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Direct violence and Christianity among Manobo converts

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THESIS/ DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

(729)

Title: Direct Violence and Christianity Among Manobo Converts

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Statement of the Problem

Main Problem: The study seeks to represent or explain the conduct of indiscriminate killing by Manobo converts to Christianity? To seek this explanation, the study wishes:

Sub Problems: To provide an ethnographic description of the Dulangan Manobo of South-western Mindanao (Cotabato Cordilleras).

To describe how Christianity is 'localized' in the Manobo context.

To understand the notion of direct violence among non-converted Manobo?

Procedure

The study uses the qualitative and descriptive methods. Data were gathered through ethnographic approach and from accounts of selected key informants. Case histories, life-cycle events, epics, myths, etc., formed the bulk of data taken through participant observation using semi-structured interviews.

Treatment of Data

The study's analytical framework charted the direction of study. Emic orientation (local, subjective perspective) in the ethnography and the theory of 'localization' were used as analytical tools for approaching culture encounter. Validity claim is reinforced by structures/systems of applied anthropology—as indicated by the variables and directional arrows presented in the analytical framework.

Findings

1. Christianized Manobo do not explain/ cannot rationalize their conduct of direct violence. They, however, represent the issue with a moral judgment: that it is wrong to kill.
2. Non-converted Manobo males conduct indiscriminate killing (of non-kin persons) to assuage a subjective feeling ("very bad taste-in-the-heart") of oppression from a perceived affront.
3. Christianity is apprehended in the Manobo world through indigenous representations that is truly 'localized.'

Conclusions

1. Males socialized in the traditional mentality, although now Christian, conduct direct violence when situations warrant it. The consequent remorse and moral judgment that the action is wrong comes from the new idioms of the ideology of Christianity. Some forms of indiscriminate killing (i.e., at the death of a close kin) have stopped.
2. Because of the entrance of new power structures in the area (the State, the Missionaries, Private Companies) and the influx of settlers, the conduct of direct violence even among non-converts is now going mainstream: revenge killings directed towards perceived culprits.
3. Like a good, traditional datu, God is understood to be the ultimate provider and protector of the Manobo. He is seen as 'taking care' of the dead kin and so it is not anymore necessary to kill non-kin persons to accompany the dead. The Priest is seen as God in the flesh: provider and protector of the oppressed Manobo.

Recommendations

1. Address direct violence among Manobo by appeal to universal brotherhood.
2. Encourage/support multidisciplinary studies regarding issue of violence.
3. Lobby the governmental agencies concerned for the immediate release of the Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title in the Manobo homeland.