

# Raising heritage consciousness in Pinagbayanan, San Juan, Batangas, Philippines

## *Ang pagtaguyod ng kaalaman tungkol sa pamanang lahi sa bayan ng San Juan, Batangas*

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## Abstract

Tuklas Pilipinas is a non-profit group whose mission is to promote heritage literacy in the Philippines. Tuklas developed a module for the general public to increase heritage consciousness about archaeological excavations in Philippine municipalities. The module incorporates concepts from Personal Interpretation (a method used for Heritage Interpretation) as well as activity-based lessons and lectures. Workshop participants: 1) gain additional knowledge about their local history; 2) connect the archaeology of their town to the archaeology of the region and nation; and 3) connect this with heritage protection. The purpose is to encourage locals to create their own programs for site tourism and protection. This module was first created and presented in 2018 in San Juan, Batangas, where Barretto-Tesoro spearheaded excavations of two stone-based houses and the old church complex in the old centre of San Juan from 2009 to 2012. By merging ideas from other disciplines such as Heritage Interpretation and Education, Tuklas produced an effective module that they hope to appropriately modify and use in other Philippine municipalities. The following discussion considers how the module was developed, its implementation, preliminary results and impacts, and challenges encountered in archaeological heritage advocacy.

Ang Tuklas Pilipinas ay isang non-government organisation o NGO na ang misyon ay ipalaganap ang pamanang lahi ng Pilipinas. Sa pamamagitan ng pagbuo ng modyul na maaaring gamitin ng

karamihan sa isang workshop, lalo na ng mga tao na hindi archaeologists o akademiko, sinisikap ng Tuklas na maiangat ang kaalaman sa pamanang lahi ng isang lugar o bayan na may kaugnayan sa mga sistematikong paghuhukay o 'archaeological excavations'. Ang modyul ay nakatuon sa paggamit ng konsepto ng 'personal na interpretasyon'. Ito ay isang paraan para magbigay ng liwanag sa pag-unawa ng pamanang lahi. Kasama din sa modyul ang mga lektyur at mga leksyon na tinatawag na 'activity-based'. Ang uri ng leksyon na ito ay tinatampok ang pagkilos at paggalaw ng mga kalahok at hindi nakatuon sa pagsulat at pagsasalita lamang. Ang mga kasali sa workshop ay magkakaroon ng kaalaman tungkol sa kasaysayan sa bayan nila, pag-aralan ang arkiyolohiya ng bayan kung saan sila nakatira at ang kaugnayan nito sa arkiyolohiya ng rehiyon at bansa; at ang pinakamahalaga ay ang maiugnay ang arkiyolohiya sa pangangalaga ng pamanang lahi. Ang layunin ng workshop ay hikayatin ang mga mamamayan na magbuo ng sarili nilang mga programa para sa pangangalaga ng archaeological site at upang payabungin ang turismo sa kanilang lugar. Ang modyul ay unang nilikha at ginamit noong 2018 sa San Juan, Batangas, kung saan si Barretto-Tesoro ay pinangunahan ang paghukay ng dalawang bahay na bato at ang lumang simbahan sa Pinagbayanan mula 2009 hanggang 2012. Sa pamamagitan ng pagsasama ng mga ideya mula sa iba pang disiplina tulad ng 'Heritage Interpretation' at Edukasyon, binuo ng Tuklas ang isang modyul na inaasahang gagamitin din sa ibang mga bayan sa Pilipinas. Tinatalakay sa papel na ito kung paano nabuo ang modyul, ang pagpapatupad nito sa workshop sa San Juan, ang resulta ng workshop, at ang mga suliranin na kinakaharap sa pagpapalaganap ng pamanang lahi na nakatuon sa arkiyolohiya.

**Keywords:** Heritage, Heritage education, Heritage Interpretation, Experiential Learning, Public Archaeology

**Mga Susing Salita:** Pamana, Pag-aaral sa pamana, Interpretasyon sa pamana, Pangkaranasang pagkatuto, Arkiyolojeng pambayan

## Introduction

This article is a result of the Extension Project granted by the University of the Philippines to Barretto-Tesoro. Extension work is defined as

public service work by an academic unit, faculty, staff, and students, individually or as a group...Extension includes services utilising expertise and talent related to one's discipline, such as technical assistance, extramural programs, advocacy and community mobilisation, and organising symposia, public fora, exhibits, performances and conferences. It may also include activities related to service-learning that complement course instruction. (134th University Council Meeting, 16 February 2015).

The Extension Project, in this case, promotes archaeology to public school students from national high schools through creative, non-traditional workshops. The aim is to increase local heritage consciousness and use artefacts excavated from local sites. The proponents of this Extension Project were involved in archaeological work in San Juan from 2008 to 2012 and published several articles on the sites (Barretto-Tesoro 2011a, 2012, 2013, 2015; Barretto-Tesoro and Hernandez 2017; Barretto-Tesoro et al 2009; Basilia 2014; Cruz 2014; Kintanar 2014; Luga 2014; Sales 2013)

(Figure 1). The team is interested in disseminating excavation results and increasing heritage consciousness in San Juan.

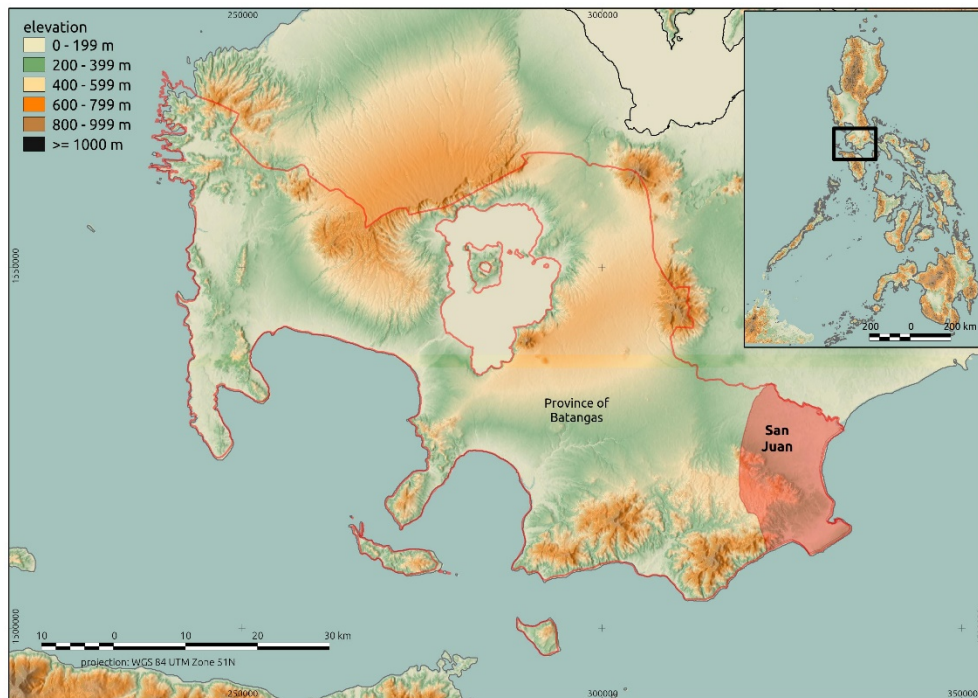


Fig. 1 Map of Batangas showing location of San Juan along the coast of Tayabas Bay. Source: E. Robles

Objectives of the project include:

1. Promoting the protection of the sites and fostering support from the local government and local heritage group through the establishment of a sustained tourist education and conservation program for culture, history, and natural heritage
2. Building a strong learning component by linking stakeholders, including local officials, experts, and heritage professionals
3. Enhancing the narrative and experience in remembering the old town located in Pinagbayanan, San Juan, Batangas
4. Educating the youth about the concept and importance of heritage of Pinagbayanan through creative, non-traditional methods
5. Aiding in the creation of a sustainable program to protect and promote the archaeological sites in Pinagbayanan

This project recognizes the need to engage and expand archaeological knowledge and its value to different members and stakeholders in society, especially the youth. In most Philippine rural communities, residents are not familiar with archaeology and heritage conservation. Some people still view archaeological excavations as treasure hunting. Since most people are more concerned with where to get their daily meals, the idea of heritage conservation is not part of their scope or

priorities. However, by informing community members on the impact of understanding archaeology or prehistory, they become more concerned and therefore want to be involved in conservation efforts. Conservation of archaeological heritage through collaboration with communities has proven effective in Latin America (McAnany 2017), South Africa (Chirikure and Pwiti 2008; Mokoena 2017; Schmidt and Pikirayi 2016), and Southeast Asia (Natapintu 2007; Schooncongdej 2011).

Public archaeology and the promotion of heritage awareness have been done in the Philippines by pioneering Filipino archaeologists in the Palawan Island Palaeohistoric Research Project (Paz et al. 2007a, 2008a, 2009, 2010a, 2011, 2012a, 2013a, 2014a, 2015a, 2016a, 2017a) and the Catanauan Archaeological and Heritage Project (Paz et al. 2008b, 2010b, 2012b, 2013b, 2014b, 2015b, 2016b, 2017b). The University of the Philippines-Archaeological Studies Program, during its annual field school excavations in provinces in the Philippines, always include exhibits after the excavation, wherein the panels and materials are turned over to the local government or community of the area (Barretto-Tesoro 2011; Barretto-Tesoro et al. 2010; Paz 2004, 2005, 2006; Paz et al. 2007b). During planning, excavation teams work closely with the local government of the area where the sites are located. Explanations on the basics of archaeology are provided. Tarpaulins containing information about the research project are set up near the site or around the area (Canilao 2011, 2012; Neri et al. 2014).

All these archaeological projects are coordinated with the local government units of the sites. In most cases, the sites are located in privately-owned lands. To get the approval of the landowners to access the sites, it is important to explain the archaeological and heritage importance of what is found in their properties. Through awareness campaigns conducted in the form of *in situ* exhibits, public lectures, and tarpaulins, the community members are able to know the difference between archaeology and treasure hunting. In most cases, treasure hunting activities are put to a stop or reported to authorities (Paz et al. 2010a). Also, officially deputizing some local community members through the National Museum of the Philippines, help empower the locals and include them in the heritage protection process (Paz et al. 2010a).

However, these archaeological projects also recognized that the reach of the archaeological and heritage awareness mainly catered to nearby residents. Heritage work is a continuing process that often needs follow-ups. Maintenance of exhibit panels and replicas and updating information need the facilitation or guidance of the researchers who worked in the area and the local government unit. Continuous awareness campaigns depend on the relationship the archaeologists established both with the community and the local government officials. More importantly, the impact of the exhibits and lectures need to be reviewed to know if the campaigns worked. Often, exhibits are text-heavy. While there is always effort to use the local language, sometimes most sentences are still technical for the general public. Text-heavy and technical writing do not appeal to the public.

With this, the Batangas Extension Project recognizes the need to bridge the knowledge gap between the academe and the local government, schools, and heritage workers in San Juan, Batangas regarding the management of heritage sites. While traditional excavation teams use tarpaulins, exhibits, and public lectures for outreach, this Extension Project used a more inclusive and activity-based approach. We also used the Heritage Interpretation framework which is a way to communicate information about a natural or cultural site, a museum, or a park or centre. The main

focus of this project is to put the youth in the forefront of heritage interpretation and site management.

The overall goal of the Extension Project is to facilitate learning, mentoring, and module development sessions with members of local heritage groups and youth leaders. Through a series of simulated archaeological activities, they were taught to develop an education and conservation program. It is expected that eventually this activity will be administered by a local heritage group, with youth members at the forefront of engagement.

A significant result of this project was the collaboration between a local heritage group in San Juan and an organisation whose expertise lies in archaeological heritage. The Benito Marasigan Ruins and Museum (BM Ruins), a local heritage group in San Juan has been organising tours in the old church in Pinagbayanan and in other areas that showcase local heritage. However, these tours are mostly attended by non-residents of the town. Due to limited access to archaeological information, their stories do not include significant results from archaeological research conducted over the years. The BM Ruins Managing Director Mr Zaldy Marasigan aims for further heritage awareness in the community. The Batangas Extension Program, with the help of Tuklas, created a module specific for the residents of San Juan, Batangas.

Tuklas, (Filipino word for "Discover"), is a non-profit organization that aims to advance Philippine heritage literacy with an archaeological, anthropological, ecological and/or historical perspective through alternative education programs and research-consultancy work. In three words, Tuklas aims to explore, educate, and engage. The organization offers workshops, lectures, research work, mobile lectures, and hands-on activities to participants interested in learning about archaeology and heritage. Since 2009, Tuklas has conducted public archaeology programmes for young audiences. In 2015, Tuklas was formalized and registered as a non-profit organization under the Securities of Exchange Commission of the Philippines. Through formal registration, Tuklas was able to expand its activities to a wider public audience.

### **About the Excavations in San Juan**

A series of excavations were conducted in Barangay Pinagbayanan, one of the 42 barangays of San Juan, Batangas. Pinagbayanan was the location of the old town of San Juan, when it was created as a separate municipality along the coast of Tayabas Bay in 1848. The centre was transferred to its current location 7 km inland due to flooding. Two stone-based houses and the old church complex were excavated from 2009 to 2012 (Barretto-Tesoro 2015). These structures were made from volcanic tuff blocks cemented with lime mortar. Materials excavated include domestic objects such as pottery, foreign ceramics, construction materials, food refuse, and bottles. Archaeological research indicated that flooding was experienced in the area where the church was located but not in the area where the houses stood (Barretto-Tesoro and Hernandez 2017). There is archaeological evidence to indicate that church construction was not completed due to flooding. Residents of Pinagbayanan were aware of the historical significance of the ruins, and hence the structures were relatively protected and no looting or destruction was reported at the site. Residents in other barangays have a vague knowledge of the old church and are unaware of the archaeological research conducted in Pinagbayanan. It is through the Extension Project that the authors hope to spread archaeological awareness in San Juan.

## Methods

The primary participants of the Extension Project were students from the national high schools and local colleges in San Juan. Also included were members of local heritage groups and tourism officers of San Juan Municipality and the provincial government of Batangas (Appendix A). Letters were sent to the principals and barangay captains to facilitate the invitation of students to the workshop. Through the participation of local youth, the program is intended to be sustainable and will promote, manage, and protect the archaeological heritage of San Juan. Placing the youth at the forefront of heritage promotion empowers them. Also, with the youth involved, the continuity and wider reach of heritage promotion is more ensured, thus leading to the sustainability and longevity of the goals.

Tuklas established collaborations with the then-Mayor of San Juan Rodolfo Manalo and Tourism Officer Elsie Sagaral Iyas and existing local heritage groups to obtain support for logistics and operations. It was important that these stakeholders participated in the project, to encourage them to initiate activities geared towards archaeological heritage management of sites found in San Juan.

The authors, who are also members of Tuklas, developed a module that assisted the participants in creating a narrative for an education and conservation program for local and foreign visitors. The module is centred on what archaeology is and its significance. Content was derived largely from the excavations conducted in Pinagbayanan and surveys in other parts of San Juan. The workshops and module also included information on the material and laboratory analysis of artefacts recovered from San Juan. The guiding frameworks for this work are Heritage Interpretation, Experiential Learning and select educational approaches, which are explained in the Module development subsection.

In May 2018, the module was presented through a two-day workshop that was creative and non-traditional (Appendix B). Creative in the sense that the workshop was interactive and activity-based, wherein all senses were engaged. Non-traditional, because it was not solely book or text-based or a lecture type. It was meant to be an “out of classroom” experience. For example, during the two-day workshop, participants were given a tour of the stone ruins in Barangay Pinagbayanan where they gained a first-hand experience of the excavation site. While in the site, the participants were given guide questions and floor plans. More about the workshop is explained in this paper below.

Monitoring and evaluation was done by distributing feedback forms to workshop participants. Participants were requested to comment on the following: information, logistics, time, performance of the youth facilitator, and other suggestions to make the tour more informative and memorable. Forms and other data were collected and analysed that formed the basis for improving the module and workshop. Other data was informally collected during the workshop, based on performance of the participants and the questions they asked during the Q&A portions.

### *Module development*

The module was created with the following beneficiaries in mind: 1) students from the national high school of Pinagbayanan and surrounding barangays; 2) representatives from the Batangas Eastern Colleges and Batangas State University, and 3) local heritage groups such as the BM Ruins and the Bolboc San Juan Batangas Heritage. The purpose is to increase heritage consciousness about the

excavations conducted in the old stone houses and church complex of Pinagbayanan from 2009 to 2012 and relate these to the archaeology of the province of Batangas and the Philippines. One of the intended outputs was to encourage workshop participants to create a voluntourism program for site protection and development. Through the voluntourism program, youth groups in San Juan were trained to spearhead activities such as cleaning the site and creating revised and improved tour narratives that cater to the local community. Using the current methods of Tuklas, the group integrated ideas from Personal Interpretation/Heritage Interpretation (Ludwig 2015) so that participants create their own heritage talk/walk at the end of the workshop.

“Heritage Interpretation is the art to create a relation between the elements of a heritage site or collection on the one hand and the meaning making and value frame of the visitors on the other” (Tilkin 2013: 7). The emphasis is that rather than simply communicating factual or scientific information, Heritage Interpretation specializes in engaging the non-academic public by catering to their needs. “Interpretation also tries to actively involve audiences by relating the content to their personal knowledge, interests, feelings, and values and by engaging senses and reflection” (Tilkin 2013: 7).

The module design strategy included the use of archaeological data and other historical facts – turning these into meaningful experiences (Ludwig 2015). Tour narratives are not merely a list or statement of facts. Participants of the new heritage tour will feel more connected to the place and archaeological site making the experience more personal.

Ludwig (2015: 7) emphasizes that “[Heritage Interpretation] empowers people to take ownership of their shared heritage, and to discover the ‘sense of place’ of the many precious sites on our European continent.” Tuklas integrated Personal Interpretation/Heritage Interpretation in the Philippine setting, so that participants of the workshop will have a sense of ownership to the narrative of San Juan’s prehistory and history. This is important in the Philippines, because most Filipinos consider 1521 AD—the year Magellan found the Philippine archipelago—as the beginning of Philippine history. It has been a challenge to increase awareness of the rich culture and past of the archipelago before 1521 AD. By using Experiential Learning and Heritage Interpretation, Tuklas was able to entice non-archaeologists and non-academics to appreciate and understand archaeological method and data.

The path to archaeology and heritage awareness was indeed paved by the previous public archaeology done in excavation projects and all these projects understand that there needs to be a more inclusive and effective approach for the continuity of heritage protection (Barretto-Tesoro et al. 2010; Barretto-Tesoro 2011b; Canilao 2011, 2012; Neri et al, 2014; Paz et al. 2011, 2012a, 2012b, 2014a, 2014b, 2015a, 2015b, 2016a, 2016b, 2017a, 2017b). With this, Tuklas experimented on Heritage Interpretation along with select educational approaches to create a “Tuklas Learning Experience”.

The Tuklas Learning Experience incorporates Experiential Learning as first introduced by John Dewey for outdoor learning. While it might be easy to assume the simplistic thought of “experience” as by simply “doing” something—in this case by simply including activities for participants to do—the main thought that is borrowed by Tuklas is the impact of experiencing itself. Dewey called this a transaction: “An experience is always what it is because of a transaction taking place between the individual and, what at that time, constitutes the environment” (Dewey [1938]1997). Tuklas has always pushed for its participants to “try” as directly related to their thrust

that heritage is something experienced. This can be brought back to Dewey's idea that more than just doing something, an individual must truly try and undergo. "Trying refers to the outward expression of the individual, the attempts by them to manifest themselves upon the environment. Undergoing refers to the manner in which the environment manifests itself upon the individual" (Ord and Leather 2011: 17). As participants try, it becomes a "purposeful engagement of the individual with the environment... where an attempt is made to have an impact in the world, [and by] attempting to have an impact, the experience also impacts on us" (Ord and Leather 2011: 17).

More than supplying information to participants, the Tuklas Learning Experience seeks to let them try and undergo, i.e. to act and see consequences of their actions. Seeing and understanding the consequences of trying, one must reflect. As a result, by experiencing, a person reflects, which then leads to learning (Fowler 2008). By doing so, this creates the depth and meaning of the experience of the participant. For instance, one of the modules of Tuklas includes knapping and a simulation of hunting and foraging. The idea is, try this, undergo, see what happens after, and then reflect. An experience is created, reflection is prompted, learning occurs. With that experience comes an impact and hopefully a deeper meaning to the participant.

Along with this, the Tuklas Learning Experience also incorporates Bloom's Taxonomy, where learning objectives focus on knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Forehand 2010). Tuklas merged all of these in what we call the KSAs—Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes. In making a module, determine what knowledge is hoped to be obtained, what skills are learned, and what attitudes are developed. Merging Experiential Learning and Heritage Interpretation became unavoidable, since both approaches are concerned with understanding an experience "by appreciating the subtle and often significant differences in why they are undertaken, and what they mean to those undertaking them" (Ord and Leather 2011: 19). With Bloom's Taxonomy, it was possible to conceptualize clear and realistic learning objectives.

The format and guidelines below are based on the discussions during the module-making process held in March 2018 (Table 1 and Figure 2):



**Module Development Guidelines:**

<b>CHALLENGE:</b> How to turn phenomenon into experiences (Ludwig 2015)
<b>SOLUTION:</b> Create deeper meaning by making facts meaningful and respect the spirit of place
<b>GUIDELINES IN DEVELOPING THE MODULE:</b>
1. Each workshop should have specific objectives.
2. Always go back to the facts/evidence as basis for everything that you say.
3. Always ask open-ended questions.
4. At the end of each session, the lesson/knowledge should be summarized in one statement.
5. Translate lessons from each session into a universal concept.
6. Allow 1-2 questions after each session.
7. Request for Feedback after each session.

Table 1 Module development guidelines by M. L. A Sioco.

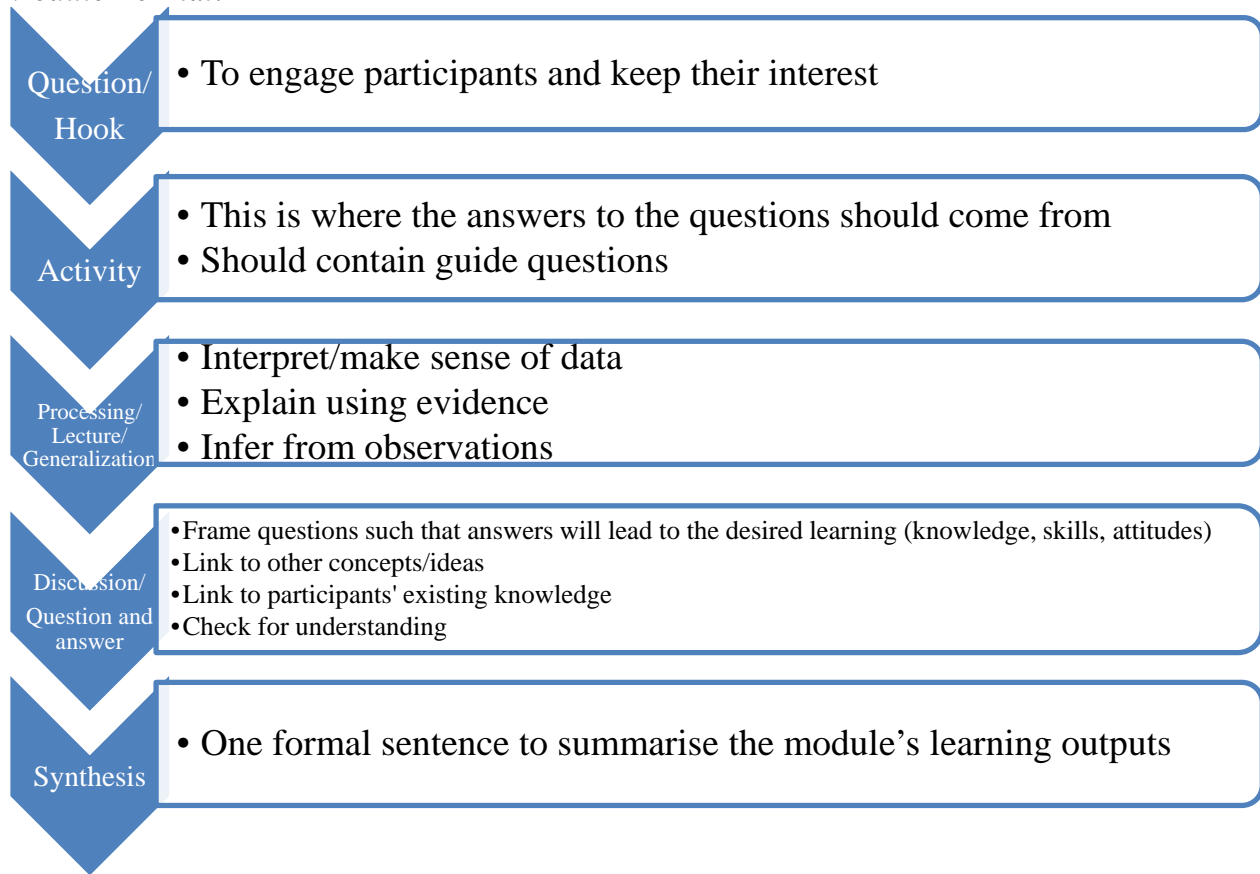
**Module Format:**

Fig. 2 Module-making flowchart by M. L. A. Sioco

In the module, the Tuklas team selected concepts for participants to focus on, which were based on the results of the archaeological excavations. Concepts include the use of space (lay-out of houses and towns), architecture (styles and construction technology), environment (relationship of the ruins with the physical landscape), and meaning of artefacts (what the artefacts mean to the people who acquired and used them). As the participants were non-archaeologists, the instructional team was careful not to use overly technical language so that the participants could easily understand the concepts. Tuklas wanted to explain what archaeology is through these concepts. Participants should then realise why the sites are significant and hence needed protection. Tuklas wanted participants to feel strongly about the sites by providing information that is not presented in a formal academic manner, which may contain technical jargon.

From the workshops, it is expected that participants learn that heritage is not a foreign concept only meant for: a) those in the academe and b) those with high social status. Through the experiential approach of the workshop, participants were also made aware that heritage is not always or not necessarily associated with formal learning only. For example, a study on Community Archaeology in South Africa (Mokoena 2017:190) demonstrated that “inhabitants do not relate to the ‘western’ meaning of heritage.” Yes, heritage is an English word but Filipinos alternatively use the Tagalog word ‘pamana’ to denote that what they do every day (i.e., daily activities) is part of their heritage,

therefore is not foreign, and not just learned in school. By experiencing the process in which archaeologists go through, participants go through a reflection that hopefully leads to a deeper relationship and feeling towards protecting heritage.

The workshop was divided in three parts namely Kagamitan (Objects), Kapaligiran (Environment), and Kwento (Narrative). Concepts on the meaning of artefacts fall under Kagamitan. Significance of construction materials and other objects such as square nails, foreign ceramics, bricks, roof tiles, volcanic tuff blocks, capiz shells used in windows, bottles, shells and other items was discussed in this session. The ruins, use of space, architecture, relationship of settlements and rivers, and the landscape were discussed under Kapaligiran. Activities inside a stone-based house or bahay-na-bato in Tagalog were discussed under Kwento. Each session had its own objectives. Sessions were initiated with a 'hook' or stepping stone (Ludwig 2015) to stimulate participant interest. For example, to introduce the Kagamitan session, the hook was that participants bring an object that is important to their family or place. This way, they were able to share a story about the object they brought, that is personal and close to their heart.

It was important to promote and maintain the participants' interests, especially to encourage them to return the next day. A lecture-only approach was intentionally avoided in discussing the concepts. The method Tuklas emphasized was to present the concepts as experiences in order to create deeper meanings to the participants, making the facts relatable and respecting the spirit of the place of Pinagbayan and San Juan. For instance, when presented with the artefacts, questions for participants included 'what they think the objects were'; 'what were their functions' or 'how were they used'; and 'what they meant to them if they had seen a similar object before.' Because the artefacts are objects encountered in daily life, the realm of archaeology was brought closer to them. When asked about their experiences about these objects, participants noted that the relationship with the objects and what the objects meant to them became more intimate and relevant. It was not the actual object but what those objects represented that were meaningful. To address Kwento, each participant was requested to interview an older person from their barangay at the end of the first day. Participants asked the elders for stories they heard as children regarding Pinagbayanan and San Juan. The following day, the participants exchanged stories with each other. Volunteers were then requested to share with their experiences with the entire group.

In each session, personal interpretations were linked with the facts of the excavations. The team also emphasised that one way to do archaeology is to interview people in the community and identify relationships between the stories and the sites. Thus, the terms 'artefacts/archaeological materials' which were often perceived as archaeology jargon became more understandable to participants. Through such activities, it is easier and more effective to cultivate passion in their heritage. Although archaeological excavations in San Juan have concluded, it does not mean that research is over.

### **Output: The Workshop**

A two-day workshop was conducted in San Juan, Batangas in May 2018. The venue was the Benito Marasigan Ruins and Museum, ancestral home of Zaldy Marasigan (Figure 3).



Fig. 3 Benito Marasigan Ruins and Museum. Source: A. N. Kintanar

Logistics included close communication with the BM Ruins staff. It became a strict policy of Tuklas to enlist the services of small and medium entrepreneurs who were residents of San Juan. The food provided for the participants and facilitators were prepared by the BM Ruins staff. Other services that the team availed of were transportation, initial site cleaning, and secretariat assistance during the workshop. Tuklas also ensured that participants from the municipal and provincial offices were invited to the workshop.

The Tuklas team entitled the workshop *Kagamitan, Kapaligiran, at Kwento ng Pinagbayanan, San Juan, Batangas*, which translates to “Objects, Environment, and Narratives of Pinagbayanan, San Juan, Batangas.” The purpose was to communicate the workshop’s objectives in helping participants understand research methods of archaeology and what stories the data can give. By reconstructing the past through material remains and other research methods archaeologists use, we can all create a narrative for the community. A narrative that the community feels connected to. A narrative that the community helped create as well.

### **Kagamitan (Objects)**

The team started by introducing artefacts. For participants to understand the meaning and value of objects, participants were asked to bring heirloom pieces or valuable items (Figure 4). Each was asked to tell the story of the object they brought. They learned that the story behind the object gives value and meaning to it. The workshop facilitators moved on to showing participants actual

artefacts that were excavated from the archaeological sites. They learned the story of those artefacts and then thought of possible uses and meanings of each artefact. Through this approach, they also learned the value of studying material evidence and taking care of artefacts.



Fig 4 Some of the participants discussing their heirloom pieces. Source: A. Tesoro

### **Kapaligiran (Environment/Surroundings/Excavation Site)**

After the session on Objects was completed, the next part was learning about the excavation site and its surroundings. This was done so that participants would understand the relationship of the environment or landscape with the structures and settlement. Most people know about the birth of civilizations often occurring near river valley areas. The main activity of this session was for participants to enumerate and describe the activities and resources that a river valley can offer. To make it more hands-on, the method used was “Paint me a picture.” The participants were divided into groups and each group created a tableau that represented the resources or activities in the river valley environment (Figure 5). Through human activity that is dependent on their surroundings, they understood the importance of our relationship with the environment. Participants also understood the importance of protecting the environment or the archaeological site. To get the feel of the place and to properly visualize the excavation, part of the session included bringing participants to the excavation sites (Figure 6). This also gave them better context of how the old town may have looked like and an idea of how the excavation took place.





Fig 5 Some of the participants in the “Paint me a Picture” activity. Source: A. Tesoro



Fig. 6 Photo of participants in Structure B, one of the excavation sites in San Juan. Source: A. Tesoro

### **Kwento (Story/History/Narrative)**

The objective of this session was for participants to understand the process of how stories are created in building the narrative of Pinagbayanan, San Juan. Here they learned the importance of research and integrating this with local history from residents or community members.

Archaeologists not only excavate or analyse artefacts in the laboratory, they also take note of stories from community members (Figures 7 and 8). While it is important to be careful with different data from stories, there is still merit in considering what locals or community members have to say, especially the eldest members.

After sharing community stories from their childhood, participants' experiences were validated when the workshop facilitators corroborated or related the archaeological data and historical research with it. In an open forum, some participants shared that they did not realize how significant those community stories are in the narrative of their town. This session not only taught the participants to corroborate sources, but it also gave way to gather their perspectives. Inclusion of communities through their stories means acknowledgement of their past and present cultures, and incorporating these into research (Mokoena 2017).



Fig. 7 Noel Amano (left) and Kate Lim (extreme right) talking to a local resident during the 2009 excavation of one of the stone-based houses. Source: A. N. Kintanar





Fig. 8 Riczar Fuentes (middle) and Tara Reyes (right) explaining 19th century architecture to a community member of Pinagbayanan, San Juan in 2009. Source: A. N. Kintanar



Fig. 9 Some of the participants in the “Shoebbox Archaeology” activity. Source: A. Tesoro





Fig. 10 Some of the participants examining the “artefacts” they “excavated”. Source: A. Tesoro

Part of the archaeological method is the excavation itself. Participants experienced a simulated excavation through “Shoebox archaeology” (Figures 9 and 10). Printed and laminated photos of artefacts were buried in sand inside old shoeboxes. Normally, Tuklas would conduct this in a large Sandbox. However, due to funding constraints, Tuklas improvised with shoeboxes. Participants learned the meticulous recording and careful digging of an excavation. They also learned how different archaeology is from treasure hunting. Through this activity, the participants were able to get a taste of a systematic excavation. The recording system and interpretation of artefacts and the site itself were also taught, making participants understand the detailed work of archaeology.

### **Kahalagahan (Significance)**

After performing all those activities, the final message was about Kahalagahan or significance of all this research and work. This leads to the importance of protecting heritage. The workshop concluded with asking participants, “now that you know all this, what is the importance of studying and protecting heritage?” The most common answer was that ‘heritage is their history and their prehistory – it is their roots or something passed on to them.’

Also part of the discussion was asking participants what they now think of their town, San Juan, Batangas, after the workshop. Their answers were mainly about having pride of place. Two participants shared how happy they were for learning that their town has cultural heritage and not only white sand beaches that most tourists visit.

As a major output of this project and to culminate this last session, Tuklas distributed an Action Plan Template. The Action Plan is where the participants were to write down specific steps and a detailed timeline for protecting and promoting heritage sites and objects in San Juan. This activity

accommodates views of the stakeholders, particularly the community members residing next to or very near the archaeological and heritage sites.

Other studies in Community Archaeology (Chirikure and Pwiti 2008; Mokoena 2017; Schmidt and Pikirayi 2016) also highlight the importance of involving community perspectives to achieve a better understanding of the research process and dynamics of heritage promotion and protection. “One of the primary roles that archaeologists and heritage managers play is to steward heritage and archaeological material and to do it in such a manner that the interpretative frameworks reflect multiple perspectives open to constant evaluation and change” (Mokoena 2017: 191).

### **Output: Feedback and Action Plan Implementation**

Before ending the workshop, Tuklas requested the participants to accomplish an evaluation sheet (Figure 12). Questions were mainly about the teaching quality and if they now know what archaeology and heritage are. Here are some examples of positive and negative feedback:

#### Positive Feedback

- “... The workshop allowed the participant[s] to experience how archaeologists work.”
- “I like the experiential and collaborative approaches.”
- “Archaeology can be painstaking, but the information we get is beneficial to us.” (locals in San Juan, Batangas)

#### Negative Feedback

- “Going to the archaeological sites is tiring and hot.”
- “Please accept more participants.”
- “Need more time”

Below is a chart that illustrates the overall results of the evaluation sheets (Figure 11). A total of 22 respondents answered the evaluation sheet. The age of the participants ranges from 15 to 40 years of age.

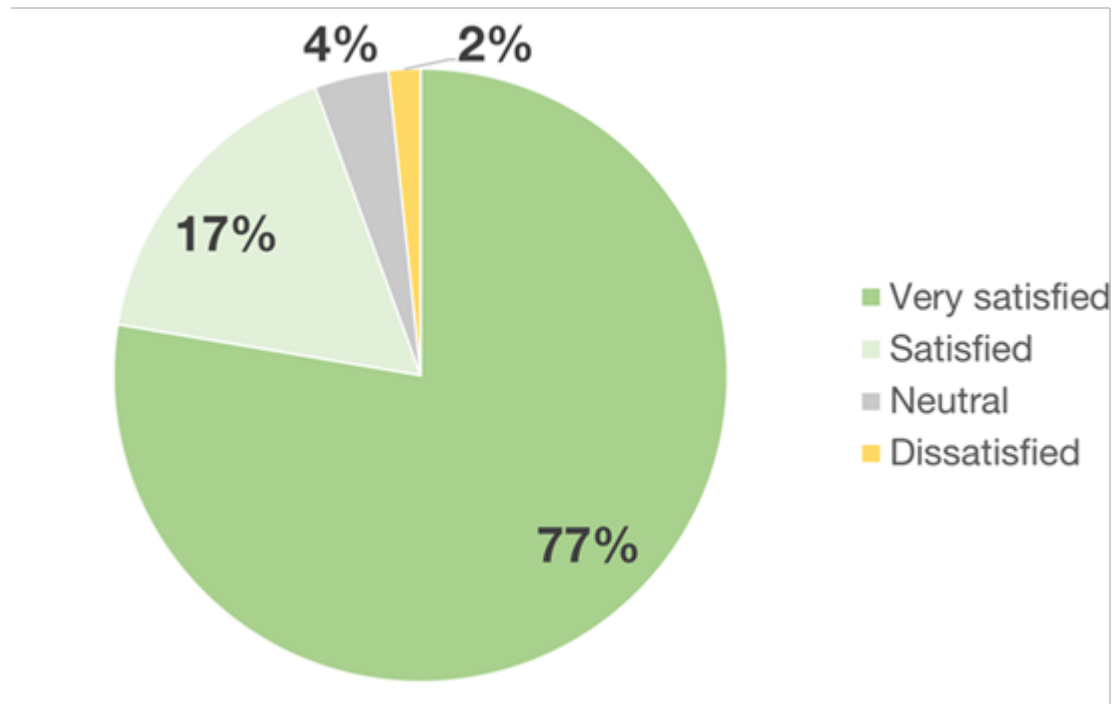


Fig. 11 Overall feedback results. Source: O. Choa

There was eagerness from most of the participants and this was shown by a group that wanted to organize their own heritage group and call it Tuklas Pinagbayanan (TP). Other participants were students of the Education Department of the Batangas Eastern Colleges (BEC) and they were pushing for the inclusion of the archaeological data in the curriculum of schools in San Juan, Batangas.

Part of the Batangas Extension Project was distributing Action Plan templates to participants that were separated into groups. The Action Plans included conducting workshops and site visits, based on what participants learned from the Tuklas Learning Experience. TP focused on giving a workshop to elementary students of Pinagbayanan, San Juan. BEC conducted a workshop for BA Education students in their college.

On July 2018, two months after the workshop, the authors of this paper went back to San Juan to check on the Action Plans and the commitment of the participants. The TP group and the BEC groups attended the meeting. The TP group reported the implementation of their Action Plan, which they had done in June 2018, while the BEC group was asking for advice on their plan to be implemented on October 2018. Both groups were successful in increasing awareness of the archaeological sites in Pinagbayanan. Since the implementation of their Action Plans, Tuklas was approached by school officials from both the secondary and tertiary levels of education to push for curriculum inclusion of the data yielded from the archaeological excavations. This is remarkable, because the Extension Project and Tuklas aim to effect heritage literacy and cultural consciousness among the public. In May 2019, the same Extension Program team was invited by the BM Ruins to train their guides in sandbox archaeology activities. The team also takes this as a positive move towards understanding and disseminating the archaeology heritage of San Juan.





Fig. 12 Tuklas members and the participants from San Juan, Batangas. Source: A. Tesoro

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The underlying aim of this work was to assist the residents – specifically the youth – to develop grassroots heritage conservation efforts that will aid the local government unit and town-based heritage groups in the protection, promotion, and conservation of archaeological sites in San Juan. Results are also hoped to assist with enabling sustainable tourism. Tuklas intends to replicate similar projects in other barangays and towns in the near future. During the writing of this paper for example, the module developed for Batangas has been revised and used in Mindoro and Misamis Oriental.

Through the guidance of Heritage Interpretation, Experiential Learning, and Bloom's Taxonomy, the project was able to develop a module that is interactive and inclusive. The stories and experience of current community members of San Juan, Batangas were woven into a new narrative that can be part of Heritage Walks/talks that locals will conduct to visitors or tourists. The archaeological data was made relatable to the non-academic public, appealing to their emotions and personal lives. By experiencing archaeological research methods, albeit just the surface of it, participants were able to reflect on the science and technicality of archaeology, creating a level of respect for it. The participants of the workshop, who are residents of San Juan and other nearby towns, were able to infer the importance of artefacts, understand humans' connectedness to the environment, and create a narrative of their town. Their eagerness to share this experience to others

should be followed up. Learning from The Palawan Island Palaeohistoric Research Project and the Catanauan Archaeological and Heritage Project, continuity can be achieved by a longitudinal study.

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We dedicate this to the residents of Barangay Pinagbayanan, San Juan, Batangas.

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## Appendix A

Students and members from the following institutions participated in the workshop:

1. Benito Marasigan Ruins and Museum
2. Bolboc San Juan Heritage
3. Municipal Office of San Juan, Batangas
4. Provincial Tourism and Cultural Affairs Office
5. Batangas State University
6. Batangas Eastern Colleges
7. Lumang Bayan National High School
8. Don Juan Mercado Sr Memorial National High School

## Appendix B (Online)

Modyul para sa Kagamitan, Kapaligiran, at Kuwento ng Pinagbayanan [Module for the workshop]