finally, Don Juan confessed that he had used a similar spell involving an egg on behalf of Pedro del Valle, designed to kill Bernardino. Armed with this information and the testimonies of his three witnesses, Bernardino presented himself before the Inquisition.[116]

While the substantive claim by Bernardino to the Inquisition was that they should punish Pedro del Valle, it is also clear that Bernardino was concerned with exposing Don Juan's occult practices.[117] His secretive positioning of witnesses behind screens meant that he had others who could corroborate Don Juan's guilt. As a result of these events, Don Juan was eventually exiled from Manila, making him the only practitioner of *hechicería* known to be punished for his activities. We learn this fact almost by accident from another Inquisition case from 1634, when Bartholomé de Vera Encalada travelled to Pampanga and employed Don Juan's services as a spellcaster to help him secure the death of a man due to arrive in Manila on board the next galleon.[118] While we do not know the timing or the circumstances surrounding Don Juan's exile, it is likely that it took place only following the death of Sultan Saïd in 1627.[119] Although the Inquisition could not formally punish Indigenous subjects like Don Juan, the death of the Ternaten King would have left Don Juan deprived of his benefactor and allowed him to be legitimately pushed out of the city. The Jesuit annual report for 1627 includes a note that the new governor, Don Juan Niño de Távora, had ordered a general cleansing among the *Indio* and Chinese populations of Manila, saying that 'a great number of natives that were like *Madianitas* and caused much scandal to this republic have been expelled from Manila'.[120] We might hypothesise that Don Juan was caught up within this purge.

Historians of folk magic elsewhere in the Spanish Empire have written about magical practices as an avenue for subalterns to subvert their subordinate positions within the empire, confronting racial and gender hierarchies and reclaiming new manifestations of power.[121] By tracing Don Juan's story through the archives, we can see how folk magic was a commercial activity that facilitated this Ternaten spellcaster's escape from subservience and idleness he experienced as an elite hostage in exile. For Don Juan, folk magic became a way to acculturate himself to the new

[115]Ibid.

[116]Ibid.

[117]Ibid.

[118]'En la Cd. de Manila, Fray Francisco de Herrera … contra el Bachiller Bartolomé de Vera Encalada, por estafa. Por tratar con brujas', 1634, Exp. 3, Caja 2721, Indiferente Virreinal, AGN.

[119]'Respuesta a Távora sobre asuntos de guerra y gobierno', 1630, fols. 158r–162r, Libro 3, Leg. 329, Filipinas, AGI; Lobato, 'Os mardicas', 60.

[120]'Annua de la provincia de Philippinas del año de 1627', fol. 450v, Phil. 6, ARSI. The use of the term *Madianitas* is curious and ambiguous, referring in a biblical sense to the ancient people of Canaan, who were nomadic traders in constant conflict with the Israelites.

[121]Few, 'Chocolate, Sex, and Disorderly Women', 674; Behar, 'Sexual Witchcraft', 178–206; Lewis, *Hall of Mirrors*.

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social world in which he found himself. Yet, significantly, the society that Don Juan found himself accepted into was not that of his captors, but rather that of his fellow Philippine folk magic practitioners. Exiled for a second time and re-settled in Pampanga, he nonetheless continued with his newfound trade. With the exception of the one reference in 1634, he fades out of the historical record.

Folk magic and the hidden transcripts of Ternaten power

While practising folk magic helped Don Juan to overcome exile, the story of Cachil Hamzah—another Ternaten spellcaster—reveals how the same practices might also be read as a hidden transcript of political opposition to European colonisation. Cachil Hamzah was the grandson of Sultan Hairun and the cousin of Sultan Saïd. As a hostage in Manila, he was baptised with the name Pedro—after Governor Pedro de Acuña—and in the 1620s he reinvented himself alongside Don Juan as the spellcaster Don Pedro, a purveyor of love charms.[122] But Cachil Hamzah was also a cunning politician. He cultivated a public reputation as a loyal, Christian subject of the Spanish Crown and used this to his advantage to eventually become Sultan of Ternate, following the death of Sultan Saïd in 1627.

Hamzah was long regarded as the hostage most loyal to the Spanish Crown. In 1606, he was instrumental in persuading Sultan Saïd to surrender to the Spanish and was therefore, to some extent, responsible for their lengthy exile in Manila.[123] When the political situation in Maluku deteriorated into outright war between the Spanish and Ternatens in 1625, Hamzah was once again called to intervene on behalf of the Spanish.[124] The Governor of Maluku, Pedro de Heredia, claimed that the Ternatens were angry at the lengthy imprisonment of their Sultan in Manila. Both he and the Jesuit Manuel Rivero petitioned the governor for the return of Sultan Saïd to Ternate, saying that he was by that time an old man and of little threat.[125] But Governor Niño de Távora decided that he first needed the approval of the Spanish King to release the Sultan and chose to send Hamzah instead, instructing him to broker some kind of peace between the Spanish and Ternatens. After two decades in exile in Manila, baptised a Christian, and integrated into the Spanish community, Hamzah was considered a thoroughly Hispanicised agent of the Spanish Crown.

Nevertheless, the Spanish would come to regret the trust they placed in Hamzah. In 1627, within a few short months of each other, both Sultan Saïd and his son, Sultan Mudafar, died, one in exile in Manila and the other in Ternate.[126] This opened up a power vacuum within Ternaten politics. Mudafar's eldest son was then only four years old, so Ternatens looked to other contenders for the position of Sultan. Hamzah, as grandson of Sultan Hairun, stepped neatly into this position, elected in preference to his half-brother, Ali, who was seen as too heavy-handed and power-hungry.[127] The Spanish saw this as a great opportunity: a Catholic convert and loyal subject

[122]P. Gregorio de San Esteban, 'Memoria y relación de lo sucedido en las islas Malucas . . . ', 1609–1619, 21/12, AFIO; 'Correspondencia de los comisarios y autoridades de Filipinas, refiriéndose a los reos . . . ', 1621, fols. 293r, 328r, Exp. 1, Vol. 336, Inquisición, AGN; 'Supersticiosos, No. 48: Luis Méndez', 1623, Exp. 8, Vol. 220, Inquisición, AGN.

[123]'Capitulaciones hechas con el rey de Terrenate', 1606, Ramo 5, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI; 'Nombramiento gobernadores del rey de Terrenate', 1606, Ramo 15, Leg. 47, Patronato, AGI; 'Fr. Luis Fernandes . . . to Fr. Alberto Laerzio', in *Documenta Malucensia*, Vol. 3, 1–10.

[124]'Carta de Fernando de Silva sobre asuntos de gobierno', 1625, Núm. 83, Ramo 6, Leg. 7, Filipinas, AGI; 'Carta de Pedro de Heredia sobre situación de Terrenate', 1625, Núm. 122, Ramo 19, Leg. 20, Filipinas, AGI; 'Carta de Niño de Távora sobre liberar a rey de Terrenate', 1626, Núm. 151, Ramo 20, Leg. 20, Filipinas, AGI.

[125]'Carta de Pedro de Heredia sobre situación de Terrenate', 1625, Núm. 122, Ramo 19, Leg. 20, Filipinas, AGI; 'Fr. Andrea Simi to Fr. Muzio Vitelleschi', in *Documenta Malucensia*, Vol. 3, 468–71; Lobato, 'Os mardicas', 60.

[126]'Jacq. Le Febure, Gouverneur der Molukken, aan den G.-G. Pt. De Carpentier, 16 Augustus 1627', in *Bouwstoffen*, Vol. 2, 118–24; AGI, Filipinas, Leg. 30, Núm. 12.

[127]'Jacq. Le Febure, Gouverneur der Molukken, aan den G.-G. Pt. De Carpentier, 16 Augustus 1627', in *Bouwstoffen*, Vol. 2, 118–24.

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of the Spanish Crown elected as ruler of Ternate would surely benefit them, opening up the clove trade and providing a path to future Christian conversion in the archipelago.[128] But Hamzah never intended to remain loyal to Spain. Less than a month after he became Sultan, Hamzah wrote an official letter to the Dutch Governor General Pieter de Carpentier, reassuring him that he intended to honour the alliance with the Dutch and that they would retain their monopoly over the clove trade. He asked the Governor General to issue him a command to prove his loyalty to the Dutch, saying that if he did not show himself as an enemy of the Spaniards and take revenge on them 'for the sorrow and suffering they have caused me and my ancestors', then he deserved to be beheaded.[129] Shortly after this, he renounced his Christian conversion and initiated a bloody campaign against the Christianised population of Moro, dispatching more than 700 warriors to force this community to accept Islam.[130] In 1629, the Jesuit missionary Fr. Andrea Simi wrote of Hamzah's actions as a crushing defeat for Christianity in the Maluku Islands.[131] His betrayal of the Spanish was felt all the more deeply because it was so wholly unexpected.

In James Scott's formulation, hidden transcripts represent a 'critique of power spoken behind the back of the dominant', contrasted to a public display of subordination and compliance.[132] Hamzah was skilled at this game of politics. Able to outwardly project himself as a loyal servant of the Spanish Crown, he manoeuvred himself into a position of power that allowed him to exact revenge on the authorities who had kept him and his brethren hostage and in exile for two decades. Within this story, we can only guess the role that folk magic played in facilitating Hamzah's hidden transcript of political opposition, as a set of cultural practices that tied the Ternaten spellcasters to their own culture while also subverting the austere Catholic authority of the world that they found themselves in.

Combined, the histories of the Ternaten noble hostages, their practice of folk magic and their continued struggle for political independence provide insights into the dynamics of power in maritime Southeast Asia in the seventeenth century. The historian of Ternate, Leonard Andaya, wrote about the Spanish invasion of Maluku in 1606 as marking 'the nadir of Ternate's fortunes and the end of the period when its rulers had seized the initiative and made Ternate one of the most powerful nations in the archipelago'.[133] With their Sultan exiled to Manila, the Ternatens descended once more into factionalism and decentralised squabbling, and Andaya concluded that the Ternatens looked 'to the Dutch for protection as they had once turned to the Portuguese a century earlier'.[134] Ever afterwards, Ternaten interests were ultimately entwined and subordinate to one European power or another.

But this conclusion is only feasible if we accept the narrative of domination written in official accounts of this history, of the victorious Spanish conquest of Ternate, of the defeat and ultimate demise of the Sultan, of his final burial in an unmarked and forgotten grave.[135] As always, there is more that was left out than included. The Inquisition records explored here give us a glimmer of a counter-narrative, through the unfolding politics and social role of Ternaten hostages in Manila. They show us a people who found new and ingenious ways to retain their own cultural integrity and to build back anew from these experiences of exile. Their story contributes to a growing

[128]'Carta de Niño de Távora sobre la expedición a Isla Hermosa', 1628, Núm. 12, Leg. 30, Filipinas, AGI.

[129]'Hamdja, sultan van Ternate, aan den G.-G. Pt. De Carpentier, 14 Augustus 1627 (Uit het Ternataansch vertaald)', in *Bouwstoffen*, Vol. 2, 124–6; Van Dam, *Beschrijvinge*, 33.

[130]Lobato, 'Os *mardicas*', 60; 'Fr. Andrea Simi to Fr. Muzio Vitelleschi', in *Documenta Malucensia*, Vol. 3, 468–71.

[131]'Fr. Andrea Simi to Fr. Muzio Vitelleschi', in *Documenta Malucensia*, Vol. 3, 468–71.

[132]James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (Yale University Press, 1990), xii.

[133]Andaya, *World of Maluku*, 143.

[134]Andaya, *World of Maluku*, 149.

[135]These claims are best exemplified by the grandiose chronicle written by Bartolomé Leonardo de Argensola in 1609 and have sometimes been uncritically repeated by later historians. Eberhard Crailsheim, for instance, describes the 1606 conquest of Maluku as 'a resounding success for Spain'. See: Eberhard Crailsheim, 'Jesuit Mediators in the Inter-Polity Relations between Christians and Muslims in the 17th-Century Philippines', *Philippiniana Sacra*, Vol. LVI, No. 168 (2021), 387.

emphasis within the historiography of Manila on a cultural *mestizaje* that undermined Spanish hegemony within this space.[136] Their evident acceptance into the most intimate spaces of Spanish society also demonstrates that cultural practices—influenced at least in part by Islamic traditions—could find acceptance within a folk Catholicism that was more culturally porous than often portrayed.[137]

At the same time, when thinking through the history that follows these events, of the contours of Dutch colonisation and the alliances they built with the Ternatens to facilitate Dutch power in eastern Indonesia, historians might keep these hostages is mind. As Matthew Restall has written recently, the concept of 'native allies' might prove overly Eurocentric, while Indigenous-European 'alliances were often forged by local rulers, whose motivations remained hidden'.[138] The Inquisition records relating to the Ternaten hostages offer us—if just for a fleeting moment—an insight into the hidden transcripts of power that allowed one such ally, Sultan Hamzah, to use the weapons of his captors against them.

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[136]Crewe, 'Troubles of Global Civitas', 148–73.
[137]Mawson, 'Folk Magic in the Philippines', 220–44.
[138]Matthew Restall, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest* (Oxford University Press, 2021), 170.

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