

Prior to its colonization, the Philippines already had at least 16 different types of writing systems at work. *Baybayin*, which was widespread among coastal groups, became the most popular and documented of scripts since the Spanish studied and used it to communicate with the island's inhabitants. The Roman alphabet replaced *Baybayin* in the archipelago, save for the upland and remote villages which the colonizers failed to reach. This is why the ancient syllabic script of the indigenous people of Mindoro, called *Surat Mangyan*, and those of Palawan, simply called *Surat*, remained intact and preserved to this day. In contrast to the Mangyan of Mindoro who continue to use *Surat Mangyan* to communicate, the Tagbanua and Pala'wan script is preserved as a cultural relic.

