

Memory of Death: The Embodiment of Revenge through a Dance Ritual in Ifugao, Philippines

LILYMAE FRANCO-MONTANO

ABSTRACT

Revenge done in retaliation for murder is justified in Ifugao law. This paper examines how a family crisis escalates into a community concern leading to participation of the collective in a revenge ritual called *himong*. Memory formation is vital in the performance of the ritual, and the underlying symbolisms in its performance are interpreted in the context of five major figures of memory that act as stimulants of memory-making. Here, the revenge ritual is performed to move the psyche of the “avengers” to anger and empower them to seek out the offender to be able to regain dignity for the family of the victim and reclaim honor for the dead. Revenge takes the form of emotion that transfers the act of revenge from the hands of man to the hands of the gods. In this ritual, various figures of memory function as mnemonic phenomena that enable participants to remember their obligations as members of the community in instances that call for revenge, and spiritual beings to exact vengeance on the perpetrator of the crime. Despite changes in customary practice brought about by factors such as Christianization and other colonial influences on traditional political systems, *himong* continues to function for the consolidation of the community and the maintenance of Ifugao identity in the contemporary world.

Keywords: collective memory, figures of memory, *himong*, revenge ritual, Ifugao, rhythmic entrainment

INTRODUCTION

In Ifugao custom, there is one general law for killings in war, murders, or executions, which public opinion would pronounce justifiable and legal. That law is: “a life must be paid by a life” (Barton 1969, 69). In Ifugao society, a tragic death in Ifugao society occasions a revenge ritual called *himong*,¹ which preceded the headhunting expedition. However, changes in politics and society were brought about by American colonial presence. Frank Jenista writes:

Where American policy decreed change in Ifugao customs, the white apos attempted to utilize existing indigenous systems to deflect Ifugao opposition. In prohibiting headhunting, for example, the apo recognized the Ifugao demand for vengeance and made himself the agent, saying, "I'll be the one to get your revenge." In matters of justice, Ifugao headmen were routinely consulted during investigation and settlement. In many cases the American merely placed his *imprimatur* on a decision reached by Ifugao leaders. On occasion the white apos deliberately violated American government regulations in order to achieve a resolution acceptable to the Ifugaos. (Jenista 1987, viii)

This eventually resulted in the cessation of the Ifugao customary practice of headhunting. Nonetheless, the revenge ritual remained as an important custom still practiced up to the present. Himong is usually defined as a revenge dance (Dumia 1979, 15; Funnel 1978, 2458; Montano 2012, 130), but an examination of the himong that I was able to observe and document² revealed that in accordance with Dulawan (2001), himong is a ceremonial act that encompasses different activities and ritual performances. Archaeologist Jan Assman refers to these activities as "figures of memory" that pertain to fixed points that help in the formation of cultural memory, and whose horizon does not change with the passage of time. These fixed points are fateful events of the past whose memory is maintained through cultural formations such as texts, rites, monuments, festivals, epics, poems, and images (Assman and Czaplicka 1995, 129).

In this paper, I examine fixed points of the himong ritual as "figures of memory" that function as stimulants of memory that arouse emotion in community members, thus summoning the act of revenge. Here, memory is aided and enhanced by mnemonics, namely visual images, execration, music and dance, ceremonial rites, and drama—multiple figures of memory, which all combine to consolidate collective memory (Halbwachs 1950) and stimulate a shared painful memory of death. Through the evocation of emotion and anger, the enactment of revenge as a community responsibility is embodied in the shared feeling of vengefulness itself. In contemporary times, with legal constraints on human acts, revenge is an emotion evoked through the memory of the dead and memory of the community to invoke the entities in the metaphysical realm to exact redress and dispense justice for the aggrieved.

Visual Image and Execration

Mike³ was murdered in a village in Ifugao in May 2005. According to Ifugao custom, in instances such as this, the family performs a ritual called *tengeteng*,⁴ led by a *mumbaki* (native priest). The ritual

requires the use of paraphernalia, chanting of a myriad of prayers, and drinking of *bayah* (rice beer). At this time, malevolent spirits are invoked to cause the death of the perpetrator (*awit*/revenge).⁵ Mike's body was made to sit on a chair in front of his house wearing the same clothes he had on when he died. The body was left unwashed, and a piece of cloth was tied around the head to keep the jaw from falling. By the third day, the corpse had already turned dark purple in color, and was beginning to exude fluids. The body sat there for three days from the time of the murder. This was the Ifugao custom (Montano 2012, 130–34).

As Mike's body sat lifeless, his mother spoke to him disdainfully as if still alive. Although the derisive speech was addressed to the dead son, this was meant to defile the murderer. Her mournful execrations served to remind her son of his disgraceful state and to provoke his spirit to seek out the perpetrator. The pain and anger verbalized by the mother were done to remind the son that his death was one without honor. Relatives and neighbors were also allowed to shout out their anger in front of the corpse for the spirit of the murdered man to hear so that it can locate the murderer and seek its own redress. Previous accounts also document instances wherein the rage was given vent through angry gestures like shaking the corpse (Dumia 1979, 21) and dragging the corpse to its burial place (Dulawan 2001, 16).

Positioning the corpse in a manner that allows for public viewing not only serves to remind the spirit of the dead of the unfavorable circumstances of the demise but also to arouse feelings of anger, grief, and sorrow not just among family members, but among members of the larger community as well. The morbidity of the visual image functions as a stimulant of memory. Hallam and Hockey write:

We consider the body itself—a body that has passed the threshold of life, a body that is no longer living form but through death can be reanimated as a material of memory. We can discern this transformation of the body from a living form into a dead, yet socially active memory 'object,' in the use of the corpse as a relic and as a substance that has been deployed in mourning practices. (2001, 129)

The tangible imaging and materiality are not only a social experience for the living but also intended for the deceased, who according to Ifugao beliefs, is still wandering in the sky. Even after death, the dead should remember to seek revenge by “staying beside the murderer” so that he may be able to “point out” the culprit to his family (Bocos Kagawad Lito Liwongan, pers. comm., 2012). In addition, the mother, relatives, and other community members stimulate memory of the spirit of the deceased by recounting to the corpse the cause of his death, uttering angry words, and wailing. All of these are done, because these

are necessary to be able to attain a peaceful and honorable afterlife.

Sight and sound, connect to memory established through embodied emotional experiences. Speech used in execration is a powerful stimulant of memory, because sound cuts sharply through to affective dimension. In addition, the oral nature of speech enhances the communal experience shared by those who participate in and witness the scene. Hallam and Hockey note the relationship between words and images:

[T]he memory-making capacity of visual experience is crucially dependent upon the social and cultural contexts in which images are received and interpreted. Thus, the interaction of visual images and other forms of cultural representation such as written or spoken word are also significant. (Hallam and Hockey 2001, 130–31)

Memory-making is thus vitalized by these visual and auditory experiences that involve the victim, immediate family, relatives, and community members. In this instance, the “self” as the metaphysical presence of the deceased remains connected with the various selves that comprise the living. This is important in Ifugao custom. Inevitably, the memory-making of the “dead” self and family, extends to a collective memory of the community. Leichter (2011) quotes Ricoeur in on the relationship between the individual and the community in “The Poetics of Remembrance: Communal Memory and Identity in Heidegger and Ricoeur”:

...[A]ll private and public memories are constituted simultaneously, according to the schema of mutual and reciprocal establishment... This reciprocity is established only by analogy, and in relation to individual consciousness and its memory... such that collective memory is held to be a collection of traces left by the events that have affected the course of history of the groups concerned, and that it is accorded the power to place on stage these common memories on the occasion of holidays, rites, and public celebrations. (Ricoeur 1999)

Communal memory is expressed in the himong ritual as a moral obligation of the community to remember the wrongful death of a community member, and to take action. Ricoeur expounds upon in the idea of “ethical intention,” and the four ethical dimensions: self-esteem, solicitude, and justice, aimed at the attainment of a “good life with and for others in just institutions” (Ricoeur 1992, 172). Leichter continues:

Ricoeur extends the meaning of the good life to the communal level. To be a self means to be a self in community; it is to be a citizen. Individuals participate in the life of a community through institutions. Institutions, for Ricoeur, refer to “the structure

of living together as this belongs to a historical community—people, nation, region, and so forth—a structure irreducible to interpersonal relations and yet bound up with them in...the notion of distribution” (OA, 194). (Leichter 2011, 249)

Memory-making in the practice of himong, thus, plays a big role in recalling the norms of the Ifugao forefathers in the pursuit of justice for the wrongful death of an individual who is both kin and clan.

Music and Dance

Word of mouth traveled fast, and news came to where I lived that Mike was murdered. On the night of his death, I heard short random rhythms struck on wood from afar. The sound echoed across the distance, serving as an announcement of a murder. I heard the same sound on the second day. This was a signal for the community to prepare for the himong ritual. Music plays an important role in the execution of the himong dance not only as an accompaniment to the movements. *Pattung* music announces the murder of an individual and summons the sun and the moon gods to look for the offender, with the sun god looking for the perpetrator during the day, and the moon god continuing the search at night.

Participants must be psychologically and emotionally prepared because only the most determined men with strong conviction are qualified to participate. The men’ psyches must be fully prepared to face the responsibility and accept the consequences of seeking revenge (*awit*). Volunteers gather ritual objects, prepare their traditional attire, and prepare the *pattung*,⁶ a wooden beam used as the musical instrument used to create the rhythmic accompaniment in the performance of the revenge dance. This particular *pattung* is of a larger size than usual, and that which is struck in the first few days of the rites to announce the murder. According to Mariano Batton, Banaue local and son of a *mumbaki*, the himong⁷ instrument is carved just for the himong ritual during the first two days. On the third day, after the himong dance and after the burial, the himong instrument is thrown to the burial site to burn (Mumbaki Marcos Batton, pers. comm., 2005).



Figure 1. Photo of a *pattung*.

To dance the himong, the men don their full regalia, consisting of the loin cloth (*wanno*), betel nut pouch (*hinabnutan*), woven cloth worn like a sash (*bayya-ong*), belt made of shells (*ginuttu*), and *bolo*. A headdress exclusively made for the ritual completes the attire. This headdress is made out of the dried bark of the betel nut tree and adorned with the long red leaves of the *chongla*⁸ plant. Special accents, such as white cloth leg and arm bands, originally made out woven rattan are also worn (Beyer and Barton 1911, 233). According to Ifugao belief, these ritual objects imbue the performers with the presence of the gods and spirits, and during the himong, the belief is that heaven opens up and Maknongan, the creator of the earth, acknowledges all human activities. Maknongan sees the red leaves on the warriors' heads and the white bands as signs that a murder has been committed.

In the himong dance that I witnessed, three groups of men from different barangays arranged themselves in line formation, with two sets of dancers, and danced along the road. First in the line were three to four dancers holding spears (*pahor*) and / or shields (*hapiyo*), followed



Figure 2. First set of dancers who hold the spears in ritual attire (Photo by L.F. Montano, May 2005).

by the second set of 10–15 dancers, who played the percussion beams (*pattung*). The *pattung* players struck their instruments with a hard stick as their bodies bounced in rhythm. *Pattung* playing was done in alternation, creating an interlocking rhythm. With each of the players' movements corresponding to their own downbeat, their movement also created an alternating pattern. The musician-dancers usually followed the lead of the *pattung* player who was first in the line.

When he stopped beating, the rest of the players also stopped, after which they did the *chimichim* (a movement where arms are bent and flicked against the body). Then, the leader turned to the opposite side and commenced with the beat, while the other dancers at the front bounced in rhythm as they tossed their spears.

Pattung playing is not primarily concerned with melody; rather, rhythm is the principal element with interlocking rhythms of low and high tones. As can be seen in the musical transcription (Figure 2), the pattern is basic and repetitive. Pattung 1 plays steady quarter beats with occasional eighth beats, while Pattung 2 answers with his own steady beat in alternation with Pattung 1, creating a continuous sequence of tones. This alternation technique goes up to the last player, such that, 1-3-5-7-9 alternates with 2-4-6-8 etc.

The two interlocking rhythmic aspects likewise combine in the kinetic performance: A. the sound emanating from pattung playing, and B. the sound produced by the flicking of arms against the body (*chimichim*), an action that produces a soft pounding sound which is also done in alternation. After a two-section sequence, performers turn to the other side to begin again the AB form. Usually, the first musician leads the turn and beating of the percussion bars or the

The figure displays a musical transcription of seven different rhythmic patterns, labeled Pattung 1 through Pattung 7. Each pattern is represented on a single staff with a double bar line at the beginning and end. The notation consists of vertical stems and horizontal lines indicating pitch and rhythm. Pattung 1 and 2 are the most prominent, showing a clear interlocking relationship. Pattung 1 features a steady sequence of quarter notes with occasional eighth notes. Pattung 2 provides a complementary rhythm, often starting with a half rest followed by eighth notes. Pattung 3 through 7 show variations of these rhythmic motifs, with some including rests or different note values. A small number '5' is positioned below the staff for Pattung 7.

Figure 3. Musical transcription 1: Excerpt of pattung playing with the first two players during the himong in interlocking pattern of low- and high-pitched wooden beams.

chimichim movement. However, in some instances, other players take the initiative on occasions when more experienced musicians with more extensive knowledge of the sequence or formation guide or correct the other performers. Players must stay attentive to and conscious of the other performers to be able to follow through. Since himong performance is spontaneous and unrehearsed, what is apparent here is a process of remembering wherein memory is constructed at the moment of performance. Notably, the himong dance I witnessed included musicians who were first-time participants. As such, memory of past experiences as observers of their forefathers who performed the himong ritual is called upon to be able to recreate how dancers imagined himong music and dance is performed. At the same time, their memory is aided and regulated by the spontaneous reconstruction of memory of the more experienced performers. Furthermore, non-verbal forms, such as music and dance, enhance the communal memory and sense of togetherness through the collective musical experience.

Ruth Finnegan emphasizes the role of musical experiences in the study of emotions, the link between body, thought and feeling, and “between ritual and sentiment” and quotes Ottenburg:

The repetitiveness of the instrumental music and song, the steady rhythm, sometimes the repetitive movements of dancers in a circle, and the minimizing of everyday time allowed not only for a sense of momentary social solidarity but also for a special sort of inner individualism...swinging back and forth between full consciousness and daydreaming. (Ottenburg 1996, 192–93 cited in Finnegan 2012, 355)

Music is embodied through the bodily movements of the dance. Though himong dancers do not move in complicated patterns, the musical affect envelopes them into a state similar to trance that activates a collective memory and a sense of something beyond or larger than the self through rhythmic entrainment (Becker 2004; Scherer and Coutinho 2013). Rhythmic entrainment pertains to the process that takes place in the brain when rhythmic aspects in the music are perceived (Trost and Vuilleumier 2013). Becker, expounds:

Rhythmic entrainment occurs when two or more seemingly independent processes mutually influence each other to converge in a common pattern. Musical rhythmic entrainment can be seen as structural coupling, of a changed interior, personal consciousness in a musical domain of coordination. Bodies and brains synchronize gestures, muscle actions, breathing, and brain waves while enveloped in music. Many persons, bound together by common aims, may experience revitalization and general good feeling. The situation is communal and individual, music

descends on all alike, while each person's joy is his or her own.
(Becker 2004, 127)

When music is perceived by the brain through the ear, the body responds in resonant motion. This "structural coupling" (Becker 2004) of mind and body is exemplified in the himong performance by himong performers who are both the musicians and dancers. Their bodies resonate with the rhythmic pattern, they themselves create such that "body and brain synchronize gestures, muscle actions, breathing, and brain waves while enveloped in music" (Becker 2004, 127). Furthermore, ensemble performance requires that "in order to make music together, coordination, cooperation, communication and social cognition have to be established in a group which in turn strengthen contact, co-pathy and social cohesion" (Trost and Vuilleumier 2013, 213). The collective effort entails cooperation in maintaining rhythm and tempo. At the same time the synchronization of muscular action heightens the bond of communality. It is important to be in time and in sync both in music and dance. Cognitive cultural studies have also revealed that the "process of timing that is featured in music, such as rhythm, can trigger specific neural processes which can contribute to the stimulation of emotional states" (Trost and Vuilleumier 2013). This phenomenon of rhythmic entrainment has been explored by scholars to have an affective role in the induction of emotion.

In the case of himong, the work of entrainment stimulates anger to give vent to feelings, and displays of vengefulness. A line of dancers is comprised of two sections: (1) dancers consisting of at least 3–4 players, who brandish swords and shields to simulate a fight scene, (2) the rest of the dancers, who provide the himong beat, and heighten the emotion of anger by beating loudly on their instruments and maintaining stern countenances. The ensemble performance becomes a mnemonic formula for memory-making, as they recall their forefathers' dance of revenge and recreate this in the present.

Communication among the community members who participate in the himong ritual is key for the construction of the memory of death. Each participant has his own set of memories. Differences in age, experience, social status also exist. These make it necessary for participants to be able to communicate to be able to execute the performance. Some knowledge is explicitly provided by the elders to the younger members of the community, most details are implicitly understood because these have been observed since birth, although others may have forgotten these practices or may only have fragments of memory. Constructively, himong dance also embodies a relationship of the self and the community in a way that the voluntary participation is personal and the degree of anger is individual. The collective participation is important in music and dance and the

processes that go between- rhythmic entrainment and induction of emotion. These are fixed points of the event and are considered as figures of memory that are enlivened in the performance of himong dance. The combination of each one's rhythm, movement and emotion becomes a collective memory of lived experiences. The participants experiencing these strong memory stimulants are provoked to act as avengers. The power of the collective experience also functions to propel the cries for retribution into the metaphysical realm, assuaging both individual and community ethos.

Ceremonial Rite and Ritual Drama



Figure 4. Second set of dancers beating the percussion beams. Three lines of men converge at the ritual space, then to the house of the victim (Photo taken by Lilymae F.Montano, May 2005)

Essential episodes of himong rite like ceremonial rituals and ritual drama are necessary to complete the ritualization of himong. Here, ceremonial rituals refer to private events that entail chanting of a myriad of prayers by the ritual specialists known as *mumbaki*. Two to three ritual specialists collaborate to divide the work of reciting the prayers addressed to different classes of gods and spirits, and to beseech the malevolent gods to take revenge on the murderer. Few helpers also take charge of the sacrificial animals. Ritual objects, such as, rice beer (*bayah*) and its vessel (*pun-amhan*) with a coconut shell (*ungot*) as its cup for drinking, and a wooden box (*intib*) which contains several other objects,⁹ are also important paraphernalia to help the senses complete the process of the ceremonial rite and ritual drama.

Material culture gains power when combined with the performative nature of a ritual. By changing their daily wear from ordinary day-to-day clothing to traditional attire, and brandishing spears and shields that were previously kept in the house, the participants conjure the memories of their ancestors' past wars as well as their defeats and victories. The mundane landscape is transformed into ritualized space for those participating in the himong. Dressed like raging warriors, their angry cries pierce the Sky World with their pattungs' loud, recurring sounds that resound and fill the atmosphere with sonic power. Store owners along the road become part of the community undertaking, and provide water and snacks for the himong players.

Several ceremonial rites were observed in the practice of the three-day rite of himong. As mentioned earlier, a ritual called *tengeteng* was done the night of the murder to guide and safeguard the conduct of the rites (Montano 2012). Second, on the third day, while other participants performed the revenge dance, another set of people were already in a ritual space called *pun-ub-uban* to do another ceremonial rite, which involved a sacrificial pig.¹⁰ And third, after the himong, a post-ceremonial rite called *hongga*, was observed by each participant. During the *hongga*, first-time participants are required to sacrifice four chickens, while those who had participated in the past need only to sacrifice two chickens. This serves as a protection from harm that might result from the opponent's performance of a counter-ritual.

Arnold van Gennep (1960) describes three types of rites: separation, transition, and incorporation. Death is clearly a separation rite characterized by the individual's departure from the corporeal world life and society. After separation, Ifugaos believe that the soul is in a liminal state and continues to roam. The himong dance is, thus, necessary as a transitional rite to enable the soul to find retribution and peace. Following the idea of van Gennep, the himong dance is "the phenomenon of transition noted in many other human activities of physical energy and in cosmic rhythms" (Van Gennep 1960, 82). This part of the rite aims to invoke the gods to solve the crisis so that the soul can transcend the liminal state and be at rest. A rite of incorporation is marked by another ceremony involving the chanting of prayers and sacrificial offering of a pig, which is cooked and partaken by everyone. Incorporation is also seen in the sharing of the meal to seal the bond of the community. The ceremonial rite is private in nature in the sense that two to three local priests and few helpers do the work in sacrificing chickens, but also a public event in the sense that there is distribution of other roles among community members who contribute to the whole performance of the rite. In the sequence of events, the liminal rite proceeds to the drama which is also an integral part of the whole ritual. Here ritual drama is seen in the ritual dance component of the himong.

In the himong dance I witnessed, the three lines of dancers came from different points and converged in another ritual space called *pun-ub-uban*. There, some native priests or *mumbaki*, were initiating a ceremonial rite. Myriad prayers were uttered in front of some ritual objects while the dancers rested. The death blanket was hung near a woman, who tossed a spear while quietly praying. In one of the trees, a basket containing food was hung as an offering to the spirits. An air of solemnity pervaded the space. After the incantation of the *mumbaki*, the himong dancers formed a circle. One *mumbaki* stood up, held a sacrificial chicken, and shouted to the heavens, calling out to the gods. Then, using his bolo, he slit the chicken's neck and threw it in the middle of the circle of men. The chicken struggled, gasping for its life. The direction to which its head points when it dies is believed to identify the man designated to take on the burden of responsibility for revenge, a responsibility that would be passed on to his family and the next generation until justice is served.¹¹

The wooden beams were played again, with the players occasionally stopping to give way to cursing (*ichut*). After some men shouted their curses, some men held thin dried branches to smite a butterfly (*kokolapte*), a symbolic enactment of the murderer being smitten to death. Then, they continued to beat the wooden beams as they left the ritual space and danced along the road once more until they reached the murdered man's home, where the himong dance ended. When the dance was done, the dancers took off their headdresses and left these in the house of the victim.



Figure 5. Liminal rite in the ritual space called *pun-ub-uban*.

The appointed men, close kin of the victim, wrapped the corpse in a death blanket and carried the corpse on a chair to the final resting place, a burial site near a mountain away from the burial grounds of those who had died of natural causes. The tomb was built to accommodate a corpse in a sitting position and later sealed off with interlocking stones like the wall of the terrace. As is customary, the himong ritual ended at noon. All participants performed the post-himong ritual, *honga*, upon arrival in their own homes.

According to Turner (1979), a ritual drama is an episode in which involves performative acts such as singing and chanting; dancing and playing of instruments; mimetic displays; gesturing; and performance of drama. In the case of himong, emotions are poured out as men shout and call out gods for vengeance. The powerful emotions are intensified by angry cursing and facial expression, which create physical tension. The drama comes to its climax when chicken in rigor mortis designates the avenger. Moreover, the sound from the percussion beams further connects emotion and music. Becker writes:

Emotion, music, and dance become one system of ontogenic coordination of actions. Together, they bring about changes in being and changes in the music event. Although it is the individual who experiences the emotion, it is the group and its domain of coordinations that triggers the emotion.

...

Thinking of the relationship of emotion and music and trancing as a biological process with a co-defined, historically enacted ontology, as a group creation in which self-contained individuals have undergone structural changes through their interaction with other self-contained individuals, helps to provide an integrated embodied analysis of the relationship of music and emotion and trancing. (Becker 2004, 127)

In this case, the state of vengefulness is similar to trancing. The shared emotional experience of expressing anger and the evocation of memory results in a heightened conviction to carry out a community responsibility. Hence, in this way, the communal experience wherein the participants share emotions of grief and anger, resulting in a greater motivation to seek vengeance for the murdered community member is the ritual drama that culminates in the climactic space of the *pun-ub-uban*.

CONCLUSION

In the past, revenge was enacted in the ensuing headhunting expedition after the himong ritual, and a successful expedition entailed another ritual to commemorate the victory. This Ifugao custom waned during the American occupation with the Ifugaos integration into the new political system that was introduced. Aside from adapting the statute

law, widespread evangelization in the 20th century also resulted in changes in the traditional religion and belief system. However, traditional rituals are still observed by the Ifugaos to this day, and signs of acculturation and syncretic practice are apparent. In the case of himong, the need to assuage the need to take revenge remains.¹² Because of the diminished crime rate in Banaue in recent years, there has not been much occasion for the performance of himong. The last recorded himong after that, which I was able to document in 2005 was one done for an Ifugao member of the Special Action Force (SAF), an elite unit, who was killed in the battlefield in Maguindanao in 2015.

What then is the form of revenge? Here, we see through the himong that revenge is an emotional affect of memory making. The expected outcome of the himong ritual, for example, is that rather than the aggrieved family or community members taking the law into their own hands, the duty of meting out the final punishment for the crime vengeance is re-directed from man to the gods. Through the performance of himong, the gods are invoked to cause the death of the offender through other means, such as illness or bad luck, or accidents like drowning, snake bites, or falling from a cliff.

Himong as a metaphysical activity retains its most significant contribution to the social affairs of Ifugao life by strengthening the relationship between the self and the rest of the community. In this case, the tragic memory of death, ensconces the individual who has proceeded to the afterlife in the shared stories and memories of the community thus forging continuity from the past to the present. The embodied ritual performance, which deploys various figures of memory, summons collective memory intensified by shared emotions of grief and anger and the impetus to seek justice for a wrongful act committed.

Indeed, the Ifugao concept of revenge has re-directed its course from the hands of man to the hands of the gods, and from headhunting to other causes of death. However, a common Ifugao entity remains—the embodied ritual performance, intensified by the emotions of grief and anger through the remembrance of a collective memory, continues to build and strengthen the Ifugao community identity.

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NOTES

1. Shirley Funnell, a linguist who translated literary materials to the Ifugao language, wrote an account of himong she witnessed in 1978. Her description included the first two days of the three-day himong ritual. One of the oldest accounts was written by Beyer and Barton in 1911.
2. Fieldwork for this research was done in Banaue in two phases: the summers of 2002–2005, and periodically from 2012–2018.
3. Mike is not the real name of the victim to protect his identity.
4. According to a local writer, Emilio Posadas, *tengeteng* is done before the body is laid against the house's post. The mumbaki asks for three things: first, for the gods of death to take revenge for the victim; second, to call out to the victim's soul to avenge for his death; and third, to ask the spirit of the dead not to linger in the earth world, causing sickness and death, but to move in to the skyworld. In Posadas's account, the *tengeteng* consists of a continuous sacrifice of chickens not until a good omen appears by inspecting their biles.
5. I was living in the Village of Bato Binongle with my informants when the murder happened. I have been friends with the couple, Lito and Regina Liwongan since 2002, and they also became my primary sources of information on Ifugao customs and conduit to other culture bearers in Banaue, Ifugao. Although I was unable to witness the first two days of the wake, I heard the sounds of percussion bars. Initial additional information on the himong was given by my informant, Lito Linawon, who was well-informed regarding the conduct of the practice. The account of the revenge dance is based on my observations of its performance on the third day of the himong, which I witnessed. Information on activities prior to performance of the revenge dance is from Lito Liwongan.
6. In general, the percussion wooden beam is called pattung. It is described usually by writers as a beam, but it is shaped slightly more like a yoke. It has a handle made of rattan and another hard stick is struck against it to create sounds. This is also referred to as *bangibang* by the Tawali-speaking groups, one of the language groups in Ifugao. Pattung is a Bannowor term among the Banaue people.
7. Among the Banaue people, there are two types of pattung according to size and usage. The smaller type (50 cm and 61.7 cm in length) is used only for curing rituals, and is usually owned by a native priest (mumbaki). It is usually kept on a shelf above the

- cooking area to keep the wood strong by smoking. Because of this, its color becomes dark brown to a shade of black. The himong instrument is used specifically for himong ritual which is bigger and longer in size. used only for the himong dance. It has its natural brown color because it is supposed to be newly made for the dance ritual. It is bigger so it can produce a fuller and louder sound when played in open air in the wider public space. In my interviews, informants generally refer to the instrument as “pat-tung.” However, some locals, specifically the native priests and elders, refer to the instrument used in the himong as himong, too.
8. *Chongla* is the local term for the red plant which is used to delineate the boundaries of rice fields.
 9. Objects inside the wooden box or *intib* may differ from one family to another. These may include small amount of *palay*, cooked rice and chicken liver. Others may put a small portion of the chicken’s blood if the offering is for malevolent gods such as Ballituk, or a piece of long grass known as *talahib* to indicate that someone has a debt that needs to be paid, though this grass is not required paraphernalia for the ritual performance itself.
 10. I was not able to witness this event because I was documenting the himong dance. When we arrived at the *pun-ub-uban*, the ceremonial rite had ended. The butchered pig was cooked for the participant to eat so they can regain their strength.
 11. In the event that I witnessed, something went wrong, and the sacrificial chicken was able to run after its neck was slit. When the chicken was caught, another *mumbaki* repeated the process. However, where the chicken’s head pointed toward when it died was not clear.
 12. According to my informants who have witnessed himong in the past, however, there has been a diminished level of emotional intensity displayed by the himong dancers in the more recent performances.

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