

Chapter 1.

INTRODUCTION

The nature of archaeology and the need for ethics in archaeology

Archaeology is a discipline that encompasses the sciences, the humanities and social sciences, and one that endeavors to present several systematic studies of the human past (e.g. Binford 1962, Hodder 1982; Shanks and Tilley 1987; Leone 1984; McGuire 1992). This past is studied through material cultural remains. However as is the nature of the development of a discipline to produce knowledge for itself and for the public, not only are the material remains seen as the basis for the interpretation, but so are the agents that carry out this interpretation, which are in this case the archaeologists themselves. Schiffer (1999) has developed a communication model to represent the relationship of the interpreting agent and the interpreted agent as well as other channels that affect the communication of meaning through time. As archaeologists continue to produce archaeological knowledge in the midst of several tangible and intangible factors that affect this production, a proper structure is thus required to maintain a more or less good and/or proper standard of archaeology.

Ethics is the structure required to maintain the integrity, strength, and fluid development of a discipline. It is deemed vital especially for such wide ranging and multi-natured disciplines like archaeology. When applied to the practice of archaeology, ethics is able to strengthen its foundation by providing

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clarity on how to practice the discipline in a proper or acceptable way within the community; this would affect, for instance, the treatment of an archaeological artifact or site, or the presentation of archaeological knowledge to the public. An ethical structure can also provide answers or considerations to three general questions that pertain to the basic 'standard' of the practice of archaeology: (1) Who is an archaeologist? (2) To whom or what is an archaeologist accountable for his or her actions? (3) What is an appropriate level of accountability in general and in any specific situation? (Wildesen 1984:4).

A need to understand and formalize the ethics in Philippine archaeology

The ethics in Philippine archaeology does not merely refer to the nature of Philippine archaeology. Rather, it is a reflection of the historical development of the Philippine archaeological community's application of theories, methods and practices (Faylona 2004). I have described the nature of these ethics as "transforming" through time, but the need to define and understand ethics looms over the archaeology community with much urgency for several reasons:

- (1) The growing public awareness of archaeology in the Philippines, catalyzed by, among others, the establishment of the Professional Society of Archaeologists (KAPI) and the University of the Philippines-Archaeological Studies Program (UP-ASP). In the last decade, these institutions have been actively involved in research, publication, and dissemination of archaeological knowledge through several academic and popular means (Dizon 2002; Santiago 2002; Dado 2003; Neri and Teodosio 2003; Paz 2002-2004).
- (2) The rapid growth of the archaeological community in the country, mainly due to the increasing number of enrollees in the graduate program in Archaeology at the UP-ASP, which has graduated at least ten Masters in Archaeology students, and whose graduate student community comprises of more than half of the professional associate members of the KAPI (KAPI Proceedings 2004; Tiama 2003 and 2004).
- (3) There are several rapid advances and developments in the praxis of archaeology, especially here in the Philippines. More scientific approaches have been incorporated in the conduct of archaeological research in the last 25 years by Filipino archaeologists (see Ronquillo 1981; Dizon 1988; Bautista 2001), and heritage as a significant aspect of archaeological work, is incorporated at almost all levels of analysis and interpretation (e.g.

Teodosio 2003; Museum Foundation of the Philippines, Inc. n.d.; Faylona and Hernandez 2004).

- (4) Consequently from all of the above, several incidents implicating Philippine archaeology and the community, especially in the last decade, have gravely criticized and questioned the ethics of archaeology practiced in the country. Issues besetting archaeologists, artifacts, archaeological sites, institutions and even the audience of the public archaeology, have been raised by sectors both within and outside the archaeological community. One of the more controversial incidents in recent times is the “Huluga Archaeological Site Controversy” (see Neri 2003 and Hernandez 2004). The Huluga Controversy is one case in which the issues that Wildesen (1984) raises are highlighted. The Heritage Advocates Groups, headed by a social-anthropologist claiming to be an archaeologist in Cagayan de Oro, condemned the local government (specifically the mayor) over the issue of a bridge being constructed over an archaeological site without first conducting a proper Archaeological Impact Assessment as required by existing laws. When the mayor approved a research project conducted by the UP-ASP, this same Advocate Group inflicted malice into the agreement, thus, called the nationally recognized archaeologists “unethical” (See Sun Star issues of November 4 and 12-13, 2004).

This, then, roughly translates to more people becoming aware of archaeology, and the archaeologists involved, the archaeological research conducted, as well as the issues to tackle and debate. It makes for a dynamic scene that needs some form of structure to preserve its integrity, goals, and aspirations largely based on its values and, consequently, its ethics. Our broadened awareness of its ethics can help understand how, why and where Philippine archaeology is at the present time.

Ethics and Philippine archaeology

Although there is no existing concrete and specific “code of ethics” for Philippine archaeology at the moment, there exists an ethical structure underlying the history of the discipline in the country. In connection to this, I would like to posit the following significant queries: 1) What constitutes the ethics for Philippine archaeology? 2) How can these ethics in Philippine archaeology, from the beginning of the 20th century to the present, be extrapolated and presented? and 3) How can the elements composing ethical behavior/practice in Philippine archaeology be standardized into a “code of ethics” for the community of archaeologists/practitioners? These questions

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bear great implications for the Philippine archaeological community and its future, specifically to the integrity and progressive nature of the discipline in the country, and to the management of archaeology and all aspects of it in the country. An archaeological community with a sense of its ethics is a community that is committed to the benevolent development of archaeology in the long run.

Towards presenting the transforming ethics in Philippine archaeology

In light of the absence of an articulated ethics, in this study I will primarily address the elements, behavior and practice that may reflect ethics in Philippine archaeology. This involves:

- (1) Distilling the ethics in Philippine archaeology through: (a) the history of Philippine archaeology; (b) the artifacts on display in Philippine museums; and (c) the public perception of Philippine archaeology through the writings of non-archaeologists.
- (2) Identifying the transitions in the transforming ethical practices in Philippine archaeology.
- (3) Extrapolating the valued aspects of Philippine archaeology.

With these extrapolated value aspects, I shall propose a framework that can serve as the backbone, in terms of providing clarity and structure, for an eventual “Code of Ethics” for Philippine archaeology. It must be emphasized, however, that the ‘code’ proper will not be drafted or formulated in this study; that will be an endeavor that the whole community and all its stakeholders can undertake together.

A survey of ethics in archaeology around the world through codes, standards and principles of conduct

Generally, and from country to country, the ethics and the ethical standards for archaeology vary. This is seen in the application of ethics to archaeology in different parts of the world. The variety is clearly seen in professional archaeological groups in the United States, such as the Society for American Archaeology (SAA), the Society of Professional Archaeologists (SOPA), the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) and the American Cultural Resource Association (ACRA). All have their own distinct codes of ethics which differ from one another.

The SAA, on the one hand, has its *Eight Principles of Archaeological*

Ethics (SAA 1996) namely: stewardship, accountability, commercialization, public education and outreach, intellectual property, public reporting and publication, records and preservation and training and resources (see Appendix I). Mark J. Lynott (2002), once chairman of the SAA Committee on Ethics, considers these principles as “ceilings” of ethical behavior rather than “floors” that might identify minimum acceptable levels of conduct. He adds that these principles are supposed to enable the archaeologist to understand the role of ethics and values in interpreting past behavior in material remains. The SOPA’s *Code of Ethics*, on the other hand, deals on the archaeologist’s responsibilities to the public, to his or her colleagues, and to employers and clients (1976, see Appendix II). Besides the code, SOPA has created the *Standards of Research Performance* (1976, 1981, see Appendix III) which states that the research archaeologist has a responsibility to attempt to design and conduct projects that will add to the understanding of past cultures and/or that will develop better theories, methods, or techniques for interpreting an archaeological resource base (1981:5). Likewise, the AIA *Code of Ethics* discusses the principles and responsibilities of an archaeologist with regard to conducting archaeological exploration and survey, the significance of refraining from illicit trading, and other activities that involve commercialization of the uncovered artifacts (see Appendix IV). ACRA, not surprisingly, has the same code of ethics and professional conduct like the other groups mentioned. ACRA’s code of ethics and professional conduct enumerates the responsibilities of the archaeologist to the public, clients, employees and professional colleagues (see Appendix V).

Archaeology is also a developed concern in Canada. It has a professional organization called the Canadian Archaeological Association (CAA 1997) dedicated to the dissemination of archaeological knowledge and to the protection of cultural heritage in Canada and throughout the world. It conducts activities according to the principles of ethical practice, and recognizes the interests of groups affected by its research. This particular principle is entailed in their preamble under the entry “aboriginal relationships”. And this is how Canadian ethics in archaeology is described in general, as normative ethics. It involves arriving at moral standards that regulate between right and wrong conduct and consists of virtue, duty and consequentialist theories (See Pojman 1989).

Across the continent of Europe, there exists a united association for archaeologists known as the European Associations of Archaeology (EAA). The EAA has its own *Principles of Conduct* (2000, see Appendix VI) for archaeologists

involved in contract archaeological work, and a *Code of Practice* (2000, see Appendix VII) for members in fulfilling their responsibilities to the community and to their professional colleagues. They also have a *Code of Practice* (2000, see Appendix VIII) for fieldwork training, archaeological excavation, survey, and for laboratory work as well. These two codes assess various aspects of European archaeology and the profession and differentiate archaeology as an academic discipline and as contract archaeology. In the Pacific area, Australia has a *Code of Ethics* by the Australian Archaeological Association (AAA 1995), a professional archaeological group. The members of AAA adhere to the principles relating to the archaeological record, to indigenous archaeology and conduct (see Appendix IX).

On the other hand, countries from the continents of Africa, Asia and South America mostly follow the international governing bodies on culture in conducting archaeology as their ethics. These groups are the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Council of Museums (ICOM). The Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property was adopted in Paris in November 1972 by the General Conference of UNESCO (see Appendix X). The convention recognizes the value of cultural property as elements of civilization and national culture. It includes the moral obligations of the State to respect and protect existing cultural property within its territory from the dangers of theft, clandestine excavation and illicit export (UNESCO Convention 1970). Meanwhile, ICOM (1995) strictly follows policies on acquisitions to museum collections under Article 3, Sections 1 to 7 of the *Code of Professional Ethics*. These policies benefit archaeologists and museums by limiting dealers and looters from selling their finds to collectors and other museums (see Appendix XI).

Fundamentally, these codes of ethics are not drafted and agreed upon by archaeologists and groups of archaeologists without any underlying foundation of principles and values, as well as basic recognition to the nature of archaeology that are respected by all concerned. These underlying foundations, principles, values, and the nature of the archaeological practice in a particular region or area must first be extrapolated and laid-out so that a code may be agreed upon and drafted.

Extrapolating the transforming ethical practice of Philippine archaeology

This book is an exploratory research on ethics in Philippine archaeology. It includes empirical data derived from pragmatic methods and practices that

were generated from the entire process of this research. It hopes to lead to such output as “Codes”, “Standards”, and primarily, “Principles” that I have surveyed above. The empirical approach attempts to examine the facts and develop hypotheses and theories to describe, in more general terms, the applicable meaning of events in Philippine archaeology (Shaughnessy *et al.* 2002). The facts in this case refer to the pragmatic methods and practices of Philippine archaeological history, and its relationship with each other. The ethics of Philippine archaeology and its transforming ethical practices to the discipline have been extrapolated through the following methods:

The nature of data

The Content Analysis method is a research tool in understanding and identifying the transformation of ethics in Philippine archaeology. It is another form of textual analysis that focuses on explicit content and tends to suggest that this represents a single, fixed meaning (Chandler, www.aber.ac.uk). At a specific time period, their dealings on artifacts and archaeological sites, the ethics of the archaeologist, archaeological institutions and audience were identified as valued aspects of Philippine archaeology. These were then surveyed and documented using the Content Analysis method. The following are the identified valued aspects that determine the ethics of Philippine archaeology, which I have coined as the ‘Five A’s of Philippine archaeology’; ***Archaeologist, Artifact, Archaeological Site, Archaeological Institution and Archaeological Audience.***

The *Five A’s* represent the core of Philippine archaeology expressed in the transformation of the practice of archaeology in the Philippines. They inculcate the rationale of the discipline in the country, and the manner in which the archaeological community conducts archaeology from surveys, excavations and analyses of data to the goals, methodologies and research imperatives. These practices govern the community’s research and professional relations. Interviews pertaining to questions like ‘What is ethics in Philippine archaeology?’ conducted with archaeologists in the Philippines were excluded, because ethics in Philippine archaeology is yet to be articulated. Thus, it will be difficult for the respondents and researcher to discuss this topic.

In order to address the objectives of the study it is necessary to synthesize data from various types of sources. These sources include:

a. Documentary research on Philippine archaeology literature

Reviews of related literature were surveyed extensively from the UP-ASP

Library, the UP Anthropology Library, the UP Main Library, and from the Records Section of the Archaeological Division of the National Museum of the Philippines. Each and every article related to Philippine archaeology underwent Content Analysis (see Table I). Ethical practices in Philippine archaeology were identified from these sources.

b. Museum viewing

Ocular inspections were conducted in the displays of the Archives Section at the De La Salle University Library, H. Otley Beyer Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology in the University of the Philippines Diliman, the Lopez Memorial Museum, the Metropolitan Museum and the National Museum of the Philippines. Exhibited are the potteries and gold collection of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (Metropolitan Museum), potteries excavated from Calatagan, Batangas (Lopez Museum), the pottery collection of Daniel W. Tantoco Jr. (De La Salle University Library Archives Section), and the several sections of the country's National Cultural Treasures exhibited at the Museum of Filipino People of the National Museum of the Philippines

Museums serve as a venue for the understanding of existing views in the field of cultural resources management, and of how archaeology and archaeological materials are appreciated. This actually reflects an articulated/unarticulated view of the institutions on ethics in archaeology. Other avenues were explored as well, specifically the emerging practices in the museums from excavation to the presentation of archaeological materials. The museums were also explored using an ethical collection management evaluation, namely: editing of museum collections, human osteological collections, publication of archaeological information, exhibition of artifacts and artifact authentication and evaluation (Ford 1984).

c. Popular archaeology

Popular archaeology was culled from sources such as historical textbooks and periodicals, specifically from local daily newspapers and magazines. Besides being the writings and presentations on Philippine archaeology by non-archaeologists, these periodicals also present another perspective as to how archaeology is perceived and practiced for popular public consumption in different historical time periods.

All sources underwent a Content Analysis (see Table II). At this point,

two comparative aspects —internal and external— were drawn for the analysis of the historical literature on the valued aspects of archaeological institutions in Philippine archaeology. The internal aspects of archaeological institutions are those under the academic, scientific and government programs that support Philippine archaeology, while the external aspects in the archaeological institution refer to those that have no academic or technical background in archaeology, but have supported and contributed tremendously to Philippine archaeology.

Sources gathered were all public documents. Undocumented developments, events and issues in relation to Philippine archaeology were excluded in this study.

Data analysis

Since all possible sources were exhausted from the suggested data sets to be gathered, I complemented these sources by applying ethical values to the inductive experience from the historical development of Philippine archaeology and its community of practitioners. Thus, the premise of the study is to understand the ethics in Philippine archaeology by looking at the history and nature of the discipline. Although there are standard values and theories in archaeology today, the analysis carried out was not intended to pronounce judgement on the events, but instead to examine the historical facts, and eventually interpret their meaning and significance in accordance to the values of the discipline. The interpretations arrived at were divided and labeled into several transformations from the ethical history of archaeology: the Integration Phase (1900s-1950), the Assimilation Phase (1951-1980) and the Recognition Phase (1980s–present). Describing and evaluating the transition of the ethical history of Philippine archaeology was based on the prevailing methods and practices represented in a particular time and context. These led me to define the ethics of Philippine archaeology and its corresponding value in the archaeological community. These findings will not only summarize the ethical trends in Philippine archaeology, but also compare them and present general relationships between these trends.

Organization of the Study

The study is composed of seven chapters. Chapter 1, the introduction, states the main purpose of the study and presents other information pertinent to the research. The ethics in archaeology is presented in Chapter 2. Also in this chapter is a review of related literature relevant to the research. Chapter 3 tackles

the history of Philippine archaeology. It is organized based on the analysis of the corresponding phases of ethical practice for each period. Chapter 4 focuses on the ethical nature of archaeology as seen from five museums' displays. This deals with the acquisitions, documentations and presentations of museums' display of artifacts. It also includes publications, exhibitions, authentications and evaluations of displayed artifacts of the museums. Chapter 5 presents the interpretation of popular archaeology in the Philippines. It shows a variety of practices on Philippine archaeology written by non-archaeologists in historical textbooks and periodicals, such as the local dailies and magazines, that support archaeology. Chapter 6 discusses the transforming ethical practice in Philippine archaeology, and lastly, Chapter 7 synthesizes the insights generated from the study, and attempts to explain the nature of ethics in Philippine archaeology through time and its direction in the future.