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## THE UNINTENTIONAL VIOLENCE IN THE JOKES ABOUT THE INDIGENOUS MANGYANS OF ORIENTAL MINDORO, PHILIPPINES

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#### **ABSTRACT**

This paper examines the intention within the violence inherent in the jokes directed towards the indigenous (IPs) Mangyans of Oriental Mindoro, Philippines. It has two parts. The first part focuses on exposing how these jokes originated and transferred. The second part deals with tracing the intentions behind uttering these jokes.

#### INTRODUCTION

This paper is the second part of the series of studies that aim to dissect the jokes directed toward the Indigenous Mangyans of Oriental Mindoro Philippines. The first part was published in the journal – Palarch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology 17(2) last 2020 with the title *Structural Violence in the Jokes About the Indigenous Mangyans of Oriental Mindoro, Philippines* (Mahaguay, 2020). The first article proved that there is violence in the jokes given to the Mangyans. This second part, on the other hand, is different since it will tackle manners how these jokes spread, and the intentions of its sharing.

The researcher's commitment to exposing these jokes about the minorities is unwavering because he hailed from Oriental Mindoro Philippines and has direct relationships with the Indigenous Mangyans. He grew up with the Mangyans in their village and developed bonds with them. He studied in high school and college with schoolmates from the Indigenous group whom he considers genuine and worthy to be called friends. Thus, exposing this violent popular culture is not only one of his academic projects but also life advocacy.

#### RELATED LITERATURE

There is a conscious move worldwide to protect the right and heritage of Indigenous People's (IPs). The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2007 orders* every member state to develop laws in protecting the IPs (United Nations, 2007). In the Philippines, there is Republic Act No. 8371 or commonly known as the "*The Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997*" which upholds the rights of the IPs.

With the specialized laws above, truly the basic rights of the IPs are protected consciously but there are other aspects taken for granted by these laws which are the IPs' character being degraded in popular culture like jokes. These jokes about the indigenous people have the prejudice that harms the group (La Fave, L., & Mannell, R.,1976), (Lowe, 1986), (Schutz, 1989). The joke comes from the Latin word "jocose" which means to have fun, play, or spend time. It can be through words, sentences, or stories that can be written or spoken. There are two facets of giving or using a joke, the first is to hide the messages one wants to convey, and the second is to build relationships with others. The first face can be seen in Freud's statement saying that it has a deeper source, in his book "Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious" he says that it is a way of avoiding a person from inside and his external problem. He may be using a joke to tell things indirectly. The second can be seen in Cohen's article "Jokes: Philosophical Thoughts on Joking Matters" that instead of avoiding, the joke is a way of having a relationship with someone (Cohen, 2001). Because everyone wants pleasure, jokes serve as a bridge to get along and help to develop bonds with everyone (Vinton, 1989). Whatever reason one is employing, still to utter a joke is the safest way to cross issues that are acceptable or not, holy or rude (Hodson and McInnis, 2016) simply because if the joke is not accepted, it can be said as "just a joke" and if it is accepted, it is the beginning of a good exchange of stories (Mahaguay, 2020).

This paper will look at the intentionality of violence on the jokes about the indigenous Mangyans in Oriental Mindoro, Philippines. Mangyan is the general name used to refer to the IPs living on the island of Mindoro. The Mangyans have seven main tribes: Iraya, Alangan, Tadyawan, Bangon, Buhid / Batangan, Tao-Buhid, and Hanunuo (Postma, 1988). They live in the mountainous areas of Mindoro. They were the first inhabitants of the coast of Mindoro and had strong trade relations with the Chinese. But due to the frequent attacks by the Moros, the arrival of the Spaniards, and the influx of people from neighboring areas they were forced to retreat to the mountains (Mahaguay, 2020). The Mangyans have their own: a) political structure, b) language, c) way of writing, d) literature, and e) faith which can be considered as heritage not only of the island of Mindoro but also of the entire Philippine nation (Postma, 1981; Miranda, 1989).

#### Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored on Donald Davidson's theory of intention (Davidson, 1963). It says that any action done by the agent which is intentional can be explained through the agent's reason. This reason is the agent's desire and

beliefs. This means that the agent's intention is nothing but the summary of his desire and beliefs which are directed in his actions (Bratman, 1999).

To apply this theory, suppose a teacher wishes for the beautification of the garden in front of her classroom, so she drew her desired landscaped and hired personnel to carry out her plan. Here, the intention is the beautification of the garden which was the pro-attitude that guided the actions are taken which are drawing the desired landscape and hiring personnel to carry out the plan. The same explanation is seen in the paper of Sinhababu entitled The Desire-Belief Account of Intention Explains Everything (Sinhababu, 2013), where he called this Davidson's *desire-belief* as *reason-choosing*.

Concerning the inherent violence present in the jokes attributed to the indigenous Mangyans, this theory of intention as desire-belief by Davidson is very critical because it will shed the light on the very intentions of which these jokes are uttered. Going back to the desire-belief pattern, uttering jokes therefore as an action is just a manifestation of the desire and belief of the speaker. So, it is very important to understand their desire-belief to move forward in understanding violence as a product of actions. Through this theory of intention, this paper will look at the *intention-action-message relation* which is crucial in building a holistic and peaceful solution to the problem.

#### RESEARCH METHODS

The study started with the first 100 jokes received electronically through Messenger from different respondents. After grouping similar jokes, there are 40 unique jokes left. These 40 jokes became the subject of the study of the first part, while the original 100 jokes which were accompanied by a questionnaire checklist are the subject of this second part. This questionnaire revolves around three main topics such as a) Where did these jokes come from? b) On what occasions these jokes are shared? c) What is the intention behind sharing these jokes?

Since this is a philosophical paper, it uses the mixed method of quantitative and qualitative research to strengthen its discourse which follows that format of John Creswell in his book "Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches 4th ed" (Creswell, 2014). In the quantitative aspect, only the frequency distribution was used in interpreting the data. This method is used to understand the motive or intention in sharing these jokes. While the qualitative approach was used in analyzing the intention of the sharer of jokes in relation to the theory of intention of Donald Davidson which is centered on the desire-belief system.

#### Violence in Jokes

Using the criteria based on the Five Faces of Oppression by Young (2005), the violence inherent in the jokes was identified in part 1 of the study (Mahaguay, 2020). In forty (40) jokes taken as sample, thirty-seven (37) of them appeared to be carrying violence. While only three of them can be said to be non-violent. A huge proportion of jokes carry violence. The table below shows the

type of violence observed. A single joke might have one or more types of violence presence which makes the number of violence observed greater than the total number of jokes.

**Table 1.** Violence in Jokes In Young's Five Faces Of Oppression

Jokes Classified in the Five Faces of Oppression of Young	Frequency	%
1. Exploitation	1	2
2. Marginalization	2	4
3. Powerlessness	5	11
4. Cultural Imperialism	21	47
5. Violence	16	36
Total	45	100

Table 1 reveals the violence seen in the Mangyan jokes in relation to the five faces of oppression of Young. Of the total forty jokes, the violence caused by imperialist culture has the most of which twenty-one (21) have it. The second most common is violence (physical, mental, and emotional) in which sixteen (16) jokes are present. The third is powerlessness where five (5) jokes have it. Fourth is marginalization with two (2) and the last is exploitation with only one (1) joke. The detailed discussion of this can be read on the first part of this study entitled *Structural Violence in the Jokes About the Indigenous Mangyans of Oriental Mindoro, Philippines* in Palarch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology 17(2) last 2020 (Mahaguay, 2020).

#### The Spread of Mangyan Jokes

There is violence in most jokes about the Mangyans. These jokes cover all aspects of Mangyan life from economic, social, cultural, and symbolic. That is why, if one wants to protect the natives, it is important to know the root of these jokes. It is important to understand where it came from, on what occasions it is used, how often it is mentioned, and what exactly is the reason for sharing it?

#### Where Did the Jokes About the Mangyans Start?

**Table 2.** Sources of Mangyan Jokes

Where did these Mangyan Jokes originate?	Frequency	%
1. Heard from family	23	23
2. Heard from friends	60	60
3. Heard from an unknown person	3	3
4. Read in an article	2	2
4. Heard or read a story and just change the	0	0
charaters		
6. Witness in true event	1	1
7. Self-made	3	3
8. Internet	8	8

Total	100	100

Table 2 contains the sources of the initial one hundred (100) Mangyan jokes received. First on the list is from friends where sixty-eight (60) jokes came from. The second is from the family that reached twenty-three (23) jokes. The third is the internet where there are eight (8). The fourth is heard to an unknown person and self-made which the same got three jokes (3). While the fifth with two jokes are simply read from an article. While the last with only one joke is from the real event witnessed.

This table shows the importance of friends and family in the transmission of these jokes. The internet on the other hand brings another dimension to this source of jokes and methods of transmission. At this part, it is worth mentioning that some of the invited participants of the researcher decline to send jokes but instead suggested channels on the internet particularly on Youtube where Mangyan jokes are uploaded. The researcher checked Youtube and found four channels. Although not all their contents are all about the Mangyans, their huge followers and subscriptions affect largely the propagation of these jokes. This can be seen in the selected shows that were taken on June 29, 2020. In Michael Landicho's channel the show with the title "Joke time by Alimbuyog: Bumili ng Tsinelas, 2 Araw di pa nakauwi" was published on May 25, 2017, has already 94,577 views. In Jaymar's Entertainment Channel there is a show with the title "Mangyan Namaraka sa Bayan TV at Radyo / Alimbuyog Joke Time" which was published on August 15, 2019, and has 23,836 views. Also on the JIGS TVE Channel, there is a show with the title "Pinoy Joke Mangyan 1" which was released on May 8, 2020, and there were already 224 views. Meanwhile, on the Melca Pabunan Channel, there is a show intitled "joketime 01: Tawanan ALIMBUYUGIN" which was published on May 17, 2017, there were 34,909 views. These Youtube channels only show that these jokes are already entering the larger media. It is not anymore contained in Mindoro or in the whole country but already worldwide. From the number of views registered, it shows that these jokes are already out there. Sharing then is unlimited which means the violence inherent in the jokes is also transmitted without restriction.

#### Occasions Where Mangyan Jokes Are Shared

**Table 3.** Occasions Where Mangyan Jokes Are Shared

Occasions where Mangyan jokes are shared	Frequency	%
1. Ordinary conversation	91	81
2. Family gathering (reunion, birthday,	12	11
baptism, wedding, and wake)		
3. Public gatherings	0	0
4. Radio/newspaper	0	0
5. Others: (drinking alcohol)	10	8
Total	113	100

Table 3 shows the occasion where these jokes are being shared. Respondents can select more than one occasion in which these jokes are shared. The common conversation placed the highest event with ninety-nine jokes (91) shared. The second is in family gatherings with twelve jokes (12). While drinking alcohol got 10. The huge number of jokes shared in ordinary conversations and family gatherings further strengthen the previous result about the majority of the jokes shared by friends and family members which are discussed above. While the internet did not appear here as a place where jokes can be shared because none of the participants have a channel on Youtube or any internet site. But because of the four channels listed above it can be inferred that of all the occasions or places where these jokes can be shared, the internet is the most promising and most accessible to all.

#### How Many Times These Jokes Are Shared?

**Table 4.** Sharing of Jokes

How many times a joke is shared?	Frequency	%
1. naver been shared	5	5
2. 1 to 5 times	27	27
3. 6 to 10 times	28	28
4. more than ten times	40	40
Total	100	100

Table 4 deals with the number of times these jokes are shared. It is seen that majority of those who heard tend to share it since only five jokes were never been shared again. Forty (40) of the jokes have been shared with others more than ten times. Twenty-eight (28) have been shared six (6) to ten (10) times. Twenty-seven (27) have been shared one (1) to five (5) times.

Ninety-five percent (95%) sharing rate of jokes entails also the sharing rate of the violence inherent in these jokes. While five percent (5%) rate of not sharing the joke is a good manifestation that not everyone is keen on passing this violent culture. But this five percent is not enough to stop the process of spreading these jokes. Also not included here are the rates of views of the internet channels introduced above which: Michael Landicho channel with 94,577 views, Jaymar's Entertainment Channel with 23,836 views, JIGS TVE Channel with 224 views, and Melca Pabunan Channel with 34,909 viewers.

#### The Intentionality of Violence in The Jokes About the Mangyan

**Table 5.** Reasons for Sharing Jokes

Reason for sharing jokes	Frequency	%
1. to have fun	93	90.3
2. to kill time	6	5.9
3. to boast	0	
4. to transfer	1	.9
5. to be proud of the Mangyans	3	2.9
6. to belittle the Mangyans	0	

Total 103 10
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Table 5 deals with the reasons or purpose of sharing these jokes. Each participant is allowed to select one or more reasons from the choices. To have fun came as the highest reason since out of one hundred jokes, ninety-three (93) are listed. The second is to kill or spend time with six (6) jokes recorded. The third is done because the speaker is proud of the Mangyans with three (3) jokes mentioned. These three jokes are the ones that show the natural intelligence and logic of the Mangyans which are already discussed above. There is one (1) joke which was shared simply for the reason of transferring to others.

Although the majority of these jokes have inherent violence, having fun as the main reason for sharing is a positive sign. It is positive not because many enjoyed it but because the goal or intention is good. It means there is no negative intention like to transfer violence or disrespect the Mangyans. It means that if only the content of the joke can be corrected, the fun will continue but the violence will disappear. It directly contradicts the theory of pride from ancient thought (Hobbles, 1604) to modern (Billig, 2005) that jokes are made directly to undermine the dignity of others. The second reason which is to be proud of the Mangyans which is related to the three positive jokes discussed above is also a good sign since it proves that there are already people consciously trying to protect the dignity of the Mangyans through jokes. They are doing it by inserting humanistic values in their jokes. Joking here becomes a process of educating the listener as well.

### THE CRITICAL ANALYSES OF THE UNINTENTIONALITY OF VIOLENCE IN THE JOKES ABOUT THE MANGYAN

#### Responsibility on Violence in The Jokes Even It Is Unintentional

In the desire-belief model of intention by Davidson (1978) the reason of the agent in doing the act has a big part in explaining his intention. Here every reason is personal and different compared to the others. The same with Mangyan jokes, the reasons behind are sharing it for fun and not to humiliate the Mangyans. But upon doing the act, unintentional effects like violence come with the intentional view of having fun. Here the researcher argues that even violence is unintentional still it is the responsibility of the agents. Thus, the agents have all the moral obligation to consciously examine his jokes if it has violence before uttering.

This point simply means that although the violence in the jokes about the Mangyans is found to be unintentional it is very important to note that its unintentionality does not warrant anyone to continue sharing these jokes and escaped the responsibility for its negative effects. It is the responsibility of the agent to explore all the possible effects of his acts or jokes before uttering it. The same is true with other cases of unintentional violence such as physical violence (Han, You, Gao, Duan, Hu, Wang, & Zeng, F. 2019) and some are structural also in nature like violence on LGBTQ community (De la Ossa,

2016). The unintentional point of view of the agent will not exempt him from the effects of his acts.

If the agents or those who are uttering jokes about the Mangyans will not take responsibility for the violence in it because it is unintentional then the abuse will continue. This issue is similar to the mining issue in Oriental Mindoro (Mahaguay, 2018) where the Ancestral Land of the Mangyans is part of the mining project. Many are saying that the destruction of nature and of the sacred place of the Indigenous People is unintentional in pursuance of development since the main purpose of the project is to generate income and livelihood for the Mindoreños. This argument is absurd since it excludes the possibility of finding a way to generate income and livelihood for the people without sacrificing the rights of the Mangyans to that ancestral land. The same is true with the violence in the jokes about the Mangyans, even it is unintentional, it is undeniably true that it violates the dignity and basic human rights of the Mangyans.

#### There Is an Intentional Anti-Violence Effort

The three jokes related to the genius and logic of the Mangyans are promising models. These jokes aim to recognize and be proud of the intelligence of the Mangyans. These jokes simply proved that jokes with Mangyan topics and with no inherent violence are also possible. They are nothing less compared to those with violent content. Like other jokes, these are also funny but not violent and serve the greater good of a group. These are examples of counterconsciousness against violence which are intentional acts. These jokes should be told to friends, passed on to family members, written in newspapers and other media. Only positive conscious action is needed to combat unintentional violence. Education then is what is needed to combat this violent culture. Values formation therefore should take a major part in the learning experience of every Filipino students (Mahaguay, 2013; Mahaguay, 2018; Mahaguay, 2019; Abenes, R.D., Mahaguay, J.M. 2019; Mahaguay, 2020).

Violence even unintentional is still violence. The unintentionality of violence will not change the damage done to the dignity of the Mangyans. Thus, the importance of education in informing this violence in jokes about the IPs, especially the Mangyans of Oriental Mindoro is very significant. The ignorance of this situation will create bigger damage in the future. More suffering and injustice will follow if this ignorance is not addressed, this is true even with the discussion of human security in the context of evil as suffering in the Christian and Buddhist tradition (Mahaguay, 2019). Ignorance of the violent effects of these jokes will create more suffering and its unintentionality is not an excuse. It is important therefore to have an intentional effort to correct this unintentional violence in the jokes about the Mangyans. Creating a positive joke as a model is just one of the steps but the most important step is to educate the citizen about this problem. Unintentional violence should be addressed through intentional effort especially through education.

#### **CONCLUSION**

It turns out that friends usually transmit these jokes, followed by family. This is supported by data about the occasions where jokes are shared, the largest proportion occurring in common conversations, and followed by family gatherings. Many of those who share these jokes said that after hearing the jokes they also recite them to others. While only five listeners said they had not shared yet. It just means that not everyone who hears jokes is willing to pass it on to others. It also shows the huge potential of the internet as the fastest and widest mode of transferring these jokes. This is dangerous if it continually transmits violent jokes due to its extent and speed. It will cause more pain in the future. But if proper guidance is given and positive jokes with counter-consciousness with anti-violent content will be aired through the internet, then it will be of big help.

To have fun came as the main reason why these jokes are uttered, followed by killing or wasting time and the third is to be proud of the Mangyans. It is important to pay attention to the jokes that are made to be proud of the Mangyans that showcase their natural talents and logic. These jokes can be potential models. It also proves that there are people who are consciously trying to fight this violence. In the end, it is important to note that those who utter jokes with violence against the Mangyans are unconscious, their only real goal is to have fun and make others happy. They do not understand that they are building a structure that separates them from Mangyans. They are putting the Mangyan into the lower structural level and at the same time elevating or putting themselves into a higher one. Everyone who laughs or enjoys these violent jokes also participates in strengthening the violent structure that undermines the dignity of the Mangyans. In this sense, the conscious actions of those who understand this violence are only necessary. The end goal of this paper is not to punish those who are transmitting these violent jokes but to educate them and help them realize that there are other positive ways to have fun.

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