

The Contributions of Alonto to the Development Islamic Thought in the Philippines (1914-2002)

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Abstract

This paper examines the contributions of Alonto to the development of Islamic thought in the Philippines, and it will clarify his Parliamentary struggle, his establishment of Islamic University of the Philippines, his views on Islamic education and also the main characteristics of his Islamic thought in the Philippine Islands. The tendency of giving priority to discuss the some major contributions of Alonto to the development of Islamic thought in the Philippines is to clarify and trace the hidden and explore the reality of Islamic thought in the Philippine Islands. To address this limitation, an analytical study is conceived to foreground of his some major contributions to the development of Islamic thought in the Philippines. The objectives of this study is to identify and trace the development of Islamic thought, to understand its reality, to summarize the views of Alonto's Islamic thought, and to forward analytical framework of the reality of the development of Islamic thought in the Philippine Islands. Discourse Analysis will use in this study in order to identify the elements of the Alonto's Islamic thought, contextualizing and examining the factors that shaped Alonto's Islamic thought, synthesizing and understanding/confirming/clarifying the reality of his contribution to development of Islamic thought from the others, summarizing the views of the others, quoting/citing the statements of Muslim Scholars. The study singles out first that the Alonto's Islamic thought no dichotomy to disconnect its teachings and understanding to each other and no contradictory between the Filipino Muslim Scholars about his Islamic thoughts. Alonto raised the level of his involvement by collaborating with international Islamic universities, institutions, and centers. His approach to spread and development of Islamic thought is primary a combination of his western educational background grounded based on the the Holy Qur'ān, and the teachings of Prophet Mohammad peace be upon him. At the end, the study focused on Alonto's contributions to the development of Islamic thought and gives a critical analysis.

Keywords: Alonto, Parliamentary Struggle, Jāmi'atu al-Fīlibbīn, Characteristics of Alonto's Islamic thoughts

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Introduction

Rationale of the study, one vast field of academic research on development of Islamic thought that thus far has not been carried out systematically within the domain of discourse and language is intellectual history of Muslim scholars in the Philippines. Despite the fact that Islām has a very strong impact on Philippine socio-political affairs, very few studies have been conducted on individuals who have contributed to the Islamic thought in the Philippines (Alonto 1972). The tendency of giving priority to well-known Muslim scholars predominates over those whose works remain hidden and unexplored (Marohomsalic 2001). To address this limitation, a critical study is conceived to foreground a Muslim leader and intellectual in Mindanao, as a grand Master Islām supporters Movement in Philippines. Popularly known among his colleagues in the Philippine Senate in the 1950s as *Dami*, Ahmad Domocao Alonto, born from an illustrious family on August 1, 1914 in Lanao del Sur, Mindanao, Philippines, was not only imbued with Islamic principles but also emboldened by the courage to make a difference. He died on December 11, 2002 at the age of 88, but his legacy lives on and his writings and works have survived (Said 1981; Macaraya 1988 & Manzoor 2005).

Ahmad Domocao Alonto is one of the one hundred great Muslim Leaders of the 20th Century and one of the most outstanding Muslim intellectuals in the Philippines (Manzoor 2005 & Javier-Alonto 2009). He stands at the forefront of development and spread of Islamic thought in the Philippines (Marohomsalic 2001). He has greatly contributed to the socio-political and educational reform, diplomatic relations through the establishment of Embassies in the Philippines, increasing international trades with Muslim countries, and inter and intra-religious discourses in the academia. With all these achievements, Alonto, amongst other Muslim intellectuals in the Philippines is considered to be one of the reliable authorities on the development of Islamic thought and the religious unification of politically divided *'Ulamā*. Alonto's Islamic Thought, religious views, education reform and ideas are frequently promoted and cited in the official mass media of the Philippines, and allowed him to be seen by others as the grand master of contemporary Muslim Filipinos struggle for their right to self-determination (Marohomsalic, 2001; Macaraya, 1988; Manzoor 2005 & Saber, N.D.).

Literature Review

Given the limited materials in public libraries and from personal collection of Muslim academicians in Marawi City, Philippines, the task of composing a review of literature has been very challenging and complex. Despite Ahmad Domocao Alonto's long political career and active involvement in Muslim affairs, not much works have been devoted to his views and approaches of Islamic thought.

One of the earliest theses is "*Ahmad Domocao Alonto: An Annotated Bio-Bibliography*" written by Pantonan M. Said in 1981. In his thesis, Pantonan M. Said endeavored to illustrate Alonto's life by describing his lineage, his philosophy of life, his role in the lower house as a Congressman and in the upper house as a Senator from Lanao, and his activities with some photographs. This thesis also touched on Alonto's record as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1971, his works, works composed about him, the impact of his character on diverse audiences and sectors of Philippine society, his records in the Congress of the Philippines, his social achievements and standing, and his membership and presence in various international organizations and conferences. All these achievements demonstrate Alonto's noble ambition for social, economic and educational development of the citizens Philippines (Said, 1981).

Generally, the thesis provides factual information from Alonto's birth in 1914 to his education and professional career, stressing on his writings until 1980. The thesis was based on a compilation of published writings from different national newspapers magazines and his records in the Philippines Congress and House of Representatives. From a journalistic point of view, the thesis undoubtedly speaks of Alonto as a public figure in a span of 66 years (1914-1980).

The most commendable work on Alonto was written by Tocod D. Macaraya. Entitled "*Nomination Letter for the 1988 King Faisal International Award for Service of Islām and other Related Papers*", this paper was a comprehensive portrayal of Ahmad Domocao Alonto as a nominee for the Service of Islām in the Philippines. Although not a typical biography, Macaraya outlined the paper in such a way that Islām as an ideology and Alonto as a leader and intellectual merged through service and commitment. Against this backdrop was the Mindanao crisis that drew international attention, especially from the Arab Muslim world (Macaraya, 1988).

Macaraya illustrated Alonto's history and educational background including his official positions in the national government and in private institutions and corporations, his contribution to socio-civic religious organization, and a brief account of his service to Islām and Muslims. Macaraya cited Alonto's works such as books, articles written in both English and Maranao language, published and unpublished, his local and international awards, participation in many seminars locally and internationally, his outstanding activities in the field of Islamic *da'wah* and people's review and comments about him (Macaraya, 1988).

Another Muslim intellectual who wrote a paper on Alonto was Mamitua Saber, the founding father of the Mindanao State University Research Center, later named after him, the Mamitua Saber Research Center. Mamitua Saber's biography entitled " Ahmad Domocao Alonto: Serving the cause of Faith, King Faisal International Awardee, Tribute to a Muslim Statesman", highlighted Alonto's service to Islām and Muslims in the Philippines, drew some of his preliminary statements as a government functionary, his contributions as a Filipino citizen, his intellectual works, his awards from local and international bodies, his special grants (both local and international), his outstanding activities in the field of *da'wah*, his works which were reviewed by *The Manila chronicle* and *The Daily Mirror* (Saber N.D.)

Much closer to the Alonto clan was Rowena Awliya Javier-Alonto, the wife of Bobby Alonto, one of Ahmad Domocao Alonto's grandsons. She wrote about Alonto's leadership in a paper entitled "*Ahmad Domocao Alonto, Case Study on Muslim Leadership*". Rowena included in the biography the following: Alonto's family background, and how the people of Moroland considered him a legendary character of his time, as man of vision, a great teacher, a social reformer, a statesman, a pragmatic politician and a champion of the Muslims' rights in the Philippines. Rowena concluded that Ahmad Domocao Alonto should be considered as the early father of contemporary Moro struggle for the rights of self-determination (Javier-Alonto, 2009). In tracing the Alonto's personal pursuit of excellence, she paid attention to the educational background of Ahmad Alonto through his father's footsteps, his positions in both the government and the private sectors, and considered the year of 1950 a defining year and turning point in his life as a practicing Muslim. Rowena also cited Alonto's view on Kamlon rebellion in Sulu and Tawantawan in Lanao del Sur. Above anything else, Rowena mentioned Bandung Conference held in 1955 and the Afro-Asian Conference (AAC), which marked the beginning to send Muslim students in Egypt.

In that conference, Alonto met the former President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, who offered scholarships to deserving Muslims, and he asked Alonto to act as intermediary. Another important event cited by Rowena was the massacre, commonly known in Philippine history books as the Jaidah massacre, where sixty-four Muslim Moro trainees in the Corregidor Islãnd in March 17, 1968 were killed because they refused to invade Sabah in Malaysia. (Javier-Alonto, 2009). With regards to the *Ansār al-Islām*, which Alonto established, Rowena argued that its establishment was to resolve the crisis between Muslims and Christians who were fighting against each other. The Muslims' struggle for their right to self-determination heightened during the Marcos regime, and a civil war broke out, pitting innocent civilians for a cause they never understood.

Parliamentary Struggle

Ahmad Domocao Alonto followed his father's footsteps in Philippine politics in the 1950s (Javier-Alonto 2009). Although he was elected Congressman, his achievements peaked when he became a Senator, the only one Muslim in the Philippine Senate. This section focuses and addresses his role in the parliament and the impact of his achievement to the Muslims in the Philippines specifically in Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan (Macaraya 1988). One of the significant impacts of Alonto's contributions to the development of Islamic thought in the Philippine Islands was his parliamentary struggle (Alonto 1996). From then on, several movements appeared on the political scene, all working with the Philippine government to re-establish the Islamic *Shari'ah* among the Muslims in the Philippines. Their endeavor culminated in the establishment of the *Ansār al-Islām* Movement in 1969 in the Philippines (Alonto 1996). Although the objective of the movement was parliamentary struggle, Alonto decided to redirect the struggle through western and Islamic education (Said 1988). He knew that very few would be given the chance to participate directly in Philippine politics, so the best way was to educate the Filipino Muslims and other cultural minorities in the MINSUPALA region (Alonto 1996). Alonto authored the establishment of the Mindanao State University, and in 1961, his dream became a reality (The Manila Chronicle 16/3/1959). In Mindanao, this university played a significant role to spread western knowledge and educate both Muslims and Christians using English as the medium of instruction (Said 1988).

Alonto theorized that western and Islamic education could eliminate the barriers of ignorance and underrepresentation in Philippine affairs among his people (Javier-Alonto 2009; Alonto 1996; Tamano 2008). It is clear the Mindanao State University is one of Alonto's greatest achievements as the Muslims' representative in the Philippine Senate (Javier-Alonto 2009). In a span of 50 years (MSU will be celebrating its Golden Anniversary on September 1, 2011), the university remains solid in terms of academic excellence in Mindanao and overall the Philippine Islands (Said 1981). Its graduates have conquered foreign shores as professionals while others remain in the country to serve various institutions. The Moro Muslim Filipinos who graduates from MSU have been resolute in leading the way to work in Islamic centers and to establish Islamic Institutions including madāris and mosques. They also launched Islamic seminars, wrote many Islamic articles, and helped in solving the problems between Muslim and Christian Filipinos. Many of the Muslim Filipinos also joined local and regional politics, and they are now the present leaders of the Filipino Muslims in the Philippines (Tamano 2008).

Some of Alonto's achievements throughout his association with the Parliament included the sponsoring the creation of Mindanao Development Authority (MDA), the Commission on Higher Integration, and the creation of Mindanao State University. And he confirmed that even before the Commission on National Integration (CNI), there was the Commission on Higher Integration (CHI), which was established to grant scholarship schemes to poor but deserving Filipino Muslims and Christians in the region and later on, the Commission on Higher Integration was changed to the Office of Muslim Affairs. It appears that Alonto's role in parliament was to establish a national community whereby citizens become united despite diversity (Macaraya 1988; Said 1981). As a prominent Muslim Filipino leader in the government and grand master of Islām supporter movement in the Philippine Islands, Alonto authored Republic Act no. 1387, which led to establishment of Mindanao State University. (Macaraya 1988; Said 1981) Within this university, two centers were created to integrate Islamic religion in the academe. The first was the King Faisal Center for Islamic and Arabic Studies (KFCIAAS) and the *Shari'ah* Center. Alonto was also the principal author of the Republic Act no. 1888 leading to creation of the Commission of National Integration, a cabinet level office of the Republic of the Philippines (Said 1981; Saber Mamitua N.D). He also developed the Republic Act no. 3034, the Mindanao Development Authority for the economic improvement and development of Muslim Filipinos as well as other cultural communities such as the *Lumad*, a collective term for the different tribes in Mindanao.

Alonto was the principal author of the Republic Act no. 1515 which reformed representation of leaders from appointive status to elective positions. (Macaraya 1988; Javier-Alonto 2009; Manzoor 2005).

In terms of Alonto's policy on integration, it is documented that Alonto was able to amend the Civil Service Law of 1959, which recognized the Islamic holidays such as *'Īd al-Fitr and 'Īd al-Adhā*. (Alonto 1975; Marohomsalic 2001). Alonto as a Commissioner to the 1986 Constitutional Commission combined various Islamic concepts in the preamble, declaration of the principles and state policy, Bill of Rights, social justice and human rights and other provisions of the 1987 Constitution of the Philippine Governemnt (Javier-Alonto 2009; Manzoor 2005). According to the Civil Service Law of 1959, it has good impacts because the Muslim Filipinos were integrated to the Philippine body politics, but human rights and justice among the Filipino Muslims in the Philippines are not fully implemented until our present time (Alonto 1975).

Jāmi' Atū Al-Fīlibbīn Al-Islāmīa

Alonto established the *Jāmi'atū al-Fīlibbīn al-Islāmīa* to preserve Islamic religion and to reeducate the Muslims on the importance of Islamic religion to the Moro Muslims. Alonto founded in 1954 the first modern Islamic School in the Philippine Archipelago which later became the first Islamic University in the Philippines known as the *Jāmi'atū al-Fīlibbīn al-Islāmīa*, (Macaraya 1988; Manzoor 2005 and Saber N.D.) Alonto appears to have founded his legacy of service through fulfilling the residents of Lanao quest for Islamic knowledge. In 1955, this University was called the *Kāmilol Islām* College initiated by a group of educated Muslim Filipinos and *'Ulamā*. It was organized in accordance with certain legal requirements in order to obtain official recognition. *Jāmi'atū al-Fīlibbīn al-Islāmīa* offers courses on Islamic religion and is taught as part of the curricula, together with the Arabic language (Alonto 1984).

From 1955 onwards, this university has increased its enrollees to two thousand and four hundred Muslim students. The board of trustees decided to offer complete Islamic education package from elementary to secondary as feeders to the tertiary education. Soon the number of faculties also increased.

The Faculty of Education offers teachers' training to Muslim teachers around the Lake Lanao area who are employed in public schools. These trainings are aimed at enhancing their skills as Muslim teachers. The Islamic University also offers Bachelors of Science in Elementary Education (BSEE) and Bachelor of Science in Education (BSE) (Alonto 1984: Alonto 1973). The Faculty of Liberal Arts prepares Muslim students in different degrees for Bachelor of Arts (AB), while the Faculty of Business Administration trains Muslim students in economics, commerce or business administration. This university has a big role to spread the Islamic Thought of Alonto because thousands of Muslim teachers who graduated from this university are playing active roles in various Islamic institutions in Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan, and over all Philippine Island, and even abroad (Alonto 1984: Alonto 1973).

Jāmi'atu al-Filībbīn al-Islāmiya is a private institution. Until now, it is fully dependent on Muslim students' fees, which might be the cause of its low turn-outs of new intakes. Aside from the main faculties described above, the Islamic University has a branch in the Province of Sulu with a Muslim students' enrollment of one thousand three hundred (Alonto 1985& Macaraya 1988). It plans to open new branches in the Province of Cotabato, in the cities of Iligan, Zamboanga and Basilan, and in the municipalities of Malabang and Balabagan located in the Province of Lanao Del Sur and Norte. This Islamic University set the model for integrated Islamic modern schools for primary, secondary and college education in the Philippine Islands specifically in Muslim areas. Plans are underway to open the Faculty of Law, Medicine, Agriculture, Engineering, Pharmacy, Nursing, Polytechnic Institute and etc (Alonto 1984).

The *Jāmi'atu al-Filībbīn al-Islāmiya* is the first Islamic institution to teach formal Islamic education and to mold Muslim leaders in the Philippine Islands. From a small college, the *Kāmilol Islām* College, the primary thrust to concentrate on the Arts, Philosophy, and Humanities with Islamic Theology, History and Philosophy, Arabic language and literature, has been extended to other fields. It is important to note that the Muslim teachers in JPI receive low wages compared to other public universities in the Philippines, but they continue to serve the university. Perhaps the board should take other measures to improve the teaching staff. Because it has grown into a Islamic university, it needs hire foreign Muslim professors and experts, specifically in the field of Islamic theology and Arabic studies (Alonto 1984).

Alonto's intention in establishing this university was to educate the residents of Lanao, the Maranaos, and other Muslims from the other parts of Mindanao region. Alonto was forecasting his advocacy because Islamic education is an important component of national integration (Alonto 1975). This is further demonstrated in Nur Misuari's argument that Alonto's achievements in establishing the *Jāmi'atu al-Filibbin al-Islāmia* and the Mindanao State University helped improve Maranao's Islamic knowledge and defend their Islamic religion through Islamic education. With educated Maranaos in the Philippine government, they could be the catalysts to institute change in Mindanao region (Alonto 1975). Alonto set this Islamic university to educate Muslim Filipinos in the Philippines based on the Holy Qur'ān and the *Hadith* of the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him. Ahmad Domocao believed that the basic idea for the establishment of the Institute of the Islamic studies was to create a department under the *Kāmilol Islām* College with the following functions:

(a) to prepare curricula for required subjects in religion and Arabic Language for primary, elementary, secondary and the different faculties of the College; (b) to prepare curricula for teachers' training for a period of at least one year to teach religion in government schools under the optional religious instruction; (c) to procure and approve the necessary instructors, professors and researchers in the field of Islamic Studies; and (d) to establish and conduct a research program in Islamic studies and to publish papers, articles and essays. Translation therewith shall be made in Arabic, English and local language (Alonto 1975).

While all these provisions support the overall curricula of JPI, it seems that the curricula of Islamic subject and Arabic language are not satisfactory because the Islamic curricula do not have a common module. To solve this problem, the Islamic University should have recruit foreign Muslim graduates from the field of Islamic studies and Arabic language in order to improve the curricula. In coordination with other faculties of the *Kāmilol Islām* College, the Institute of Islamic Studies developed an intensive one year training course to prepare teachers to teach Islamic theology in government schools to Muslim students (Alonto 1985; Alonto 1973 & Manzoor 2005). It is a five year program to produce one thousand Muslim teachers by the end of the period. Presently there are one hundred thousand estimated Muslim students in government schools at the primary and elementary level, a number likely to double in the next decade.

The *Jāmi'atu al-Filippin al-Islāmia* was also established to help understand the meaning of Islamic religion, and towards Islamic educational upliftment and technology transfer (Alonto 1984; Alonto 1985; Macaraya 1988). We can explain that Alonto's establishment of the *Jāmi'atu al-Filippin al-Islāmia* was to enhance Islamic education and to make Muslim people aware of their rights in various spheres of life.

According to Alonto, JPI also offers certificate for graduates in Bachelor degrees in Science in Elementary Education, religious training in the faculty of Islamic studies, and Arabic studies. Muslim student graduates are eligible as regular teachers in several government schools in Mindanao and thus removing the essential of employing temporary Muslim teachers teaching Islamic theology in government schools. Beginning in 1957, the *Kāmilol Islām* College was already producing Muslim graduates in the area of Islamic studies and theology who were employed as teachers in several government schools in the Philippines (Alonto 1984). To date, one hundred Muslim graduates holding Elementary Teaching Certificates graduated from this Islamic University while about fifty graduated with Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education. Because of this, it appears that the religious instruction given through the current course curricula does not provide good working knowledge of Islamic studies and theology.

This Islamic university must provide and update its curricula for Islamic studies leading to degrees of Bachelor of Arts with majors in Islamic theology, Philosophy, History, or Arabic language and literature (Alonto 1984). This Islamic University produces scholars (*Ulamā*) through formal aspects of Islamic ideology. It also provides courses for teachers where religious subjects are part of the curricula in order to afford graduates sufficient knowledge of Islamic religion. It envisions obtaining scholarships for post-graduate studies in Muslim learning institutions like those in the United Arab Republic so as to provide qualified Muslim instructors and professors in *Kāmilol Islām* Colleges and in the Institute of Islamic Studies (Alonto 1984; Alonto 1985; Macaraya 1988; Manzoor 2005 & Saber N.D.).

The role of *Jāmi'atu al-Filippin al-Islāmia* is to serve as effective control of Christian education among Maranoas, model for others to follow, prevented education of Christian missionaries and introduced western Islamic blended curriculum.

It is very clear that this Islamic university was organized through Alonto's idea in order to control Christian's mixed curricula, and avoid it to be integrated with Islamic education and theology in Mindanao and all over the Philippine Islands (Macaraya 1988; Manzoor 2005). Indeed, the Islamic University of the Philippines has a vital role to play in the spread Alonto's Islamic thought in the Philippines specifically in Mindanao Island, Sulu and Palawan, and has also role to spread the learning of Arabic language as a second language in the Philippines (Alonto 1984). This Islamic university is a concrete foundation of Alonto's Islamic thought in the Philippines, even if the knowledge of Islamic education and theology is not sufficient for the Muslim students. Since Arabic grammar is important in understanding Islamic theology, the Islamic university should strengthen the curriculum so that the Muslim students can obtain proper Islamic education (Alonto 1984; Alonto 1973).

Alonto was able to contribute to the Muslims' struggle towards Islamic educational development and technology transfer, Alonto confirmed that adequate Islamic education and appropriate technology should be provided to the Filipino Muslims and if the Muslims are educated, they could propose programs to solve the high unemployment rate and economic crisis in the Philippine government. However, the pace of incorporating technology in the various units and faculties in JPI is very slow (Alonto 1973).

Alonto established courses to teach Muslim students the religion of Islām using two languages: English and Arabic and he wanted Muslims to learn Arabic and English to be able to defend their Islamic religion. Despite Alonto's critical stance on colonization, he knew that the language of the colonizers, English, is also a potent instrument to spread Islamic religion to non-Arabic speaking countries (Alonto 1984; Alonto 1985). This Islamic university has a major role to spread Alonto's Islamic thought in the Philippines especially in Mindanao Islands. All this Islamic university is required to do is to revise their curricula in Arabic language and Islamic studies (Alonto 1971 & Alonto 1973), and specifically in Islamic theology to provide Muslim students quality knowledge so that they could properly understand the teaching of the Holy Qurān and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him and strengthen their Islamic faith (Alonto 1984; Macaraya 1988 & Manzoor 2005).

The Main Characteristics of Alonto's Islamic Thought (Ait)

Alonto's Islamic Thought (AIT) was accepted by Muslims in the Philippines because it was grounded in the Holy Qur \bar{a} n and the teachings of Prophet Mohammad peace be upon him. It must be recalled that Alonto was born during the American occupation. His entire educational background was greatly influenced by western scholars, and he read the Qur \bar{a} n in English translation (Macaraya 1988 & Manzoor 2005). The need to learn Arabic came only in the mid-1950s when he realized that to educate the Muslim Filipinos; he must read the Holy Qur \bar{a} n in Arabic text. Aside from classical scholars (western and Islamic), Alonto's Islamic Thought (AIT) was a product of his active involvement in advocating Islamic religion as a tool to solve the Mindanao crisis and to educate the Muslim Filipinos (Alonto 2009).

Alonto's Islamic Thought (AIT) characteristics is integrating the views of classical Muslim scholars in order to strengthen and modernize his understanding of Islamic religion (Said 1981). He found it necessary to recontextualize his Islamic social reform agenda to accommodate the diverse composition of inhabitants in Mindanao Island (Alonto 1986). As a result, he initiated and established several Islamic institutions in the Philippines such as the Islamic Center in Manila, Philippines. The center was very strategic because it was also the place where Muslim local and international scholars met and discussed their plans. Alonto also revived the Muslim Association of the Philippines (MAP) (Macaraya 1988 & Manzoor 2005). Alonto was also strongly influenced by education as a vehicle to change people and society. Because of this, he collaborated with several \square Ulam \bar{a} and Muslim intellectuals around the world to establish the Islamic University in the Philippines in Marawi City (Alonto 1984). He was also the co-founder of *R \bar{a} bitah al- \square Alam al-Isl \bar{a} miyah*, and continued as a constituent member committee of this organization (Said 1981). Another main characteristic of Alonto's Islamic Thought was the need to share the Holy Qur \bar{a} n and other writings on Islamic religion through translation. The Mindanao State University was another milestone in Alonto's Islamic Thought in the Philippines. The university was his message of Islamic unity, development, and peace to the MINSUPALA region and all over the Philippines (Macaraya 1988; Manzoor 2005).

Alonto was instrumental in reshaping Islamic values and ethics in the Philippines. His response was to build the first mosque in Manila because Muslims should have a house to worship the Oneness of God. Alonto realized that the Muslim Filipinos in Manila had shown signs of losing their grips with Islamic religion. First, they lost their *amānah*, or fear for one God; second, they lost their Islamic brotherhood and replaced it with Christian brotherhood; and third, they lost their Islamic cultural ethics. Because Muslims Filipinos are obliged to pray five times a day, the first mosque became the symbol of Islamic “rebirth” in Metro Manila, Philippines. Later on, Alonto established other Islamic institutions such as Rajah Sulaiman in Metro Manila in the area of Binangonana, which was predominantly Christians in composition. Moreover, when Alonto saw that the Filipino Muslims in the Philippines lost their *amānah*, piety, morality, peace and brotherhood, they were also disconnected from one God because they failed to perform their Islamic prayers and observe fasting during the month of *Rama...an*. Some were no longer paying Islamic charity (Alonto 1984; Said 1981; Macaraya 1988 & Manzoor 2005).

Alonto placed more emphasis on parliamentary struggle (Alonto 1996), and he showed his commitment to peaceful means by establishing several private Islamic and western public institutions in the Philippines (Said 1981). His membership in the Constitutional Convention of the Republic of the Philippines (1971-1972) and in the Constitutional Commission (1986) was proof of Alonto’s involvement in the government’s programs to amend the Philippine Constitution (Javier-Alonto 2009). The Autonomous Region in Muslim-Mindanao (ARMM) was enshrined in the 1987 Philippine Constitution, and Alonto was the one who proposed its legislation during the Constitutional Convention (Nolledo 1987). Although ARMM fell short of that ‘meaningful political autonomy’ envisaged by Alonto, Muslim politicians harvest the fruits of the autonomous region (Manzoor 2005). Alonto’s Islamic mission and vision was finally granted – autonomy of Muslim Mindanao in Article X, Sections 15 to 21 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution (Javier-Alonto 2009).

Lastly, Alonto made strong linkages between Filipino Muslim minorities with the majority Muslims in Islamic countries around the world. Most importantly, he was able to share his Islamic Thought to his fellow Muslims in prestigious universities.

These include al-Aazhar University in Cairo, the Islamic University of Medinah, the King Abdel Aziz University at Jeddah, the University at Riyā... and Makkah al-Mukarramah, the University of Kuwait, the University of Omdurman, the University of Indonesia, the University of Malaysia, the University of Qatar and etc (Macaray 1988 & Manzoor 205). Today's generation of Muslim Filipinos is grateful for Alonto's contributions to Islamic education in Mindanao Island. The overseas donors who pledged financial support continued sending their assistance to Filipino Muslims. This is Alonto's greatest achievement because of its long-term impact (Alonto 1971; Alonto 1984 & Marohomsalic 2001).

Analysis and Findings

Based on my analyzing, finding and evaluation showed that Alonto reshaped Islām based on the objective conditions during his time from the Holy Qur'ān. Alonto is the one who started and established Islamic seminars in Marawi City and all over the Philippines, he set-up Islamic Center in Manila, organized Ansār al-Islām, and finally, Alonto establish Islamic University of the Philippines, Alonto is the grand master of developing the Islamic thought and re-Islamize the Philippine Islands. All the Muslim intellectuals in the Philippines agreed, confirmed, supported, and clarified the concepts of his Islamic Thought is from the Holy Qurā'n and Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him. Alonto is no doubt successful in sharing all that he knows about Islām and his ideas on developing and spreading the Islamic thought in the Philippines widespread through his institutions such as Mindanao State University, Islamic University of the Philippines, and Islamic Centers in the Philippines.

Conclusion

The contributions of Alonto's Islamic Thought (AIT) have benefited the Filipino Muslims in Mindanao in many ways since his time until now. As a member of the Philippine Senate, Alonto authored bills and acts on education, electoral representation, and national integration. He also proposed the creation of regional autonomy in Mindanao during the Constitutional Convention in 1986. To address the Mindanao problem which was partly orchestrated by the Philippine Armed Forces and Ferdinand E. Marcos. Through this membership of the Philippine Senate, Alonto raised the level of his involvement by collaborating with international Islamic universities, institutions, and centers.

Alonto's approach to develop and spread Islamic thought is primary a combination of his western educational background, the Holy Qur'ān, and the teachings of Prophet Mohammad peace be upon him.

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