

When the Chinese took possession of the northern parts of Borneo, under the Emperor Songtiping, about the year 1375, the daughter of that prince was married to a celebrated Arabian chief named Sherif Alli, who visited the shores of Borneo in quest of commerce. The descendants of this marriage extended their conquests not only over the Sooloo Archipelago, but over the whole of the Philippines, and rendered the former tributary to Borneo. In three reigns after this event, the sultan of Borneo proper married the daughter of a Sooloo chief, and from this union came Mirhome Bongsu, who succeeding to the throne while yet a minor, his uncle acted as regent. Sooloo now wished to throw off the yoke of Borneo, and through the intrigues of the regent succeeded in doing so, as well as in retaining possession of the eastern side of Borneo, from Maludu Bay on the north, to Tulusyan on the south, which has ever since been a part of the Sooloo territory.

This event took place before Islamism became the prevailing religion; but which form of idolatry, the Sooloos pretend, is not now known. It is, however, believed the people on the coasts were Budhists, while those of the interior were Pagans.

The first sultan of Sooloo was Kamaludin, and during his reign one Sayed Alli, a merchant, arrived at Sooloo from Mecca. He was a sherif, and soon converted one-half of the islanders to his own faith. He was elected sultan on the death of Kamaludin, and reigned seven years, in the course of which he became celebrated throughout the archipelago. Dying at Sooloo, a tomb was erected to him there, and the island came to be looked upon by the faithful as the Mecca of the East, and continued to be resorted to as a pilgrimage until the arrival of the Spaniards.

Sayed Alli left a son called Batua, who succeeded him. The latter had two sons, named Sabudin and Nasarudin, who, on the death of their father, made war upon each other. Nasarudin, the youngest, being defeated, sought refuge on Tawi Tawi, where he established himself, and built a fort for his protection. The difficulties were finally compromised, and they agreed to reign together over Sooloo. Nasarudin had two sons, called Amir and Bantilan, of whom the former was named as successor to the two brothers, and on their deaths ascended the throne. During his reign another sherif arrived from Mecca, who succeeded in converting the remainder of the population to Islamism. Bantilan and his brother Amir finally quarrelled, and the latter was driven from Sooloo to seek refuge in the island of Basillan, where he became sultan.

On the arrival of the Spaniards in 1566, a kind of desultory war was waged by them upon the various islands, in the hope of conquer-