

# **Islamic Manuscripts of Southern Philippines: A Research Note with Descriptions of Three Manuscripts**

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## **I. Islamic Intellectuals and Manuscripts of Southern Philippines of the late 18th to 19th Century: An Overview**

**By KAWASHIMA Midori**

This paper presents some of the results of our research on Islamic manuscripts of southern Philippines, and aims to contribute towards laying a foundation on which this potential study could be developed. We use the term “Islamic manuscripts of southern Philippines” to include the following three types of manuscripts: (1) Manuscripts that were written, translated, or commented upon in Mindanao and Sulu by persons coming from those areas. (2) Manuscripts that were written, translated, or commented upon outside of Mindanao and Sulu by persons hailing from those areas. (3) Manuscripts that were written, translated, or commented upon in Mindanao and Sulu by persons who came from outside southern Philippines. It first presents findings on Islamic intellectuals and manuscripts of southern Philippines belonging to the period spanning the 18th to 19th century, and discusses the languages used in them. In the second part it describes three manuscripts of Mindanao that are found in collections in the USA and Indonesia.

### **1. The study of the Islamic manuscripts of Southern Philippines**

The southern part of the Philippines, which consists of the Sulu and Mindanao islands and their adjacent areas, maintained close contact with other parts of maritime Southeast Asia by way of visits by people, traffic in various goods, and circulation of information and ideas. It is within this context that the teaching of Islam was transmitted to the Sulu and Mindanao areas, and took root in their societies.<sup>2</sup> The development of Islamic thought and movements in the Sulu and Mindanao areas, will also be more fully understood when the phenomena are studied with reference to their relationship to those in other parts of maritime Southeast Asia.

One of the obstacles that stand in the way of such studies, is the dearth of concrete material upon which such studies should be founded. In fact, there exist a considerable number of

Islamic manuscripts written, copied, or used by Islamic intellectuals of southern Philippines, either in private collections of southern Philippines, or in libraries and archives, both within and outside the country. However, they have neither received adequate attention, nor have they been utilized in works concerning Islam and Muslims in the Philippines.

One of the reasons for such a neglect of these manuscripts lies in the fact that many such materials were seized by the American military personnel during their operations in Mindanao and Sulu in the early 20th century, and taken away from where they used to belong. Some of them were later donated to museums and libraries in the U.S., but they were left without adequate academic attention being paid to them. No serious effort was made to systematically list such materials in collections outside the Philippines, until recently.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, because of the prolonged armed conflict in southern Philippines from the late 1960s to the present, many of these materials have been destroyed, lost or abandoned in the turmoil. There exist some materials that survived such crisis, but most of them are privately owned and rarely shown to those outside the family, since they have been conserved as family heirlooms. Besides, since Muslims are a minority in the overwhelmingly Christian-dominated country, academics and policy makers based in Manila have largely ignored the value of these Islamic manuscripts. In other words, a lack of interest and knowledge has resulted in the generally stagnant conditions surrounding the study of Islamic manuscripts in southern Philippines.

Among the few works dealing with the Islamic manuscripts, we find the pioneering study of Islam in the Philippines by Najeeb Saleeby, a Christian Arab who served as a surgeon in the U.S. army during the Filipino-American War, and later as a colonial administrator in the Philippines.<sup>4</sup> Others include a series of works led by a Filipino historian, namely Samuel Tan.<sup>5</sup> Several Philippine Muslim scholars also directed their attention to Islamic manuscripts.<sup>6</sup> In recent years, several works by Filipino and foreign scholars on the subject have been published.<sup>7</sup> Thus, the study of Islamic manuscripts of southern Philippines is beginning to attract the attention of academics both within and outside the Philippines, and this is expected to throw new light both on Islam in the Philippines, as well as its connection with the rest of Southeast Asia.

## **2. Predominance of Malay manuscripts in the period spanning the late 18th to the early 20th century**

Spanish colonial administrators and Catholic priests mention in their records Arab and Malay Muslims who came to Mindanao and Sulu from Johor, Brunei, Ternate and other places to preach and teach Islam [Majul 1973: 51-78]. Sultan Kudarat, who reigned in the Maguindanao Sultanate from 1616-1671, is known to have been an Islamic intellectual, and he engaged in religious debates with a Spanish Jesuit priest [Majul 1973: 174]. The 19th Sultan of Sulu, namely Azim ud-Din I, who reigned twice in the mid-18th century is reported to have studied Islam in Java, and thus obtained proficiency in Arabic and Malay.<sup>8</sup>

There are also oral traditions concerning those who travelled to Mecca, studied there and brought home new knowledge on Islam. One such figure is Sayyidna<sup>9</sup> from the village of Binidayan of the Lanao area (the present municipality of Binidayan in the Lanao del Sur province), who is said to be one of the earliest *haji* from Lanao who stayed in Mecca for a

long time.

According to the oral tradition handed down to his descendents, Sayyidna was born in the village of Magonaya in Binidayan, probably in the latter half of the 18th century. When he was twelve years old his mother told him to fulfill his duty of going on *haji* and studying Islam. Sayyidna obeyed his mother, and left his hometown and headed for Malabang by land. He then sailed to Cotabato, later to Zamboanga, and further on to Tawi Tawi, and he further proceeded to the Balabac and Labuan Islands. He intended to go to Tampasok, to an Iranon-Manarao community in the northeastern coast of Borneo island, (currently in the state of Sabah of Malaysia). However his ship was wrecked by a storm, and he was swept away to a place called Lingga. People in Lingga took care of him and he recovered. With the help of the Sultan of Lingga he proceeded to Johor and then to Palembang, and later he proceeded to Jidda and then to Mecca, where he stayed for seven years studying Islam. He returned home via Palembang and Lingga,<sup>10</sup> where he married the daughter of the Sultan of Lingga. With the Princess of Lingga and her entourage, Sayyidna arrived in his hometown in Mindanao.

Upon returning home, he established a government system called *tartib ago igma*, based on Islamic laws and agreement among the people. Since he is considered to be one of the first to perform *haji* and return to the Lanao area in Mindanao, he is to this day known as Haji sa Binidayan (*haji* of Binidayan). His tomb stands in his hometown of Binidayan, and the people in Lanao remember him as a famous *wali* (Sufi saint).

What is striking here is that despite the fact that Sayyidna is such an important figure in the history of Islam in Lanao, very little has been written about him in the academic works dealing with Muslims and Islam in the Philippines.<sup>11</sup> Although he is well-known in the oral tradition among the Maranao people, he is unknown to scholars either within or outside the Philippines.

One wonders what type of Islamic knowledge he brought back to his hometown in Mindanao from Mecca, Palembang, and the other places he visited, and here the manuscripts would serve as important source material. There are a couple of manuscripts he is said to have written.

The first is the Qur'an, which he is said to have copied while he sojourned at Palembang on his way back home from Mecca. The history and the characteristics of this Qur'an manuscript have been jointly documented by myself and Annabel Gallop [Kawashima and Gallop 2011]. This Qur'an manuscript which was locally known as *Maradika* (freedom) was inherited by his descendants, but was confiscated by the U.S. Expeditionary Forces in 1902 during the battle of Bayang, in which the Maranao people in Bayang resisted the invading U.S. forces. It found its way to the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, but was returned to the National Museum of the Philippines in 1980. The manuscript was then brought to the presidential Museum of Malacañang Palace on the request of the then First Lady, Mrs. Imelda Marcos, and it was reported as missing since the "People Power Revolution" of February 1986. However, in actual fact, it had been preserved intact at the Malacañang Palace Museum, and subsequently was successfully identified. Although the text of the Qur'an itself is identical to that in other copies of the scripture, we can still further our understanding of the intellectual world and the aesthetic sense of the Islamic intellectuals of early 19th century Mindanao, by analyzing the style of writing, illuminations, paper, marginal writings and other such features.

Another manuscript that is said to have been either copied or written by Sayyidna is a book on Sufism, called *Ahl al-sunnah wal-jama'ah*. This manuscript is said to have been written in Palembang, and it has been inherited by a descendent of his.<sup>12</sup>

We were also able to survey and identify another manuscript that was written by an Islamic intellectual from Mindanao in the manuscript collection of the National Library of Indonesia in Jakarta.<sup>14</sup> This manuscript, ML361, is entitled *Kifāyat al-mubādī 'alā 'aqīdat*

*al-mubtadī'*, and it was written by Abd al-Majid al-Mindanawi.<sup>15</sup> The writing of this manuscript was completed in Aceh, during the reign of Sultan Mahmud Shah ibn Sultan Johan Shah, which corresponds to the period from 1760 to 1781. According to Teuku Iskandar, Abd al-Majid al-Mindanawi stayed for some time in Aceh on his way to Mecca, and wrote a Malay treatise on Ash'arite theology [Iskandar 1996: 434, 596]. This manuscript is described in the following section.

Furthermore, Saleeby's pioneering study on Islamic manuscripts of Sulu and Mindanao points out the predominance of the Malay language used in these manuscripts, which he found in the early 20th century. One of the manuscripts described by him is a code of law called Luwaran, which had widely been used in the Maguindanao area at the time Saleeby conducted the survey. The main text of Luwaran is written in the Maguindanao language, but its introductory part is written in Malay, and the marginal writing is in Arabic.

Luwaran is based on the translation of several *kitab*s concerning *fiqh*, but its provisions have been modified so as to suit the conditions prevailing in the area. The *kitab*s cited in Luwaran include *Mir'āt al-ṭullāb*, written by Abd al-Ra'uf ibn 'Ali al-Jawi al-Fansuri (1615-1693), popularly known as Abd al-Ra'uf Singkel, or Syiah Kuala, who hailed from Aceh.<sup>17</sup> This also indicates a link between Mindanao and the other parts of maritime Southeast Asia.

It is also noteworthy that the same introductory remarks include the following expression:<sup>18</sup>

Adapun kemudian dari itu<sup>19</sup>, segala hukum diambil daripada kitab *Minhāj*<sup>20</sup> dan *Fath al-qarīb*<sup>21</sup> dan *Taqrīb al-intifā'*<sup>22</sup> dan *Mir'āt al-ṭullāb*, dipindahkan bahasa Jawi daripada Mindanawi *dār al-salām*.<sup>23</sup> (Then, all the laws are taken from the *kitab*s entitled *Minhāj* and *Fath al-qarīb* and *Taqrīb al-intifā'* and *Mir'āt al-ṭullāb*, [which were] translated into the language of Jawi from Mindanao, the land of peace.)

Jawi is the generic term, which Arabs used to refer to a Muslim who came from Southeast Asia. Although the identity of the author of this manuscript is not known, it is clear that the Muslims of Mindanao were regarded as a component of Jawi, and that the Maguindanao language was considered a sub-group of the language of Jawi.<sup>24</sup>

We also conducted a survey of two Islamic manuscripts from Mindanao in the Ayer Collection, in the Newberry Library in Chicago. The Malay language is also predominant in both manuscripts, with some Arabic and Maranao.<sup>25</sup> These two manuscripts are also described in the following section.

These manuscripts are a testimony to the fact that Islamic knowledge was transmitted to Mindanao and Sulu from Malay-speaking areas by way of Islamic intellectuals who travelled across the sea, and the Malay manuscripts that they either wrote or obtained and brought home with them. By studying the manuscripts of southern Philippines and placing them in the Southeast Asian Islamic milieu, we can reconstruct the intellectual network connecting southern Philippines and the rest of maritime Southeast Asia, and even further beyond to regions such as the Middle East.

## II. Description of Three Islamic Manuscripts from Mindanao

By Oman FATHURAHMAN and KAWASHIMA Midori

### 1. The Manuscript Collection of the National Library of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia: ML 361<sup>27</sup> (Photos 1-3)

**Title:** The title of the manuscript is *Kifāyat al-mubādī ‘alā ‘aqīdat al-mubtadī* which was translated into Malay by the author as *Memadai permulaannya atas iktikad orang yang pada berlajar* (the adequacy of principles on theology doctrines for beginners). It is found on page 5.

**Author:** ‘Abd al-Majīd al-Mindanāwī. It is mentioned on page 3.<sup>28</sup> Lines 11-12 on page 3 read as follows: *‘Abd al-Majīd al-Mindanāwī balad al-Shāfi‘ī madhhaban*. It was translated into Malay by the author as *‘Abd al-Majid Mindanawi pada nama negerinya, Shafi’i pada mazhabnya* (‘Abd al-Majid Mindanawi from the country of Mindanao, [who has embraced] Shafi’i school of jurisprudence).

**Language:** Predominantly Malay with some Arabic.

**Script:** Arabic.

#### Physical Description:

**Paper:** European paper of light brown color is used. The condition of the paper is not too good. Some pages were damaged by insect bites. Some pages were restored by lamination by the National Library of Indonesia.

**Watermark:** The watermark is PRO PATRIA. This watermark is found on many pages of the manuscript, but the one on page 24 is the clearest. It is accompanied by a countermark, presumably IVDL. This countermark refers to one of the largest Dutch paper manufacturers, namely Van der Ley, who began giving his name in full as a countermark in the early 18th century [Heawood 1981: 36].

**Cover:** The outer cover, which is made of thick paper was later added to the original manuscript as a renovation by the Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen (Royal Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences). There is no inner cover.

**Size:** Length 19.0cms, Width 15.9cms. This manuscript is described in [Ronkel 1909: 416] as 21cms long and 16cms wide. It appears as though the top and bottom edges of the original manuscript were cut off when it was renovated and bound with a new cover. As a result, some of the words written in the bottom margin are missing.

**Ink:** The Arabic text is rubricated in red ink, while the Malay text is written in black ink.

**Lines of text per page:** 13 lines.

**Number of pages:** The total number of pages is 112. The first and last pages are blank. The pages on which texts are written number 110. The page numbers are written for every other page for most of the manuscript except for the last few pages, each page of which are numbered by pencil. It appears as though a librarian later added these numbers.

**Illuminations:** None.

**Illustrations:** None.

**Colophon:** In lines 4-9 on page 97, we find the following writing:

*Qad faraghat hādhihi al-risālah fī balad al-Ashī ba‘da al-ṣalāt al-ṣubḥ yawm al-jum‘ah sittah yawman min shahr rajab al-mubārakah fī al-ta’rīkh al-Sulṭān al-a‘zam wa-al-ikrām Mawlānā al-Sulṭān al-Maḥmūd Shāh ibn al-Sulṭān Jūhan Shāh<sup>29</sup>*

It means “this work was completed in Aceh, after *subuh* prayer on Friday, 6th of Rajab, during the reign of Sultan Mahmud Shah ibn Sultan Johan Shah.” As Sultan Mahmud Shah reigned from 1760-1781, the manuscript is considered as having been written during this period. The colophon is written only in Arabic, and there is no Malay translation.

**Contents:** The text deals with an explanation of the basic doctrines of *Ash‘ariyah* or *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama‘ah* taught by Abu al-Hasan ‘Ali ibn Isma‘il al-Ash‘ari (d. 936), a Muslim Arab theologian and the founder of the Ash‘ari school of early Islamic philosophy. The discussion begins with a statement that the first things that should be known by a *mukallaf* (Muslim who is pubescent) are the Attributes of God and his Messengers. The author then describes in detail the conception of God and nature of His Attributes according to the Ash‘arites theology. In the introduction to this text, the author explains that he wrote this work owing to a request from some of his students and colleagues to write a treatise on Ash‘arite theology. The text is complete.

At the end of the main text, a brief additional note is found, which contains *du‘ā’* (invocation) to be said after *ṣalāt* (prayer). The first sentence of this additional note is: “*Ini doa abis sembahyang*”: (this is *du‘ā’* after *ṣalāt*, followed by the Arabic text of *du‘ā’*). Many grammatical errors are found in the Arabic of the additional note, while such errors are few in the Arabic of the main text. The style of handwriting in the additional note appears to be different from that in the main text. These facts suggest that a person other than the author of the main text wrote the additional note.

The additional note includes a text that recommends every female Muslim to read after *ṣalāt* what the author calls “*Shahādat Fāṭimah*” (*Shahādat* (testimony) to Fatimah). It reads:

*Ashhadu an lā ilāha illā Allāh, wa-ashhadu anna Fāṭimah al-Zahrā ibn Muḥammad Nūr Allāh Ḥabīb Allāh* (I testify that there is no god but God, and I testify that Fatimah al-Zahra, daughter of Muhammad, is God’s Light and Beloved).

## 2. The Ayer Collection of the Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois, USA.<sup>30</sup>

### 1-1. VAULT Ayer MS 1979- 1 (Photo 4)

**Language:** Arabic, with elements in Malay and Maranao.

**Script:** Arabic.

**Physical Description:**

**Paper:** Cream-colored European paper is used. The watermarks include the words of Al Masso (p.1) and FIUME (p.21).

**Cover:** Brown leather cover.

**Binding:** Bound, but the spine is partly broken.

**Size:** Length: 22.0cm, Width: 16.0cm.

**Ink:** The text is written mostly in black ink. Purple ink is used in the text in pp.24-26.

**Lines per page:** 9 lines.

**Number of pages:** 48. (Pages 1-3 and 28-47 are blank)

**Illuminations:** None.

**Illustrations:** None.

**Contents:** A collection of various prayers. It includes a prayer after *adhān* (a call for prayer), the words of *iqāmah* (a call to immediately offer worship), the words of *nīyat* (the intention to pray), readings of the *iftitāḥ* (*du‘ā’* (invocation) which is offered at the beginning of *ṣalāt* (prayer)), and all other *du‘ā’* that should be read during and after *ṣalāt*, including the reading of *Āyat al-Kursī* (Qur’an 2:255). The text on page 22 also contains various prayers, which include the expressing of one’s intention to perform *janāzah* (burial) prayer, and the special prayers for the dead.

**1-2. VAULT Ayer MS 1979-2 (Photo 5)**

**Language:** Malay. The writing on the margin of page 3 is in Arabic.

**Script:** Arabic.

**Physical Description:**

**Paper:** Cream-colored paper is used. There are no watermarks.

**Cover:** It has no covers.

**Binding:** Bound.

**Size:** Length: 15.4cms, Width 11.0cms.

**Ink:** The text is in black ink.

**Lines per page:** 9 lines (pp. 1-26), 11 lines (pp. 27-28)

**Number of pages:** 28

**Illuminations:** None.

**Illustrations:** None.

**Frames:** Some pages are framed, namely (pp. 1-12, 15-17). The others are not framed.

**Contents:** It contains two different kinds of texts. The first three pages (pp.1-3) contain prayers. The first sentence on page 1 reads: *Selesailah sembayang dan tasbih dan istigfar dan salat itu, maka baca pula munajat syaykh itu tujuh puluh kali.* (The prayer and the reading of *tasbīḥ* (reciting the phrase “*Subḥāna Allāh*”) and *istighfār* (begging for mercy) are over. Please read the prayer for *shaykh* (teacher) seventy times). On page 3 is written, “*Ini doa*

*selamat*” (This is a prayer to keep one safe). This manuscript seems to be a continuation of another manuscript of prayers.

The succeeding part (pp.4-23) deals with a kind of prophecy, similar to *primbon* in the Javanese tradition. The first line of page 4 states, “*Bismillāh al-rahmān al-rahīm, bab peri pada menyatakan bulan tiga puluh hari, diketahui baiknya dan jahatnya*” (In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. This chapter deals with thirty days of the month, each of which is known to be a good day [to do something] and a bad day [to do something]). The rest of the text explains in detail the fortunes of each day for specific activities.

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<sup>2</sup> Islam was gradually introduced into the societies in the Sulu and Mindanao areas from the late 13th to 17th century, as a part of the Islamization process in Southeast Asia. See [Majul 1973] for details.

<sup>3</sup> See [Gallop 2011] for the as yet most comprehensive list of manuscripts in the U.S. collections. For those in the Philippine and European collections, see [Jimenez 2010].

<sup>4</sup> See [Saleeby 1905; 1908]. Saleeby was first sent to Mindanao as a surgeon. He then served an officer in the Ethnological Survey of the Philippines and later as the Superintendent of Schools in the Moro Province, until he retired from public service in 1906 to work as a medical director in a hospital in Manila.

<sup>5</sup> See [Tan 1996a; 1996b; 2005] [Tan and Hairulla 2002; 2007a; 2007b]

<sup>6</sup> For examples of such studies, see [Madale 2001] [Sakili 2003].

<sup>7</sup> See [Kawashima 2002; 2003; 2009] [Gallop 2008a; 2008b; 2011] [Jimenez 2010] [Kawashima and Gallop 2011]. For printed Islamic books in the Philippines, see [Kawashima et al. 2010] [Riwarung et al. 2011].

<sup>8</sup> He first reigned from 1735 to 1748, and later from 1764 to 1774. See [Majul 1973: 197-205].

<sup>9</sup> Sayyidnā ibn Shafā at Allāh. It is the name he had when he was a young boy. After he performed *haji*, his name became Muhammad Sayyid. Sayyidnā is often written as Sayyidna, Saiidna, or Saidna, by Philippine Muslims. (Interview with Alim Usman Imam, who is a descendent of Sayyidna, on February 24, 2001, at Tokyo). The name Sayyidna is derived from the Arabic word Sayyidunā, which means “our Lord”.

<sup>10</sup> The most famous place in Southeast Asia, which has the name of Lingga, is the island of Lingga, which is situated in the Riau archipelago, and was the seat of the sultans of Johor and Riau from the 18th to the early 20th century. Other places called Lingga include a place in the north-eastern part of Borneo island, and the present Sarawak state



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of Malaysia. The oral tradition does not specifically mention the location of Lingga.

<sup>11</sup> The story of Sayyidna was narrated by Alim Usman Imam Sheik Al-Aman in his lecture at Sophia University in 2002 (See [Al-Aman 2004]). It is also mentioned in [Kawashima and Gallop 2011].

<sup>12</sup> Namely, Alim Usman Imam.

<sup>14</sup> We were guided by the information provided by Dr. Nico Kaptein of Leiden University in locating this manuscript.

<sup>15</sup> ‘Abd al-Majīd al-Mindānāwī. This manuscript is mentioned in [Behrend 1988: 289] and [Iskandar 1996: 434, 596]

<sup>17</sup> The full title is *Mir’at al-ṭullāb fī tashīl ma’rifat aḥkām al-shar’īyah li al-malik al-wahhāb*. The details of the *kitab*s cited in Luwaran are based on the comments of Fathurahman.

<sup>18</sup> This sentence was transliterated and translated by Fathurahman.

<sup>19</sup> “Adapun kemudian dari itu” is a Malay expression which corresponds to the Arabic phrase “amma baḍu”, which means “after that”. (by Fathurahman)

<sup>20</sup> The full title is *Minhāj al-ṭālibīn*. This is a classical manual on Islamic law based on Shāfi’ī *fiqh*, which was written by Muḥy al-Dīn Abī Zakarīyā’ Yaḥyá ibn Sharaf al-Nawawī (1232-1277). (by Fathurahman)

<sup>21</sup> The full title is *Faṭḥ al-qarīb al-mujīb fī sharḥ al-taqrīb*. Its author is Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Qāsīm al-Shāfi’ī. (by Fathurahman)

<sup>22</sup> The full title is *Taqrīb fī ghāyat al-ikhtisār*. It is written by al-Qādhi Abū Shujā’ al-Shāfi’ī. This work serves as the basic text of *Faṭḥ al-qarīb*. (by Fathurahman).

<sup>23</sup> In the text, it is written as “al-shalam”.

<sup>24</sup> Saleeby translates this phrase as “the Java (Malay) dialect of Mindanao, the land of peace”. [Saleeby 1976: plate I, after p.64]

<sup>25</sup> I was helped by [Gallop 2011] in locating these manuscripts. The text was read by Fathurahman. I have not found any documents that explain when, how and why the two manuscripts found their way to the Newberry Library, but as most of the Islamic manuscripts in the US collections were confiscated during the military operations and brought to the US by American officers, these two manuscripts are most likely to have been brought to the library in the same manner.

<sup>27</sup> The content was described by Fathurahman, and the remaining parts were described jointly by Fathurahman and Kawashima.

<sup>28</sup> See Photo 2, the right page, line 11.

<sup>29</sup> See Photo 3, the right page, lines 4-8.

<sup>30</sup> For both manuscripts in the Newberry Library, the contents were described by Fathurahman, based on photographs taken by Kawashima. The remaining parts were described by Kawashima who conducted a survey in the Newberry Library in August 2011.