

Romancing the Ticao Stones: Preliminary Transcription, Decipherment, Translation, and Some Notes

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Introduction

The catchy title of my paper “Romancing the Ticao Stones,” is not mine. It was supplied by Prof. Ricky Nolasco and it was already there when I saw the conference program for the first time in an Internet announcement. At any rate, it suggests the task assigned for my paper and I saw no need to change or alter it.

However, the meaning of the root word “romance” in the title is different from the popular idea of what it is, which is related to excitement, love and medieval chivalry (*Webster’s* ... 1988). It has a rarely used definition which I invoke here. I will present in transcribed Roman letters the *baybayin* characters written on two now-famous stones found on Ticao Island, Masbate, decipher the words in them, and translate these into plain language that many or all of us can understand. I will also provide some notes on the possible cultural context of these two stones based on what had been written on them.

My findings should be treated as preliminary and subject to further discussions during this conference, more detailed physical investigation of the writing on the artifacts, and later consultations with other project team members. The four of us who were assigned to decipher the *baybayin* characters on the stones were specifically requested to work independently of each other, not to compare notes, and to present our respective findings to the public together in one setting, which happens to be this conference. It is therefore expected that we would present results that could complement in many aspects but may contradict in others. We hope though to eventually integrate our findings in the days or weeks ahead.

Method Used

In transcribing the *baybayin* characters on the Ticao Stones to syllables in Roman letters, I used two basic references as guides. One is a table (see Fig. 1) with seventeenth-century Tagalog scripts summarized by William Henry Scott (Scott 1984, 60), and the other is also a table (see Fig. 2) with ancient Samareño syllabic writing summarized by Fr. Cantius J. Kobak, OFM, which includes native alphabets recorded by Fr. Francisco

Alcina, SJ, in 1668, Fr. Domingo Ezguerra, SJ, in 1747, and Fr. Juan F. Delgado, SJ, in 1751, respectively (Borrinaga 2009a, 223).

Most of the *baybayin* characters on the stones were transcribed into Roman letters guided by Scott's summary table alone, but a few other key characters were transcribed or triangulated with the help Fr. Kobak's summary table.

The transcription was essentially a trial-and-error process, but I did not wait until all *baybayin* characters had been transcribed before I proceeded to the next step. From a previous experience in deciphering the Calatagan pot inscriptions (Borrinaga 2009b, A16), I found out that the transcription of about three-fourths (75 percent) of the *baybayin* characters was sufficient to start the next process of deciphering key words from a series of single syllables in Roman letters. Such single-syllable Bisayan words as *LA* (only, alone) and *NA* (already; or as past/present tense-prefix of a verb) were the easiest to spot. These adverbs (*la* and *na*) usually follow a verb and serve as markers for locating the verb, which could be deciphered from the preceding two or three syllables.

Since the basic word order of sentences or statements in non-Tagalog languages usually starts with a verb or with a single syllable prefix (*NA* or *MA*) to indicate the verb's tense (as past/present or future, respectively), the decipherment process becomes facilitated by the early identification of the marker adverbs and verbs. The deciphered verbs themselves could give hints about the nouns or pronouns to be deciphered from the other single syllables along the series. With entire lines of verb-adverb-noun/pronoun combinations already deciphered from the single syllables in Roman letters, the solved bigger piece of puzzle could help in transcribing and deciphering the remaining one-fourth (25 percent) of the *baybayin* characters which are difficult or confusing to interpret.

This same set of steps was applied in transcribing and deciphering the basic texts from the Ticao Stones.

After deciphering the key verbs and nouns from the series of single syllables in Roman letters, the next step was to find their contemporary meanings in the old Bisayan dictionaries, because the deciphered words were either no longer commonly used at present, or their meanings have changed or altered through the centuries. For this I mainly consulted the *Vocabulario de la Lengua Bisaya* (1711) by Fr. Mateo Sanchez, SJ. The meanings of words not listed in this dictionary were checked in *Diccionario Bisaya-Español para las Provincias de Samar y Leyte* (Third Edition, 1914) by Fr. Antonio Sanchez de la Rosa, OFM, and Fr. Antonio Valeriano Alcazar, OFM. Aspects of Bisayan grammar were checked in *Waray-English Dictionary* by George Dewey Tramp, Jr. (1995). Other dictionaries consulted include those by de la Encarnacion (1885), de Lisboa (1865), and Wolff (1971).

When this process had been done, the English translation of the Bisayan texts deciphered from the *baybayin* characters was made.

A glossary of the Bisayan words for every set of texts was then supplied. And the notes at the end of each result provide the possible cultural context of the artifacts with their corresponding texts.

Results and Findings

A. Ticao Round Stone



Ticao Round Stone. (Photo by Dr. Francisco Datar.)

Transcription of the *Baybayin* Characters

Line 1: KA – HA – NGA – NA – NI
 Line 2: NA – PA – LA – U – DA – [NA]
 Line 3: NA – KA – TA – A – NA

Deciphered Bisayan Words

Kahangã na ni?
 Napala[w]udã [na]?
 Nakataa[n] na.

English Translation

Is this already the boundary (*kahang*)?
 Has [it] gone to deep sea (*lawud*)?
 This has been allowed (*nakataan*) to be set here already.

Glossary of Deciphered Bisayan Words

Kahang (ka.háng) – n., boundary in the planting fields (Sanchez 1711); v., to make or to leave a boundary (Sanchez de la Rosa and Valeriano 1914).

Lawud (la.wúd) – n., high sea, wide sea (Sanchez 1711); deep sea; off-shore waters.

Na – already; now (Tramp 1995, 278).

Naka- - prefix: can or could (Tramp 1995, 280); has been, has become.

Napa- - prefix: makes (Tramp 1995, 295); has tended to be.

Ni – contraction of *kini* or *ini* - this.

Taan – v., to permit, to allow (Sanchez 1711); to put or to place in the sea or river a fish trap, a [baited] fishhook (Sanchez de la Rosa and Valeriano 1914).

Note on the Possible Cultural Context of the Artifact

The Ticao Round Stone appears to have functioned as stone sinker at the end of a heavy-duty fishing net centuries ago, presumably the one called *panamaw*, which was used to catch large species of fish. Jesuit Fr. Francisco Alcina in his 1668 manuscripts (Ch. 16, Bk. 2, Part I) described that these nets were set in place in the sea; they were likewise used on land to catch wild hogs and other animals. At sea, they ordinarily caught *duyungs* (sea cows) and species of manta ray such as *saranga*, *punsuan*, *dahunan*, *bituunun*, and *banugun* (*Ibid.*).

This artifact could not have served as sinker for the ordinary gill net, called *pukut*, which was allowed to drift at sea in many instances and just required smaller stone sinkers to keep the bottom part of the net vertically under water.

The specific areas of the sea for setting the *panamaw* net that would have been anchored by the Ticao Round Stone (along with several other similar-sized but plain stone sinkers) seemed to have been pre-established by native rituals negotiated with the spirits of the sea (Arens 1971, 42-46). The *baybayin* characters written on the stone seemed like a prepared apology (to the literate spirits) in the event that the net had been unwittingly set outside the negotiated inshore-offshore boundary or had been dragged to outer boundaries by the heavy volume of catch.

Father Alcina had mentioned one such incident during a fishing trip he had joined. They had set the *panamaw* nets in the feeding ground of the *duyungs*, which clogged the nets and carried them off without the fishermen being able to do anything about them. The nets were lost and never seen again (Alcina 1668, Ch. 16, Bk. 2, Part I).

A stone sinker with the shape of the Ticao Round Stone was usually bound with a piece of rope in crosswise manner across the center. An almost-erased *baybayin* character at the end of the second line, which I theorize here as representing *NA*, might have been erased through wear-and-tear by the rope binding through time or from dragging at the sea bottom.

It is possible that the *baybayin* characters were written on the Ticao Round Stone long before the arrival of the Spaniards and before the friars had set the rules for the writing of end-consonants for native words (i.e., this would have to be supplied by the reader of the *baybayin*) (Marcilla 1895, Ch. 2). For this stone, it seemed the writer also used the vowel character (U in the second line) to signal to the reader to pick only the consonant in the next syllable (D only instead of DA). This alternative seemed to have escaped the friar chroniclers. There was also no *baybayin* character yet for the W sound. Thus it only appeared as *LAUD*. As for the word *KAHANG* (boundary) on the first line, it seemed more appropriate to write the full NGA character than to leave the NG consonant to the reader's guesswork.

B. Ticao Trapezoidal Stone – Face 1



Ticao Trapezoidal Stone – Face 1. (Photo by Dr. Francisco Datar)

Transcription of the *Baybayin* Characters

- Line 1: [NI] - A - NA - TA - MA - NGA - BA - TA - HA - LA - NA
(a)
- Line 2: DI - TA - A - NA - BA - I - HA - LA - I - HA - LA
- Line 3: HA - KA - SA - GA - NA - BA - HA - YA - NA
- Line 4: HA - TA - A - NA - NGA - I - HA - LA
- Line 5: NA - NGI - LA - U - TA - A - KA - NA
- Line 6: LA - HA - KA - LA - NA - MA
- Line 7: A - NGA [variant: A - NA - MA]

(a) – the *baybayin* represented seems to approximate the NGA character recorded by Father Alcina (see Fig. 2). The left line is different from that of the GA on Line 3. The other NGA characters on Lines 4, 5 and 7 approximate one summarized by Scott.

Deciphered Bisayan Words

[Ni]a na ta, manga bata. Hala na!
Ditaa[n] na ba? Ihala[d]! Ihala[d]!
Ha kasagana baha yana.
Hataa[n] na nga ihala[d].
Nangila[w]u[d], taaka na
La ha kala[g] na ma-
angga [variant: anama].

English Translation

Here we are already, children. Come on now!
Have you put *dita* on it? Offer it! Offer it!
By the noise of the river current, we have a flood today.
Allow it to be offered [then].
Those who went downstream (*nang-ilawud*), get lost (*taak*) now
From the soul that is
Tending to beg your confidence [or: starting to ...].

Glossary of Deciphered Bisayan Words

-an – *suffix*, having (noun); etc. (Tramp 1995, 14).

Anam (a.nám) – little by little (Sanchez 1711); the beginning of ..., *v.*, to begin (Sanchez de la Rosa and Valeriano 1914).

Anga (a.ngâ) – *n.*, caress; *v.*, to crave for caresses, love or affection (Tramp 1995, 16).

Angga (ang.gâ) – to beg with confidence, trust (Sanchez 1711). The word has evolved to *anga* (see above) in our time, although it is still found in such word as *pinalangga*, a cherished person, loved one, favorite (Tramp 1995, 358) and *palangga*, to be fond of, to love, to esteem (de la Encarnacion 1885).

Ba – *interj.*, be for sure! (Tramp 1995).

Baha (ba.hâ) – flood.

Bata (ba.tâ) – child; *mga bata*, children.

Dita (di.tâ) – a large tree, its root is medicinal for many things, such as snakebites, diarrheas, fevers, etc. The wood is eaten away readily, and for this reason it is called *ditâ* (Sanchez 1711). Milky pine or cheesewood, *Alstonia scholaris* Linn. (Tramp 1995, 138).

Ha – *part.* ... 3. always used before place names and others. 4. precedes pre-positive pronoun in goal construction that is a recipient of an active verb sentence, etc.; ... *prep.*, at, in, of, with, etc. (Tramp 1995, 167).

Hala (ha.lá) – *part.*, used with 1. exhortation, 2. making commands optional, 3. O.K. or alright go ahead, 4. saying goodbye, 5. ending a conversation, & 6. threatening (Tramp 1995, 171). Come on.

Halad – to offer (Sanchez 1711); *n.*, an offer, offering, a promise (Sanchez de la Rosa and Valeriano 1914).

Ihalad – to offer.

Ilawud (i.la.wúd) – downstream; the interior part of the river that flows into the sea (Sanchez 1711); the river's end or near the sea (Sanchez de la Rosa and Valeriano 1914).

Ka- - *prefix*, how (adjective)(a thing) is, etc. (Tramp 1995, 68).

Kalag (ka.lág) – soul (Sanchez 1711); a soul, a spirit (Sanchez de la Rosa and Valeriano 1914).

La (lâ) – only; alone (Sanchez 1711); *adv.*, alone; just; merely; no more; only;

nevertheless (Tramp 1995).

Ma- - *prefix*, (adjective)-ish (Tramp 1995, 242).

Manga – contracted as *mga*. Participle that precedes nouns to indicate plural form (Tramp 1995, 272).

Na – already; now (as a single word).

Nga – *conj.*, used as a connective linker between a noun and qualifier ..., *gen.*, according to, used as emphasis (word) *nga* (word) (Tramp 1995). *Na* is its acceptable variant, as in Line 6. It translates to “that is”.

Nia (Ni.a) – here we are; here I am (de la Encarnacion 1885).

Sagana (sa.gá.na) – noise or sound of floodwater; current of the river, the sea, the creek, etc. (de la Encarnacion 1885). The word *saganap*, to flood, is found in Sanchez de la Rosa and Valeriano (1914).

Ta – contraction of *kita* – we.

Taak – to walk into the mountains as if to get lost or to hide (Sanchez 1711).

Taan – to permit, to allow (Sanchez 1711).

Yana (ya.nâ) – today; at present.

Note on the Possible Cultural Context of the Writing on Face 1 of the Stone

Face 1 of the Ticao Trapezoidal Stone seemed to have originally functioned as a platform for ritual offerings in a native *simbahan* or place of worship. The *baybayin* characters on its contain an outline for a live ritual drama, perhaps complemented with expanded monologue presumably performed by a *babaylan* (native priestess or worship leader) and accompanied by patterned body movements or ritual dancing, both by the *babaylan* and the worshippers in attendance. The purpose was to avert material and human destruction from an impending flood.

Line 1 suggests a gathering of people who brought with them some unnamed item to offer to the spirits. The worship leader calls them “*Mga Bata* (Children)” and exhorts them to prepare themselves and their offering.

Line 2 suggests a requirement for the offering: putting *dita* on it. It is not mentioned in what form, but it can be inferred that the *dita*, a medicinal plant itself, would be burned to produce smoke during the worship, the native equivalent of the incense smoke in Christian rituals. Then the *babaylan* would exhort the worshippers twice to now present their offering.

Line 3 presents to the spirits the purpose of the ritual: the peculiar noise from the river or its current suggests that there would be a flood on that day, and that the ritual was their way of dealing with it.

Line 4 looks like an appeal for the ritual to be allowed and for the offering to be accepted by those in the spirit world.

Lines 5-7 provide a ritual warning for those community members who had traveled downstream, suggesting how to avoid death from the impending disaster due to the flood by depending on themselves and not their spiritual guardians. They would need to get lost or to hide from the *kalag* (soul) that would beg their confidence and trust during the disaster, but could bring them instead to the Other-World.

Line 7 suggests the practical difficulty of writing in *baybayin* characters the word *angga*, perhaps as early as the time when this alphabet was introduced to our forefathers in past centuries. The best result would read as *an-nga*. The text could not have been intended as *anam*, because this would leave an incomplete statement.

C. Ticao Trapezoidal Stone – Face 2



Ticao Trapezoidal Stone – Face 2. (Photo by Dr. Francisco Datar)

Transcription of the *Baybayin* Characters

Line 1: DA – I – MA – NGA – HA – BA – A – SA – SI – NGU – TA – NA – DA

Line 2: NA – KA – BA – HA – TA – U – KU – GA – NA – RA – DA – I – MA
(k)

Line 3: TA – HA – I – RA – KA – PA – DA – I – MA – GA
(k)

Line 4: TA – RU – HA – I – RA – KA – RA – HA
(k) (k) (k)

Line 5: HA – TA – NGA – A – NGA – I – MA – BA

Line 6: KA – I – PA – GA – BA – LA – HA – NA – I – BA

Line 7: GA – NA – NGA – A – NGA – I – NGA

Line 8: DA – TA – A – SA – NA – MA

Line 9: DA – GA – NA – NGU – TA

Line 10: NA

(k) – RA was the handwritten designation by Father Kobak (see Fig. 2) of the *baybayin* character designated as YA in Spanish friar accounts (Marcilla 1895). The reason is still unknown. But it must be noted here that a dialect of the Bisayan language in Surigao commonly pronounce RI in other dialects as YI. Thus, Su-ri-gao is acceptably pronounced as Su-yi-gao.

Deciphered Bisayan Words

Day, manga haba[w]a sa singu[t] ta [a]na da!
Nakabaha[g] ta[w]u[n] ko. Gana ra, Day. Ma-
taha. Ira ka pa, Day. Maga-
taro ha ira karaha.
Hata[g] nga anga imaba
kay pagaba la ha naiba.
Gana nga anga inga-
da ta. Asa na ma[n]
Daga nanguta -
na?

English Translation

Woman, we would be drained of perspiration with that, really!
I am in g-string, what a pity! Just a desire, Woman. Full of
respect. You are still theirs [her masters], Woman. Processing

beeswax in their steel pans.
 Gift of affection should be humbled
 because it just comes closer to many others.
 [The] affection that is desired we put
 in there. Where is the
 Lady who asked the ques-
 tion?

Glossary of Deciphered Words

Ana (a.nâ) – contraction of the (Cebuano Bisayan) *niana* - that.

Asa – *interrogative* (Cebuano), where.

Anga (a.ngâ) – *n.*, caress; *v.*, to crave for caresses, love or affection (Tramp 1995, 16).

Bahag – g-string.

Da (dâ) – particle of apology for doing something poorly, that one was pressed into doing (Wolff 1972, 186)

Daga – Cebuano word for single (unmarried) woman; lady. *Dalaga* in Tagalog.

Day – contraction of *Inday* or *Iday*. A common term used to call a woman, usually of the same age or younger than the speaker.

Gaba – to come closer. *Hungaw* is the same. It is said of the sun, when it comes near half-day (Sanchez 1711).

Gana (gá.na) – *n.*, (Spanish) appetite; complacency; desire; willingness; zest. *v.*, to induce; to influence; to persuade; to sway (Tramp 1995, 151).

Ha – *part.* ... 3. always used before place names and others. 4. precedes prepositive pronoun in goal construction that is a recipient of an active verb sentence, etc.; ... *prep.*, at, in, of, with, etc. (Tramp 1995, 167). *Sa* in Cebuano Bisayan.

Habwa (hab.wâ) – *haboa*, to take out something from somewhere for having much quantity (de la Encarnacion 1885).

Hatag (há.tag) – *n.*, dole, gift, grant (Tramp 1995, 178).

Iba – those of many (*los de mas*). *An iba sini*, the others of this (Sanchez 1711); *adj.*, other, the other ones; *adv.*, more (Sanchez de la Rosa and Valeriano 1914).

Intawon – *interj.*, pitiful! what a pity (Tramp 1995, 210). Contracted as *tawun* in Line 2.

Ira – their.

Karaha (ka.ra.hâ) – steel and those pots made of steel are called *caraja* (Sanchez 1711); n., *carajay* or species of a large frying-pan (Sanchez de la Rosa and Valeriano 1914).

Kay – because.

La (lâ) – only; alone (Sanchez 1711); *adv.*, alone; just; merely; no more; only; nevertheless (Tramp 1995). *Ra* in Cebuano-Bisayan.

Maba (ma.bâ) – to humble oneself (de Lisboa 1865). *Imaba*, to be humbled.

Mag- *conjugation*. the “executive” conjugation is 1. transitive, ... 3. includes the “becomes” but not the “bes” (Tramp 1995, 248).

Man – *part.*, used ... 3. upon noticing something (Tramp 1995, 258).

Manga – contracted as *mga*. Participle that precedes nouns to indicate plural form (Tramp 1995, 272).

Na – already; now (as a single word).

Naka- - *prefix*, ... 3. in (some kind of clothing) (Tramp 1995, 280).

Nangutana – the person asking the question (*pangutana*).

Nga – *conj.*, used as a connective linker between a noun and qualifier ..., *gen.*, according to, used as emphasis (word) *nga* (word) (Tramp 1995).

Ngada (nga.dâ) – to that place, indicating a place near the listener; *adv.*, there (Tramp 1995, 304). *Ingada* means to “to put there.”

Singut – perspiration, sweat (Wolff 1972).

Ta – contraction of *kita* – we. In Line 1, this was a polite collective first person substitution for the second person *ka* or *ikaw* (you) in such sympathetic circumstance.

Taha (ta.hâ) – v., to respect, to worship, to revere, to honor, to accept, to have respect (Sanchez de la Rosa and Valeriano 1914). *Kinatahaan*, the one before whom one shows respect, etc. (Sanchez 1711).

Taro – (bees)wax (Sanchez 1711).

Note on the Possible Cultural Context of the Writing on Face 2 of the Stone

The *baybayin* writing on Face 2 of the Ticao Trapezoidal Stone particularly became the subject of controversy as soon as pictures of the two artifacts were presented by the University of the Philippines research team to the media at a press conference in the U.P. Diliman on 20 June 2011 and broadcast the next day by GMA-7, a national TV station (Lapeña and Severino 2011; Dacanay 2011; Tuazon 2011).

The most serious accusation was that this stone artifact is a “modern-day hoax” (Dacanay 2011). The hoax theory was premised on the observation of some *baybayin* experts, upon studying the released photographs, that the writing “just looks too modern” (*Ibid.*) and that the letters shapes [on Face 2] “resemble a typeface that was developed for a Spanish printing press in the early 1600s” (Lapeña and Severino 2011).

The initial critics’ concerns were verbalized by Paul Morrow, a *baybayin* expert, as follows: “It could have been an innocent exercise of a 20th century *baybayin* enthusiast who lacked some basic knowledge about the script and had no intention deceiving anybody... Or it could be a hoax” (Morrow 2011).

In the light of the international debate that has erupted over this artifact, the narrative from the deciphered *baybayin* text on the controversial Face 2 can probably speak for itself. It presents a humorous tale of a botched attempt of a man to woo a woman.

In Line 1, the man chances upon the woman in some place and comments that she will perspire a lot there.

In Line 2, he comments that he was wearing a g-string and utters an expression of pity. Then he reveals his private desire of her, claiming this was with full respect for her.

Line 3 implies that the woman is probably an *uripon* (slave) still owned by her masters. He tells her so.

Line 4 tells that the woman was processing beeswax (*taro*) in steel pans (*karaha*), suggesting she was in a fireplace, which explains his comment about perspiration.

In Line 5 up to part of Line 8, the man presents to the woman his perspective about the gift of affection (*gana nga anga*), that it must be humbled or tempered because the ensuing closeness seems inevitable to many other people. He implies that such subdued display of affection fits the two of them.

Part of Line 8 up to Line 10 suggests that the woman has walked out on the man. And he seems puzzled and hurt by her reaction.

The language of the *baybayin* characters on Face 2 is essentially Bisayan, but involving a rather queer mixture of several of its dialects: Cebuano, Leyte-Samar, and even Bikol.

The shape of the NGA character on Face 2 indeed supports the critics' observation that it has a colonial timeline and was influenced by the Tagalog and Ilokano *Doctrinas* produced in Spanish printing presses (Lapeña and Severino 2011), i.e., from 1593 and afterwards. Another proof of Spanish influence is the appropriation of the I-vowel for the Y-sound at the end of the words *Day* (Woman) and *kay* (because). More emphatically, the word *gana*, used twice, is borrowed from Spanish; it is not listed in the old Bisayan dictionaries.

The mention of the man wearing g-string and the detail implying that the woman was an *uripon* (slave) processing beeswax in steel pans strongly suggest a 17th-century timeline of the narrative on Face 2. The last of the "official" slaves were still alive by then (Scott 1991, Ch. 5) and beeswax was still a dominant export trade item.

Beeswax had disappeared as a pueblo-level trade item by the middle of the 19th-century, having been displaced by abaca and *guinaras* (abaca cloth) in Leyte and Samar (de Huerta 1865). The Bisayan word *taro*, for beeswax, is not heard or used anymore.

The critics' proposition that the *baybayin* on Face 2 does not pre-date the 20th-century and that the writing was made by a modern hobbyist can be easily refuted by the deciphered narrative. Apart from the suggested lack of some basic knowledge about *baybayin*, the most erudite 20th-century hobbyist could not have compressed in a few words the vivid details about a slave woman processing beeswax in steel pans, and the Bisayan word for beeswax. This knowledge, virtually lost in the collective memory, is also not found in our textbooks and modern books of general circulation.

I theorize that at least a century separates the writing on Face 1 from the writing on Face 2 of the Ticao Trapezoidal Stone. Face 1 has the older text, probably written in pre-Spanish times. Unlike the native ritual pots and similar paraphernalia of the *babaylans*, which were admittedly confiscated and destroyed by the friars, who also burned the community shrines in the hamlets of the Pintados (i.e., Bisayans) in the early years of Christianization (Chirino 1604, in *B&R* Vol. 12, 268), the Ticao Trapezoidal Stone might have escaped destruction because of the nature of its material. As a result, along with the Ticao Round Stone, the country now has its first set of stone artifacts with *baybayin* characters written on them.

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Fig. 1. Seventeenth-Century Tagalog Scripts, summarized by Dr. William Henry Scott (Source: Scott 1984, 60)

Fig. 5. The Philippine alphabet as written by Filipinos. Seventeenth-century variations traced from Santamaría or the documents listed in n. 21 p. 53, with "standard" López forms on the left.

A	Æ	ʌ ʌ ʌ ʌ ʌ
B	Ω	o o o o o
K	Ɔ	ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ
D	Ɔ	ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ
G	Ɔ	ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ
H	Ɔ	ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ
I-E	Ɔ	ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ
L	Ɔ	ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ
M	Ɔ	ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ
N	Ɔ	ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ
NG	Ɔ	ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ
O-U	Ɔ	ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ
P	Ɔ	ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ
S	Ɔ	ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ
T	Ɔ	ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ
W	Ɔ	ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ
Y	Ɔ	ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ ɿ

Fig. 2. Ancient Samareño Syllabic Writing, summarized by Fr. Cantius J. Kobak, OFM (Source: Borrinaga 2009, 223).

ANCIENT SAMAREÑO SYLLABIC WRITING

Syllabic writing as recorded by writers who lived in Samar & Leyte

Sound Equivalent	ALCINA 1668 Palapag	EZGUERRA 1747 Carigara	DELGADO 1751 Guiuan
A	4 CP	P P	W
E-I		m P	m
O+U		3	3
B	O	O	O
C	F	I	I
D	G	G V	U
G	L	R	C
H	S	S	S
L	S	3	E
M	V	P	U
N	T	G	M
P	F	P	V
S	S	W	S
T	P	S	C
R	X		V
NGA	L		

1. Characters without punctuation, above or below them, are sounded with an a - for example:

O - BA S - LA
G - DA t - MA
L - GA ...etc...

2. Characters with a point placed ABOVE them, are sounded with an E or I - for example:

F̄ - CI or CE L̄ - GE or GI
Ḡ - DI or DE ...etc...

3. Characters with a point placed BELOW them, are sounded with an O or U - for example:

F̄ - CO or CU L̄ - GO or GU
Ḡ - DO or DU ...etc...

4. The pre-Hispanic Samareños, as a result, did not use vowel characters in their writing unless two vowels came together, or when the words began with a vowel. Nor did they use the consonants, whether intermediate or final, because when there were two consonants, except in the character NGA, whatever was not there was supplied by the one reading - for example:

S - SA (R) is supplied or L, D.
t - MA

5. Ancient Samareño pattern of writing was not from left to right and across the page; their lines went from top right vertically and then from bottom to top and so on until they finished on the left-hand side, where we begin.

SOURCE: HISTORIA...1668, Francisco Ignacio Alzina, Munoz Text, Pt. I, Bk. 3, chap. 2. FR. CANTY J. KOBAK, O.F.M.