

# Filipino Martial Arts

Digest

Special Edition  
2009

## Philippine Weaponry



**Publisher**

Steven K. Dowd

**Contributing Writers**

Mark Lawrence  
FMAdigest Archives

**Contents**

**From the Publishers Desk**

**Early History of Metallurgy**

**Sword Making Methods**

**Categories of Weapons and Equipment**

**Filipino Weapons**

**Filipino Weaponry Dealers**

Filipino Martial Arts Digest is published and distributed by:

FMAdigest

1297 Eider Circle

Fallon, Nevada 89406

Visit us on the World Wide Web: [www.fmadigest.com](http://www.fmadigest.com)

The FMAdigest is published quarterly. Each issue features practitioners of martial arts and other internal arts of the Philippines. Other features include historical, theoretical and technical articles; reflections, Filipino martial arts, healing arts and other related subjects.

The ideas and opinions expressed in this digest are those of the authors or instructors being interviewed and are not necessarily the views of the publisher or editor.

We solicit comments and/or suggestions. Articles are also welcome.

The authors and publisher of this digest are not responsible for any injury, which may result from following the instructions contained in the digest. Before embarking on any of the physical activities described in the digest, the reader should consult his or her physician for advice regarding their individual suitability for performing such activity.

## From the Publishers Desk

### Kumusta

Marc Lawrence has put together a very good list and has added some comments about weapons that are known and used in the Philippines. Now I am sure there might be one or two that were not mentioned or that a further explanation could have been given, however you can only give what you get, find, borrow etc. Also while visiting the Philippines I usually run into someone that shows me a weapon that is or was used in the Philippines that I have never seen.

But I think Mr. Lawrence did a excellent job with what he has put together for you the reader. And I am sure there are a couple “for you old timers” that you might not have known about.

This is an interesting Special Edition due to the fact that most of the Filipino martial artists I associate with or have talked to usually end up discussing weaponry of the Philippines, or during their seminars they demonstrate or teach a weapon that they like the most.

And for sure the knife training is popular whether at a seminar or in the school. And in the Philippines I know several Grandmasters and Masters that desire to train with the bolo.

Now once you have read through the weaponry of the Philippines, comes the shopping area, where you most likely through one of the dealers can find what sparks, your fancy, either in wood, training metal or the real thing. And if you do not see it in their merchandise then there are a couple of the sellers that will manufacture what you want if you contact them and let them know. Listed are sellers from the Philippines, Europe, and the United States.

So the FMAdigest hopes you find this Special Edition interesting and beneficial to your Philippine weaponry knowledge.

**Maraming Salamat Po**



## Filipino Weapons from A to Z

By Marc Lawrence

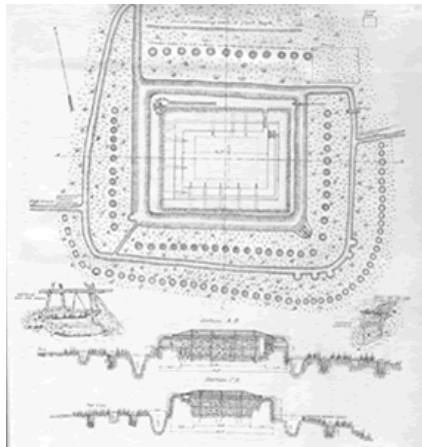
This project was started as an answer to question by one of my students and my son who asked a simple question, “*Is there a book on Filipino weapons from A to Z that I could read*”? My house like every other Fil-Am house has a Weapons of Moroland or Weapons of the Philippines plaque in it. I went looking for some books but the closest I could find was a book from 1920 by an archeologist. I found it very dull and dry. I have collected a large amount of information from many sources on the weapons of the Philippines. I wish to share with you.

### Early History of Metallurgy

Filipino metallurgy came from interaction with the Chinese in the 900 CE. This occurred during Indo-Malay Empire period better known as the Sri-Vijaya Empire. This Empire was found in 650 AD and lasted until its fall to Javanese in 1290 AD. Ships trading within the Empire pass along these trade routes. This brought the technology and culture to the islands. The Chinese came and traded, married local women and settled into the Philippines during this period. In the 14th Century the Muslim and Hindu traders from India had come to trade and brought their religion and technology.



Pre-Hispanic Inter-island and Coastal Filipino Trading ship



Moro Fort sketch by US military  
1898

as technologically as advanced. This was most likely due to no central ruling government only a bunch of small kingdoms. There were steel weapons, armor, bronze cannons and forts but not in great quantity. This was due to the methods used in making them.

By the time the Spanish arrived in the 1500s, the Peoples of the Philippines had varying levels of technology. The technology level was one similar to China and India at that time. But the outer portions were not



**L-R:** A Sulu Moro Warrior with carved wood shield, two typical Moro Warriors and a Datu in steel helmet and mail armor.

## **Sword Making Methods**

There were two principle methods being used at the time. One was based on the Muslim influences the other was the Animalist. Sword makers were alchemist, blacksmiths and also astrologers who waited for auspicious conjunctions of planets before proceeding with each elaborate phase of the sword making ritual. The passage of the sword from the maker to the owner was a very mystical ceremony, replete with all types of supernatural beliefs. It was believed that the right sword to right person would bring good luck in battle, but the wrong sword would bring bad luck.

The term- Panday -Tagalog for, a blade smith who made swords and knives came from a famous metal worker named Panday Piray. The metal smith, Panday Piray of Pampanga, was so skilled at so many types of metal working including weapons making that the Spanish entrusted him with opening the first Spanish artillery foundry in the country. Generally weapons are classified by categories, edged weapons, impact weapons, and projectile weapons.

Most people know of the three basic types of bladed weapons commonly know are the Barong, Kampilan and Kris. Edged weapons were collectively called Sandatas. But in reality there a large variety of sword that have made and used in the Philippines and contributed to the history of it. Edged weapons have played a pivotal role in the cultural development and survival of the Philippine people. For many Philippine ethnic groups, bladed weapons exist as more than just a tool of war; they are a key part of a man's identity and daily attire.

Filipino swords were made different than the ones seen today. The older style blades were made with a chisel type bevel designating it is for right or left handed person. A right handed sword will have the bevel on the right side. This older method allowed for blade to be used as tool like a draw knife or a spoke shave.

The modern blades have bevels on both sides like European swords. The swords are typically made with a tapered tang. The hilt grip is hollowed to slip into place. Methods of securing the hilt can be glued, held in place by a small piece of metal for the pommel that is soldered in place or held with threaded nut or the handle of the hilt is cross pinned in place. Handles can be made of hard wood, horn or ivory. Some swords have guards and others do not as they were intended to be an agricultural tool not a weapon.

## **Categories of Weapons and Equipment**

After reviewing all of these weapons and equipment I came to way up with way to understand their design purpose based up their designs.

**Long Swords** - Offensive/defensive weapon like Kampilan, Keris and Kris.

**Short Swords** - (Tip Bolos) Offensive/defensive weapon and could also be used for other purposes in daily use like agricultural, wood working, butchering tool, etc. like Barongs, Pinutes, Sundangs, Bicuco, etc. Generally if had a point then it was used for thrusting as well as slashing.

**Short Swords (Scimitar)** - A number the blades hold there design roots not Spanish but Chinese/Indian design known as the Scimitar. The Scimitar blade was sharpened on the outside edge of the curve. The unique shape of the weapon enabled it to be used both to strike at lightly armored opponents, and to trap their weapon allowing a strike with

another weapon held in the other hand. The truth about the scimitar's origin is that it's design evolved from the Mongol saber, which in turn traces it's origin back to the Chinese broadsword. The extreme curve of the scimitar is far more at home among the blades of the orient than among the typically straight blades of Middle Eastern origin. Well designed examples would be like the: Bagobo sword, Batangas Sword, Utak sword, Susuwat sword, Gayang sword, Laring sword, etc. So Pigafetta's description of Datu Lapu-Lapu's sword may well have been accurate when he said that the warriors were attack with scimitar swords.

**Bolos** - Daily multi-use tool and personal defense like Itak, Goluk, etc. Generally they were well designed to chop. Designed to carry the weight forward and downward and make the most of each motion.

**Knives and daggers** - Personal defense, Balisong, Daga, Balasing, etc.

**Firearms** - Personal defense & hunting like the Paltik.

**Cannons** - Fixed offensive and defensive weapon- Used in Forts and on ships.

**Armor** - Personal protection.

**Shields** - Personal protection.

**Spears**- Personal defense, hunting & fishing, and could be used offensively.

**Bows and Sling Shots** - Projectile weapons, hunting and fishing.

**Darts**-Projectile weapons typically hand thrown-defensive weapon.

**Axes**- Butchering tool and execution weapon.

**Stick, Club and Staff** - Impact weapons and training tools.

**Improvised Weapons** - Things used in daily life but could be used as weapon like a whip, Dulo-Dulo, pocket stick, etc.

## Filipino Weapons

A B D E G H I K L M O P S T U V W Y



## Armor - Baluti (Tagalog)



On the left is fine example of Moro armor that would have belonged to a Datu or Chief. On the right is set of Filipino reproduction armor

## Bagobo Sword

*Mindanao region*



The Bagobo sword comes from The Bagobo people, a tribe that traces its origin from the people who brought Hinduism to

Mindanao during the Sri Vijayan and Majapahit invasion. When the people inter-married with the locals, they formed a new society and came up with the name Bagobo.

## Bagakays

They are wooden torpedo-shaped darts which you throw by the handful. Bagakays are usually about ten inches long and 1/2 inches in diameter. Bagakays can be either made of wood or steel depending on choice, wooden ones are more traditional, steel ones more modern. They have a point on both ends and are thrown similar to a knife but usually five at a time.

## Balisong

*Southern Philippines*

It is also called the butterfly knife outside of the Philippines, was named after a town in Batangas called Barrio Balisong from which it is made and widely use. It is a folding knife that is made up of three made pieces, attached with pins and a locking mechanism. Sizes vary from 1-inch novelty blades to 16 inches folding bolos.



You can read more on the Balisong in the FMA Digest Special Edition



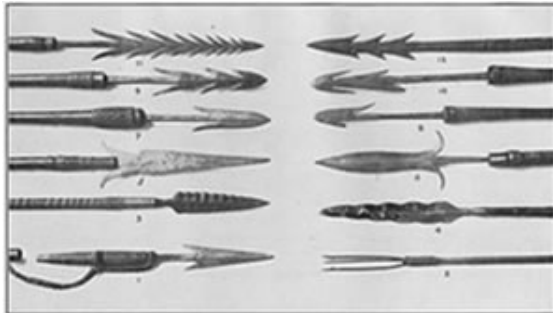
[Download](#)

### Balasingong



Steel double edged knife about 14-16inch long from the Southern Philippines.

### Bangkaw / Budiak (spears/lances)



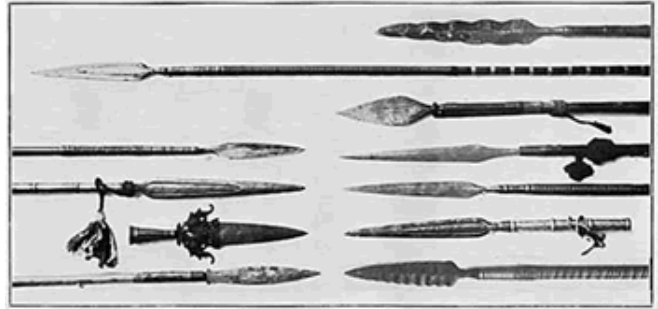
There are many varieties, varying in length and function. Some of these spears feature metal heads in a wide variety of styles and sizes. Heads may be single edged or double edged, as well as barbed. The style and function of the spear depends on what area of the Philippines it is found. Natives who hunt and fish on the beach may employ an entirely different spear than those in the mountainous or inland regions who hunt wild boar and other game. It is also called Sibat or Sapang, a Spear from the Visayan region. Another name is a Tabak, it is Indonesian word.

Many of the fighting techniques taught for the Sibat are the very same motions translated from the hunting movements for killing wild boar and other prey. Thrusts designed to puncture soft targets, such as the throat or neck are reinforced by crushing blows using the blunt portions of the weapon to incapacitate at closer ranges. These



attacks are sometimes used in conjunction; a strike with the blunt portion used to block an enemies weapon being immediately followed by a thrust into the flesh.

It is said by some that the spear was the primary weapon of a Moro Warrior, with some warriors having the ability to loft multiple spears at a time thereby confusing/scattering the enemy. Spears were kept in excellent condition (in excellent polish and keenness of edge), and were prized implements in a Moro Warrior's arsenal. Spears/lances were used for war, hunting, and fishing. Generally war spears were not used for hunting/fishing, and featured shorter shafts and larger heads. Lance heads tended to be made of high-quality pattern-welded steel (though some were made of bamboo, particularly those found in the extreme past), and had iron and/or brass ferrules. Some feature metal butt caps as well. They were often mounted on hardwood shafts or bamboo. Many spearhead variants existed, from the curvy Kris to straight fullered/panelled heads. Spearhead lengths can range between 5-24 inches. Again there are exceptions.



### **Bangkon sword**

*Southern Philippines*



Bangkong is a Sea Dayak word for war boat used sea piracy in 1700s. They were known for head hunting. A Bankon sword was the type of sword they used. A one handed blade about 24-28 inches long with the typical hooked.

### **Banyal Sword**

*Southern Philippines*

The sword 24 inches approximately. One handed use design, chisel edged, weighted forward for chopping. A Hooked handle to prevent loss while using. Has an unusual horn/hook on the back of the blade. Tip is pointed.



## Batangas Sword-Luzon

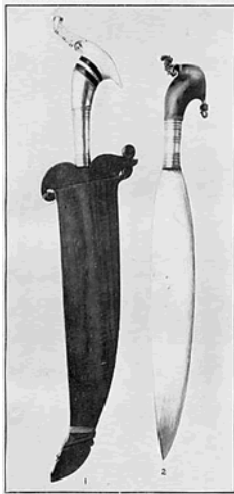


It is a sword from the Tagalog people of island of Luzon. One handed blade about 24-28

inches long with typical hooked hilt grip design. This is to prevent the loss when slippery or sweaty.

## Barong

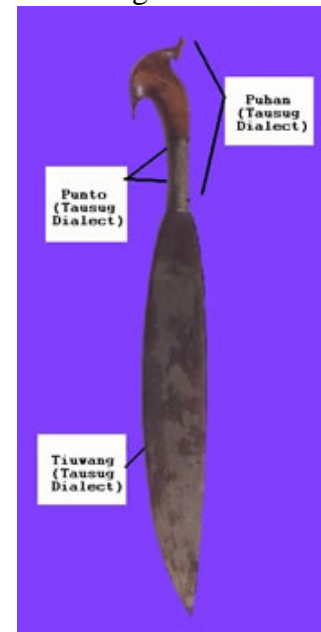
It is also called a Borung, is a unique leaf-shaped blade that is distinguishable from other Filipino weaponry. The blades range from 12 to 18 inches in length, are single edged and guard-less for easy, comfortable grip and maneuvering at the middle of a battle. It is a heavy blade and is an ideal tool for chopping, thrusting and slashing. It is stylized with a cockatoo beak (Kakatua) handle.



The Barong is the favored weapon of the people of the Sultanate of Sulu. This single edged, leaf shaped blade is an amazingly effective slicer and despite its diminutive size it has been known to have the ability to cleave a man in two. The blade tends to be thick and heavy with the weight aiding in the slicing capability of this sword. Barong blade lengths tend to range from 8-22 inches (with newer blades tending to be the larger 18-22" range) however like all Moro swords there are exceptions. Damascene patterns are also sometimes evident but again most often not as controlled as the more widely known Malay Kris. Some barong blades were made by Chinese smiths (due to the similarity in style to certain Chinese cleavers) for import into the Sulu sultanate. These blades tended to be of excellent quality and often feature Chinese characters stamped into the forte. While generally barong blades sported a flat grind to

the spine with a slight convexity near the edge, some (most commonly Chinese made blades) do sport convex grinds. Some rare blades featured what would appear to be a swollen edge that extended into the blade for about half an inch from the edge. Finally there is also the barong blade style, which sports a spine with a false edge that tends to extend 1/3 of the length of the blade from the tip. This is one of the most rare barong blade styles.

The most common pommel motif is the cockatua (though there are exceptions such as the naga/serpent motif), with a long metal ferrule (commonly made of silver, though copper, brass, swaasa, and on particularly on WWII era barongs aluminum is found) that tend to be around 3" in length (though Yakan Barongs tend to have a small ferrule of about half an inch in size, and have cockatuas that resemble those as found on the pira hilt). Often the ferrule will have lacquered braided natural fiber rings to aid in grip. Sometimes these fiber rings were on top of the ferrule, but often what would appear to be a solid metal ferrule would in fact be a



number of metal bands that alternate between the fiber bands. Cockatuas tended to be made of banati, however on higher end barongs belonging to those of the upper classes rarer materials such as ivory, carabao horn, kamagong (Philippine ebony), etc. were used. Higher end barongs belonging to the upper classes often had large elaborately carved junggayan (elongated) cockatuas. Barongs for the lower classes, and ones meant primarily for fighting have less elaborate cockatuas of much smaller sizes, often featuring de-emphasized crests or beaks (and on fighting versions mere vestigial elements of the crest and beak motifs). At some point near WWII, cockatua forms changed. Crests became more triangular, and began to emerge directly from the back of the pommel, whereas older cockatua had crests that flowed from the butt-plain of the pommel. Also beaks started to become more massive, and rectangular in form. Of particular note are barongs used by juromentados (those who had taken the rite of Magsabil), often they would sport smaller blades with normal size hilts. These barongs are often mistaken as children's weapons, but are in fact meant for adults.

Barong scabbards tend to be made of to wide grained hardwood boards that are lashed together with rattan. Older barong scabbards tended only to be partially wrapped with large rattan lashings, while newer barong scabbards sport a full wrap of thin rattan. Also, the scabbards of older barongs featured thinner flat boards, where-as post WWII barong scabbards are of much thicker stock, and feature a central ridge line. The terminus on modern-made scabbards tends to turn upward to a more dramatic degree, often at a near 90-degree angle, and feature squared tips. As with Kris scabbards of the post WWII era, mother of pearl inlays begin to appear at the throat and tips of barong scabbards as well.

### **Bicuco**



cutting easily.

It is a working tool widely utilized in the provinces of Tarlac, Pangasinan, and some town in La Union. This long knife can be used for slaughtering animals and for butchering meat. Its blade is designed to carry its weight forward for

### **Binagong / Binangon**



24-28 inches long with typical hooked hilt grip design. This is to prevent the loss when slippery or sweaty.

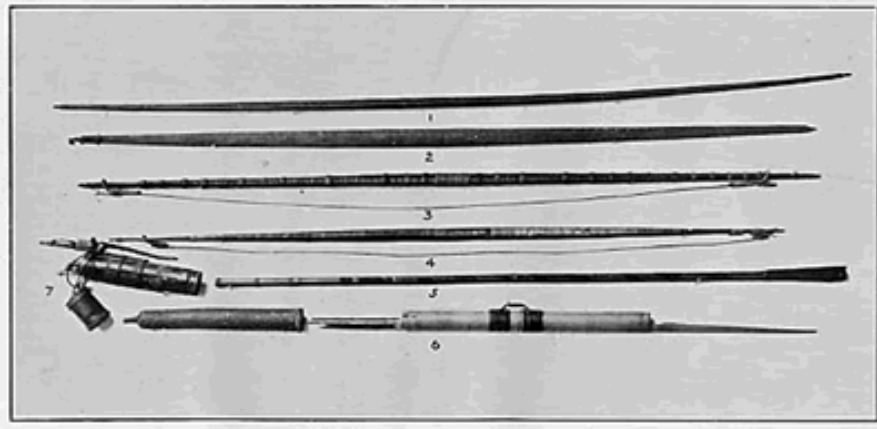
It is a Visayan blade similar to Tenegre sword. It is a very interesting and large sword from the Visayan Islands. The blade is designed to chop, using inertia to carry the blade to cut deeper. One handed blade about

## Bolo



It is large cutting tool, a kind of machete, used particularly in the jungles of Indonesia the Philippines, and in the sugar fields of Cuba. Like other machetes it is primarily intended for clearing vegetation (whether for agriculture or during trailblazing. Bolos are particularly characterized by having a native hardwood handle, a full tang, and by a blade that both curves and gets wider (often considerably so) nearer to the tip. This moves the centre of gravity as far forward as possible, giving the knife extra momentum for chopping difficult vegetation.

## Blowguns and Bows

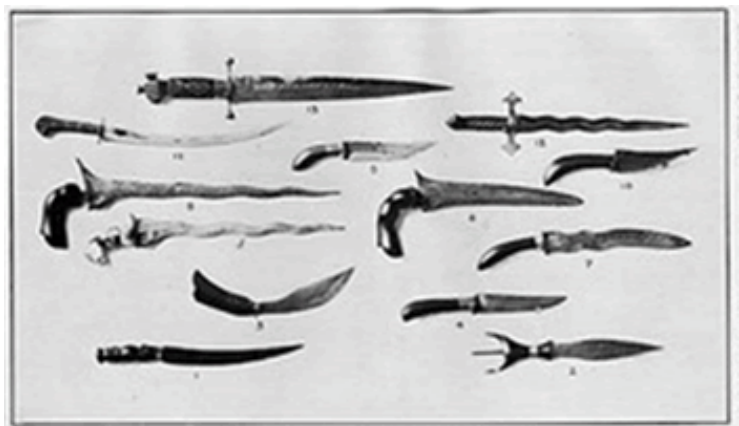


## Bunal

A club made from Rattan, Kamagong or Bahi. Usually a heavy stick with a wrapping for the grip area made out of goat skin.

## Daga

A belt knife also called a Baraw carried in the Visayan region, term comes from the Spanish word dagger. The terms Baraw and Daga can also be used either as Solo Baraw or Solo Daga associated with single knife fighting and defense systems, Doble Baraw or Doble



Daga associated with the double knife fighting systems or even with a combination of long and short weapons e.g. stick and dagger fighting systems Olisi Baraw or sword and dagger fighting systems Espada 'Y' Daga.

### **Dahon Palay**



The Dahon Palay, named after its shape which is similar to a rice stalk leaf, is a tool used by farmers working in the rice fields. It is also the favored sword of the

people who lived near the seas in the provinces of Batangas, all the way to the island of Mindoro. The Dahong Palay is a dreaded poisonous snake that resembles the 'leaf of a rice plant'. The deadly sword also named after its shape as the leaf of a rice stalk, is a tool used by farmers who works in the rice fields. However, during the revolution, some Batanguenos depended on this sword as their primary weapon due the amazing slashing and thrusting feel it has.

### **Dulo-Dulo**

A sharpen pocket stick made for close quarters fighting. These can be made of hard wood and made from Caribou horn. Dulo means tip usually referring to a horn of a Carabo.



### **Espada**

*Espada means sword in Cebuano and Hiligaynon*

### **Espada- Espada Y Daga**



A two blade set with a short sword and dagger used to block, cut and check. Espada Y dagger was influenced by Spanish and then improved as fighting form by Filipinos in the Visyan region. The Espada blade is similar to The Espada Ancha which was developed by the Spanish new world solders. It is believed that the indigenous peoples who were sympathetic to the

Spanish rulers were enlisted into the Spanish forces to help fend off regular invasions from the Muslim pirates from Mindanao and Sulu. Once recruited into the garrisons it is believed the Spanish Friars and commanders taught their fighting skills to the native recruits, who in turn adapted this style of fighting and combined it with their own indigenous fighting skills.

### **Garab Knife**

The Garab Knife is a small version of the Garab Sword, known for being an excellent combat blade as well as a good utility blade. It can do more tasks than what the Garab sword can perform - for instance, cutting leather, ropes, stripping sugar cane, among other things.



### **Garab Sword**



the same as others elsewhere in the Philippines.

The Garab is sometimes seen as another version of Talibon or Talibong with some very subtle differences. This does not mean that everyone in the southern Philippines believes

### **Gayang**

*Southern Philippines*



Gayang (Malaysian for sword) a very sharp sword was double-edged and as broad as a banana leaf. One handed blade about 24-28 inches long with typical hooked hilt grip design. This is to prevent the loss when slippery or sweaty.

### **Ginunting**

*Military sword*

Commonly used in the Philippine jungles, Ginunting was the official sword of the Philippine Marines, commonly seen together with their M16s and other military weapons. It has a beak-like shape and its tip curving downward commonly



seen in Kukris of the Gurkhas. It is a perfect weapon for close quarter attacks, utility tool, as jungle bolos, for clearing brush, slaughter tools for hunting, chopping small pieces of wood for fire and a perfect weapon to carry.

### **Golok/Goluk/Bolo**



The Golok is a bladed, butcher-knife-like weapon popular in the Cordillera Mountains regions, which is originally used as daily work tool in the fields. It

became known for its use of chopping body parts specially the head of a person. Known as headhunters, the Cordillerans decapitate people as a punishment for a heavy crime. It was also used during tribal wars due to land disputes or family feuds. A type of machete, the Golok has a superb cutting ability. As of the present, the Golok is still utilized in its exact way, and is also used to slash and thrust weeds and grasses in agricultural fields.

### **Gunong**



Little has been written about the Gunong. However with its dubious place in the modern tourist market it tends to be one of the most prolific of Moro Swords floating in today's market, and invariably often is the first taste of Moro Weaponry for the beginning collector.

The Gunong is also commonly known as Punal, or Punal de Kris. This name is more often associated with pieces that are from Mindanao, where Spanish influence/interaction (as seen in their presence in Zamboanga, and at differing times Northern Mindanao), particularly on the Maguindanao Sultanate, was much more significant compared to the Sulu sultanate. Such influences on vocabulary can be seen in other Spanish loan words such as the title of Kapitan Luwat, versus the pre Spanish Raja Luwat.

Gunongs are often considered to be the dagger version of the Moro Kris. With blades that often bare strong resemblance to their larger Moro Kris sword relatives. While many Gunong blades are found as double edged either straight or wavy, there also exist Gunong blade variants that are single edged, often with more crescent like blade shapes. It is unclear in this author's current level of research whether this is just a variant in blade form of the Gunong proper, but it has been suggested that this blade form constitutes a different weapon in of in itself. It is possible that the true answer may be lost to the sands of time. What is clear though, Gunong blades, while often resembling Kris, lack many features normally associated with the Kris blade, such as the presence of a gangya, and in the case of the single edged blades the tapering blade profile intrinsic to the Kris form.

Gunong hilts are what distinguish Gunongs most from other Moro weapons. Many associate the bulbous pistol grip style pommel, which is often at extreme near right angles to the hilt proper, as being the traditional Gunong hilt. However, truly old Gunongs feature a straighter hilt, as can be seen in the related picture of old Gunongs. At some point between the turn of the century and the 1930s, gunong hilts gradually changed into the more familiar pistol grip. In this time period as well, Gunongs start to appear made with much more extravagant fittings and materials. These newer Gunongs often featuring beautifully chased bands on their scabbards, with conspicuous Western style belt clips on the top most band. Also, guards start to appear with more frequency, as well as hilts featuring socketed bulbed ferrules that connect to the bulbous pommel.



As to why these changes started to occur are left to speculation. However, there are many factors that may have influenced these changes. First let us gain some background on the usage and intention of the Gunong. Gunongs were often worn in the back of the sash, or were hidden in various spots on a person, such as the turban. They were daggers of last minute defense (similar to the Western Boot knife), as well as daggers for common utility. It has been reported in period documents that Gunongs were often carried by both sexes, young and old. As such, in daily interaction with the newly colonial aspiring Americans, it is not surprising that Gunongs would be commonly exchanged as souvenirs. With the fledgling tourist market, demand for gaudier Gunongs would most likely have grown, and given their relatively small size the Gunong is ideally suited for both the maker and the tourist for quick and easy manufacture and purchase. Another factor could be as American influence grew in Moroland, US colonial restrictions on the carry of traditional weapons, such as the Kris or barong, left a gap in the daily attire of a native population whose culture required the daily wear of bladed weaponry.

A gap that the less menacing Gunong could easily fill thereby existing as an in-offensive item of dress to the colonial fears of the US colonial powers; however, these are only possible factors in the evolution of the Gunong. They are by no means definitive, and remain only speculative.

As to identifying the age of newer Gunongs, one must rely on looking at such logical identifying features such as material usage, construction method, etc... The usage of German silver and aluminum become much more prevalent, like with many Moro swords, after WWII. One-piece construction of ferrules and other fittings, versus soldering, also becomes more prevalent after WWII as metal tubing becomes more common in the area in such dubious forms as shell casings. With Kris variants one must look at the shape of the luks. Like their larger sword counterparts, more modern tourist Gunong blades have much more angular luks. Thinner blades are also more common on newer pieces. Also newer Gunongs tend to be much larger than older pieces, with some pieces verging on sword like proportions. This author personally owns a modern tourist Gunong that is over 2 ft in size. Ironically, some of the best Moro chasing/repose this author has seen have been on newer, often tourist Gunongs. Often these newer Gunongs



also feature either an inlay down the blade consisting of copper, brass, or nickel. It is my personal feeling that many of the newer Gunongs are prime examples of Moro craftsmanship, and should be cherished as highly as their plainer older counterparts.

However one must take caution to consider these more modern pieces, for what they are, modern expressions of traditional art, and if the term applies, sometimes a tourist pieces.

### **Hagibis**



The Hagibis knife dates back to the Spanish occupation, but was re-designed by the grandfather of the now Grandmaster (GrandTuhon) of Pekiti Tirsia Kali, Leo T. Gaje. It was Grand Tuhon Leo Gaje who

made the Hagibis popular back the early 1960's. The Hagibis was re-designed by him to make it a more effective "killing use only" blade! This blade was made for only one purpose... to kill. Any other tasks for this knife such as for utility use or for Philippine jungle survival is secondary.

### **Itak (bolo) Tagalog**

Itak Tagalog is a bladed tool which is an important tool of the daily lives locals. The country being highly agricultural, the Itak is primarily used for harvesting root crops and for cracking coconuts. However, when necessity calls for it, this tool is used as a deadly weapon. During the revolution, the young boys used it as a weapon, and together with their fathers, they participated in the battlefields. Women also used it in defending themselves and their property.



### **Kalis**

*Southern Philippines*



A Kalis is a type of double-edged Filipino sword, often with a "wavy" section, similar to a Kris. Unlike the Kris, the Kalis's double-edged blade can be used for both cutting and thrusting. It is believed that the Kalis first appeared in the 13th

century. Its original location is the island of Java which is situated in the Indonesian archipelago. From there Kalis migrated to its today's location - the Philippines. Countries in which the Kalis is considered to be one of the main weapons include Malaysia and some other countries in Southeast Asia.

The Kalis is available in different shapes and sizes. Usually, the Kalis has a special blade that is straight at the top and has a wavy shape at the handle. All the Filipino types of Kalis swords are both larger and heavier than those from Indonesia. Although it is considered to be a slashing weapon, Kalis has a special thrusting power which is very dynamic. Its durability and sharpness can be comparable to the Japanese Katana. Kalis can easily cut some hard objects. These types of swords are made by hand in several Filipino tribes.

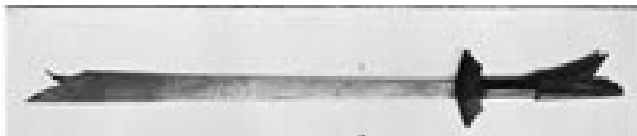
### **Kalasag**



A Kalasag is a shield used for close quarters fighting and parrying.

### **Kampilan**

*Southern Philippines*



The Kampilan is the weapon most favored by the warriors of Mindanao. This large single edged blade is considerably noted for its

fearsome look and at total lengths ranging up to 40 inches it is the largest Moro sword. It also is notably the only true two-handed sword of Philippine origin. The Kampilan were truly a war sword, and every well-stocked Mindanao arsenal had a number at the ready for battle. While in many court photos, one often sees Kampilan bearers, it is eluded that the Kampilan was not a weapon of common carry (like the Kris, barong, or Pira), but rather one of the campaign and court. As such, the Kampilan was representative of a Datu/Rulers prestige/power in as much as it was a physical representation of the Datu/Ruler's ability to control violence either positively or negatively.

The Kampilan a famous long sword widely used in the pre-conquest Philippine Archipelago and still in use by many Filipino Muslims today, especially by the Maguindanao and Maranao Moros. The Kampilan, common in Mindanao, is a large and heavy sword that needs to be handled with both hands. It is considered to be in the same class as the cutlass or Japanese samurai sword because of its great size, weight and craftsmanship. The blade is single-edged, has a definite sharp point, is wider near the tip

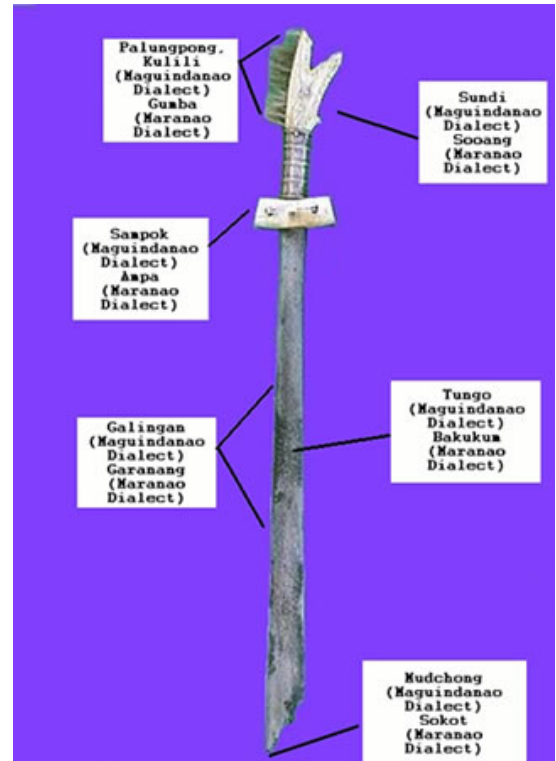
and narrows progressively toward the hilt. The term "Kampilan" is known all over the archipelago, but it describes various types of swords. Mactan chieftain Lapu-lapu and his warriors were reported to have wielded this weapon to great effect when they fought against Ferdinand Magellan in the Battle of Mactan on April 27, 1521. The sword is mentioned in ancient Filipino epics, e. g., *Hinilawod* of the Hiligaynons.

The Kampilan is single edged and about 34 to 40 inches long. The hilt is quite long to counterbalance the weight and length of the blade. Most hilts are in hardwood, invariably with the same shape: a cross guard (*sampak*) and a pommel shaped in an animal's wide open mouth, crocodile or *bakonawa*, with *okir* carvings. Some Kampilan have goat hair tassels sticking out of the hilt's backside.

The blade is thick and narrow at its base while it gets thinner and wider to the truncated point. Some blades have a spike to the point. Original Kampilan have a laminated blade with a central layer of steel; some older examples show a *pamor* specific to the Moro pattern-welding process.

Related to the *Parang* the Kampilan blade is quickly identified by its distinctive taper, narrow at the forte, and gradually swelling in width to the tip, giving the blade profile an almost trapezoidal appearance. The Kampilan blade often features damascene patterning. There are many variations to the Kampilan tip. Some Kampilan blades sport a spikelet at the tip, but it must be noted that not all Kampilan have this spikelet. Some were never made with the spikelet, but on certain pieces often due to the fragility of the spikelet, upon close inspection, it is discovered that it has in fact broken off. Some say that the spikelet is purely ceremonial / decorative, but others assert that it serves as a key distraction when countering an enemy blow thereby allowing an effective un-impeded counter cut. Often one will find Kampilan blades with decorative holes near the tip. Quite often these holes are filled with brass. Rarer still, some Kampilan tips feature Kris like fretwork. Some Kampilan blades also featured engraved blades, with heavily engraved blades appearing near the late 1800s to early 1900s. It is speculated that these Kampilan are perhaps early attempts at creating tourist blades, as the intricate engraving would not be typically be visible as status markers, as it would be a severe cultural faux pas to bare an un-sheathed blade in court, or generally in a non-war related situation.

The hilt form is quite large thereby extended as a counter balance to the large blade. The Kampilan hilt is generally bifurcated in what some say is symbolic of the open jaws of a crocodile. However, others assert that this motif is representative of the tail of the swiftlet (a bird common to the area that, produce edible nests that are highly valued in Chinese cuisine). There do, exist other variants, beyond the common bifurcated hilt. The Kampilan hilt can be used single-handed but when necessary the wielder is able to use the sword in a two-handed fashion. It must be noted that traditionally the hilt was bound to the hand of the wielder to prevent slippage. The lashings used to bind the weapon were



called munsala, and sometimes served as anting-anting as well. However, munsala were not always used for binding a weapon to the hand, and were often decorative or attached primarily for talismanic purposes. Also often there existed a mail, gauntlet like covering that was attached to the hilt during battle via metal staples that covered the hand of the wielder. However, since these metal staples and gauntlets often covered the okir carving on the hilt, they were often removed when not in ready for battle. Kampilan hilts were made of various native hardwoods such as kamagong (Philippine Ebony), but some extremely high-end Kampilan hilts were completely silver plated, or made of such rare materials such as ivory or bone.

Kampilan scabbards tended to be very simple. Often when going to battle scabbards would not even be used. However, traditionally the scabbard tended to be of two pieces of native hardwood, which was held together by a thin natural fiber string or rattan lashing, thereby allowing the scabbard to be cut through in case of emergency. Also there existed a "travel" scabbard made of tubular reed. Some scabbards featured a handle, which allowed the scabbard to be used as a make shift shield if necessary.

### **Kampilan Bolo**



The Kampilan bolo is a one handed variation about 24-28 inches long, of the two handed blade. It is designed to be used for work and self defense. Its design originated from the Kampilan.

### **Karambit**



The Karambit, also spelled as Korambit, is a multi-purpose utility knife born around the 13th century in the Indonesian archipelago. Introduced by the Indonesian Pencak Silat, this weapon has its roots from the martial arts of Malaysian Bersilat, and Filipino Kali. It was originally designed for various daily chores and not as a deadly weapon. But since an individual carry this tool so often, it evolved into an object that could defend the carrier from any harm. The Filipino Karambit's exceptional form symbolizes a fierce "tiger claw," and its treatment is similar to that of the Japanese sword, Katana. It is impossible to disarm someone holding this weapon because of the hole in its handle which allows a person to insert his finger in it for grip and easy maneuvering.

## **Katipunan Bolo**

The Katipunan, a type of Bolo called a Tabak. It is a weapon used and named after the brotherhood Kataastaasang, Kagalanggalangang Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan. The KKK members, during the revolution, armed themselves with their common farming tool to fight the Spanish colonizers. This weapon commonly has a rough, unfinished blade primarily due to its agricultural significance. With its strong belly design, the Katipunan can deliver a fatal chop. Because of its wide usage, the Katipunan sword, like its founding brotherhood, gained respect among the Filipinos and was greatly feared by their enemies.



## **Kris**

### *Southern Philippines*

The Kris is undoubtedly the most famous of Moro weapons. Variations of this distinct sword are found in every Moro tribe. Besides being a superbly balanced and effective weapon, the Kris was also a key symbol of a man's status/rank in society, as well as often bearing strong talismanic properties as an anting-anting (talisman/amulet). The Kris was a key part of the everyday wear of a man's dress, and it was often felt that to be without a bladed weapon was akin to being naked (a sentiment shared by many native groups in the Philippines). This custom often conflicted with later attempts by colonial invaders to disarm Moro society and led to many unfortunate conflicts.

The Kris also spelled Keris is a distinctive, asymmetrical sword or dagger indigenous to Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, Southern Thailand and the southern Philippines. Both a weapon and spiritual object, the Kris are often considered to have an essence or presence, with some blades possessing good luck and others possessing bad.

The Kris spread from the island of Java to many parts of the archipelago of Indonesia, such as Sumatra, Bali, Lombok, Sumbawa, South Sulawesi, Kalimantan, and to the Southeast Asian areas now known as Malaysia, Brunei, southern Philippines, southern Thailand, and Singapore. Functionally, the Kris is not a slashing weapon like a Bowie knife or other fighting knife, but rather a stabbing instrument. If a Kris fighter had stealth on his side, the Kris was lethal. There are many stories of a Kris being made especially for killing a specific person.

Kris's were worn everyday and at special ceremonies, with heirloom blades being handed down through successive generations. Yearly cleanings, required for as part of the spirituality and mythology around the weapon, often leaves ancient blades worn and thin. In everyday life and at events, a man usually only wore one Kris. Women sometimes also wore Krisses, though of a smaller size than a man's. In battle, a warrior carried three Krisses: his own, one from his father-in-law, and one as a family heirloom. The other Krisses served as parrying daggers. If the warrior didn't have another Kris to parry with, he used the sheath. Kris's were often broken in battle and required repairs. A warrior's location determined what repair materials he had. It is quite usual to find a Kris with fittings from several areas.



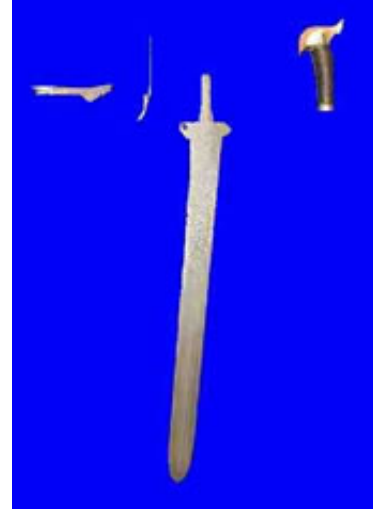
The Kris blade is defined as one that is wide on the base and double-edged. It is capable of delivering both chopping and slicing cuts. While many assume the traditional form of the Kris is the fully wavy blade, the half-waved half-straight, as well as the fully straight blades, are equally if not more common, as straight blades were more practical in combat. The waves in older Kris were fewer in number and of deeper/wider distribution however as time passed waves started becoming tighter and more frequent in placement. Kris blades with many waves demanded excellent skill in use since if cuts were improperly made they would merely bounce off target or worse become stuck in the bone of an enemy. However it is said that a higher number of waves increased a Kris's potency as a talismanic object. Often one can find as a testament to their usage as talismanic objects, totemic like engravings (often filled with an inlay of brass, silver, or nickel) on the blade, generally in okir (jungle motifs such as tree and leaf) designs, but occasionally one will find Islamic script instead. Many Kris blades are also forged with meticulously crafted fullers, ranging from a complex webbing of multiple full-length fullers, to a single elegant fuller running down the latter third of the blade approaching the tip. Near the gangya (guard) on some Kris, are ceremonial spear/arrow head like incisions that have been carved into the blade. Unlike their Malay cousins, Moro Kris's are primarily cutting swords, and generally were not used as thrusting blades like the Malay dagger Keris. This is evidenced by the rounded state of many Kris points. Moro Kris blades generally range in size from 18-26 inches, though as with all Moro weapons there are exceptions.

Generally however, the larger blades are found on later pieces, while the oldest Moro Kris's tend to be of smaller stature. Damascene patterning is sometimes evident though often not as controlled as seen in the complex pattern welding of the smaller Malay Keris. However, just because no pattern is immediately seen, it must not be assumed that none exist. Since many Moro Kris were taken by American's as exotic souvenirs, and in order to "enhance" their appeal to the American aesthetic of what a sword should be (mostly influenced by Hollywood), many Kris were polished by their foreign owners on a buffer till the original pattern disappeared, and all that was left was a shiny piece of steel. In some extreme cases, one can even find Kris blades that have been chrome plated.

The gangya (guard) of a Kris blade is made in such a manner that their lines flow very elegantly into the blade, never interrupting in continuity from transition from gangya proper to blade. Antique Kris (Kris made before 1930) were made with a separate gangya (guard) like their Malay cousins, while more modern made kris lack this feature and have gangya that are in fact integral to the blade. Some newer Kris does have an engraved line to simulate the appearance of a separate gangya, but when inspected closely it is evident that this is only a cosmetic engraved line, and not a true separate gangya. However, it must be noted that often the fit of the guard on older kris is so good, and combined with age/corrosion, often the demarcation line that would indicate a separate gangya is not visible without first re-etching the blade. Kris made before the early 19th century featured a gangya that met the blade proper in a straight line. However, at some point near the early 19th century, gangya started to be made with a distinct 45-degree angle near the terminus. Opposite the hook-like fretwork on the gangya exists, a curved cavity. It has been suggested that this cavity is representative of the trunk of an elephant; others contend that it is the mouth of the naga (serpent) with the blade being the tail, and still others contend that it is in fact the open mouth of an eagle.

Modern, tourist Kris blades can be distinguished by a number of features that once identified are quite easy to spot. Perhaps the easiest to identify feature of a modern tourist/fake Kris blade are the shaping of the waves. Traditional Kris feature gracefully undulating waves that are forged deep into the blade to penetrate straight to the centerline of the blade. Tourist Kris, on the other hand, feature shallow angular waves, that appear to be cut out of the steel rather than forged into the blade. Also, in order to stand to the rigors of combat, traditional Kris are quite thick at the gangya, often approaching half an inch in thickness. However, to maintain its balance, traditional Kris distally tapers becoming thinner near the tip. Tourist Kris, generally are made of much thinner material, and are of uniform thickness lacking distal taper. This leads to the flimsy and unwieldy nature of many, tourist Kris.

The hilt of Kris is either straight or slightly curved (most common on cockatua pommel hilts). Pommel variations are many, however the most common are the horse-hoof (the most distinctive variation coming from the Sulu Sultanate) and the cockatua. Commonly the pommel is made of beautiful hardwood burl (such as banati) with the hilt being wrapped in a lacquered natural fiber (such as jute). However on higher end Kris, belonging to the upper class, the pommel would be made of such exotic materials as ivory, silver plating, solid brass, etc., with hilts often lavishly bound with silver or swasaa (an alloyed mixture of gold similar to red-gold) bands frequently with braided silver wire interspersing the chased bands. Large junggayan (a Sulu term denoting the elongated style, though elongated styles can be found all over Moro-land) and Danangan (literally meaning decorative, but used most commonly to describe the large embellished cockatuas) style cockatuas appeared in the 19th century, while older kris pommels sported medium to small cockatuas. The oldest kris are found with hilts of a much



A Kris Broken Down into its Various Parts

diminutive stature, with the cockatua versions retaining only vestigial elements of a crest. The axis of the hilt (whether straight or curved) is always at an angle to conform the blade angle, when properly held with the guard up, to the arc of a circle. Thereby the angle of the blade when swung conforms to the cutting arc of the wielder maximizing the cutting potential of the blade.

The Moro Kris scabbard shares many common characteristics with their Malay cousins, but are unique in their own style and form. Scabbards tended to be made of wide grain native hardwoods (eg. mahogany, teak, nara, etc...), and lashed together with rattan bindings. Sometimes the crosspiece is a separate piece, with the tailpiece socketed in, but quite often the crosspiece and tail are made of one board. Older scabbards feature wider rattan lashings, and normally only cover small sections (eg. bottom 1/3, 4 inch bands, etc...) of the scabbard. However, sometime near WWII, scabbards began to be fully wrapped with thinner lashings. Also it is in this time period; that the use of mother of pearl inlays on the crosspiece and tips of scabbards, as well as the pommels of Kris, begin to appear. For higher end Kris (belonging to those of high rank) more exotic materials were used for scabbard construction. Often the scabbards of the nobility were bound with exquisitely chased and reposed silver or swaasa bands, instead of the rattan bindings found on more common scabbards. Sometimes these bands were so numerous, and socketed in such a fashion as to cover the entire wood core thereby giving the appearance of a scabbard that is entirely crafted out of precious metals. One can even find on such high-end scabbards such opulent features as crosspieces crafted entirely of ivory, horn, bunti, etc...

### **The Making of a Moro Kris**

Despite the adoption of strict Quranic laws by the Moro's, like most Filipino's native animistic beliefs were, and to some extent still are today, strong features within their culture/society. Like the Malay Keris it was believed that only men of great strength and character could properly make a Kris infusing it with a jen (spirit). Only after much prayer and meditation and dependent on certain astrological factors the Kris blade would be made.

Again, like their Malay cousin the antique Moro Kris blade consisted of two parts, that of the blade proper and the separate gangya (guard). On Kris made before the late 19th century this separate gangya was evident by a straight line parallel to the guard, however at some point in the late 19th century the line went to a sharp angle when nearing the outer end of the guard. After the 1930s the separate gangya disappeared and the blades were made in one piece. On some modern Kris there is an engraved line to symbolize the gangya but on many there is no demarcation of any kind.

Like the Malay Keris Moro Kris blades were made in a laminate construction in which steel and iron (though occasionally nickel) was combined to form the blade. Stories of leaf springs being used in their construction while true for some more modern blades is not applicable to those Kris that are truly antique and certain modern blades. Various ingots



Typical Moro Forge



were heated in a charcoal fueled fire that was fed air manually via bamboo bellows. Occasionally some Moro pandays (sword-smiths) would twist the metal billets during forging to create a pamor like textured center, but this was not typical. The Moro Kris blade was generally triple-laminated consisting of softer metals in the thicker inner core and harder steel for the edges. Unlike their Malay cousins the Moro Kris blade has a larger thicker rectangular tang versus the skinny cylindrical tang found on the Malay Keris.

After the pattern welding was complete the Kris would then be sent to a different craftsman so the forge scale and hammer marks could be removed. This was traditionally done using a draw-knife, but now is often done with a file. After the blade was sufficiently shaped it would be sent for hardening. Generally only the edges of most Kris are hardened while the inner core is relatively soft. After hardening decorative file work was done to the blade before it was sent to other craftsmen for hilding. Other craftsmen would then carve out the handle and sheath out of various indigenous hardwoods or other material such as water buffalo horn and ivory. After the completion of the handle and sheath fittings such as Baca-Baca (clamps) were made.

Now the blade was ready to be merged with the handle. Some have thought that the Baca-Baca (clamps) served to secure the blade to the handle. While partially true in the sense that they do give support, the primary purpose of the Baca-Baca was to insure the mating of the ganya and the blade. It is possible that this was important as to make sure that the Jen (spirit) that inhabited the blade and gave it its superior abilities would not escape. The primary means of securing the blade to the handle was through natural resin.

After the blade was attached to the hilt it was ready for sharpening. A Kris was always maintained to have a keen edge and be functional as a weapon. Even the most beautiful Datu Kris could be used in battle.

After sharpening the Kris was then set in the hot sun to warm the blade. After a certain amount of time the blade was ready to be etched using various acidic citrus fruits. This etch would darken the blade as well as revealing the damascene pattern created by the Panday (sword maker). It is said that the darkened blade was preferred as it would not glint in the sun thereby revealing a concealed Warrior.

Now the Kris was finally completed and ready to be sent to the owner. Each Kris was the product of many craftsmen, and individually made to suit the needs of the customer.

## **Lahot**

*Southern Philippines*



Lahot also called Gamong is a long thin one handed blade designed for slashing and thrusting. The word Lahot comes from India. One handed blade about 24-28 inches long with typical hooked hilt grip design. This is to prevent the loss when slippery or sweaty.

## Lantaka

The Lantaka is a swivel mounted cannon from the Philippines. Lantaka (swivel gun) was one of the most awesome weapons of the Filipinos. When conquering some of the Philippines islands, the Spanish had faced a much trouble fighting against lantakas. Later they included Moro type of Lantaka on native ships.

These guns were placed on flexible swivels which was not characteristic for Spanish technology. This thought-out construction allowed to quick-tracking of a moving target.



## Laring



It is one handed sword from Southern Philippines that designed to chop, with the tip being heavy and weighted forward. The edge is chisel type made for the user being right or left handed. The tip has V in it, like a design of a blade catcher. One handed blade about 24-28 inches long with typical hooked hilt grip design. This is to prevent the loss when slippery or sweaty.

## Latigo



A whip used to move livestock.

## Maguindanao Kris Sword

*Southern Philippines*

Maguindanao means "people of the flooded plains." Maguindanao is in central Mindanao. It is bounded on the north by



Lanao Del Sur, on the east by North Cotabato, on the west by the Moro Gulf, and on the south by Sultan Kudarat. The Spaniards launched expeditions to subdue the area throughout the colonial era but they never gained control of the middle of the 19th century due to the Rebellion of the people in this area and the skillful use of the Maguindanao Kris.

The Kris is the most common Moro sword found in Sulu and Mindanao. The Kris sword is extensively used by the Tausug, Samal and Yakan warriors.

The wave of each Kris denotes a flame or a serpent (depending on who has made it and for what purpose). The Kris with the most wave will always be carried by someone with the authority and believed to give the deepest thrust and could even go through the enemy's body. The waves are simply variations that tells a stranger where they came from, what region, or land, or their position in the community. The Kris has a rather vague history with folklore giving many varying accounts where some also believe that it is symbolic of the stingray's tail.

Some believe it's a design of the mythical serpent or dragon and some believe it has a distinct religious association. There are so many reasons why the blade of a Kris is shaped like a crawling serpent. Whatever the reasons are these, type of swords can deliver the most damage when used with both slash and thrust movements. Hacking works well with this sword due to its unique design.

### **Olis**

Olis is typically a rattan stick, the sticks were cut at an angle and fire hardened on the ends. Other types are made of a variety of hard woods like kamagong and bahi. These were used as an impact weapon and a thrusting weapon. Some are cut at an angle for thrusting. Some have ends hallowed and lead is added, others have a metal tip made from a can to make a cutting edge. Typically the one handed version is cut at the length of the user's arm. The two handed version was cut at about 42 inches long.



### **Pakal**



The Pakal Knife is a personal fighting knife, which has a razor sharp blade and has a very comfortable grip design. Also called "earth grip", "pakal grip" or "ice-pick grip", this knife is crafted for individual usage, and is modified by different tribes to make it more comfortable in a "standard grip" or "sac-sac grip".

Pakal is also used for pocket weapon that is sharpened on both ends - called doce puntas.

Some versions are made from carabo horn.

### **Palm Stick - aka - Doce Puntas**



### **Paltik**



Paltik is a home-made gun. It originated late in the Philippine-American War when guns and ammunition had become scarce. The most common form of the weapon was a gas pipe attached to a rifle stock. Usually some sort of wire was wrapped around the barrel to keep the pipe from expanding from the fire. There was a small hole at the bottom end of the barrel that a cigarette or match was placed to ignite the primer, which made aiming difficult. This also gave it the nickname the "Cigarette Gun". It was muzzle loaded and fired a medium sized bullet or musket ball.

Others made during WW-2 were more complicated using shot gun shell and were slam fired like a trombone.

### **Paltik Shotgun**



### **Pana**



Pana are classed into two types - Injun Pana and Pana. Injun Panas are bows and arrows. Pana is sling arrow made like a sling shot that fires small arrows made from nails, basic variation of the sling shot. Feathers are provided by chickens. These arrows are commonly poisoned with chicken waste to cause a blood infection. These were a commonly used weapon in the people's power revolution. These weapons are considered as dangerous as a firearm in the urban environment.

## **Panabas Axe**

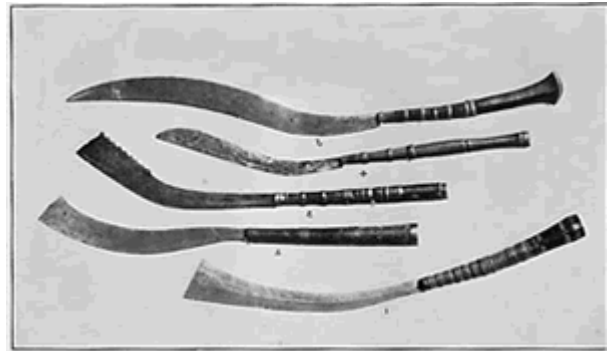
*Southern Philippines*



While probably originally an agricultural tool, this weapon soon gained its place as a weapon of war similar to the western battle-axe. The Panabas (also known as Tabas) is a chopping weapon

favored by the Moros of Mindanao. The Panabas ranged in size from 2 to 4 feet. This single-edged Axe/Sword, which takes on the appearance looking like a long handled Kukri, can deliver a deep meat cleaver like cut. Due to its clean cutting capabilities it was also sometimes used as an execution weapon. It was said that the warriors wielding the Panabas would follow the main group of warriors up front and would go in behind mopping up any survivors of the first wave of attack. It could be used by holding it with one hand or two hands. Either way, in combat this particular axe/sword can cut anything it comes in contact with right in half! As a weapon of execution, like the Kampilan, the Panabas also came to represent a Datu/Ruler's power/prestige in relation to his ability to control violence.

Also, like the Kampilan, the Panabas was not a weapon of common carry, but rather a weapon devoted either to court/ceremony/execution, or the campaign. The Panabas blade often features damascene patterning. On the spines of some Panabas one will find decorative file work. Panabas hilts were often wrapped in rattan bindings, though some featured no wrap, or had metal collars.



## **Pinute**

*Visayan*



The Pinute, a variation of the agricultural bolo machete, is a native tool for the Visayan people. Farmers and children alike in Visayan region can be seen in the jungles carrying this

while searching for food. It is a tip bolo meaning it was a short sword and daily work tool. This can effectively chop bamboos and other woods. This can be a very deadly weapon not just for hunting and farming tool. They can be used as a draw knife for wood working.

## **Pira Cotabato**

*Southern Philippines*

The Pira Cotabato is a sword characterized by a wide tip and had a history of death behind it. It is widely used in the farms, seaside and the markets. It was used to cut poultry, whale meat, tuna and processing other large fish meats. The Yakan, a Philippine indigenous group in Mindanao, popularized this sword. Many were fearful of this Filipino sword because it was by the natives to decapitate their opponents.



## **Punyal**



The Punyal, also known as Kris knife, is a short bladed weapon crafted by the Maranaos which is dedicated not only for fighting but for other functions as well. It has the same characteristic as that of the Kris, only shorter. It has no finger protection, but instead, the tang extends back from the spine of the blade

so that the blade hangs below the handle, protecting the fingers from an opponent's blade. This also protects the fingers from getting closer to the edge during thrusts. Punyal is deemed by some as an important sidearm and is mostly seen in close quarter knife battle.

## **Sanduko**

*Visyan region*

It is a Visyan blade that designed to chop, using inertia to carry the blade cutting deeper. This blade had a Tenegre-Animalist hilt on it. One handed blade about 24-28 inches long with typical hooked hilt grip design. This is to prevent the loss when slippery or sweaty.



## **Sandukoy Daga**



The Sanduko is a top heavy blade that was brought in the Philippines by the early settlers from Indonesia. Used mainly for farming, trimming tree branches, and dressing animals for feast, the small dagger that goes with it serves as the cutter for things that the long blade cannot accomplish easily such as peeling

fruits, sharpening stick tips, and cutting the meat into small pieces.

Until revolution was called upon the Filipinos, these combinations of farming tools became very deadly weapons for resistance.

## **Sansibar**

*Leyte region*



Mainly the Sansibar was and still is used by the river men who cut bamboos and use it as floaters for their "bangka" or boats for local traveling. These same boatmen

also travel the seas to cross to the other islands in the Philippines. That is the reason why the Sansibar design reached other islands within the Philippines. You will see various popular designs of the Sansibar Sword approximately 5 different designs in the various islands where the Sansibar had found a home.

The name Sansibar was first called "pang sibak", which "pang" means "for" and "sibak" means "chop" in Filipino term. So pang sibak means "for chopping," later the term evolved into "pang sibar" which means the same in Tagalog. Other explanations are "san sibak," meaning "one" (san or isan or isang) and "chop" (sibak) so to put them two words together "san-sibak" means "one chop!" Then much later on the name Sansibar was adopted even though every Filipino dialect differs in almost every island. The hearing and the pronunciation of the word "Sansibar" changed until the occupation of America began... and then the word Sansibar was used as the standard name for this particular sword design. This history is one strong theory supported by strong beliefs of the Filipino people. Any other history of this sword is not well known because more popular swords like the "Katipunan" and "Pinute" were used by the katipuneros. Those swords are widely used in everyday tasks as tools of survival, and the Sansibar whose image, shape and style was temporality put aside. But then again, the Sansibar was also used by many of the katipuneros for all out combat purposes due to its perfectly engineered balance.

## **Sundang (Bolo) Tip Bolo**

The Sundang is believed to have originated in the 13th century on the island of Java in the Indonesian archipelago, and migrated to the Philippines, Malaysia, and various Southeast Asian countries. When used in combat the Sundang is primarily a slashing weapon but has dynamic thrusting power. Sundang is another word for bolo and is also called a tip bolo. It was used as agricultural tool as well.



### **Keris Sundang**

The Keris Sundang are believed to have originated in the 13th century on the island of Java in the Indonesian archipelago, and migrated to the Philippines, Malaysia, and various Southeast Asian countries. The Keris Sundang is very distinct in appearance with various shapes and sizes. The blade may either be straight or wavy or a combination. The blade widens near the handle with sharply pointed protrusions which act as a guards against an opponent's blade. Typically, Filipino swords Keris are larger and heavier than their Indonesian counterpart.



### **Susuwat**

*Southern Philippines*



Susuwat sword is a wide tipped sword with a triple prong tip designed to carry the cutting energy forward. It is one handed sword meant for chopping. Chisel edged blade would be made specific for a right or left handed person. One handed blade about 24-28 inches long with typical hooked hilt grip design. This is to prevent the loss when slippery or sweaty.

### **Tabak**



Tabak means sword/bolo in Tagalog no specific blade is listed.

### **Talibon**

The Talibong or Talibon is a sword that has an overstated belly and was commonly used by the ladies in the northern Philippines during the later part of the Spanish era and the early American regime. The Talibong was used as a hunting tool but during the Spanish era, it was carried by warriors to defend themselves. Its handle, at present, was modified for easy grip and for protection to fingers during encounter.





## Tenegre



The Tenegre sword comes from the Visayan region. The Tenegre swords are known for the Animal type hilts or monster-carving head handle.

These are animalist made blades. The blades were made with special Anting-Anting for owner in battle. One handed blade about 24-28 inches long with typical hooked hilt grip design. This is to prevent the loss when slippery or sweaty.

## Tirador



A slingshot.

## Tukon-Staff

A four foot long pole or staff used for caring a balanced load like buckets or bales was also used as self defense impact weapon.

## Utak

*Southern Philippines*

Utak sword is a wide tipped sword designed to carry the cutting energy forward. It is one handed sword meant for chopping. Chisel edged blade would be made specific for right or left handed person. The word Utak comes from Tagalog word brain! One handed blade about 24-28 inches long with typical hooked hilt grip design. This is to prevent the loss when slippery or sweaty.



## Visayan Barong

The Visayan Barong is a modified Barong sword which originated from the Tausag tribes of the Southern Philippines, and is one of the most popular weapons among the people of the Sultanate of Sulu.



Although fancy looking, with its unique leaf-shaped blade, this type of bolo was proven to be capable of cleaving a man in two. Its length ranges from 8 to 22 inches and it is crafted thick and heavy to support its slicing power. The Sulu sultanate also imported barong swords from China which have distinguished Chinese characters stamped in it. When the sword crossed the Visayas it was modified to suit the peoples' needs, a hilt was added at its spine, and the handle was resized due to the small hands of the local workers. The unique leaf-shaped blade makes the Barong recognizable from other Filipino weaponry. Barong Bolos can be maneuvered with ease, and has a comfortable grip.

### Visyan Blades

Visyan Blades differ in design based upon need. Here is collect of agricultural blades.

1. The all purpose Bolo.
2. Haras used for cutting high grass
3. The Cutsilyo generally used to kill a pig, generally a butchering and de-boning knife.
4. A smaller Bolo.
5. The Bolo-guna, a bolo specifically shaped to remove roots.
6. The Garab, used to cut 'Humay' –rice.
7. Sundang, supposedly mainly used to open coconuts.
8. Sundang is also an Indonesian/Malay word for a sword like weapon as in Sundang Keris). The Sundang (also called 'tip Bolo' or Itak in Tagalog).



### War Goluk/Gulok



The Golok is the only sword in the Philippines that does not have a pointy tip. The War Golok is a simple tool that is used by the Igorot tribes. The tribes consider this as their “multi-tool,” for it can be used to chop wood for fire, carve wood and create decorations, for

butchering meat, peeling and slicing fruits, and many more uses. The tribal wars that existed between tribes found another use for the War Golok so it evolved to become their personal weapon.

## Wasay



An axe in Cebuano are, also called Ibaroy axe, Kalinga axe and Bontoc axe.

## Yo-Yo

In the Philippines around 1500, the Yo-Yo was a weapon. It consisted of a four pound stone attached to a rope about 20 feet long. Tribesmen used it in two ways. When hunting, they stood off to one side, held one end of the rope and threw the rock towards the legs of an animal. The rope became tangled around the animals legs, and with a tug, the hunter brought the animal down. Against enemies, the stones would be dropped on their heads. The tribesmen would quickly recover the stones, ready for a second blow if necessary.

The below listed, contributed to making this project happen and shared their love of the Filipino martial arts, so I ask that you support them as they have supported the Filipino martial arts community.



**Some of the Major Weapons of the Moros**

**Federico Malibago** is a Filipino-American with a keen interest in Philippine history and culture. For him there is no artistic match for the beauty that is found in the weaponry of the tribes that compromise the Bangsamoro (Moro Nation). Hopefully as time goes by Federico is hoping to be able to have more information and history about the Moro's and their culture as well as other items of interest. Visit his website [Moro Swords a Webpage by Federico](#) for a full list of the

sources used for this article, as well as further information on this subject, and if you have any questions about Moro swords please feel free to **Email** him.

**Federico's Moro Sword:** [home.earthlink.net/~federicomalibago](http://home.earthlink.net/~federicomalibago)



**Macao Museum of Art -History of Steel in East Asia** I found extremely informative  
[www.arscives.com/historysteel/philippines.introduction.htm](http://www.arscives.com/historysteel/philippines.introduction.htm)



**Ron Kosakowski** without his careful research and cataloging it would not have been possible to complete this project. If you want any of these swords he has them in stock.

**Traditional Filipino Weapons**

847 Hamilton Ave., Waterbury, CT. 06706

Phone 203 596 9073

**Email:** [Sandata4UsAll@aol.com](mailto:Sandata4UsAll@aol.com)

**Website:** [TraditionalFilipinoWeapons.com](http://TraditionalFilipinoWeapons.com)

## Filipino Weapons Dealers



**EskrimaKaliArnis.Com**  
E.K.A - THE MOST COMPETITIVE SUPPLIERS AROUND.

### Buy Direct from the Philippines and save money!

Hi, my name is Simon and I'm the "Owner" of E.K.A.Com. Though "Owner" sounds too corporate for my liking! I prefer to say that I'm the person that will be buying the items and ensuring that they reach you safely and, most importantly of all, that you are satisfied.

We are committed to bringing you the best FMA Equipment at the best possible prices. If there's anything at all you would like but don't see when visiting the website please contact us! We are always improving our stock range and listening to our customers.



All the best with your training,  
Simon McMahon.  
[eskrimakaliarnis.com](http://eskrimakaliarnis.com)



If you have any questions at all about our products or anything related just drop me a line at [info@eskrimakaliarnis.com](mailto:info@eskrimakaliarnis.com) and I will do my best to answer them.

We accept all Major Credit/Debt Cards, along with PayPal and Google Checkout.



*DeKiti - Tirsia - Siradas*

**Grandmaster Jerson Tortal Jr.**

1. **1" inch dia. Kamagong Stick 28"** - \$10 each.
2. **1" inch Rattan Sticks 28"** - \$6 each.
3. **Training blades** - Talibong, Ginunting (live blade) - \$ 45 each.
4. **Kerambit Blade** - (With Sharpened Blade) - \$25 each  
(Without Sharpened Blade) - \$20 each
5. **Arnis Bag** (good for - 10 sticks) - \$7 each
6. **Training Instructional Video Tape**  
(By Grandmaster Jerson Tortal Jr.) - \$20 each



For orders or further inquiries contact: (63) 918 203-3201  
**Email:** [gqvillahermosa@yahoo.com](mailto:gqvillahermosa@yahoo.com)



[www.fmadirect.co.uk](http://www.fmadirect.co.uk)

**FMA Direct** is a UK-Filipino company formed back in 2006 as a subsidiary of Ramin Sports. Our Philippine manufacturing operation is modest with a 10000 sq ft shop situated 30 minutes drive from 'Manila International Airport' in Kamias, Quezon City (25 mins walk from the famous 'Araneta Coliseum' - where Muhammad Ali fought in the 'Thrilla in Manila').

Our primary focus is the manufacture of bespoke sports and leisure garments.

We don't just manufacture FMA equipment. We manufacture t-shirts, hooded tops, sports clothing etc. and can also make unique designs to customer specification. We generally only prefer to manufacture bespoke provided the minimum order is 50.

**FMA Direct**

16 The Pines  
Cringleford, England NR4 7LT  
0207 1939 560

**Email:** [sales@fmadirect.co.uk](mailto:sales@fmadirect.co.uk)  
**Website:** [www.fmadirect.co.uk](http://www.fmadirect.co.uk)



**Arnis Association International Inc.**  
**Senior Master Rodillo "Rodel" Dagooc**  
108 - Balayong, Bauan, Batangas  
Philippines 4201  
(043) 727-8502 / Cell: (0919) 507-2916  
**rodeldagooc@yahoo.com**  
**www.smokingsticks.multiply.com**



### Smoking Stick Arnis Cane Maker Products

Rattan Arnis Sticks (w/engraving)	Remy Presas Bolo (single-edged)
Rattan Arnis Sticks - w/spiral design (without engraving)	Double Edged Bolo
Labsika Arnis Sticks (plain: 4 - 5 knots)	Kris Bolo
Labsika Arnis Sticks (plain: 6 - 7 knots)	Pinute Bolo
Labsika Arnis Sticks (plain: 8 - above knots)	Barong
Arnis Stick Bahi Wood	Kampilan
Arnis Stick Kamagong Wood	Kerambit
Arnis Case (2 sticks)	Aluminum Training Knives/Kris Daggers (w/Kamagong handle)
Arnis Case (6 sticks w/Philippine Flag)	Bangkaw / Long Pole (made of Bahi wood - metal tip)
Arnis Case (large - roll type)	Bangkaw / Long Pole (rattan wood)
Arnis Uniforms (s, m, l)	Bangkaw / Long Pole (rattan wood w/engraving)
Arnis Uniforms (xl, xxl, xxxl)	Kris Kamagong Dagger
Arnis Belts (for all ranks)	Pinuti Kamagong Dagger
Bahi Flat Stick	Kamagong Dulo-Dulo
Bahi Flat Stick (w/metal tip)	Horn Dulo-Dulo
Padded Stick	
Padded 5 ft long pole	

**For Price information or Ordering Contact:** (043) 727-8502 / Cell: (0919) 507-2916  
Or **Email:** rodeldagooc@yahoo.com

### AKDPhilippines

**Korambit Aluminum Knife:** non sharp blade with kamagong hard wood black handle 1,200.00 pesos includes shipment, 10 % off for whole sale over 50 pieces.

**Korambit Rubber Knife:** 120.00 pesos includes shipment, 10 % off whole sale over 100 pieces.

**Korambit Military Combat knife:** authentic with sharpen blade \$300 U.S.D. includes tax and shipment.

**Korambit knife and 2 Rattan sticks w/case**  
(standard 28inches): 200 Pesos, includes shipping and tax.



**AAK Lightweight Polyester Camouflage Uniforms:** 3 sizes, V cut - \$50 USD includes shipping and handling outside the Philippines.

**Traditional Red Uniform Pants:** Cotton canvas, garterized with waist draw string - \$50 each.

**Contact:** Frank Aycoco (0919) 883-1120  
or **Email:** [Click Here](#)



## Giron Balisong Store

Joceln "Ateng" Giron  
 Mahabang Ludlod Taal  
 Batangas, Philippines  
 (043) 408-1674  
 (0915) 337-6936  
 (0920) 441-3982

**Email:** gironbalisong@yahoo.com.ph

Need a ride to get to the store contact them and they will arrange.  
 Print this advertisement and mention the FMA Digest and get a Discount



## Master Reynaldo Postrado Engraved Arnis Sticks

Beautifully hand engraved arnis sticks.

Get your school logo, style or organizations name or your personal name engraved on an arnis stick. Give an engraved arnis stick to your students or fellow practitioners.

Each arnis stick professionally hand engraved. Send your design and receive a quote. Order one or order several.

Get a 5% discount mention the FMA Digest

For price quotes on designs email

Master Reynaldo Postrado at: [liping\\_maharlikare@yahoo.com](mailto:liping_maharlikare@yahoo.com)







[soteco.webs.com](http://soteco.webs.com)



[www.pmasupplies.com](http://www.pmasupplies.com)



[www.eskrimador-supplies.com](http://www.eskrimador-supplies.com)



[www.sandatacrafts.com](http://www.sandatacrafts.com)

Campana Arnis Sticks  
Cebu City, Philippines  
63 (917) 623-2945

Contact: [Click Here](#) / Sample: [Click Here](#)



[www.arnisimporters.com](http://www.arnisimporters.com)



[www.stickman-escrima.com](http://www.stickman-escrima.com)

## Keith Roosa Hand Made Wooden Weaponry



Keith Roosa hand makes many different designs including Kampilans, Kris, Bolos, Pinutes, and many Indonesian blades. He also makes custom trainers for people that send him their own design.

Keith Roosa prices vary because of availability and cost of the hardwoods he uses. The Presas Bolos and the Abanikos will sell for \$70. He makes a cheaper line that sells for about \$20 less, which have parachute cord wrapped handles. Keith Roosa's prices sometimes scare people off until they have the weapon in their hands and feel the balance and see the quality the work. Each one is hand built and not off an assembly line.



Bram Frank's Abanikos are made from Bolivian rosewood w/ zebra wood handles (left) and purple heart w/ bubinga handles (right).



The Presas bolos in the second picture are made from macaucaba, which has the hardness of kamagong. The left one has Birdseye maple handles and the right one has cocobolo handles.



Different Bolo and a few Abanikos designs



**Keith Roosa**  
Hand Made Wooden  
Weaponry  
Inquiries: **Email**



## **Brennan Blades**

By Guro Scott Brennan

P.O. Box 2331

Friday Harbor, Washington 98250

(360) 378-9732

**Email**

Friday Harbor, Washington USA

Excellent Custom Training Blades! Modern or Classical, it doesn't matter Guro Scott can duplicate, your blade. Excellent craftsmanship and durability!



## Hand Made Weaponry



Made by Grandmaster Fred Lazo, the weaponry that he creates is magnificent. The craftsmanship is professional and unique to every piece.

For questions or inquires on purchasing weaponry, you can contact: Grandmaster Fred Lazo at: **Email:** [Click Here](#) or (813) 973-1620



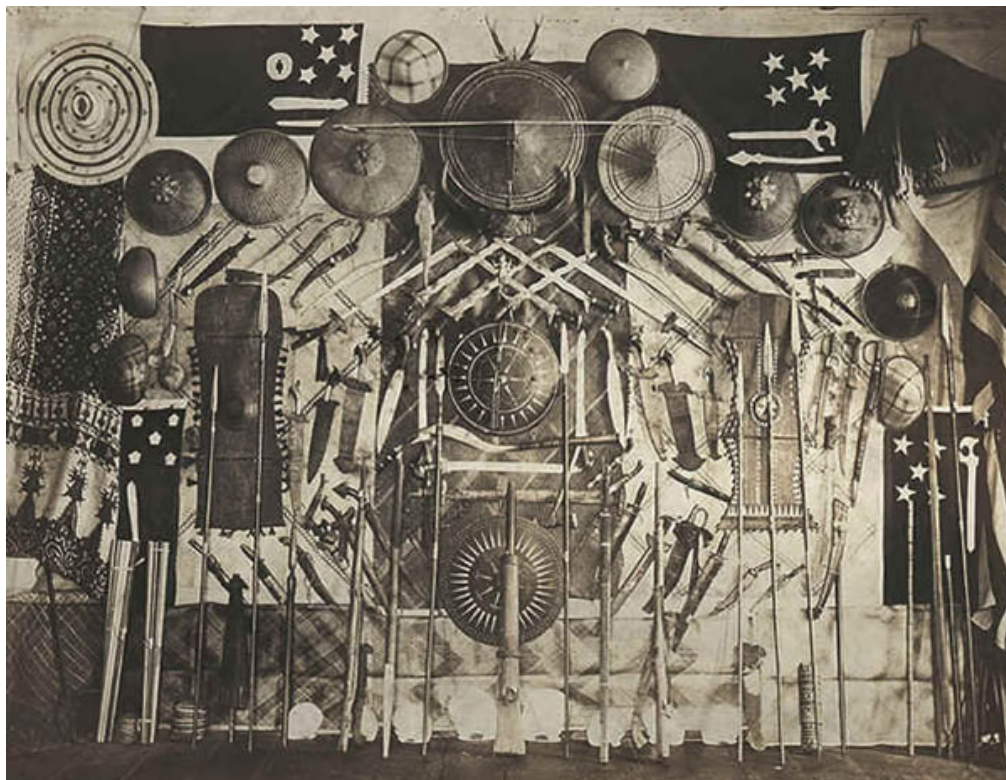
[www.kaligear.com](http://www.kaligear.com)

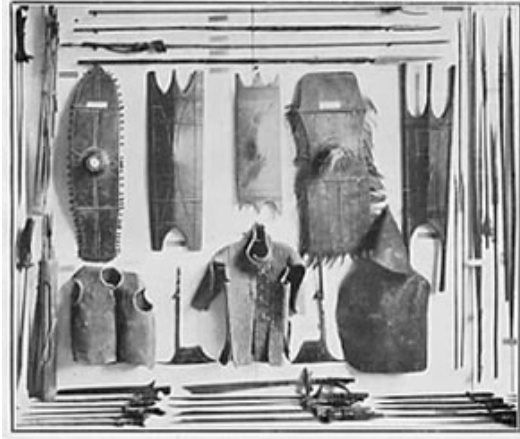
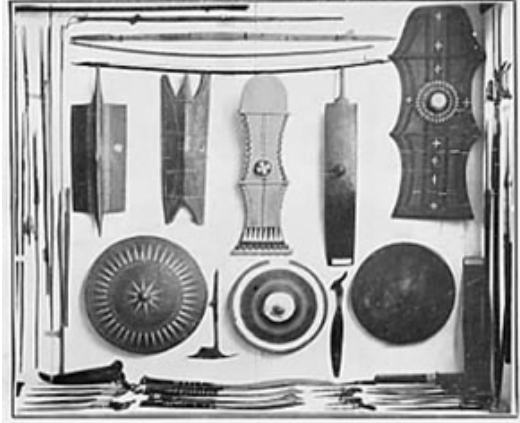
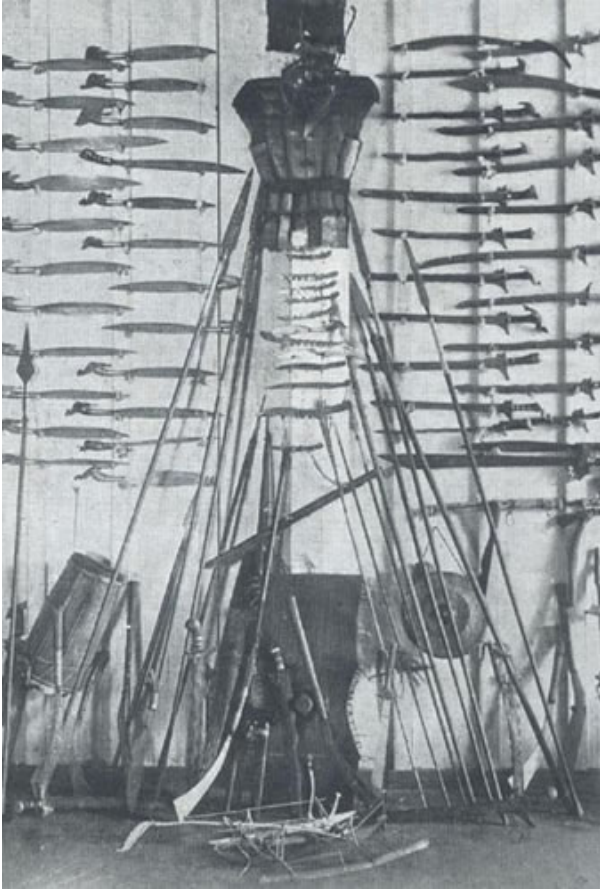


[www.eskrimacustoms.com](http://www.eskrimacustoms.com)



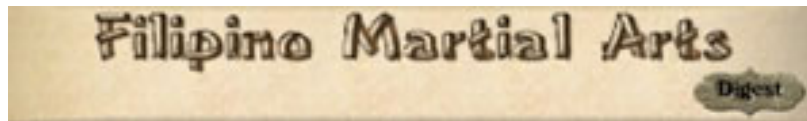
[www.takknife.com](http://www.takknife.com)







**Rapid Journal**



**Filipino Martial Arts Digest**

**Register your FMA School  
Post your Event**

**Advertise with the FMA Digest**

An Ad in the Filipino Martial Arts Digest can create Business. Your Advertisement for Filipino martial arts equipment, books, videos etc, can be included in the Filipino Martial Arts digest.

Website Advertisement - Free

Subscribers Online {e-book} digest - \$5 per Issue

**Website Application  
Hard Copy Application**