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Headhunting, Christianity, and History among the Bugkalot (Ilongot) of Northern Luzon, Philippines

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Headhunting, Christianity, and History among the Bugkalot (Ilongot) of Northern Luzon, Philippines

Recent studies describe Southeast Asian headhunting traditions as mediating historical memory and the shifting patterns of dominance and subordination in local and national politics. This article shares these concerns, but differs in its focus on headhunting in the context of conversion to Christianity among the Bugkalot, or Ilongot, through the influence of the New Tribes Mission since the 1950s. Anthropologists, missionaries, and converts view headhunting and Christianity in oppositional and mutually exclusive terms, but this article suggests that their relationship is far more complex, entangled, and ambiguous. In their encounter with the New People's Army in the late 1980s, Christianity provided the Bugkalot a metanarrative of change, even as their relationship to the state was altered.

KEYWORDS: BUGKALOT/ILONGOT • HEADHUNTING • CHRISTIANITY • HISTORICAL MEMORY • NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY

The Bugkalot, or the Ilongot as they are known in the previous colonial and anthropological literatures, are famous for their headhunting tradition.¹ Headhunting has given them a widespread notoriety both in the neighboring valleys and in colonial documentary records. It has been noted that “no tribe has a more established reputation for headhunting than the Ilongots . . . When one utters Ilongot, the message *invariably* sent across is headhunting” (Anima 1985, 9, italics added). Although the Ilongot are still strongly associated with headhunting by other ethnic groups,² from Renato Rosaldo’s description (1980, 1989a) of the acute predicament faced by the Ilongot after the declaration of martial law in 1972—the impossibility of headhunting as a way of dealing with grief—and widespread conversion to Christianity for several decades, it is reasonable to expect headhunting to be a thing of the past. The Ilongot themselves attribute sociocultural changes, particularly the ceasing of headhunting, not to the influx of education and development programs sponsored by the government, but to the entry of the Gospel into their lives (Ilongot Bible Christian Fellowship 2004). As these once feared headhunters converted to Christianity en masse, it seems that they have also accepted the missionaries’ rhetoric of equating headhunting with savageness, and Christianity with civilization.

During my first visit to the Bugkalot area of Gingin (fig. 1) in November 2004,³ Eddie, a young man of 22, approved my plan to study Bugkalot culture and its contemporary transformations by saying: “It is a very good time for you to do research here. When I was in elementary school, the people here were not civilized yet. But now they are civilized, there is no more headhunting. This is because of the church.”⁴ Eddie’s words confirmed my expectation that headhunting was a thing of the past. However, I was also surprised and intrigued to know that headhunting was still a living practice in the late 1980s and early 1990s, even though the missionaries of the New Tribes Mission, the main church in the Bugkalot area, arrived at Gingin in 1959 and the people here were already predominantly Christians in the late 1960s. The next day I attended the Sunday service, and afterward I was invited for lunch in the house of the missionary, Florentino Santos. He is one of the first two missionaries sent to the Bugkalot area and is referred to affectionately by the Bugkalot as Apun Tino (Grandpa Tino). I asked Apun Tino if it was true that headhunting was still practiced in the late 1980s and early 1990s. I thought he would deny the continuation of headhunting after nearly thirty years of

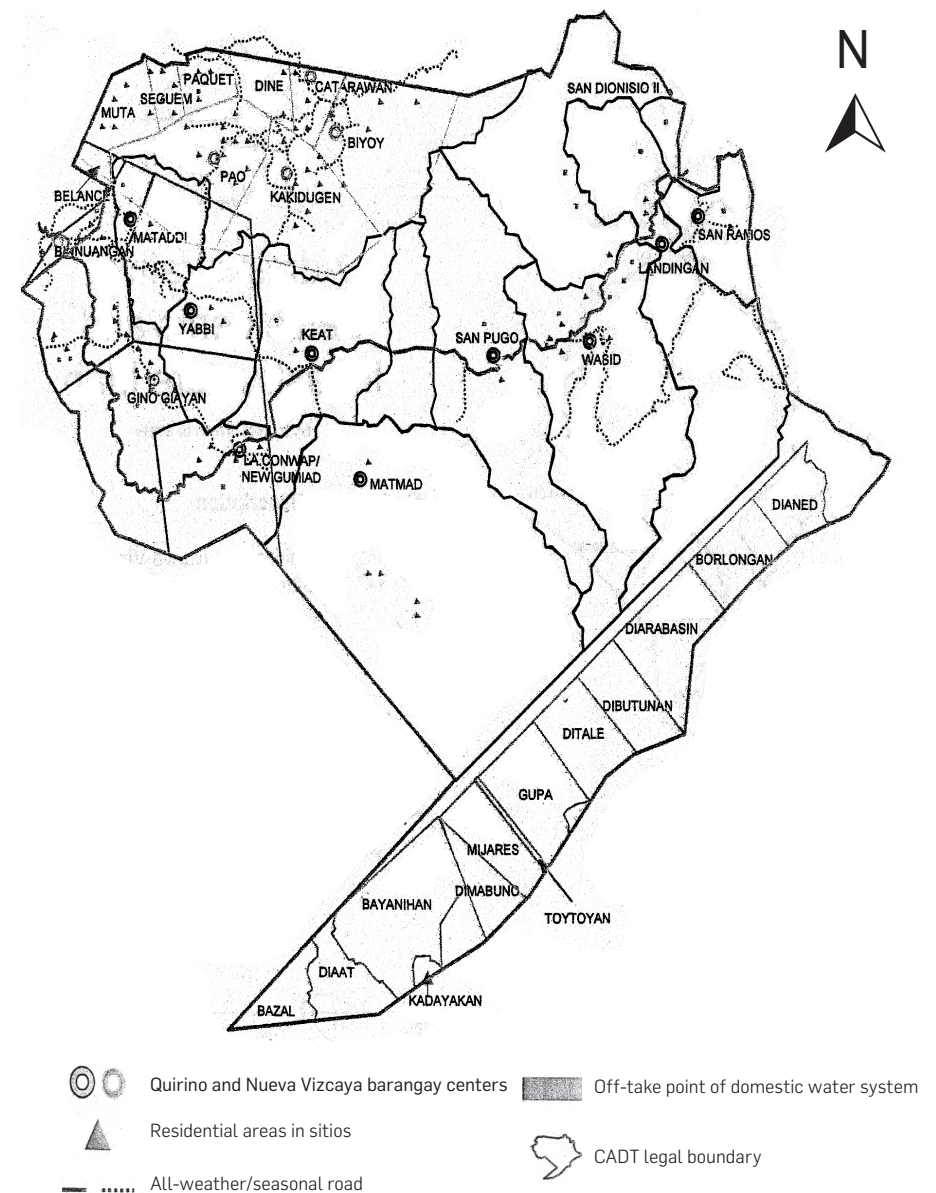


Fig. 1. Map showing the Gingin area, which is located in a boundary dispute area between Nueva Vizcaya Province and Quirino Province. On the Vizcaya side it is named New Gumiad, while on the Quirino side it is named La Conwap.

Source: Bugkalot/ Ilongot Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP)

evangelism. To my great surprise he confirmed that it was true, and even went on to tell me that earlier that year, when they celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the coming of the Gospel to the Ilongot people, an old man from Matmad, a neighboring village reachable in a day's hike, told him that he had cut a head in the previous year (2003). The headhunter claimed that his victim was a member of the New People's Army (NPA), the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), and apparently regarded the killing as justified.

Apun Tino doubted that the victim was truly an NPA soldier. He thought this was just an excuse, the real reason being that the old man desired to take a head. This old man was a convert. I was utterly perplexed by the idea of a headhunting Christian. Apun Tino admitted that this bothered him immensely as well. He commented on the persistence of headhunting among proclaimed Christians, saying: "It is very hard to explain. He is a Christian. However, you have to be really changed by the Gospel, to let the Gospel truly enter your heart and become a new man. It is very difficult to change their hearts. The urge to kill is in their blood."

I visited Matmad in another preliminary survey in April 2005. My guides were two young teenage girls from Ġingin, one of whom carried a *bolo* (machete), which came in handy when our path was blocked by tall grasses or long tree branches. However, when we were near the village, about half an hour's hike away, she hid the bolo in the long grass because Matmad men would be angered to see a woman carrying a bolo. Matmad men, they said, were very traditional, and their "attitudes" (*ogali*, Tag.) were coarse. I gathered that the headhunting incident of 2003 was probably an exception, and now Bugkalot people in other villages had stopped headhunting completely.

I started long-term fieldwork in the beginning of 2006. Only two months after I settled in Ġingin, the news of the death of "Bin Laden" reached us. This was not the al-Qaida leader, but a Tagalog carpenter, Ben, who was nicknamed Bin Laden. Ben was hired by a Bugkalot family in Wasid to make furniture two years earlier, after which he stayed with them, helping in their house and doing odd jobs for other villagers. On 13 and 14 April, an intertribal youth conference organized by the Ilongot Bible Christian Fellowship (IBCF) was held in Padet (San Pugo), with hundreds of attendees. Ben took the opportunity to sell ice candies and make some money. He went to Padet on 13 April and told his host family he would return the next day, but he never did. On 16 April his corpse was found in a bush near the trail between Padet and Wasid, chopped into several pieces. The head was found

nearby, too. My friend Rachel, a Bugkalot teenager who knew Ben well because Ben's host in Wasid was her uncle, commented with disgust when she brought me the news: "Now I am afraid of the Bugkalot."

There were suspicions that Ben was a member or former member of the NPA, and the reason why he stayed in Wasid for two years was to escape the arrest of the military. Rachel, who had lived with Ben for one month when she visited her uncle in Wasid, defended him, insisting that he was just an ordinary guy who was very kind. However, in the remote mountainous areas of the Philippines, it is not uncommon to see the NPA interacting and forming reciprocal relationships with local people (Kwiatkowski 2008; Shimizu 2011, 6). The NPA could be "Nice People Around," too.

As my stay in Ġingin was extended and my relationship with some local people deepened, I heard of six more headhunting incidents, which happened this century in different parts of the Bugkalot area. All the victims were *sinongag* (non-Bugkalot), and almost all of them were said to be NPA, with the one exception being the Ita (Negrito) who trespassed into the forest of the Bugkalot and killed too many wild pigs, now scarce and ever more valuable. The tendency to identify the victims as NPA was accompanied by a nagging suspicion by the Christians that this was just an excuse to kill. There have been simultaneous attempts to justify beheading and judge it.

Because headhunting was such a sensitive issue, not until one year into my fieldwork was I able to have a better grasp of why some Bugkalot Christians went back to headhunting when conversion was constructed as a rupture with the past (cf. Robbins 2007). The reason is closely related to the cultural meanings of headhunting and the invasion of the NPA into Bugkalot territory in the mid-1980s. In what follows, I will first provide a brief history of the entry of the New Tribes Mission to the area, and present their view of headhunting. I will then situate Ilongot headhunting in the regional context of Southeast Asia to highlight its cultural distinctiveness, and follow this with a discussion of the invasion of the NPA in the 1980s as well as the Bugkalot's response to the communist insurgency. Finally, I will explore how the Bugkalot continue to rely on the tradition of headhunting for shaping their collective identity and the politics of the present.

Headhunting and the Civilizing Endeavor: The Coming of the New Tribes Mission

The New Tribes Mission (NTM) was the first missionary organization to evangelize the Bugkalot successfully. Prior to the arrival of the NTM, there

was no proselytizing attempt made by the Catholic Church in the heartland of the Bugkalot area. The NTM remains the largest and most influential church in the area. With headquarters in Sanford, Florida, the NTM is officially a nondenominational organization, but has strong ties with Southern Baptists and adheres to Christian fundamentalism. The identifying marks of contemporary fundamentalism (Riesebrodt 1993; Robbins 2004; Wuthnow and Lawson 1994) expressed by the NTM include belief in the inerrancy of the Bible, an emphasis on the necessity of personal salvation, a focus on a distinct individual conversion experience and efforts to encourage others to have such experiences, and a strong distinction between believers and nonbelievers. However, it does not place emphasis on the charismatic gifts, such as speaking in tongues or healing by the Holy Spirit, and distinguishes itself from Pentecostalism.

In March 1954 work among the Ilongot tribe was first considered by the NTM when American missionary Lee German hiked into the Taang area (now Pelaway) to try to help settle a dispute between these renowned headhunters and the Philippine constabulary (Schultze et al. 1982, 6). In June American missionary Marvin Graves and his Tagalog companion Florentino Santos were sent to work among the Ilongot. They used the settlement of Taang as their mission base and from there they traveled to other parts of the Bugkalot area to spread the Gospel. In the first two months, nine Bugkalot were baptized (Pennoyers 1955). Marvin Graves left Taang and returned to Manila after six months, but Florentino Santos continued his evangelical work among the Bugkalot. In the first two years of missionary effort, it was reported in the NTM magazine, *Brown Gold*, that “roughly 120 Ilongots have confessed Christ publicly and followed His example in baptism” (Brunemeier 1956, 7). In 1959 Florentino Santos married a Bugkalot woman, and moved to the well-populated place of Ġingin with his wife (Santos 2002). Ġingin was an ideal mission base for them because of its location at the center (*benggi*) of Ka-Bugkalotan (the Bugkalot land), and they have stayed there ever since. In the 1960s, missionary efforts intensified as more missionaries were sent to the Bugkalot area. The number of converts increased rapidly in the 1960s and 1970s.⁵ A Bugkalot hymnbook was compiled, and the arduous work of translating the Bible also began. After more than ten years of labor, the Bugkalot Bible *Opon Ma Diyot* (Word of God), composed of Genesis, Exodus, and the New Testament, was published in 1982. The book of Proverbs was added to the Bugkalot Bible in 1991 (Santos n.d., 36).

The missionaries construe the vernacular Bible as a gift from God to the Ilongot. However, this is not a complete gift, for the majority of the Old Testament has not been translated due to the constraints of time and labor. In the 1980s, the NTM had already planned to divert their missionary efforts to other tribes. The NTM’s mission is to expand the reach of the Gospel as widely as they can and to as many tribes as they can. They place great emphasis on establishing an “indigenous church, the self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating church” (Brunemeier 1956, 7), so that when a “mission field” matures they can pull out and move to other fields. When the number of the Bugkalot churches that were able to function under indigenous clergies increased, the NTM thought it was time for the local believers to form their own organization. In 1989 the Ilongot Bible Christian Fellowship, which includes sixteen churches, was established.

From the very beginning of the evangelical encounter between the NTM and the Bugkalot, significant battles were fought over the issue of headhunting. For the missionaries, headhunting was not only a murderous act but also a sign of an unruly and pagan otherness. It made the urgency of evangelism self-evident, but it also presented its biggest obstacle. The tradition of headhunting was taken to be indisputable proof that the Bugkalot “were unknowingly bound to Satan” (Santos 2002, 22) and needed deliverance from spiritual darkness. All the missionaries with whom I spoke expressed their emotions of fear, confusion, and repugnance aroused by the savageness of headhunting. Florentino Santos, who had witnessed the headhunting ritual *buayat*, wrote that “the killing of a fellow human being was actually being celebrated! I was reminded yet again of Satan’s hold on this people” (ibid., 29).⁶

Since, according to the missionaries, “Satan has blinded the Ilongot to the evil of headhunting,” and made killing “a second nature to them” (ibid., 46), they faced a formidable task. Not only were their own lives in danger, headhunting had also prevented many Bugkalot men from converting to Christianity.⁷ For example, Apun Dengpag, one of the elders in the Ġingin church, gave headhunting as the reason for his initial resistance to Christianity, in his testimony:

I was born in Mengegpet before the Japanese came. My parents moved to Ġingin to make a living. Since I was very small, I was taught that I should cut a head when I grew up. We children enjoyed playing

headhunting games, singing the song and doing the dance. When I was bigger, I was taught how to discern the omens of bird and snake, and how to fashion an amulet out of a certain kind of grass. It kept the dogs from barking so that I could be undetected by my human prey and kept me away from danger. It was ingrained in my heart to behead.

I still had not beheaded anyone when I heard the word of God from Tino. So I disregarded God's word because my heart was preoccupied with my parents' words: I should decapitate so that I could reach the full stature of manhood and be able to marry. So I honored my parents and beheaded someone.

Two years thereafter, the words of Tino, which I did not heed then, haunted me. The words from John 3:16, which said "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life," unsettled me.⁸ When the missionary Rose Simsim came to us she quoted the same passage and added Romans 6:23, which said, "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." I did not accept the Lord Jesus at that moment but a month later, by which time I heard that many came to believe, Rose invited me to a Bible study where she prompted me to decide. The Lord made me realize that I had to repent all of my sins and receive Him as my Savior. I thank Him for not giving up on me. In 1963, I received Jesus Christ.

My faith was tested when Siklab and Inggo urged me to go headhunting. I declined because I knew it was a sin. So they admonished me—condemning me for turning into a believer. Once, when I was preaching in the chapel, a passerby did not like what he heard, for I was saying that he who loves God and others is a child of God, while he who does not is a child of the devil. So he went home, grabbed a rifle and shot at me but missed because the gun did not go off. He killed neither me nor the message I bore, for many came to believe.⁹

It was common for young men who had not beheaded and become "real men" to resist Christianity. But even elderly men who had taken heads

could be kept from conversion by their role and responsibility in guiding the youths in headhunting, as the following example shows: "One man who had three sons showed interest in the Gospel, but something held him back from believing. He told me: 'It is good to be forgiven and go to heaven, but I have three sons I have to train in headhunting. If I accept Jesus Christ now, who will train them to hunt for heads?'" (Santos 2002, 46–47).

Conversion was constructed as a rupture with the past, particularly the headhunting past. For the missionaries, the end of headhunting marked the success of their proselytizing efforts. It was the most obvious and significant sign that God's amazing power had prevailed over the devil's reign over Ilongot hearts and lives. Baptized Ilongot believers also purposefully made attempts to break with their headhunting past, such as cutting their long hair short; ceasing to wear red hornbill earrings, which was the privilege of headhunters; and abandoning headhunting songs, lest they tug at their hearts and awaken their old ways.

The attempt to break with the headhunting past was marked and celebrated at a communal level in 1969, when the *beḡtan* of Ġumiad and Butag made a peace covenant. *Beḡtan* was the largest unit of social organization among the Bugkalot, a largely territorial descent group that becomes manifest primarily in the context of feuding (R. Rosaldo 1975, 1980).¹⁰ The people of Ġingin were part of the Ġumiad *beḡtan*, and their perennial enemy was the Butag *beḡtan*.¹¹ The NTM sent an Australian missionary to the Butag area in the early 1960s. He made some baptized believers there but left the mission station in the mid-1960s. Florentino Santos and Dell Schultze (fig. 2), an American missionary who came to the Bugkalot area in 1962, were concerned about the Butag and wanted to reach them again. With the help of some Ġumiad people who had kinship connections to the settlement of Buayo, they visited the Butag area. They encouraged the Ġumiad and the Butag to make amends for offenses in the past and to end their feud. Christian converts from both *beḡtan* favored the idea of a truce, of putting their headhunting feud behind them. After a series of complex negotiations, the covenant between Ġumiad and Butag was made in Ġingin in February 1969.¹²

The form of covenant is cast in the idiom of Ilongot formal friendship, with its mutual exchanges of hospitality and gifts. Ġingin hosted the 1969 covenant, and a return covenant hosted by the Butag was held in 1970. The people of Ġingin referred to the covenant as *beyaw* (compensation),



Fig. 2. American missionary Dell Schultze distributing medicines to the Bugkalot, 2007.

because the focus of the meeting between the two sides was the payment of reparations for past beheadings. After guns, bullets, bolos, cloth, and jewelry were paid to amend past assaults and killings, a pig was sacrificed and an oath (*binatan*) was sworn. The men rubbed salt in the blood of the sacrificial animal as they swore not to kill one another in the future; otherwise, just as salt dissolved in water, so would they perish if they failed to keep the peace.

At this three-day event, the atmosphere was tense at the beginning, and the Butag even held their trigger fingers on loaded weapons pointed at the Ġumiad at one moment. Ġingin's elderly women remember vividly how they shook with tremor and fear when they served the Butag food. However, both sides declared their deep desire for social harmony, which was cast in the image of "wanting to eat from a single leaf," and were able to achieve a peace agreement. The covenant ended in a friendly and convivial atmosphere, with the Ġumiad and the Butag calling each other friends and kin.

Apun Tino wrote in his memoir: "how rewarding it is to see the Bugkalot people being freed from their former fear of being killed by their co-Ilongot tribe" (Santos n.d. 32). He took pride in the fact that the Gospel had accomplished what soldiers had tried for so many years to do but failed: stop

headhunting. Indeed, after the covenant, the people of Ġingin enjoyed nearly two decades of peace until the NPA incursions into Ka-Bugkalotan occurred in the mid-1980s. But before we turn to the invasion of the NPA, it is necessary to discuss first the cultural meanings of headhunting for the Bugkalot in order to understand their reaction to the communist insurgency.

Headhunting, Emotional Idioms, and Historical Consciousness

Like most headhunting groups in Southeast Asia, the Bugkalot regard headhunting as a source of fertility, well-being, vitality, and renewal (M. Rosaldo 1977, 1980; R. Rosaldo 1986). However, this is not because by taking heads one acquires the "soul-stuff" or "soul-substance" of the victims (Kruyt 1906, quoted in Needham 1976). In fact, the Bugkalot stand out as an exceptional case when it comes to the treatment of the head. Not only is the severed head not the focal point or dominant symbol of the headhunting ritual, it is also not even brought back to the settlement, but simply tossed to the ground and left there. The Bugkalot explain headhunting not by reference to spirit beliefs or cosmology, but by reference to the desires of men who (because of insult, grief, or a sense of youthful inadequacy) have felt a "weight" that they would cast off from their "hearts" by tossing the severed head. A successful headhunt is said to "lighten" what were cloudy and distracted thoughts, and provides killers and, through celebration, the community at large with new energy and vitality (M. Rosaldo 1977, 168).

The association of headhunting, mourning, and vitality is a theme that can be found prevalently in Southeast Asian societies (De Raedt 1996; Downs 1955; Freeman 1979; George 1996; McKinley 1976; Metcalf 1982, 1996). However, the interplay of grief and the desire to take heads did not receive such close attention until the works of the Rosaldos. Michelle Rosaldo (1977, 1980, 1983) pioneered an analytical framework based on explorations into the distinctive "tone of thought" and emotional idioms in which Ilongot headhunting made sense. She discovered that in local vocabularies pertaining to the "heart" (*ġinawa*),¹³ *liget* (anger/passion/energy) is most closely linked to headhunting. *Liget* derives from insult, slights, and other intimations of inequality. Typically born of envy (*apet*), *liget* grows when the ideals of "sameness" and equality are breached. Headhunting makes equals of otherwise unequal men, and provides a means for *liget* to be transcended by directing envy stimulated within a kin group to a violent

catharsis far outside it. Buayat, an all-night sacrifice, singing, and dancing that celebrates a killing, gives *liget* an intelligible form and offers a source of communal strength and vitality. Grief and mourning are common causes for raids, because headhunting, as a moment of great emotional release and expansive satisfaction, turns a victim's anguish into a source of joyful life.

While Michelle Rosaldo delved deeply into Ilongot elaborations of the emotional idiom of *liget*, Renato Rosaldo (1980) made a significant contribution to historicize headhunting. Situating the analysis of headhunting within a wider historical and regional context, he pointed out that headhunting, as the dominant symbol of Ilongot identity, must be understood in the context of lowland–upland relations. Social forces and events located in the world system, most noticeably the great depression and the Second World War, have shaped the pace, direction, and timing of local-level population movements and headhunting activity. However, the Ilongot were not passive recipients of events originating from metropolitan centers. Events, whether external or internal, are mediated through social processes and cultural forms in the local setting. By demonstrating how headhunting works as a central moving force in the shaping of local memory and historical consciousness, Renato Rosaldo successfully debunked the image of the timeless primitive.

Many subsequent studies of Southeast Asian headhunting (George 1991, 1995, Gibson 1990; Hoskins 1987, 1989, 1996a; Roque 2010; Tsing 1993, 1996) have followed the historical turn taken by Renato Rosaldo. These works describe headhunting traditions within local and regional histories that make the past relevant to the present. They also show how headhunting has mediated shifting patterns of dominance and subordination in regional and national politics. The discussion that follows shares their concern for history. My analysis differs, however, in its focus on the reemergence of the practice of headhunting in the new context of fundamentalist Christianity. Headhunting and Christianity are usually cast in oppositional and mutually exclusive terms. Earlier we have seen how missionaries regard headhunting as a sign of an unruly and pagan savageness. Bugkalot converts also make attempts to demonstrate their new faith by dissociating themselves from headhunting. Anthropologists, too, when dealing with the persistence of headless headhunting ritual in areas where Christianity has made inroads or taken strong hold, treat them separately and pay little attention to Christianity (George 1996; Metcalf 1982, 1996). However, the following discussion shows that the relationship between headhunting and Christianity is far more entangled and ambiguous for the two to be treated separately.

The Invasion of the New People's Army

The Philippines has a long history of political unrest and social turmoil, which has provided fertile ground for the development of the radical Left. As early as 1930, the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP, the old communist party) was established. By 1942 the PKP was at the helm of the Hukbalahap (Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon, People's Army Against the Japanese; the Huks for short), the most effective guerrilla organization during the Japanese occupation. With the reconquest of the Philippines by the returning American forces, the Huks found themselves under attack by their presumed wartime allies. By the mid-1950s, the "Huk rebellion" had been pacified and defeated by the Philippine government, guided and assisted by the USA (Fuller 2007). The Bugkalot also encountered the Huks in their territory. In mid-1954, a group of Huk guerrillas fled through the central Gumiad area, and were ambushed by the Bugkalot. Nine Huks were killed and beheaded, and none of the Bugkalot was seriously injured (R. Rosaldo 1980, 171–72). The people of Gingin played a leading role in ambushing and raiding the Huks, and *bengangat* (elder, leader) Dangsal Gumiad brought the heads of two Huks to present to President Magsaysay.¹⁴

A split in the communist movement led to the establishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) on 26 December 1968. The CPP's leader, Jose Maria Sison, adopted Mao's concept of a protracted people's war as the only workable revolutionary strategy for the Philippines. He soon forged an alliance with *Kumander* Dante (Bernabe Buscayno), the leader of a Huk splinter group based in Central Luzon (Tarlac), which led to the formation of the NPA on 29 March 1969 (Abinales 2001, 26). The movement of the "Red fighters," as Sison called them (Sison and Rosca 2004, 48), quickly gained momentum and developed into a vast nationwide network of rural and urban cadres, guerrilla soldiers, supporters, and allies. The revolutionary Left was credited by Anderson (1998, 277) as the "first and foremost factor" in the downfall of the Marcos dictatorship.

When the CPP-NPA reached its peak in the mid-1980s and posed a powerful challenge to the state (Rutten 2008, 1), the Bugkalot who lived in the hinterland of the Sierra Madre also felt they were increasingly under the threat of communist insurgency. The growing presence of the NPA and their willingness to resort to coercion and violence in the Bugkalot area invoked painful memories of the Japanese time (*kakapon*), when the Bugkalot lost at least a third of its population in June 1945 or immediately thereafter (R. Rosaldo 1980, 40). This brief period of Japanese invasion was so packed with

matters of life and death that it was described by Renato Rosaldo as “the most amplified moment in the Ilongot remembrance of things past” (ibid., 39–40).

When the Japanese terrorized the region, the people of Ġingin scattered and fled to areas nearer the lowland and the American troops. A majority of them ended up in Lipuga and Pelaway, and only returned to Ġingin in the late 1970s and early 1980s to defend their ancestral land against the encroachment of settlers.¹⁵ Those who survived the Japanese time related stories of cutting Japanese heads and taking their firearms, of sudden death and weeping over lost kin, and of hunger and suffering while fleeing through the forest. The presence of the NPA awakened memories of incomprehensible catastrophe in the past, and stirred up feelings of fear, terror, panic, and anger. In 1986 the NPA burned down the office of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) in Belancé, and some Ġingin families were frightened and sent their school-aged children away to stay with relatives in other settlements. From 1986 to 1988 the people of Ġingin went into hiding in the forest on several occasions upon hearing news or rumors of the NPA’s impending invasion. This was a period of great tension and *liget*, and in 1987 some Bugkalot men were recruited by the government into the Citizen Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU) to fight the NPA alongside the military.¹⁶

Renato Rosaldo described how the egalitarian Bugkalot were morally appalled during the Japanese invasion when they saw that one soldier had the authority to order his brothers to move into the line of fire. Soldiers, they remarked, are men who sell their bodies (R. Rosaldo 1980, 18; 1987, 253). If the Bugkalot “were as horrified of modern warfare as most of us would be of cannibalism or headhunting” (R. Rosaldo 2000, 18), their decision to join the CAFGU was a very telling indication of how disturbed and devastated they were by the threat of the NPA.

The people of Ġingin saw their worst fear realized when the NPA killed seven Bugkalot men—Sakdal, Ġengtad, Fred, Wagsal, Bantong, Tepġit, and Pingok—in July 1988. The incident happened in Kanaw, a place about one-and-a-half hours’ hike from Ġingin. Four of the victims were CAFGU, and this was the most commonly given reason for why they were targeted and murdered by the NPA. The CAFGU, Ġingin people remember, always boasted about their intention to kill the NPA. Some people perceived the NPA to be aiding land grabbers; they believed the NPA soldiers were paid by Igorot, Ifugao, and Ilocano settlers to kill the Bugkalot in order to seize their

land.¹⁷ The NPA was seen as part of exogenous forces that were impacting Bugkalot lives. However, the ideological difference between the NPA and the NTM was not cited as a reason for these killings.

Three victims (Sakdal, Ġengtad, and Fred) in this killing were from Ġingin. Moreover, Sakdal was the son-in-law of Dangsál Ġumiad and the first barangay captain of New Ġumiad appointed by the government since 1982.¹⁸ Their deaths on a fateful morning in 1988 pierced the hearts of the Ġingin people deeply. Impelled by their rage in bereavement, some Bugkalot men in this predominantly Christian community, including church elders, resumed the practice of headhunting.

Grief and the Christian Headhunter’s Rage

There were witnesses to the NPA killing, and the incident was described as treacherous and full of deception. The NPA killed some government soldiers and kidnapped another, dressing in their victims’ military uniforms before approaching Sakdal and his company. Sakdal was unalarmed because he thought they were his friends and allies. The kidnapped soldier, who was held with a gun to his back, used his eyes to indicate that the NPA soldiers were not wearing military boots, but Sakdal’s party did not notice. They were deceived and killed.

When news of the seven Bugkalot men’s death reached Ġingin, wailing broke out and angry men fired their guns into the sky. A group of armed young men were sent to Kanaw to collect the victims’ bodies. In the afternoon, Sakdal, Ġengtad, and Fred’s corpses were hauled back to Ġingin on the top of carabao carts, and an all-night wake was held for them at Sakdal’s house. Apun Tino and church elders led prayers for the deceased and the bereaved families. As in all Christian-style funerals, traditional taboos (*maked*) that limit visits, eating, and communication with relatives of the departed were disregarded, and the whole community came to help. The deceased were buried the next morning near Sakdal’s house with a Christian ceremony officiated by Apun Tino, and three wooden crosses were erected on their graves.

During the wake, some people mentioned that they had seen *uidu* (a small red bird with long tail) in Ġingin recently. The Bugkalot saw *uidu* as an omen of death, it was a sign of headhunters impinging, and now Christians call it Satan’s bird. The visitation of *uidu* conjured an even stronger sense of horror toward NPA violence among this community deep in bereavement. The possibility of more deaths seemed imminent. Aroused by NPA treachery

and gripped by their rage in grief, it did not take long for some Bugkalot men to go headhunting, a practice they had given up when they converted to Christianity.

The Rosaldos describe that when headhunting became impossible after Marcos's declaration of martial law in 1972, the Ilongot considered conversion to Christianity as a means of coping with their grief. This is not because they think God will do away with death and illness, but rather because faith in him is said to remove all cause for mourning, and to quiet hearts that once were twisted, torn, and heavy (M. Rosaldo 1980, 158). It made coping with bereavement less agonizing because they could believe that the deceased had departed for a better world (R. Rosaldo 1989a, 4). However, here we see Christian hearts enraged by the death of kin and the resurrection of headhunting as a means of lessening grief.

I am very hesitant to go into details of these headhunting raids because some Gingin people have asked me not to disclose them. Also, one settler whose hand was chopped off but survived the attack still lives in the Bugkalot area, and Gingin people fear that he and his relatives might take revenge. Thus, I will limit my description to the following points. First, the target of headhunting was not Bugkalot but only *bininyagen* (lowlanders, "baptized ones") or sinongag (non-Bugkalot). This is not because of the concern that beheading a Bugkalot would spark a total return to tribal warfare, but because by this time the Bugkalot had already cultivated a strong sense of themselves as "one tribe" or "one ethnic group" through the annual conferences of the NTM (fig. 3).¹⁹ The Bugkalot explain the widespread reemergence of headhunting, which rippled through the whole Bugkalot area as news of these seven men's death spread, in terms of their sense of group cohesion and ethnicity.

Second, the buayat (headhunting celebratory ritual) was held after each successful killing. Many people around the age of 30, who regarded themselves as still small children at that time, participated in buayat. They remember vividly how the headhunters' bodies became light and energetic and changed color, turning to red. However, under the watchful eyes of the church, buayat was performed more discretely and on a smaller scale.

Third, these killings were commonly regarded as *tobgat* (revenge, to reciprocate). The initiative was taken by older men who had previously taken heads, not by young men who grew up as Christians. They were not the product of youthful desire but of vengeance. As Sakdal's widow Layning

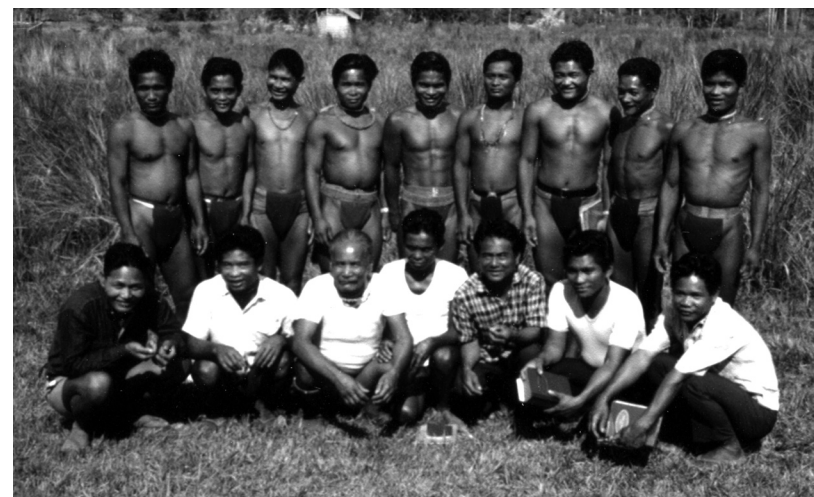


Fig. 3. Group photo after a Bible study, with elders all wearing Western clothes, while ordinary Bugkalot men wear the traditional attire, 1980s. Photo courtesy of Florentino Santos.

explained to me why Bugkalot men kill: "If their relatives are killed, even only one, they *tobgat*. They go headhunting to remove their anger (*mekag ma liget*)."²⁰ She apparently thought that headhunting was a justified response to NPA violence, and added: "*kasalanan de*" (it was their fault).

Kasalanan is the word adopted from Tagalog to translate the concept of sin and guilt in the Bugkalot Bible. There is no equivalent term in Bugkalot. Michelle Rosaldo (1983, 141) suggested that the concept of guilt is at odds with Ilongot understandings, actions, and feelings bound to deeds of wrong, abuse, or violence. Renato Rosaldo (1987, 241) also considered the notion of guilt too embedded within the Western tradition to be generalized. Indeed, missionaries remark that it is very difficult for the Bugkalot to understand the meaning of sin—its more abstract assumption about humanity and the connotation of self-examination and moral evaluation often elude them. They usually take it to mean fault, wrongdoing, or mistake. This poses a question about the Bugkalot's inner agency (Taylor 1989) and their moral conscience, as well as the adequacy of their conversion. Do they not feel remorse and guilt when felling a victim? This may appear to be a miscast question when it comes to traditional Bugkalot culture, but it should be taken seriously in the context of new Christian ideals.

As mentioned above, traditional taboos that prohibit visiting, eating, and communication with the bereaved are abandoned in the Christian-style funeral. Strictly speaking, therefore, headhunting is not needed for the lifting of mourning taboos. Also, the Bugkalot insist that spirits of the dead do not themselves inspire killing. What really impel Bugkalot men to go headhunting is devastating personal loss. The death of kin makes hearts grow heavy and distraught; through killing, men cast off the weight that comes with grief and pain. In the NPA-inspired cathartic violence, no “headhunter’s paralysis” was reported.

Headhunter’s paralysis is a condition when someone among a group of raiders finds himself immobilized by the “smell of blood.” “Heaviness” overwhelms his heart, so that he cannot flee. When this happens, one of his companions, generally an older man, cuts a lock of the afflicted raider’s hair, hoots loudly, calls for “lightness,” and in so doing causes relief.²⁰ Michelle Rosaldo (1983) explained that headhunter’s paralysis is not caused by a sense of guilt, but by a sense of shame or feeling of inadequacy in their relationships with would-be equals. Among the six reported cases in her data, five sufferers were individuals who had previously taken heads, and yet continued to be bachelors or otherwise socially marginal figures. However, there was one exception: a man from a largely missionized community who joined a raid in order to assist in his son’s headtaking. He himself was considering conversion, and Michelle Rosaldo (*ibid.*, 147) noted that it was possible in his case that paralysis had less to do with marginality than with feelings of guilt, remorse, or ambivalence in the Christian context.

Although no headhunter’s paralysis occurred in the killings aroused by NPA violence, guilt and remorse did set in afterward for some Christian headhunters. The case of Tebdey is a very telling one, and it is worth a closer look. Tebdey’s parents were among the earliest converts in Gingin.²¹ His mother was an *ayogen* (spirit medium, referred to as “witch doctor” by the missionaries) who after conversion became one of the most fervent believers in the area. When Apun Tino brought a radio pre-tuned to DZAS, a Christian radio station, she was amazed at the sound and told other people excitedly that she had heard the voice of God. Although she had become a very devoted Christian, she was unable to persuade her son to come to Christ. In the eyes of the missionary, Tebdey was a nuisance who “not only got into fights but also cut off heads—he cut off the head of his own cousin” (Santos 2002, 68).²² Understandably Apun Tino perceived Tebdey a threat

to his own safety, and recorded that “he even intended to kill me and cut off my head” (Santos n.d., 29).

Tebdey accepted Christ in a dramatic fashion. In his testimony, he described his conversion experience in terms not dissimilar to headhunter’s catharsis, as a “sudden lightening of burden”:

When the missionary came to our place with the news about the Lord Jesus, who, he said, offered salvation from the punishment of sin and security of life eternal, my parents responded to the call to receive Jesus Christ as Savior. Bible studies were held and my parents encouraged me to join. But I was indifferent. When people shared the Gospel with me, I laughed in their faces and said: “How could I accept Jesus when I am young and strong?” Deep in my heart I thought that Christianity was only for women and those who were weak like the elderly.

Not only was I not interested in the missionary’s messages, sometimes I even played tricks on the Christians. I stole the missionary’s firewood, and when people were praying with their eyes closed I grabbed their food and ate it up. In fact, there was one time when my companions and I went to headhunt. I passed by the house where people were having Bible study, and I called aloud to my mother asking her to pray for our success in headhunting.

Although my heart was hard, my parents diligently ministered to me regarding receiving the Lord Jesus as Savior. They said they did not want me to be left behind when the Lord returned to take those who received Him to heaven. I must admit to feeling fearful about being left behind by my parents. There was one time when the sun was darkened (an eclipse), and people took it to be a sign of the Lord’s second coming. I stayed close to my mother, thinking if the Lord took my parents I would grab my mother’s skirt so I could be with them in heaven.

One night, during a Bible study of my parents and other brethren in the Lord, I passed by the chapel. It so happened that one of the leaders, Bitakug, was reading the passage from John that said “Whoever

believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only son" (John 3:18). When these words reached my ears, I was pierced. I said to myself, as I tried to walk away, did this mean that all this time I had been carrying the condemnation of God in my body even if I thought I was strong? A crippling fear set in, and my knees weakened. No matter how hard I tried to ignore or forget these words, they kept ringing in my ears. They felt heavy like a burden, and I could no longer bear it. My knees gave in. I kneeled and cried to God: "Lord, remove this condemnation from me right now. I cannot bear it." Then a miracle happened—I felt the sudden lightening of this burden. And I knew that the Lord had entered my life. It was over—I was free! I thanked and praised the Lord for the awesome thing he had done for me.

After conversion Tebdey learned how to read and write from Apun Tino. He showed great interest in the Scripture, grew spiritually, and gave himself to God's service. Deeply impressed by his drastic transformation, Apun Tino wrote that "in God's amazing way, Tebdey was transformed into a devoted church leader. He became an encouragement and an inspiration to me as he served the Lord in obedience" (Santos 2002, 69).

However, this devoted church leader was among the first ones to respond to the NPA killing with headhunting. Because of his *liget* (anger/passion), as he described in a testimony he made in the *Pasalamat* (Thanksgiving) celebration in 2006, he felt he was "tested by Satan" and he succumbed:

There was one time in my life when I was tested by the enemy and I was overcome. Three of my nephews were slain by the NPA. My heart was so pained and distressed, I needed a place to carry my anger. So I arranged to avenge their deaths. I took some youth from our place and led an assault on those I suspected of murdering my kin. I was impelled by my *liget* that was not subjected to the Lord. Later my thoughts became clear and I realized the evil of my deeds. I felt a nagging accusation: I was no longer worthy of the Lord. I said a prayer, but I felt like I myself was saying that I could no longer be heard by the Lord. I was ashamed to attend the church, and I was

disciplined and removed from the position of an elder. I thought that I had no hope of returning to the assembly.

One day, I approached the chapel in secrecy and I heard them mention my name in prayer. It was uttered by the one who replaced me as an elder. I grieved and felt remorse. But my hope of returning to the fellowship was raised because I was remembered in their prayers. Later I read in the Scripture that, no matter how big or heavy, all sins could be forgiven and could be cleansed by repentance and asking of forgiveness from Him who came to remove the sins of the world. So I humbled myself before Him and begged for His mercy and forgiveness for what I had done. Then I approached the brethren to ask for their forgiveness for myself and my companions in vengeance. I also went to the missionary to personally beg his forgiveness. Since then my fellowship with the brethren became vibrant once more. Praise the Lord!

Tebdey's testimony puts the revival of headhunting within the framework of Christianity. It is exemplary of the view that sees a Christian's life as a constant spiritual battle between God and Satan, good and evil, light and darkness. In a moment of rage and spiritual weakness, he gave in to temptation and sinned. Although he did not hesitate when he led young men in an assault on suspected NPA members, after his *liget* was removed he started to examine himself and evaluate what he had done. Eventually his moral conscience made him repent and brought him reconciliation with the Lord.

However, there were several men from a particular Christian family who "backslid" and went on headhunting raids, but did not return to the church as Tebdey did.²³ Apun Tino brushed them aside as insincere converts, saying that "they converted to Christianity for the wrong reason. They just wanted to show off, to be leaders in the church. That's why they backslid after a few years and went to cut heads again." However, these men strongly denied apostasy because they "did not want their names to be removed from the book in Heaven." Although the emotions stirred up by the NPA killing were intense, there were some men who stood firm and prevailed when tested by Satan. Pawig is a case in point.

A Personal and Communal Salvation

Pawig was a renowned headhunter in his youth. His name had traveled widely among the Butag enemies. When the 1969 peace covenant between Gumiad and Butag was held, some Butag men came to his house, called his name, and demanded compensation for his past killings. Pawig's conversion was not as dramatic as Tebdey's, nor did he attend the NTM's Bible school or become a leader in the church. Although he was just an ordinary churchgoer, he was steadfast in the Christian faith in a period of tremendous political and emotional turmoil. He related a story of salvation at both the personal and the communal level when I interviewed him at his house:

When the NPA killed seven of our people and was heading to Ġingin, my heart was twisted and pulled by liget, I wanted to tobġat and cut off their heads. But I was already a Christian and the missionary taught me that I should forswear my liget after accepting the Lord as my Savior. So I restrained myself and tried to diffuse (ġingġing) my anger by going hunting. When I was in the forest, I came across a spot where many uidu (Satan's birds) were flying around, and I could no longer bear the burden of heavy feelings in my heart. I thought that the NPA would enter Ġingin and kill all of us. I struggled to control myself but my liget was so powerful and overwhelming that my body ached and trembled. I burst into tears and kneeled down to pray to God: "Lord, when I was young, the news that the NPA is coming to take Ġingin would enrage me, and I would go look for them and kill them first. But now the Lord has made me a Christian and commanded me not to kill. What shall I do? Please help me to control myself and follow your command." After the prayer, I felt calm as my heart was lightened. Soon after I returned to the village, the military came to station in Ġingin. I knew my prayer was answered. God had helped me not to backslide to my old ways. There was no need for me to kill. When I heard the news of *integ* (light) in Ganépa, I wept tears of joy and thanks. What a miracle! God had prevented the NPA from entering Ġingin and saved us.

The shining of *integ* (light) in Ganépa was deemed a miracle that prevented the NPA from entering Ġingin. The story says that, after the NPA killed seven Bugkalot men in Kanaw, they were heading to the direction

of Ġingin. They descended from a hilltop to reach the Ganépa creek. But before they crossed the river and ascended the path that led to Ġingin, a very bright, blinding white light shone on the mountain top. The NPA soldiers were frightened and they retreated, thus Ġingin and its people were spared. The appearance of *integ* was commonly taken by Bugkalot Christians as God revealing himself.²⁴ His divine intervention brought personal salvation for Pawig and prevented him from backsliding into his old ways. This miracle also brought salvation to the community of Ġingin as a whole.

Pawig had earlier given a similar testimony in the church, and in the view of Ġingin people and the missionary he stood out as an exemplary "changed man" who let God remake his whole being. Although Pawig did not explicitly give moral consciousness and sentiments as the reasons why he stood firm and prevailed when he was tempted, the missionary took his case as an example of how total self-transformation could happen instantly in conversion, while Tebdey's case showed how the spiritual battle between good and evil, God and Satan, could be protracted.

Headhunting and the Politics of the Present

I have shown that fundamentalist Christianity brought the Bugkalot into the realm of civilizational discourse in which headhunting's decline and cessation served as a measure of missionary success. However, after nearly two decades of peace, the Bugkalot resumed the practice of headhunting in response to the violence inflicted on them by the New People's Army in the late 1980s. Consistent with Michelle Rosaldo's (1980) discussion of *liget*, these killings were less a preemptive attempt to prevent NPA treachery, but more a means of coping with their rage in grief. Christian faith, which was once said to remove all cause for mourning and the need to find a "place to go" with painful feelings born of loss by tossing a severed head to the ground, was not able to quiet some men's hearts that were twisted, torn, and heavy.

As pointed out by Renato Rosaldo (1980, 1989a), cathartic violence is susceptible to changing political conditions and historical vicissitudes. Shifting social and political orders have put the violence of the headhunt into flux, sometimes fueling it, at other times dampening it. Thus his assessment or prediction of the impossibility of headhunting after the declaration of martial law was premature and gave too much credit to the state. Military attack and imprisonment in the past did not succeed in putting an end to the practice of headhunting, so there was no sufficient ground to think martial

law would make a huge difference.²⁵ Not only could historical conditions change again, but the interplay of local tradition and the globalizing force of Christianity has never been a straightforward or one-directional cultural process.

Although most missionaries were away during this period to safeguard their lives from the threat of the NPA, they later learned about what happened. One of their responses was to lament how the Bugkalot's momentary spiritual weakness gave Satan the opportunity to regain a hold on them, and emphasize the importance of alertness against temptation and Satan's evil plan. Another common response was to see what happened as a war situation and the Bugkalot's actions as self-defense. Missionaries attempted to deny the fact that some victims of these headhunting raids were not NPA, or were adamant that, if there were non-NPA victims, their killings were surely not committed by true believers. One American missionary declared: "Not every churchgoer is a believer." However, the thorny issue of the Christian headhunter cannot be easily brushed aside by questioning the sincerity and depth of Bugkalot conversion. Not only do those who backslid strongly deny apostasy, but we can also see how the Bugkalot situate their understanding of and reaction to the violent encounter between themselves and the NPA within the framework of Christianity. Christianity is not merely a neocolonial imposition or domination, as envisaged by Renato Rosaldo (1989b); rather it provides a metanarrative of change, which informs the ways in which the Bugkalot contemplate transformations in their existential world and their position within it. The Bugkalot do not only attribute sociocultural changes to the entry of the Gospel into their lives, they also engage with Christianity as a domain of conscious deliberation that provides grounds for meaningful human lives.

NPA killings not only stimulated the resurgence of headhunting among the Bugkalot and provided new justification for it, it also changed the Bugkalot's relationship with the government and led to their greater dependency on the state. Before the NPA violence, the Bugkalot were always in an oppositional relationship with the military due to their headhunting incursions to the lowland, and perceived the state to be an intrusive force. The threat of NPA violence motivated them to join the CAFGU and cooperate with the military, further incorporating them into the state. After the death of Sakdal, the first barangay captain of New Gumiad appointed by the government, an unprecedented local election for barangay captain and



Fig. 4. Ilongot men posing as headhunters during the fiftieth anniversary celebration of the coming of the Gospel to the Ilongot people, 2004. The Ilongot have stubbornly refused to enact their headhunting past for the government, but they are willing to do so in the context of celebrations in the church. Photo courtesy of Florentino Santos.

kagawad (councilors) was held in Gingin. The establishment of grassroots electoral politics facilitated and consolidated state rule, and the Bugkalot were turned more firmly into state clients.

However, whether or not stronger state control resulted in their willing subjugation is a different matter (Yang 2011). For example, the Bugkalot were willing to reenact their headhunting past during the celebration of the NTM's fiftieth anniversary in 2004 (fig. 4), but they stubbornly refuse to allow the state to appropriate their headhunting tradition and turn it into cultural performance in contemporary contexts. They say the performance of *buayat*, the headhunting celebration, would evoke strong emotions, pull their hearts, and make them want to kill (fig. 5).²⁶ Performing a headhunting ritual without a successful headhunt, as it occurred elsewhere (George 1996; Metcalf 1996; Rudolph 2008), is unimaginable to them. This does not mean that the Bugkalot do not, like many postcolonial indigenous communities in Southeast Asia and elsewhere (Barnes 1993; Drake 1989; Erb 1991; Forth 1991; Hoskins 1987, 1989, 1996a; Pannel 1992; Roque 2010; Rubenstein 2007; Rudolph 2008; Tsing 1993, 1996), rely on the memory and tradition



Fig. 5. Ilongot men posing as headhunters, 2004. Photo courtesy of Florentino Santos.

of headhunting for shaping their collective identity and the politics of the present. In the early 1990s, when the government started the planning of a predatory development project in the Bugkalot territory, the construction of the Casecnan Dam and Diduyon Dam, which would have required a large-scale resettlement of the Bugkalot to the lowland, the Bugkalot threatened to resort to headhunting as a means of resistance (Salgado 1994). Due to their strong protest, the project was downsized and no resettlement policy was enforced (Valencia 1998). The Bugkalot do not develop headhunting scares or ideas about construction sacrifice as a critique of the loss of political autonomy (Barnes 1993; Drake 1989; Erb 1991; Forth 1991; Hoskins 1996b; Pannel 1992); instead they turn headhunting into a means of empowerment against state domination.

Notes

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- 1 This group of people call themselves Bugkalot. However, they have been known by various names by other peoples: "Italon" by the Gaddang; "Ibilao" by the Isinai; and "Abaca" derived from the mountain river system where they were encountered. "Ilongot" is a lowland Christian (perhaps Tagalog) version of *igongot* (from the forest, *qiruNut* in R. Rosaldo's spelling), which some Bugkalot along the Baler coast and lower Casecnan river employ to designate themselves. These names all entered documentary records, and only at the beginning of American colonial rule were they officially classified as Ilongot. The name Bugkalot has never entered the ethnographic literature before the time of the Rosaldos' fieldwork. Thus, Renato Rosaldo recorded that "I found that Ilongots called themselves 'Bugkalot.' Whenever I asked about the name Ilongots looked puzzled and replied that 'Bugkalot' meant themselves, all of their group, and had no other significance" (R. Rosaldo 1978/2003, 107). Some Bugkalot resent the term "Ilongot" for its pejorative meanings. "Ilongot means from the forest," and often indicates wildness and barbarity. My friend Lasin said: "when I was growing up, all I knew was that I was a Bugkalot. But when the settlers came to our place, suddenly I became an Ilongot!" Because Bugkalot is an endonym, I will use Bugkalot. But when I quote previous studies or what people have said, I will keep the name Ilongot.
- 2 When a Tagalog librarian of the Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University, heard that I was going to the Ilongot area, her immediate response was to use her hand to cross her throat indicating head cutting. Another time when I visited the Center for Indigenous Peoples Studies, St. Mary's University, which is located in the lowland area near the Ilongot, an Ilocano computer engineer told me, "when we talk about the Ilongot, it means they are headhunters."
- 3 I made two pilot visits, five weeks in total, to the Bugkalot land in 2004 and 2005 to survey the area and choose a field site. Extensive fieldwork among the Bugkalot, on which this article is based, consisted of fifteen months of residence from 2006 to 2008.
- 4 Most names mentioned in this article are pseudonyms, except the names of missionaries and those that appear in the bibliography. As for the spelling of Bugkalot language, I adopt the system the Bugkalot themselves are most familiar with, which is the phonological system used by the New Tribes Mission to translate the Bugkalot Bible. In this system, /g/ is used to denote a voiced velar fricative.
- 5 The NTM does not keep a record of baptisms or make an accurate statistic about the number of converts. However, it is estimated that about 90 percent of the population has converted to Christianity.
- 6 Dark romanticism was also at play here. Florentino Santos told his fellow missionaries that the "victory blood dance" reminded him a lot of the Apache war dances he used to see in the Western thrillers on the screen (Brunemeier 1956, 6). It evoked a sense of adventure and excitement in the

wild frontier. Interestingly, Renato Rosaldo (1989b, 85) also admitted that on some occasions his Ilongot companions appeared in his imagination as if they were Hollywood Apaches.

- 7 The Bugkalot have never beheaded any missionary. However, missionaries tell numerous stories of how they almost got killed, but God's power and grace delivered them from dangers. Similarly, Bugkalot converts tell vivid stories of their past attempts to behead the missionaries, but divine intervention prevented them from succeeding.
- 8 John 3:16 is usually the first verse used by the NTM in their evangelical endeavors.
- 9 The narratives quoted here and in the following sections came from my interviews with the narrators and the testimonies they made in the church. The language the narrators used was Bugkalot, which was translated to English with the help of other Bugkalot and Apun Tino.
- 10 Two different kinds of groups were called *beḡtan*: the first was localized, coresidential groups that were predominantly endogamous; the second was dispersed and never united as action groups. R. Rosaldo (1975, 1980; beḡtan is *bērtan* in his spelling) suggested that these two kinds of beḡtan were different phases in the long-term developmental process that followed a trajectory from initial residential concentration through later dispersal to final evanescence. Under the Philippine government, the second kind of beḡtan is referred to as a "clan," and its name is used as a "surname" for its members.
- 11 Ġumiad is Rummyad in R. Rosaldo's spelling.
- 12 The Rosaldos attended this event held in Ġingin (Ringin in their spelling). In his detailed description of the covenant, R. Rosaldo (1980, 80–106) completely omitted the missionaries' role in mediating the feud, a position in accord with their assumption of salvage anthropology, which is hostile to the presence of Christianity because it brings radical social change and with it something essential ("culture") vanishes (R. Rosaldo 1988, 1989b). I have made a more detailed critique of their neglect of sociocultural changes and their simplified view of Christianity as neocolonial imposition or hegemony elsewhere (Yang 2009).
- 13 *Rinawa* in M. Rosaldo's spelling. Ġinawa is at once a physical organ, a source of action and awareness, and a locus of vitality and will. It can leave the body temporarily in times of illness, and it can leave the body permanently when one dies (M. Rosaldo 1980, 36–37).
- 14 This is one of the Ġingin people's favorite stories, and women always giggle and comment that the heads must have been very smelly (*enamay*). Bringing heads back is so at odds with Bugkalot headhunting tradition, but the severed head serves as a locus of meaning or misunderstanding for other groups, and the trophy skull feeds state fetishism.
- 15 From 1978 to the mid-1980s, the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) launched several development projects in Ġingin, including settlement projects, irrigation, and wet-rice cultivation aimed at increasing agricultural productivity in the uplands. The settlement project was originally intended for the Igorot and the Ifugao displaced by the construction of the Ambuklao and Binga Dams in the Province of Benguet. Ġingin was chosen as a settlement site because the government considered it state land. The indigenous residents of Ġingin found DAR's project, aimed at bringing in more migrants, unsettling, so they asked their relatives to move from Lipuga, Pelaway, and Cawayan back to Ġingin as a strategy for defending their territory against encroaching settlers (Yang 2010).
- 16 The CAFGU paramilitary units were established in 1987 in accordance with the notion of a citizens' armed force expressed in the constitution. They are under military command. Their members are

subject to military law and regulations, receive up to a month's military training, and must wear uniforms.

- 17 Money did change hands as the NPA imposed and collected what they called "revolutionary taxes" (Quimpo 2008, 77) on local small farmers and shopkeepers. However, whether or not this was payment for killing the Bugkalot and grabbing their land was uncertain.
- 18 Ġingin is located at a boundary dispute area between Nueva Vizcaya Province and Quirino Province. On the Vizcaya side it is named New Ġumiad, while on the Quirino side it is named La Conwap. At this time Sakdal was the only barangay captain.
- 19 Beginning in the late 1960s, the missionaries adopted a traditional Bugkalot way of social gathering—collective fishing (*pa-deweg*)—to organize region-wide seminars for Bible study, which eventually developed into a yearly event. The establishment of a network connected by yearly conferences of the NTM followers scattered throughout the Bugkalot area has facilitated the development of pan-Bugkalot politics and identity, and the Bugkalot Confederation was formed in 1975.
- 20 Headhunter's paralysis occurs very rarely, possibly no more than in one raid out of ten or fifteen (M. Rosaldo 1983, 147).
- 21 The first four people baptized in Ġingin were two elderly couples, one of whom was Tebdey's parents.
- 22 When Tebdey went on an ambush with a group of raiders, he found out later that the victim was a distant cousin of his.
- 23 Moreover, they later caused a lot of social tension in Ġingin by grabbing land from other Bugkalot (Yang 2010).
- 24 When I discussed this story with an Ifugao community nurse who was sent to Ġingin for several years in the 1980s, she knew about the Bugkalot's interpretation of it, but she thought the *integ* (light) must have come from the explosion of bombs because the military bombed the NPA in the area.
- 25 As a Bugkalot friend said: "The Bugkalot had no idea what martial law was. All we knew was that if men went headhunting in the lowland the *pisi* [police, military] would come and get us."
- 26 In the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the coming of the Gospel to the Bugkalot area, elderly Bugkalot men put on their full traditional attires to pose as headhunters and perform duels. However, the missionaries knew what kind of emotional effect *buayat* would evoke and did not ask the Bugkalot to sing it.

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