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Tourism, heritage and cultural performance: Developing a modality of heritage tourism

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A B S T R A C T

Research has shown that heritage is a contested concept which not only creates unnecessary binaries but also perpetuates essentialized First World imagery of Asian countries. To assist in its reframing, this paper proposes critical ethnography. It is argued that through it, a more nuanced and community-based understanding of cultural heritage can be developed, thus allowing the articulation of modalities of cultural heritage and the formation of alternative imaginaries. To develop this point, the essay problematizes the heritage concept, examines how governing policies and tourism frameworks define cultural heritage vis-àvis its use in the tourism industry, and discusses the theoretical sources and intellectual legacy of critical ethnography. Cases from Batanes and Marinduque provinces, the Philippines, are reviewed to serve as background. With critical ethnography as a strategic method, the essay suggests that the semiotics of heritage tourism can be broadened and possibilities for social change in Asian tourism and hospitality established.

1. Introduction

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines cultural heritage as the legacy of physical artefacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations. The definition seems to be an articulation of a simple cultural tradition, but the localization of the term implies a more complex undertaking especially in the domains of preservation, maintenance and protection (Allen, 2010; Harrison, 2010, 2013; Laurence, 2010; Smith, 2006).

In the essay, we look at how cultural heritage may be perceived as a possibility and a problem in discourses of tourism, governance and cultural studies. This is because the context of heritage applied to a cultural performance and/or tradition is not shared by all stakeholders (Allen, 2010; Harrison, 2013; Harrison & Linkman, 2010; Smith, 2006). This can be observed, for example, in world heritage-listed sites, where policy conflicts between local governments and supranational bodies like UNESCO take place (Piccolo, Leone, & Pizzuto, 2012). It is clearly a contested concept, and as a result, it creates baseless and often unnecessary binaries such as elite versus common people, state versus community, tradition versus modernity, to name a few (Harrison, 2010, 2013; Smith, 2006; West, 2010). It also has strong overlaps with other tourism constructs such as pilgrimage or religious tourism (Timothy & Boyd, 2006) and dark tourism (Timothy, 2018). For these reasons, implementation of cultural tourism management plans can become very political (Lee, Riley, & Hampton, 2010; Su & Teo, 2009). In this regard, there is a need to reframe cultural heritage as patrimony, representations of identity and a tourism marker.

Consistent with this, the paper answers a general question: How may the concept of heritage be negotiated among community stakeholders in order to use it as a necessary and strategic method in the development of cultural tourism? The argument proposes that through critical ethnography, the continued subjugation and marginalization of alternative meanings that lead to ideological domestication, and to the perpetuation of essentialized First World imagery of Asian countries, can be checked. Instead of these, a more nuanced and community-based understanding of cultural heritage can be developed, thus allowing the articulation of modalities of cultural heritage that enhances tourism imaginaries and the semiotics of heritage tourism, recognizes the plurality of voices, and ultimately identifies ways in which tourism becomes a positive force for social change.

To develop these points, we first problematize the heritage concept since it is often positioned as an ideological apparatus of the dominant authority, typically the state, which has a tendency to impose its perspective instead of engaging community members in conversations. Second, we at look at how governing policies and tourism frameworks define cultural heritage vis-à-vis its use in the industry. We highlight the point, observed by scholars (e.g., Yang, 2011), that tourism exerts a powerful force that shapes cultural images of social groups, thus, unduly influencing the development of state policy.

Third, we introduce critical ethnography, discussing its theoretical

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sources and intellectual legacy. The introduction is prefaced by observations that some social actors dominate the formation of cultural narratives. In the process, we stress contextual conditions such as power relations as important determinants of cultural hegemony, identity politics and commodification of culture, and discuss how these circumstances, which are reinforced by official interpretations, perpetuate and affirm assumed meanings that oftentimes have huge ethical consequences. These points are highlighted via two cases from Batanes and Marinduque provinces.

The choice of Batanes and Marinduque are strategic and purposive because aside from illuminating the theoretical points discussed above, these island-provinces are also popular tourist destinations in the Philippines. Batanes is the only province declared by Philippine law as protected landscapes and seascapes. Today, the local government also co-features provincial cultural practices such as the palo-palo festival alongside its natural landscapes as a valuable reason to visit the islands.

The island of Marinduque, on the other hand, is a popular pilgrimage site in the Philippines. This island is visited by hundreds of thousands of local and foreign tourists during the celebrations of the Holy Week in the Catholic calendar. The moriones performance is popular in the province during its tourist season. The national government is currently working hand-in-hand with the local government of Marinduque for the inscription of the moriones as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, particularly the performance in the provincial capital of Boac. Nonetheless, community members who are actively performing the ritual-performance show some signs of hesitation with the proposed inscription. As will be discussed later, there is a brewing tension between the community members and the state because the folks believe that the state is pushing the inscription for its own interest.

These two cases, reviewed here from previously published work, provide ethnographic details that show heritage as a critical and political concept, and how government and tourism industry players perpetuate colonial epistemological frameworks and Eurocentric logic through their uncritical and dominant interpretation of heritage. The cases imply that if these structures, practices and representations surrounding Asian heritage continue, then the Third World will remain as the imaginary other in colonial discourse. The cases do not illustrate how critical ethnography is actually carried out but are employed as a backdrop to the full development of critical ethnography much later in the paper.

Learning the tools of critical ethnographers is proposed as an important methodological strategy for cultural and heritage tourism research and practice. It is argued that through the procedural method of critical ethnography that allow the articulation of silent voices and the formation of alternative imaginaries, totalizing generalizations and conclusions about heritage, and misrepresentations thereof, can be avoided. Thus, ways in which heritage tourism become a positive force for social change can be established. A discussion of some challenges particularly to stakeholders in achieving such aims, and a research agenda, conclude the paper.

2. Conceiving heritage

Those who are recognized as the authority of heritage constantly use the glorious past as the primary defining framework for etching something as heritage (Harrison, 2010; Shetty, 2004; Smith, 2006). This identification equates heritage as something significantly valuable - similar to how precious stones such as gold and diamonds are esteemed. While the value of precious stones is often a personal encounter, the value of heritage is commonly a community endeavor.

While “glorious past” is associated with heritage, it is also understood as inheritance. Borrowing from the *Oxford English Dictionary*, Harrison (2010) defines heritage as “property that is or may be inherited” or something that can be “passed from one generation to the next, something that can be conserved or inherited, and something that has historic or cultural value (p. 9).” Timothy (2018) clearly stipulates heritage as “an inheritance from the past that is valued and utilized today, and what we hope to pass on to future generations” (p. 177). In heritage studies, this concept is translated as patrimony (Harrison, 2010; Smith, 2006).

Heritage is a broad concept that includes the natural as well as the cultural environment of a community. Two major types of patrimony are identified in heritage studies: the tangible and the intangible. By way of taxonomy, tangible heritage is typically subdivided into the cultural and the natural. Included in the list of tangible cultural heritage are historic cities, cultural landscapes, natural sacred sites, underwater cultural heritage, and museums to name a few. These are the historical monuments, parks, old buildings, archaeological sites, ruins, parks, gardens, farmlands, shipwrecks, mountains, volcanoes, natural landscapes that are cited as national treasures and, in many occasions, inscribed as World Heritage Sites for their outstanding universal values to humanity, creating a tourism industry where these sites are located (Urry, 1990).

Harvey (2001, p. 320) asserts that these monuments, historical buildings or cultural landmarks are also necessary in social life as they construct ideas of individuality and group identity. In relation to this, Smith (2006) stresses that these monuments compose the meta-narratives of nationalism and national identity; hence many states today have turned the attention of heritage discussion to “the conservation and management of non-portable antiquities and historic buildings” (p. 18).

On the other hand, the universally recognized definition of intangible heritage is found in the manifesto of the UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which is defined as “the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage” (Harrison, 2013, p. 134). Like the tangible heritage, these are also framed within conceptions of historical and cultural inheritance since they are “transmitted from generation to generation” and constantly “recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity” (p, 134).

However, heritage is not only a broad concept but also a contested sociocultural category (Tiatco, 2009, p. 292). In relation to this, Lowenthal (2015), through his proposal of *heritage-as-process*, provides an inquiry regarding heritage as being more than just a thing to preserve but a site for discourse and critical opportunity. In the 2015 edition of his seminal work *The Past is a Foreign Country,* Lowenthal reflects about how heritage is celebrated, normalized, credited and even disvalued as official, personal and unorthodox in this day and age of digital culture (i.e. social media). Hence, the more we need to talk about the concept of heritage, especially since sociologists have started identifying the current milieu as post-truth, an era where false news have increasingly influenced the individual and his or her society at large (see Fuller, 2018; Mcintyre, 2018).

Citing the Anthropological Association of the Philippines, Tiatco asserts heritage to be dependent on the “ways by which positioned actors and institutions would mobilize its meaningful values in such realms as identity politics, commodification of culture as resource, and biocultural diversity advocacies” (2009, p. 293). Coming from urban studies, Shetty (2004) notes heritage as “ambiguously articulated through the historiography of selective glorification” (p. 4). For him, only a selective few canonize something as heritage, which eventually becomes the official heritage without even consulting all involved stakeholders.

A more radical take on this matter is Smith (2006), p. 13). Like Shetty, Smith argues heritage as a socio-cultural construct based on the politics of those who are labeled as “authority.” Therefore, heritage is

an ideological construct that helps "regulate, maintain, or challenge social relations" (p. 15). Since heritage is an ideological construct, it is important for Smith to reflect on and problematize its construction, especially since the dominant discourse (i.e. the state) may have a different agenda from the wider community groups. For Smith, not all stakeholders of the social sphere share the same understanding of the concept. For instance, Laurence (2010) explains how the government, being a dominant authority uses heritage as a tool in asserting definitive actions for implementing laws and policies even if it means not pleasing all subjects. Smith adds that often this disparity creates social dilemmas and tensions. Heritage policies often beg the question who is heritage for. There are instances where champions of heritage instrumentalize it to refer to a social and cultural perspective to the exclusion of dissonant points of view. Recent research reinforces these observations. Muzaini (2017), for example, discusses how a theme park is used by Malaysian state authorities as a political statement of statehood. Yet, he finds how local people and tourists have used their own personal experiences to adjust the official hegemonic narrative conveyed by the cultural artefacts and stories at the park. These findings echo the contested nature of heritage, as also discussed in Yang (2011) and Park (2016).

3. Cultural heritage tourism

Despite the politics, and debates on the conception of heritage by those working within the arts, heritage and tourism fields, it is asserted that tourism managers see it as a resource that should be developed (Smith, 2016; Timothy & Nyaupane, 2009). The presence of a rich heritage is viewed as a driver of tourism development, "sometimes even over-deterministically" (Gravari-Barbas, 2018, p. 5).

This connection to the past, its interpretation and representation, is at the heart of heritage tourism. A branch or sub-niche of cultural tourism (Smith, 2016), heritage tourism has been referred to as visits or experiences of both material and immaterial remnants of the past (Park, 2014). Relying on built and living elements of culture in natural, cultural or urban contexts (Santa-Cruz & López-Guzmán, 2017), it encompasses inheritances from the past such as monuments which have outstanding value from the perspective of history, art or culture. The range of these resources is broad and deep such that typologies have been constructed (e.g., Nuryanti, 1996; Park, 2014; Timothy, 2011; Timothy & Boyd, 2006). Importantly, existing cultures, folkways and everyday scenes are also acknowledged as part of heritage tourism, these being argued as products of cultural patrimony (Timothy & Nyaupane, 2009).

Importantly, in heritage tourism, visitors play a significant role. In other words, heritage tourism is not seen simply from a supply perspective but also from a demand perspective. Poria, Butler, and Airey (2003) stress this point forcefully, stating that visitors' personal connections with cultural artefacts influence the quality of heritage tourism experiences. Consistent with this, Park (2014) argues that heritage tourism is a process and a performance, which are constantly negotiated and recreated to meet the specific demands of the tourist market. Heritage tourism, then, is a social phenomenon that allows the creation of heritage from below, through the personal narratives and discourses that arise during visits to heritage sites such as cultural theme parks (Muzaini, 2017). Such post-modernist tendencies, coupled with other forces like deindustrialization, defunctionalization, experiential turn and globalization (Gravari-Barbas, 2018; Park, 2014; Smith, 2016) have led to the development of a new set of attractions quite different from the traditional historical and cultural monuments of the past.

Consequently, on multiple levels, tourism is deemed to be a creator of heritage, a catalyst of change in the way people see themselves in relation to other people and cultural artefacts (Yang, 2011). Gravari-Barbas (2018) even argues that tourism has become a "heritage-production machine." In the process of heritage making at the symbolic level, it is argued that the "the tourist gaze" (Urry, 1990) transforms heritage sites, particularly those that have been rendered obsolete by cultural or technological changes, into a semaphore – "an object, the function of which is now exclusively to convey a message…and to showcase its former function that has now disappeared" (Gravari-Barbas, 2018, p. 6). At the physical level, Gravari-Barbas adds, tourism has led to the reconstruction and restoration of many historical and cultural sites following tourist specification.

This notion of heritage leans towards a mode of governance - an ideological mechanism in a similar way critical theorist Althusser (1994) looks at ideology as a modality produced by a dominant body. Althusser notes that ideologies (i.e. ideological state apparatuses) are non-physical forms of repressions. They are institutions creating beliefs and interpretative paradigms, which individuals internalize and act upon without question. They create values, and through the action or inaction of social actors, assert themselves to be at the core of the society.

The most talked about ideological state apparatus in critical inquiry is the state itself. Often, the state is conceived to prescribe a certain mode of governance that give subjects the illusion that what it does is for the betterment of everyone. Althusser notes this institutionalization of governance does not guarantee the protection of constituents but is formed to protect the state's own interests. In relation to this, Gravari-Barbas (2018) implies heritage may be conceived as an "ideological machine" dedicated to uphold the state's concerns.

Althusser writes, "ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects" (p. 130). By the act of interpellation, one is able to recognize that the hail was really addressed to him or her or that the one hailed recognizes she is being hailed. Althusser adds: "Somewhere (usually behind them) the hail rings out: 'Hey, you there!' One individual (nine times out of ten it is the right one) turns round, believing/suspecting/knowing that it is for him, i.e. recognizing that 'it really is he' who is meant by the hailing. But in reality these things happen without any succession. The existence of ideology and the hailing or interpellation of individuals as subjects are one and the same thing." (p. 131).

Based on these beliefs, agencies of the state have outlined multiple objectives for heritage tourism ranging from the economic, social through to the political. At least three overlapping state actions can be distinguished to achieve these ends: heritage site development due to tourism demand, policy development, and promotion of heritage tourism in its various forms. These roles are similar in orientation to those identified by Wood (1984): government as planner of tourism development, marketer of cultural meaning and arbiter of cultural change. For example, Casey (2013) examines stakeholders at the local, national and international level involved in the nomination of Okinawa's Tarama Village August Dance Festival for Intangible Cultural Heritage and shows how officials were motivated not just by the need to project soft power and Japanese-ness, but also to create new jobs from increased tourism to Okinawa. Muzaini (2017) shares how Malaysian authorities built the Sarawak Cultural Village "out of the state government's desire to display 'live' the state's rich cultural diversity in one single place for the benefit of the visitors and the tourists" (pp 247–248). Similar reasons are used in the Philippines, particularly in the case of *Nayong Pilipino* [Filipino Village] which government authorities have resurrected four times, as well as in many local archaeological sites (Medrana, 2011).

Heritage policy development is another aspect tourism has influenced. This is highly notable in the amount of legislations and executive regulations that have come out of some countries and territories not just to protect cultural patrimony but also to encourage tourism demand (see Bushell, 2018 for Lao; Bui, Le, & Ngo, 2018 for Vietnam; Casey, 2013 for Japan; Hitchcock, T King, & Parnwell, 2010 for other Southeast Asian countries). In the Philippines, state authorities have incorporated tourism concerns in heritage laws. This can be seen in the strong institutional linkage between the National Commission of Culture and Arts to the Department of Tourism, as dictated by the National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009. In addition, the Tourism Act of 2009 sets

aside 5% of total travel tax collection for the development of historic, cultural, religious and heritage sites and prime tourist destinations.

In summary, tourism has been a powerful force in heritage-making, and the state has not been a passive actor in the process. Operating at different levels, it has actively engaged in heritage making, even to the extent of supplying culture for tourist consumption, to meet multiple objectives.

4. Construction of community heritage

Because of its ability to discursively unravel diverse social and cultural issues associated with heritage making, ethnographic approaches have been applied in a number of tourism-related studies. They have been used to evaluate tourist product and services (Konu, 2015; Muskat, Muskat, Zehrer, & Johns, 2013), assess travel experiences (Barbieri, Santos, & Katsube, 2012; Coghlan & Filo, 2013; Komppula & Gartner, 2013), and analyze tourist motivation (Buckley, 2012). It has likewise been used to probe into the meanings and behavior of certain tourism forms and contexts (Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013; Rantala, 2011).

However, it has been noted that its application within heritage tourism-related studies has not been emphasized (Park, 2010). This is unfortunate, as this implies the affirmation of assumed meanings particularly by practitioners, and the failure of researchers “to integrate descriptions of cultural parts into an analysis of the whole that raises the critical implications of the descriptions” (Thomas, 1993, p. 5). Regrettably, narratives could include the editorialization, hyperbolization and exoticization of a community's cultural heritage for commercial motive (Chan, 2017; Peterson, 2016).

Unfortunately, the persistence of such skewed practices, largely driven by dominant social actors (Gravari-Barbas, 2018; Shetty, 2004; Smith, 2006), has ethical consequences. As Madison (2012) writes “how people are represented is how they are treated” (p. 4). Underpinning this situation is the uneven distribution of power among actors involved. As has been established in the literature (Lowenthal, 1994, 1998; Smith, 2006), this could lead to oppressive structures. This gains particular resonance in the context of semi-feudal societies such as the Philippines, where Dela Santa (2018) notes how the exercise of power and politics in general has become an important “rule of the game” in tourism policy and planning, such that some actors including state agencies are able to perform acts with impunity. Notwithstanding increased policy learning over time (Dela Santa, 2015), many actors arrogantly engage in the destruction of heritage sites, particularly if these sites get in the way of infrastructure projects (Lao, 2018).

4.1. The case of Palo-Palo and Moriones

The case of Batanes' Palo-palo festival is emblematic of the foregoing discussion. The festival is publicized in official government websites (e.g. Tourism Promotions Board, and National Commission for Culture and the Arts) as a “cultural presentation showing the life and times of the Ivatans”. Adding to this marker of cultural heritage, an industry-oriented tourism website (i.e, www.unotours.com) reads “from the name itself, ‘palo-palo’ is a stick used by Ivatans in the past to fight against colonizers. This town festival celebrated every first week of August is one of the must-see feasts in the Philippines where in people get to see the rich lands of Batanes, have a taste of their delicacies, and learn more about its history.”

Based on the foregoing and on ethnographic data collected from August 2017 to March 2018 as part of a project that documented cultural performances in the archipelagic province of Batanes, particularly the *palo-palo,* and reported in Tiatco, Landicho, and Javier (2018), something was found amiss. First, there seems to be an implication that the performance of palo-palo is a war dance. Even for Hornedo and Maranan (1994) in the *Cultural Center of Philippines Encyclopedia of the Arts*, the palo-palo is identified as a war-dance. However, according to Tiatco et al., Ivatan community members see it differently. In conversations with the locals, it is even linked as a dance of peace. At the end of the performance, all performers leap forward with their hands held together. They then move to a final position: all lined up in a row facing the audience as for the bow. This final act in the performance represents truce. For many locals, it is a message of peace (Tiatco et al., 2018, p. 178). In addition, the current dance narrative reflects how peace-loving the Ivatans are in contemporary times. This is reinforced by its reputation: Batanes is known for “its low crime rate and even has an honesty store, where people can get products and leave money, which the owner, who does not man the establishment, just picks up at the day's end” (Tiatco et al., 2018, pp. 188–9).

Also notable in the narratives of the Ivatans is the recognition of the colonial roots of the dance form. Tourism materials identify palo-palo as an indigenous cultural form. However, some scholars (e.g. Tiongson, 1998) argue that it might have had its roots from the *moros y cristianos* dance that originated in twelfth century Europe. Perhaps, it is important to think of the performance as colonial entanglement, a recognition of the foreign in the local. Palo-palo, with its probable colonial roots, is reimagined, represented and presented as an Ivatan cultural performance reflecting how a foreign element can be embraced, remolded and claimed as a community's own (Tiatco et al., 2018, p. 189).

Finally, most of the locals define the palo-palo as a cultural treasure. It is even cited as an identity marker. Every August, in Batan Island, the Ivatans gather for the state-sponsored Palo-palo Festival. According to various websites, the festival is a “cultural presentation of the different municipalities of Batanes, showcasing their ethnic group's rugged yet storied existence”. As a cultural treasure, the palo-palo is a mandatory Ivatan cultural performance taught in physical education in public high school for the intention of preservation and maintenance of tradition as discussed by an informant during the field visit.

Another example is the case of Moriones Festival in the island of Marinduque. The Moriones is one of the most popular cultural performances visited by both local and foreign tourists during the season of the Holy Week in the archipelago. Reenacting the story of the Roman convert Longinus, the morion (the performer) wears a heavy mask designed to look like a Roman centurion. He also dons a colorful costume that is in synch with the mask. Often, the morion strolls all day long unto the streets of his or her respective town as a *panata*, a sacrificial vow or devotion performed before the public even though the intention is personal.

The personal intention is commonly associated as a solemn prayer in order to achieve an important request to the Almighty: a petition for a sick family member to get better, a petition to pass a licensure examination, a prayer for the betterment of a domestic crisis, among other reasons. In other instances, the morion is performing the devotion as a form of thanksgiving such as passing a board exam, becoming well from a very serious illness like cancer. Thus, for the people of Marinduque especially those from the towns of Mogpog, Santa Cruz and Gasan, the moriones is not a cultural heritage centered on festivity. In fact, many informants are not comfortable with the pronouncement of moriones as a festive identity marker of the island.

With this, the moriones tradition faces a dilemma vis-à-vis its identification as heritage by locals especially since many are convinced that the tradition is now performed excessively under governmental involvement (Chan, 2017, p. 31). According to some informants, institutions such as the provincial government and other frontrunners of heritage cannot completely represent the locals for they themselves have not experienced the tradition or have not actively participated in it. An informant even boldly proclaims that the local government utilizes the moriones for political gains. For the people outside the provincial capital, centralizing the moriones in Boac is a good strategy for cultural tourism but the government's strategy of festivilizing the religious performance is oblivious of its cultural core.

According to the ethnographic observations of Chan (2017) and

Peterson (2016), a lot has changed when the cultural performance was brought to the center in disguise as a festival. At the same time, the art of mask-making gradually developed into a commercial enterprise more than a cultural heritage activity. Chan asserts that what is currently encountered by the tourists is a heritage imposed by the government. For instance, the performance of the moriones is now included in a local passion play written by the provincial governor. Many locals do not approve of these changes. For the devotees, the passion play, locally called *sinakulo* is a form of theatricalization which "in reality is a political construction that would become more and more obvious under the direction of Carmencita O. Reyes for the sake or rallying public support" (Peterson, 2016).

In this way, Chan is rightfully convinced that the moriones, at least the one performed in the government-prescribed festival is a community folklore without a folk because "traditions, reinvented or not, must progress and develop in line with the values and beliefs of their concerned communities, creators and bearers" (Chan, 2017, p. 30).

From the foregoing cases, some things are clear. First, the way the cultural performances are conceived and implemented is contested. Stakeholders distinctly differ on how palo-palo festival and moriones are framed. Second, the government is the dominant authority in the discourse, with national and/or local government units having the final say regarding how the performances are presented. The economic and political benefits that can be derived from linking these cultural artefacts to tourism largely drive the efforts of government functionaries. In Batanes, tourism is booming, with visitor arrivals of 40,000 in 2017 – twice the current population level. It was approximately 110,000 for Marinduque.

Moreover, dominant research on palo-palo and moriones have focused on either the indigenous connections or historical genealogy of these performances. In the case of palo-palo, Hornedo (2000) and Tiatco et al. (2018) provide reflections on the concept of indigenous. The work by Tiatco et al. on colonial entanglement perspective is a foil to Hornedo's essentialist assertion about tradition. In the case of moriones, Peterson (2016) and Chan (2017) looked at the governing politics vis-à-vis contemporary performance. The politics in Peterson's is a critique on authenticity while Chan's is a question on tradition and cultural development. Nonetheless, very little of the available literature looks at the politics of heritage and its implication in tourism. In addition, even if previous research on Moriones (e.g. Nicholson, 1997) has pointed out the reduction in the local community's control over its cultural representation and its increased institutionalization, official publications (e.g. Asuncion, 2004) have remained nonchalant, focusing instead on a singular government-driven narration of the practices, origins, acts and fun associated with the event in the interest of attracting more tourists.

As noted above, the consequence of these activities could only be the further subjugation and marginalization of alternative meanings "that conceal deeper levels of social life, create misunderstanding, and thwart action" (Thomas, 1993, p. 7). Thomas further warns that continuing along this path risks falling into ideological domestication – a situation where researchers narrow down observations to the internal workings of a topic, and, in the process, failing "to explore the ironic and emancipatory potential" of research.

5. Methodology towards a methodology

To address some of these issues, unearth alternative meanings and effect positive social change, scholars suggest engaging in an "intellectual rebellion" (Madison, 2012). Within tourism planning and research, one means by which this is carried out is to involve local communities or to view tourism as a community industry (Murphy, 2012). Often, this mode of inquiry is identified as community-based approach or a community-based tourism development, where researchers stress the needs and desires of locals in the planning process (Iorio & Wall, 2012; Wall, 2007; Wang & Wall, 2005). Iorio and Wall (2012) explain the primacy of community involvement in this methodological lens in the sense that it "considers tourism as a means for the creation of livelihood and other economic, social, and/or environment benefits to the community and its members" (p. 1441). Simply, community-based approaches in tourism concerns fostering community control, understanding community attitudes towards tourism, and the impacts of tourism on a community (Hall, 2008). But a significant dilemma is still hanging: Who gets to represent the community?

For Iorio and Wall, the key actor (assumed as the community representative) in this approach is the cosmopolitan local or those "who left the community but have retained their ties to it and have returned" (2012, p. 1442). The engagement of these people are significant becase "they become catalysts of change as they resume their previous location but take advantage of their acquired knowledge" (p. 1442). Finally, these individuals are asserted as the locals with "vision and experience in the outside world who having seen potentials in their place of origin through their external exposure, return to take initiatives" hence, they are "innovators or in more colloquial terms, "movers and shakers" (p.1442).

Cosmopolitanism has become an important catchphrase in the social sciences and in the humanities to discuss contemporary scenarios such as migration, transnational politics, human rights and world security. It is also articulated as a lens to critique globalization and/or to talk about the other and critical side of globalization (Rebellato, 2009). In the humanities and cultural studies, cosmopolitanism has given birth to conceptual frames such as aesthetic hospitality, cosmopolitan imagination, aesthetics of openness, to name a few (Meskimmon, 2011; Papastergiadis, 2012; Tiatco, 2018). Scholars in cosmopolitan cultures have been disentangling *travel* as the only and major key disposition for someone to be a cosmopolitan (Appiah, 2006; Gilbert & Lo, 2009; Meskimmon, 2011; Papastergiadis, 2012; Tiatco, 2018).

The proposal of cosmopolitan local as a significant performer in community-based tourism reasearch is one of priveleging and othering because such framing does not adhere to the ideals of inclusivity and conviviality in the cosmopolitan concept. Nonetheless, cosmopolitanism is currently understood in both social sciences and the humanities as an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness towards divergent cultural experiences (Hannerz, 1990), in pursuit of the imaginary connections between self and others and grounded in a vision of conviviality (Papastergiadis, 2012). The stress is on the interrogation of cultural plurality and cultural difference, the negotiation of borders, the interplay of the local and the global, and the reconfiguration of a community founded on global responsibility, care, and hospitality (Tiatco, 2018).

The methodology of critical ethnography is contextualized within this realm of cosmopolitanism since the ethnographer has a disposition to be intellectually and aesthetically open to divergent cultural experiences as he/she engages in the field. The ethnographer comes to terms to conviviality since he/she is aware that multiple perspectives may come out in communicating with the locals. Finally, critical ethnography is premised upon an ethical disposition of engagement with the stranger. The ethnographer is aware that representation is ideological and, in some occasions, may even be harmful to the community itself.

As described in Tiatco et al. (2018), the proposed methodology towards cultural heritage tourism was inspired by visits to eight Philippine regions for another research project, which commenced in 2015. Originally, the project's general aim was to collect and archive cultural performances for the use of academics, students and enthusiasts in theatre, cultural, heritage, performance, and tourism studies.

During field research, it was observed how every local government unit (LGU) used local cultural performances as strategic marketing impulse and publicity tools for both foreigners and locals to consider visiting the municipality for leisure. Often, these performance activities were branded as heritage. In conversations with the locals, several

community members voiced their disappointments at this current practice, which for them somehow exploits the use of heritage. The contexts of these cultural performances are far different from the information the LGU's disseminated.

The problem, as what the informants mentioned and what the cases from Batanes and Marinduque show, is LGUs assume that their ideas of communal interest are synonymous to that of the general public. A number of informants even note that LGU's supposedly cultural workers do not even directly engage the community members in conversations and in dialogues about heritage.

These encounters in the field provided the motivation to rethink the way the tourism publications and marketing dissemination is planned and written, especially the cultural performances the Tourism Department in the Philippines brand as cultural heritage. Along the way, we remember Dwight Conquergood, a performance ethnographer who saw performance ethnography not merely as a mode of knowing and experiencing the world but also of radically intervening in it. He wrote, referencing Victor Turner, that symbols instigate social action, and felt that there was important critical work to be done on the symbolic domain particularly a critique of the symbols that drive public policy to deepen the lines of socio-economic stratification (Donkor, 2007).

Consistent with this, ethnographers (academics) were to articulate the macro issues, including the institutionalized power relationships that bristle inside an immediate experience to make a breathtaking differentiation between micro-nuances of meaning and macro-narratives of political economy (Conquergood, 1992, 2002). Conquergood reminds us that doing critical ethnography is a dialogue with others – a recognition that subjectivity is not only about subject position but also about one's relationship with others. Critical ethnography "is the meeting of multiple sides in an encounter with and among others, one in which there is a negotiation and dialogue toward substantial and viable meanings that made a difference in other's worlds" (Madison, 2012, p. 14).

6. Critical ethnography as a strategic method

Critical ethnography is drawn from Marx and Engels' outline of the materialist method which allows the exploration of "macropolitical forces in the micropolitical moments of their everyday execution" (Diamond, 1986, p. 1287). It is a methodology particularly suitable to the study of culture, power and conflict (Domic & Boukas, 2017) as it shifts focus on constructs that are generated by systemic power sources and relationships (Vorobjovas-Pinta, 2018). Thomas (1993) emphasizes that critical ethnography is still conventional ethnography, but instead of simply describing what traditional ethnographers call a thick description of culture, the former connects the analyses to broader structures of social power and control. There is a political purpose in the work of critical ethnographers, to change culture, and to answer the question "what could be?" (Thomas, 1993, p. 4). Methodologically, it offers a more direct approach of analyzing relationships among knowledge, society and political action (Averill, 2006). Steps to operationalize critical ethnography are described in Carspecken (1996), Madison (2012) and Thomas (1993). In the following section, we highlight some of the theoretical and methodological features of critical ethnography, grounding the discussion on ethnographic observations collected in Batanes and Marinduque by one of the authors and discussed in Tiatco et al. (2018), as well as other scholarly works.

In doing critical ethnography, scholars insist that the research process commence by examining the researcher's own biases and values to articulate the relationship among power, thought, and truth claims (Carspecken, 1996, p 247). This reflexivity is an acknowledgement that thoughts are fundamentally constructed, mediated by socio-historically constituted power relations, and organized ontologically and epistemologically. Thus, a researcher employing critical ethnography frames his positions around a theoretical perspective and conceptual notes.

Voice and Recruitment of Participants refers to the explication about whose voices are being heard and whose are not (Harrowing, Mill, Spiers, Kulig, & Kipp, 2010).The choice can be difficult and controversial, Harrowing et al. admit, because "the very act of categorizing people can marginalize them." (p 247). In the moriones, this is especially important because of the different factions that exist across the province - with the festival being practiced simultaneously in three towns - and the politicisation of the event particularly in the capital town of Boac (Chan, 2017; Mandia, 2002). Thus, representations must be able to show the agreement and disagreement, difference and similarity, separation and coming together of meanings. In this way, the diologic stance of critical ethnography refuses any totalizing generalization and conclusion because the ethnographer is situated in a multitude of expressions that transgress, collide and embellish realms of meaning. This is achieved through communicative structures.

Communicative structure in any field encounter refers to the interpretation of meaning and the proactive relationship of the knower and the community during interaction. This, in a way, is a process involving phenomenology and hermeneutics. Fortier (2012) notes that phenomenology is concerned with what it is like for human beings to be alive in the world around them and how they perceive that world (p. 38). Merleau-Ponty (1994) writes "to perceive is to render oneself to something through the body" (p. 28); hence performing the experience such as the encounter in the field is an embodiment of the critical ethnographer's "lived bodiliness" (p. 28).

On the other hand, hermeneutics has an important value in this communicative structure of engagement in the field. Spencer (2011) asserts that hermeneutics is not just a matter of interpretation but involves self-awareness – an interlocution of the self with other networks. In relation to this, the need for a critical enquiry in interpretation is necessary because "the starting point for any genuinely profitable discussion of interpretation must be not the nature of interpretation, but the need for it in the first place" (Jameson, 1989, p. 5). In literature, hermeneutics functions "to unmask the ways in which such things are sublimated and concealed by texts (i.e. violence, oppression, power) as well as to show how texts themselves sometimes lay bare these things (Spencer, 2011, p. 56). In critical ethnography, hermeneutics functions to carefully unravel the community members' voices as intermingling stories within a grand narrative. The necessity of multiple voices reassures that the narrative produced by the ethnographer does not conceal any form of violence and oppression and most importantly unequal distribution of power. In this sense, the communicative structure of critical ethnography is hermeneutically wired, in the sense that "it recognise and attend to the broadest possible circle of interlocutors" (Spencer, 2011, p. 57).

Both phenomenology and hermeneutics position critical ethnography as a methodology focusing on social interaction and dialogue between researcher and the community (Carspecken, 1996), a recognition that subjectivity is not only about subject position but also about one's relationship with others (Conquergood, 1992, 2002). Madison (2012, p. 14) emphasizes that critical ethnography "is the meeting of multiple sides in an encounter with and among others, one in which there is a negotiation and dialogue toward substantial and viable meanings that made a difference in other's worlds". In most field engagement modes of research, researchers commonly identify cultural experts from the government, local tourism office and even members of the academia as key informants.

The intention of deriving how community members identify with cultural heritage via the cultural performances is clarified: to acknowledge community members as important performers, creators and owners of the heritage practice. More so, their narratives are important articulations in defining cultural heritage.

7. Conclusion and implications

This paper has been concerned with discussing how cultural

heritage may be perceived as a possibility and a problem in the discourse of tourism, governance and cultural studies. We highlighted, through an analysis of two Philippine cases, how heritage interpretation can be highly contested, with the apparatus of the state, driven by political and economic agenda, dominating the discourse. While other approaches such as cultural political economy (e.g., Su, Bramwell, & Whalley, 2018) and representational theory (e.g., Yang, 2011) can be used to highlight these points, we proposed the use of critical ethnography as a strategic method to generate a more nuanced understanding of cultural heritage, and avoid totalizing generalizations and conclusions.

The latent potential of tapping into these possibilities is particularly salient within the Asian context, given the range of cultures and nationalities or "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1983) the continent has. First, the way the Philippine government was observed to behave reinforces views that the state's role is contradictory, varied and complex (Wood, 1984). As it performs its role, government has tended to dominate and dictate how heritage in tourism activities is represented. Unfortunately, the exclusive nature by which this is done upholds historical narratives that have been shown to be strongly influenced by white, Western males, hence marginalizing minority, ethnic and gender groups (Smith, 2016, p.110). This tendency can perpetuate colonial epistemological frameworks and Eurocentric logic, which tend to emphasize the 'glory' of colonial history (Lowenthal, 1994). Through government's uncritical interpretations, with support from an industry that wishes to match the desires of generating markets, essentialized First World imagery of the Philippines and other Asian countries (Bandyopadhyay & Morais, 2005; Wang & Law, 2017), as seen in Palopalo's depiction as a "showcase of [Batanes] ethnic group's rugged yet storied existence", will regrettably continue to dominate and be affirmed. Thus, as tourism continues to grow in economic importance, the way it can be used as a vehicle of othering (Hollinshead, 1998) which tend to typecast peoples, places and the past, will continue. As Asian governments such as the Philippines indulge in nostalgia for the past through its emphasis on outstanding cultural and natural legacies (King, 2016), dominant actors will perpetuate Asian cultural and heritage representations as "stagnant in a state of unchanged Orientalism, open to all the exotic fantasies, and as primitive and backward" (Bandyopadhyay & Morais, 2005, p. 1007).

Nonetheless, as tourism leads to the state's increased intervention in the cultural and heritage arena, it opens up opportunities for the expansion of tourism imaginaries (Salazar, 2012) and the semiotics of heritage tourism (Waterton & Watson, 2014). Through critical ethnography, other social actors can interrogate the way in which the state frames and represents culture, and show that Asian heritage and tourism have not escaped the long shadow of the colonial landscape, and that if structures and practices surrounding Asian heritage continue, such as that observed in Marinduque and Batanes, the Third World, where many Asian countries are represented, will remain as the imaginary other in colonial discourse (Teo & Leong, 2006), and from the American perspective of the Philippines, as a country remade "in our [American's] image" (Karnow, 1989).

Engaging in critical ethnography holds promise to turn things around, to explore self and society, including issues of objectification, exclusion and identity, as the ethnographer heuristically reads the emic perspectives of the locals regarding specific understanding of cultures; hence, following Yahya (1990), allow the creation of space to "articulate the silences of the native by liberating the suppressed in discourse'" (Teo & Leong, 2006, p. 112). Through personal experiences unearthed by critical ethnography, the political economy of cultural heritage is not just understood; also, the "hegemony is readjusted and re-negotiated constantly in the cultural discourse" (Yang, 2011, p. 580). Thus, Palo-Palo is not to be seen simply as a war dance; neither is Moriones a festival with a homogenous character, but a panata, a personal religious promise, whose meaning and interpretation varies from individual Morion to individual Morion. Through the procedural method of critical ethnography, this means producing alternative contexts vis-à-vis the ontology of community traditions, heritage and other belief systems.

The consequent increase in plurality of voices has been called by Muzaini (2017) as "democratization" in heritage making, since the multiple viewpoints regarding heritage also enhance the sense of pride of locals and visitors. These voices need to be heard particularly within the Asian context where cultural heritage is not just politicized but also threatened by the violence of unregulated infrastructure projects.

Through this, and as occasioned by critical ethnography, ways in which heritage tourism becomes a positive force in social change in Asia can be established, instead of it simply being derogated as a machine for the heritagization of culture (Gravari-Barbas, 2018).This was demonstrated in Park's (2016) work for cultural heritage in Korea, where she examined how tourism can create a liminal and transformative space where political contestations can be expressed and communicated. Through the articulation of these voices and formation of alternative imaginaries, Asian tourists might find themselves not caught in betwixt and between (Teo & Leong, 2006) but rather as participants in an egalitarian process of production and identity formation, which could check the tendency to engage in discourse about the other, rather than by the other, as they immerse themselves in contexts and expressions that transgress, collide and embellish realms of meaning. There is therefore huge merit in engaging in critical ethnography as a strategic method of heritage tourism, and to its usage beyond research on ethnic and national identity formation (e.g., Domic & Boukas, 2017; Palmer, 2005; Park, 2010, 2016) within spaces of culture and tourism.

Government and industry are important actors in this process. Their engagement with research in critical ethnography, before any attempts to valorize cultural heritage, is therefore crucial. Getting them to share power, and to distance themselves from the tendency to homogenize the touristic experience (Uriely, 1997) as shown in the case of Moriones, however, could be a challenge particularly in traditional societies such as the Philippines. As Dela Santa (2015, 2018) observes, norms, ideologies and doctrines may be so embedded in these contexts that they constrain change. Nonetheless, as critical ethnography is precisely for social change, it is important to continue the process.

It is noted that this paper is an initial attempt to look into the value of critical ethnography. Thus, future research within the context of cultural heritage and tourism can assess its core characteristics. Of importance is the untangling of the complexities of the sociology of tourism which critical ethnography particularly reflects (Vorobjovas-Pinta, 2018). This includes micropolitical investigations into how the modes of production and consumption of socio-cultural artefacts, such as the moriones and palo-palo, affect, and are affected by macro-political forces of modernization and heritagization. How stakeholders act upon value commitments in the context of these forces, in an attempt to answer "what could be?", could contribute to what Timothy (2018) observes are current concerns for more inclusive investigations of cultural heritage and balanced narratives of the past.

Declaration

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Author contribution statements

Dela Santa proposed the project. He developed the cultural heritage tourism section and worked on the conclusion and implications of the findings.

Tiatco conceived the presented idea. He developed the heritage section, methodology of the paper, and provided the case study details.

Both authors worked on the critical ethnography section, discussed the drafts and contributed to the final manuscript.

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