Ginhawa: Concepts of Emotion and Resolution in *Pangayaw* Killings among the Agusan Manobo

SHEILA TAMPOS-CABAZARES

ABSTRACT

Pangayaw, a term widely shared among Austronesian speakers, is used by different indigenous groups in the southern Philippines to refer to different forms of killing such as prestige killing, slave raid, revenge killing, and armed revolt. Based on ethnographic and archival data gathered in a span of three years, this paper deals with the conditions in which pangayaw as armed revolt and revenge killing were waged in Agusan Manobo communities. A discussion on the Manobo concept of ginhawa, literally 'breath', is offered as a lens to view these conditions. The concept is construed here as a process of taking in a socially constituted pain; the buildup of which—if unaddressed—is released through rage. This category is a relevant framework in understanding the use of physical force among marginalized indigenous groups as a last recourse to disengage from the social order from which their pain emanates. Ginhawa also foregrounds the role of traditional arbitration mechanisms before pain manifests as rage.

Keywords: ginhawa, pangayaw, Manobo, pain, rage, revenge killing

Introduction

A number of contemporary studies on violence among marginalized and indigenous groups put emphasis on the broader socio-cultural, political, economic, and historical contexts in which such forms of violence emerge (Aijmer and Abbink 2000; Hinton 2005; Whitehead 2002). This attempt to situate and make sense of violence contrasts with the view that violence is about a breakdown of meaning or an innate evolutionary tendency (Chagnon 1988; de Waal 2000; Lorenz 2010). The interest instead is in the mechanisms which produced, maintained, or transformed a violent phenomenon.

It is in this light that I present this paper on specific forms of violence among indigenous peoples in southern Philippines, Mindanao. While the practice of certain killings referred to as *pangayaw* appears enigmatic or pathological from an outside perspective, it is important to understand how the concerned communities make sense of it. The word pangayaw is used among several Lumad (a collective term for the non-Islamized indigenous peoples of Mindanao) groups to refer to various forms of killing, which include slave raid, prestige killing, revenge killing, and armed revolt. Linguistic and archaeological evidence suggest that in prehispanic times, pangayaw (variations include *pangajow*, *kayaw* and *mangayaw*) was practiced among different groups in the Philippines (Isorena 2004, 75). The Austronesian proto-form *mangayaw, which means 'go headhunting,' further implies the significance of this practice not just to Philippine groups but to a number of Austronesian-speaking peoples in general (Blust 1999, 68). However, this does not mean that the practice remains unchanged. As argued in this paper, different large-scale processes such as colonialism and economic marginalization have varying effects on how pangayaw is adapted among the Agusan Manobo. Hence, in studying such a practice, emphasis on its socio-economic and socio-political contexts is needed.

The Agusan Manobo today would tend to qualify pangayaw into different forms: slave raiding, armed revolt, revenge killing, and prestige killing. These acts may vary depending on the purpose, the manner of execution, and temporal relevance, among others (see Tampos 2015). In this paper, I focused on two forms of pangayaw —armed revolt and revenge killing. One reason for this choice in emphasis is that armed revolt and revenge killing are forms of pangayaw which are practiced today among different Lumad groups or that have explicitly remained an option amid their socio-political and economic struggles (Aksasato 2011, Badian 2015 Gaspar 2011 Tiu 2005 Wenk 2007). Hence, understanding these killings is both theoretically relevant and timely. Another reason is the accessible body of references regarding revenge killing and armed revolt among the Lumad made available through missionary and ethnographic texts. For the past three years, I have also gathered first-hand ethnographic narratives from communities who experienced or engaged in revenge killings.

I examined these killings as practiced by the Manobo of Agusan del Sur, henceforth Agusan Manobo, in northeastern Mindanao. As a general ethnolinguistic category, the Manobo is one of the largest indigenous groups in the Philippines. The Agusan Manobo subgroup occupies large areas of the Agusan River valley and the eastern slope of the Diwata mountain range (Gelacio et al. 2000, 2). In 2002, there was an estimated 60,000 speakers of the Agusan Manobo language (Lewis et al. 2015).

With the incongruous emphases among the witness, recipient, and the performer of the action, I found it perplexing to come up with an understanding of the practice without foregrounding a certain perspective. It appeared that an emphasis on the interpretation of the victims would attenuate the claims of the actors, and vice versa. In the 1980s, when an "anthropology of violence" started to emerge as a discourse, David Riches (1986, 3) already articulated a similar paradox in pointing out that violence is "very much a word of those who witness, or who are victims of certain acts, rather than of those who perform them... Yet what is required is that performance should be understood and explained."

More recently, a number of anthropological studies focus on why violence occurs the way it does and how it is being transformed (Bourgois 1995; Gaspar 2011; Goldstein 2005; Hinton 2005; Whitehead 2004). This requires attention on the conditions in which the acts considered as violent became an option for a social group. Here, I examine the historical and contemporary conditions in which the Agusan Manobo waged pangayaw in the form of revenge killing and armed revolt. The historical discussion focuses on the imposition of forced resettlement and vassal schemes during the Spanish colonial period as a context for the Caraga Revolt of 1631. The emphasis in considering contemporary conditions is on the instability of the present conflict resolution mechanisms and rampant economic poverty, which the Manobo relate to contemporary revenge killings.

It is not my intention, however, to link the vast temporal gap between these two distant periods. This would imply that the practice remains unchanged. In fact, the opposite is being argued: by citing pangayaw as armed revolt and revenge killings in different periods, it will be shown how the practice, in the light of ginhawa, has undergone changes in varying socio-political and socio-economic contexts—namely, colonialism and economic marginalization.

Among the relevant concepts to be considered when viewing these conditions are those that relate to emotion, since these concepts interrelate with ideas about the self, social relations, social order, and morality within a social group (Averill 1980 Lutz 1998 Lutz and White 1986). Catherine Lutz (1998) argues that a cultural construction of emotion is a way both of understanding the world and of engaging in it. Hence, it is productive to view social events in a social group through concepts of emotion, since the use and reproduction of these concepts are predicated on social relations.

In studying Bugkalot headhunting, Michelle Rosaldo (2007) also places an emphasis on 'emotion concepts' specifically of guilt and shame. For her, 'guilt' is about an inward, impulsive self that requires constraining. Following this, she added that headhunters are devoid of guilt. Instead, it is 'shame' that makes headhunters kill as they seek to be equal with peers. This 'shame' manifests the social self in pursuit of autonomy and sameness. Being different or distinct, such as being the only adult bachelor in a group of married male peers, produces shame, which, along with envy at other's headhunting feats, contributes to a feeling of "weight" or "heaviness." Headhunting helps in casting off this weight. With this argument, her study is in line with Lutz's assertion that emotion is better viewed as involving social dimensions rather than as representations of something non-intentional or intrinsic.

Adhering to the claim that concepts of emotion could provide insights into the practice of killing, this inquiry focuses on *ginhawa*, literally 'breath,' which is a salient concept in the everyday life of the Agusan Manobo. Ginhawa, like pangayaw, is another term shared among various Austronesian groups. Among the contemporary Agusan Manobo, it is linked to concepts of emotion and resolution. It is argued here that the concept is construed as a process of taking in a socially constituted form of pain and releasing its buildup through rage, which could ultimately manifest in killings. This transition from pain to rage is avertable through proactive conciliatory mechanisms as evinced by the efficacy of traditional dispute arbitration processes.

In the next section, I will briefly discuss the methods employed in this study. This will be followed by an elaboration on the concept of ginhawa as it relates to the domains of emotion and resolution. This concept is employed in the paper to view the historical conditions associated with the Caraga armed revolt of 1631 and the contemporary conditions linked with recent revenge killings. A concluding argument will then be offered in the final section.

Methods

I gained entry to the research sites through previous outreach engagements in some Agusan Manobo areas. It was through these interactions that I gained the endorsement of some traditional leaders to conduct the inquiry on such a sensitive topic. The research assistance I received from coordinators of a non-profit organization was also very helpful in establishing rapport with the members of the community. This particular non-profit organization supports the local farmers in their struggle for land rights. I gathered the data through semi-structured interviews, informal focus group discussions, and participant-observation during five periods of fieldwork that spanned three years. Following ethical standards, the semi-structured interviews were designed to gather in-depth views on the practice from key informants. Most of the informant quotes cited in the body, however, were made possible not just with formal interviews but more importantly through established rapport, trust, and familiarity with the everyday flow in the community. This is the relevance of the participant-observation method, which involves learning about the setting and the people through participation in their events, rituals, interactions, and daily routines. Informal focus group discussions, or spontaneous group conversations that would commonly develop during participant-observation, further contributed towards more in-depth views. A total of 56 adult Agusan Manobo with different socio-economic backgrounds served as key informants in this study. The inclusion criteria for purposive sampling included the informant's ethnolinguistic background, which should be Agusan Manobo, and the extent of his or her knowledge about pangayaw. The sample included leaders who are the arbitrators in dispute settlements, individuals who have participated in a pangayaw attack before, and other members of the community who had witnessed such an act first-hand. Other informants were identified through chain referral sampling. Each interview session was audio-recorded, typically taking 60 to 90 minutes. I transcribed a total of 53 hours of audio recordings and did a line-by-line coding through NVivo 8. It was through the coding that ginhawa emerged as a salient category in the narratives.

Ginhawa: Emotion and Resolution

The Austronesian word ginhawa has a Proto-Malayo-Polynesian form *nihawa,* which generally refers to a seat of affections and a state of well being (Blust and Trussel 2015). Zeus Salazar (1977) had long pointed out the importance of such a concept, along with other cultural categories such as *loob* and *kaluluwa* in understanding the Filipino psychology. He viewed ginhawa to be on the opposite side of the same continuum as kaluluwa (soul), and as linked to non-intentional, involuntary aspects of 'feeling' while kaluluwa is associated with awareness and consciousness (Salazar 1977, 131). Among other Lumad groups in Mindanao, ginhawa relates to 'see/think/mind' and 'feel/heart/love,' among others (Paluga 2012). Myfel Paluga (2012) suggests that the concept, along with *banwa* ("community"), is highly relevant in studying different Lumad groups, for it provides an understanding that intersects multiple domains—philosophical, psychological, ecological, and political.

I intend to present the nuances of the Agusan Manobo ginhawa as a seat of both 'feeling' and 'thinking.' This implies that contrary to Salazar who dichotomizes ginhawa and kaluluwa, the Agusan Manobo view non-intentionality and awareness, not in opposition but in mutual inclusivity. It is a sensorial state that reflects both forethought and involuntary response. The 'thinking' aspect of ginhawa as a state of emotion is made apparent in its translation as 'mind' or 'thought' (*huna-huna)* in the second language of the Agusan Manobo, Binisaya. In colloquial use, the concept is most commonly related to an unpleasant state of being preoccupied with 'pain' or *sakit* and to the release of the buildup of such pain through 'rage' or *kayangot*. Although there are many other senses of the word ginhawa (e.g., gratefulness and serenity), pain and rage are given emphasis here since these were the only senses that prominently figure in the context of pangayaw killings. Below is a discussion of sakit (pain) and kayangot (rage) as employed by the Agusan Manobo in understanding pangayaw killings and different events in their everyday life.

***Sakit*[1] (Pain).** A situation wherein one is constrained to think of other relevant matters due to a pressing and unresolved issue at hand often merits the phrase "*masakit to ginhawa ko*" (literally, 'painful to my breathing'). In narratives relating to pangayaw, the phrase emerged most often in the discussion of a pre-pangayaw phase. As a farmer in his 50s put it, "When someone harms your loved one, steals your carabao, your wife, your land, or when one did not keep his promise… a lot of things can hurt your ginhawa." Other common situations include an inconsiderate disturbance and an accumulation of unpaid debts that are usually incurred for the purchase of costly fertilizers during planting seasons.

One's capacity to grasp this sense of pain is 'learned,' not intuitive. It is often said that the potential of a male Manobo to wage a pangayaw is made certain when he starts to farm, for this is when "one learns about pain" such as being disenfranchised from his land. Feeling pain disrupts a person's flow of ginhawa leading to one's inability to think of anything else. This is apparently different from physical hurt. As an Agusan Manobo mother pointed out, physical punishment among children is unproductive for it only generates pain that is not yet within the grasp of a child. This is grounded on their view of pain as a state that is both felt and understood.

Pain is the most salient quality associated with ginhawa among the Agusan Manobo today. It appears that one's ginhawa is in pain because one is processing (inhales or takes in) an experience rather than merely displaying an instinctive reaction to it. Pain makes explicit a relationship between what is acceptable and what is not. It emerges from interpersonal situations involving certain social boundaries, ethics, expectations, and forethought.

Given its relevant status in the social domain, one's disrupted ginhawa or pain is an important consideration when dealing with a fellow. For instance, horizontal lines called *guhot* can be engraved on a wooden post using a bolo or knife to display pain and warn others about it (Tampos 2016, 5). Carved whenever one is transgressed, the lines would be maintained in an ascending series on a wooden post outside the house, visible to the neighbors. Retaliation is warranted as soon as the series, which would start at ankle-level, reaches the same length as the individual's full height. Shared knowledge within a group as to the social dimensions of pain underlies this sort of custom.

It is clear to the Agusan Manobo that pain signifies one's normative relations with others.

***Kayangot* (Rage).** Rage or kayangot is another salient category in narratives relating to pangayaw. It is viewed as resulting from pain, or an accumulation of pain that can no longer be contained. As previously discussed, pain is not merely about 'feeling' but also 'thinking.' Hence, rage is viewed not as an instinctive response but as an outcome of a process—that is, taking in pain—which involves an evaluation of social relations. As a 46-year old male farmer stated,

> One cannot be enraged unless hurt… Kayangot often ensues from disrespect, when people do things without regard to your feeling, your existence; you're treated as if you're dead. It would make you wonder, 'Maybe I'm dead and they can no longer see me?' Otherwise, why would someone disrespect you? You must be invisible... to get no respect.

In pangayaw narratives, rage, like pain, is most commonly mentioned in the pre-pangayaw phase. During the actual pangayaw, the most salient category associated with ginhawa is fear. Fear (*hedok*) guides an attacking party to be very attentive and the party under attack to be very vigilant. Meanwhile, in a post-pangayaw scenario, ginhawa is often characterized as *panuyusow* meaning 'relief through expelled steam.'

However, there are means to address pain other than to let it out through rage. *Husoy,* or traditional arbitration, is considered the most effective of these. The concerned parties and at least one traditional leader or *datu* participate in the husoy. In a recent case for instance, the refusal of a man to marry his pregnant girlfriend led to rumors that the woman must have had multiple partners since her boyfriend explicitly expressed doubts about the authenticity of her claim. The enraged father of the pregnant woman started gathering their kin to wage a retaliatory attack against the man and his family due to the reputational damage caused by the man's response to the news. A datu, a traditional rank of leadership which today is locally known as 'tribal chieftain,' stepped in and proactively conducted the customary arbitration process. The contentious discussion which lasted for more than twelve hours was concluded with a metaphor about a canoe: whoever was aboard when the canoe sank should be responsible for it regardless of the number of men with whom it had previously sailed. The man's family promised to provide a chainsaw and a carabao to the pregnant woman to support the child-to-be. Everyone was relieved given that the woman's kin were already "on the brink of erupting."

This traditional resolution mechanism is highly regarded in Agusan Manobo communities. It is a consistent claim that no feud was ever reignited after having been resolved through such an arbitration process. The institutionalization of these dispute resolution mechanisms implies that rage does not necessarily lead to vehemence. A proactive conciliatory engagement with the party who is in pain and enraged could prevent the disruptive ginhawa from manifesting into a raid. A pangayaw killing, therefore, is an expression of rage from accumulated pain that was not addressed, or transgressions that went unresolved. It emerges as a last recourse for a party deprived of a rightful assuagement. The same observation was made by John Garvan (1913) after years of ethnography with the Agusan Manobo when he said that among the Manobo the sword is "the final arbiter when conciliation fails" (202).

Pangayaw as Armed Revolt: The Case of the Caraga Uprising

The Caraga Revolt of 1631 is considered the first large-scale armed revolt among the Lumad against Spanish colonizers (Paredes 2013, 84). This was waged by different Lumad groups in the east and northeast Mindanao which started with the killing of a captain and a commander, along with twenty soldiers (Blair and Robertson 1911). Although the revolt ultimately failed, with its primary actors severely punished later, it is relevant in showing how pangayaw emphasizes the concept of resolution made apparent in the concept of ginhawa.

Colonial Impositions. As the Spanish government established its foothold in the region in the early 17th century, one of the colonial policies imposed on the natives was *reducción*, a forced resettlement scheme. Saturnino Urios was considered among the more successful missionaries in implementing this. Within just a year, he relocated and baptized at least 1,500 Manobo and Mandaya (Arcilla 1984). These new settlements, each consisting of around 20 houses were ordered to be built along the banks of rivers.

A number of natives refused to leave their ancestral land and stayed in the mountains after reduccion was implemented. Those who resettled in the *reducciónes* were said to struggle with the lowland climate and the constant ebb and storms in the area. Several women and children fell sick and died in a couple of weeks (Arcilla 1984, 236).

It was said that the goal of such arrangements was to train the Manobo "to live together in permanent communities under the authority of a non-relative" (Arcilla 1984, 240). In the reducciónes, the warrior chiefs were given the authority to govern over others outside of their respective clan and were incorporated into the colonial state as leaders.

Some of the leaders who were given such rank, however, later denunciated. Such was the case of Lingkuban. It was said that he regretted submitting to the government and to Christianity. He commanded his followers to stop attending catechetical lessons and raided neighboring villages, which led to the return of the residents to the mountains. Such actions caused the emptying of a number of resettlements. At around the same time as Lingkuban's withdrawal and rampage, a number of people in the resettlements were dying of hunger (Schreurs 1985, 86-91).

The Spanish resettlement scheme was not only for evangelization but also for increasing tributes for the Spanish Crown (Arcilla 1978, 31). Before reducción, an exacting trek was the only way to visit dispersed upland communities. With the hamlets near the river, collection and evangelization would be much easier especially given that with the absence of roads, travel by boat was the only efficient means of transportation at the time.

Amid hunger, natives were forced to give up their rice for tribute or to sell their produce to pay for tax. During bad harvest, some leaders in the reductions were reportedly thrown into jail for failing to collect the full quota. Additionally, late tax payments incurred a surcharge (Demetrio 1987, 307).

Armed Revolt and *Ginhawa*. Over three decades from the arrival of the Spaniards and the implementation of colonial policies, an organized plan to wage a pangayaw in the form of an uprising emerged. In 1630, a native from Surigao was sent to meet with Sultan Kudarat of the Maguindanao Sultanate to discuss the plan. An agreement was reached that in exchange for the support of the Moro group in the rebellion, the Lumad groups of the Caraga region would become vassals of the sultanate. With their strong armada, the Moro group was asked to aid in a series of attacks by the Manobo, Mandaya, and Kalagan in the provinces of Surigao, Agusan, and Davao Oriental. June of the following year, the plan materialized. Spanish officials, soldiers, priests, including their servants, were killed often through multiple stab wounds with a machete or lance. The upheaval lasted for months in different areas of the Caraga region (Schreurs 1985, 89-92).

The willingness of the natives to pay tribute to the Maguindanao sultanate in exchange for its aid in the uprising may seem to suggest that the natives did not revolt against the tribute collection per se. Peter Schreurs (1985) suggested that the uprising may have been due to fury against the landlords accumulated over a span of 30 years (89). If so, the concern appeared to focus on the manner in which the tributes were collected rather than the disputable presence of the forced collection in the first place.

I think a more curious question, however, was not about what instigated the revolt but why it took 30 years before it materialized. Individual cases of resistance as a response to oppressive conditions were already reported since the inception of Spanish colonial schemes (Arcilla 1984, 525; Demetrio 1987, 306; Paredes 2013, 83; Schreurs 1985, 87). The interval between the oppressive colonial impositions and the large-scale uprising could offer a relevant perspective on the nature of this form of pangayaw.

The gap between the accumulation of pain brought about by oppressive conditions and the expression of this buildup of pain through rage could be qualified as a period when other resolution mechanisms were sought. For instance, in the case of the warrior chief Lingkuban who waged attacks as a form of resistance, it was reported that he demanded one hundred pesos from the government as indemnity for having lost his slaves after the imposition of the reduccion (Arcilla 1984, 236). While this seemed exploitative from the perspective of the Spaniards with whom he negotiated, the demand was consistent with the compensatory nature of the traditional resolution process or husoy.

Compensation is not merely an economic gain to the aggrieved but more importantly is an act that would make concrete one's recognition of the need to restore the disrupted ginhawa of the offended party. A concept called *dinatu* within the traditional resolution process maintains that it is irrelevant whether the compensation given is much lower than the actual demand as long as indemnification is provided. Lingkuban was aggrieved not just because he lost his slaves but because he was stripped of his capacity to assert autonomy over his traditional territory especially during a crisis—that is, famine. Prior to colonial rule, leadership of warrior chiefs greatly depended on their capacity to feed their followers in times of hunger (Scott 1994, 267). This following would be maintained or increased through status earned from successful prestige killings or raids in enemy territories. With the Spanish colonial schemes, options to assert leadership among warrior chiefs like Lingkuban became very limited.

With ginhawa as a lens, an uprising, be it at the individual level such as Lingkuban's or the large-scale Caraga revolt, is not simply about pain but *unaddressed* pain. As an armed revolt, pangayaw is a last recourse among subordinate groups to address pain when other conciliatory mechanisms failed or remained unattainable. The important highlight here is the search for resolution among the subjugated groups. An armed revolt against more powerful forces signifies that resolution mechanisms had been exhausted or had remained inaccessible. This emphasis is important since these killings emerge as a kind of resolution in the absence or failure of conciliatory means, rather than as an instinctive or thoughtless response to pain.

This also appears relevant in a more recent armed revolt among the B'laan, also a Lumad group, against a mining concessionaire in southern Mindanao. In a 2011 pangayaw attack that killed armed contingents of the company, the group released a statement through a radio broadcast which is translated as follows:

> For the past five years since Xstrata [the mining company] started its exploration of our lands, we have tried to tell them peacefully that we do not want the mines... But they have been adamant in their desire to extract the gold and copper from our lands... We tried to negotiate, we tried to barricade, we tried to petition... So now there is no other recourse but to fight back." (Aksasato 2011)

While such case is different in context from the Caraga revolt of 1631, its emphasis on the failed conciliation mechanisms is highly relevant. Attempts at or hopes for resolution among the natives may explain why the Caraga revolt took three decades to materialize since the inception of oppressive colonial actions. Hence, resolution mechanisms play a crucial role in the transition from pain to rage which manifests in pangayaw as an armed revolt.

Pangayaw as Revenge Killing: Contemporary Cases

While pangayaw as armed revolt is waged against more powerful forces such as a colonial authority or corporate company, revenge killing among the Agusan Manobo and the Lumad in general is often between two villages or kinship groups. In this section, I am concerned with the conditions that the Agusan Manobo associate with contemporary revenge killings and how such conditions may be viewed using salient concepts in the Manobo cultural milieu, specifically the notions of emotion and resolution in ginhawa. As previously mentioned, it is not the intention of this article, however, to weave the vast temporal gap between these contemporary cases and the 17th century revolt discussed in the preceding section. Rather than assume that pangayaw persisted, it is more productive to view how the practice was adapted through time within varying large-scale processes. In this section, I will discuss pangayaw in light of ginhawa as adapted over time in the context of economic marginalization.

Economic Poverty. Economic poverty was most commonly associated with discussions relating to revenge killings. The narratives on revenge killings in Agusan Manobo communities gathered for this study were recent, from the 1990s onward. Below is a statement of a farmer who was once part of a revenge attack:

> The everyday struggle of the people here is to find rice to feed their families. Logging will be useless someday when all the trees are exhausted. Sustainable livelihood is what can stop the pangayaw killings here. If people can feed their children well, they will feel bad about the idea of killing or being killed.

A farmer from another village who had also engaged in a revenge killing seemed to echo the same view:

> If you're poor, you only have very little to live for. If anyone messed with the very few things you have, that's about it. If they [the government] can provide us with good sources of living, that's when these killings will stop. You won't bother yourself preparing to attack someone if you have a kid in college or a productive farm, would you? You will think twice before you do something, otherwise it will affect your kid who is in college or your successful farm. But what do we have here? None of our kids go to school. They marry at an early age and become servants or laborers in the city... The typhoons always damaged our farms. We have nothing.

Aggrieved parties who are recipients of a retaliatory attack in revenge killings would usually contest the use of retaliatory killing as a response to an offense committed. Yet, despite this contestation, aggrieved parties share with the actors an emphasis on economic poverty when it comes to making sense of the recent retaliatory attacks they experienced. Narratives regarding a revenge killing case in 2012 provide an example. An old man visiting from another village was killed in a juvenile riot. The old man's kin waged a retaliatory attack which led to the killing of a migrant farmer who was from the same village as the youth who allegedly caused the old man's death. For over a month that the people anticipated the retaliatory attack, more than 80 families (which is around 90 percent of the entire village population) evacuated to neighboring villages to avoid the crossfire. Unable to tend their farms, those who stayed behind subsisted on mere well water for days. Although the residents condemned the attack and the individuals who waged it, they shared the same views on how economic poverty is linked to this form of pangayaw. This is apparent in the statement below:

> We are all poor here. They [the attackers] also worry about providing food for their family on a daily basis... They should have just filed a case at the police station. But, instead, they did this [attack] which affected my family, my neighbors who evacuated to other places and left their farms unattended. Even they [the attackers] left their farms unattended, too, just to execute the attack. That just made all of us poorer! The poorer we get, the more people will end up killing each other... even for the smallest reasons.

The lack of food and social services such as education in the Agusan province is one of the worst in the country. Between 2003 and 2009, Agusan del Sur was on the top five list of provinces with the highest percentage of poverty incidence (NSCB FIES 2009). This poverty incidence refers to "the proportion of population whose annual per capita income falls below the per annual per capita poverty threshold to the total number of population" (NSCB 2015). Between 1985 to 2000, the entire Northern Mindanao region in which Agusan del Sur is a part was consistently classified as one of the poorest regions in the Philippines (NSO in Reyes and Valencia 2005, 2).

Revenge Killing and *Ginhawa*. The Agusan Manobo, however, did not cite their lack of access to or deprivation of basic material necessities and social services as the direct cause of revenge killings. Rather, these socio-economic conditions relate to the motivation to address ginhawa in terms of expelling pain through rage. The effect of poverty on emotion is implied in a Visayan loan phrase *"dili mawili"* (loosely, 'nothing to live for'). The phrase was commonly attributed to individuals who waged revenge killings. It is a feeling that one does not have anything to care about, hence one's lack of concern about death for himself and for others. Experience of economic poverty is seen to aggravate the feeling of pain that appears to influence a diminished inhibition to express rage through killings.

The relevance of the concept of ginhawa in this regard goes beyond mere description of the conditions in which revenge killings were waged. More importantly, it highlights the necessity for a dialogue and other resolution mechanisms in the concerned communities. Conciliation, in the context of the traditional resolution process of husoy, is the right of the aggrieved party to be appeased after an experienced damage or loss.

> Someone stepping on your foot, walking past you without any recognition of the pain it caused is like saying, 'You are no one.' It will then make you wonder, 'Is this because I'm poor?' You know, people think they can just do anything to a poor man... The Manobo do not allow others to treat them as insignificant. We demand resolution when it is deserved.

In this sense, one's ability to pose a threat of a possible retaliatory attack is a way of showing that one matters and is worthy to be given attention especially after having been gravely offended. To be ignored renders one invisible and insignificant. To be recognized as one whose demand as an aggrieved party should be addressed appears to be a way of redeeming one's self from the social and economic marginalization one is experiencing. To be deprived of such means of resolution would magnify this economic marginalization, in which they feel that nothing is done to transform their economic conditions.

Hence, the most crucial point in a process that could lead to revenge killing is the phase in which resolution is desired and demanded. Pangayaw in the form of revenge killing is not an automatic response to an offense but an alternative that emerges as a final option when everything else fails. This is evident in statements that emphasize the role of husoy such as the following made by an elderly traditional leader,

> If someone took the life of your kin, avenging such death through pangayaw will not really bring back the life lost. So the process of husoy remains the best for both concerned parties because it compensates the loss of the aggrieved and prevents the killing of the offender or his kin. But, we [traditional leaders] cannot also blame them [actors in revenge killings] because, in times of great poverty, a poor man could easily lose everything he lives for.

Hence, resolution extends beyond individual cases and relates to wider contexts such as economic conditions in marginalized areas. This broadens the extent of the concept of resolution as it plays a crucial role in the transition of pain to rage involved in pangayaw. The main problem then is to address issues at the broader scale, such as economic poverty, which make revenge killing an option.

When an act is taken in as pain, it requires resolution often through traditional arbitration mechanisms. These mechanisms foreground the need to appease the aggrieved by addressing his loss. This notion of resolution, however, needs to expand beyond an individual case to account for the role of large-scale conditions that influence how ginhawa is construed. This means that the ultimate aim of resolution is to address the large-scale condition that made pangayaw an option. The most crucial question, therefore, is not how to stop pangayaw killings but how to address oppressive large-scale conditions that motivate the expression of pain through rage.

Conclusion

The relevance of using local concepts in understanding the use of physical force among marginalized indigenous groups is made evident in how the category ginhawa among the Agusan Manobo can shed light on their practice of pangayaw. Ginhawa foregrounds the relationship between emotion and resolution. It further serves as a useful lens in viewing the large-scale contexts in which pangayaw is practiced. Pain is socially constructed as an Agusan Manobo experiences and evaluates his social relations within wider social, political, or economic contexts. Unless addressed through a resolution process, the buildup or intensification of pain is released through rage. This resolution process at the level of individual cases highlights the need to appease the aggrieved and address their loss. More importantly, 'resolution' should address the large-scale conditions which disrupts ginhawa thereby causing pain and rage—elements that give pangayaw strong potentiality.

This further leads to another point relating to the nature of pangayaw. Revenge killings and armed revolt among the Agusan Manobo are not spontaneous or automated responses. It is not a primary option but a last resort. The act of taking this last resort means that necessary arbitration mechanisms remain insubstantial both at the individual case level and at the large-scale contexts. The ultimate question, therefore, is not about how to stop pangayaw but how to address the conditions which perpetuate the practice.

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NOTE

1. It will be noticed that several Manobo words cited here such as sakit, ginhawa, and kayangot hold close semblance to terms used in other Philippine languages including Binisaya or Visayan, speakers of which are the majority of the migrants in Agusan Manobo communities. Based on the most exhaustive map of Austronesian languages (see Blust and Trussel 2015), these semblances are to be viewed not as evidence of linguistic borrowing but of a shared linguistic ancestry producing related core vocabularies.

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