



Figure 1. *Museo Kordilyera*, UP Baguio's Ethnographic Museum.  
[Photograph courtesy of Rona Rapancol.]

## CIRCULATING ANTHROPOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE THROUGH THE *MUSEO KORDILYERA*, UP BAGUIO'S ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM

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The recently established *Museo Kordilyera*, the University of the Philippines Baguio's Ethnographic Museum, has a key role to play in the formation and dissemination of knowledge and practices that have meaningful connections to the various communities that the University serves. The *Museo Kordilyera's* mission is to cultivate an understanding of and respect for the identity and culture of the indigenous peoples of the Cordillera and Northern Luzon as an integral part of the evolving Filipino culture. As a distinct ethnographic museum in the Cordillera region, it is focused on the collection, preservation, and display of objects associated with specific societies and cultures. It also suggests the essential connection to anthropology and, in particular, the mode of anthropological research and discourse known as ethnography, characterized by detailed and holistic knowledge produced through extended fieldwork and immersion in the culture of the communities that are studied. It is moreover distinguished by its integral connection to the scholarly activities and output of the faculty from the different colleges of UP Baguio. The *Museo Kordilyera* is potentially a vital learning resource, a 'living museum' in the Cordilleras.

**Keywords:** *Ethnographic museums, museum ethnography, Museo Kordilyera, Northern Luzon, Igorots, tattoos, Jules De Raedt, Sagada*

In the past, ethnographic museums served to generate and bolster identities, particularly in societies with distinct ethnic groups who were previously colonized. The objects on display in ethnographic museums came from peoples previously labeled as 'primitive,' 'savage,' or 'exotic,' and now described as 'aboriginal,' or 'indigenous'. The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the extraordinary growth of museums as institutions representing the cultures of the past, and with this growth came a significant rethinking of strategies of

exhibition and interpretation—a new way of looking that led to the reinvention of the ethnographic museum in terms of its nature and significance through the years.

*How can anthropological knowledge be circulated through an ethnographic museum? What makes a museum ‘ethnographic’ or ‘anthropological’?* To address these questions, I will provide a brief overview about the *Museo Kordilyera*—the University of the Philippines Baguio’s Ethnographic Museum. I then examine the ways that anthropological knowledge can be circulated through museums, and in the case of the *Museo Kordilyera*, specifically: the scholarly foci and content of the exhibitions, visual instruction of ethnographic images, and ethnographic artifacts as a pedagogical tool for anthropological teaching that can contribute to the understanding of the indigenous peoples in northern Luzon. This paper is restricted to the conceptualization of the museum beginning in 2012, and to the building and soft opening of the museum last June 23, 2016. The museum was formally inaugurated last January 31, 2017.

### **Anthropology and museums**

There is, to start with, a strong link between anthropology and museums (Herle 1997), because of the connection between artifacts and the cultures that produced them. Further, there is also an incontrovertible affinity between universities and museums in their purpose to increase and disseminate knowledge (Tolentino 1999). Museums can be important centers of research, as the principal repositories for artifacts culled from anthropological fieldwork. Ethnographic museums have also served to generate and bolster identities, particularly in societies with distinct ethnic groups, who were previously colonized. The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the extraordinary growth of museums as institutions representing the cultures of the past, and with this growth came a significant rethinking of strategies of exhibition and interpretation—a new way of looking that led to the reinvention of the ethnographic museum in terms of its nature and significance. The objects on display in ethnographic museums from people previously labeled as ‘primitive,’ ‘savage,’ or ‘exotic,’ are now described as ‘aboriginal,’ or ‘indigenous’.

In 2007, the International Council of Museums defined the museum as: “a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity

and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment” (ICOM 2007). While it is generally agreed that museums are for education, research, and preservation (Guthe 1940, Ripley 1969:3), there is less agreement on the order of importance of these functions. However, it should be obvious that preservation must occur before education or research can be successful.

Earlier, anthropologist William Sturtevant (1969) had posited this question: “Does anthropology need museums?” Regardless of their characterization as “attics” or “cabinets of curiosities”, the most important function that museums can serve for anthropology is as permanent repositories for cultural resources (Boas 1907, Dockstader 1967, Fenton 1960). In this regard, museum collections are stored indefinitely, but it is important to note that museums are not just repositories for artifacts and archives, they are also spaces to circulate anthropological knowledge.

According to Collier and Tschopik, “Museums are potentially the most effective mechanisms for transmitting anthropological knowledge and concepts to the public at large, and in the execution of this unique task, exhibits are the museum’s basic and unique form of communication” (2003:29).

### **Establishing the *Museo Kordilyera***

The vision for the establishment of the Cordillera Gallery-Museum at UP Baguio had been articulated in 1993<sup>1</sup>. *Galerya Kordilyera* was built in 1994, and became a venue for art and cultural activities. In 1997, the gallery museum was envisioned to house the research and creative output of the UP Baguio faculty,<sup>2</sup> especially given UP Baguio’s niche in Cordillera Studies. It was to be a living and dynamic museum, backed by an active research program in the various disciplines. Furthermore, it was to showcase the rich natural, material and artistic wealth of the Cordillera region.<sup>3</sup> The Gallery-

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<sup>1</sup> Under then UP College Baguio Dean Jessica Cariño.

<sup>2</sup> Based on the proposal ‘Establishing the Cordillera Gallery-Museum at UP Baguio’.

<sup>3</sup> Per the UP Strategic Plan 2011-2017 for “UP as a great university taking a leadership role in the development of a globally competitive competence,” articulated by UP President Alfredo Pascual. Included in this strategic plan are cultural heritage programs, part of the initiative “to establish a flourishing and pervasive culture of research, innovation and creativity.” The university vision for “UP Baguio to emerge as the premier university in the region and a unique one in the UP System and the nation, engaged in pioneering research in Cordillera Studies,

Museum would feature (1) a Natural History Museum showcasing the indigenous flora and fauna of the Cordillera, microbial culture collections, as well as rocks, minerals and fossils from the region; (2) an Ethnohistorical Museum to showcase the social history and material culture of the region; and (3) an Art Gallery highlighting the indigenous culture of the Cordillera peoples, which are also a rich source of material for creative work both in the performing and visual arts.<sup>4</sup> The Cordillera Gallery-Museum would be guided by international conventions on the rights of indigenous peoples to cultural integrity, privacy, and control of their cultural resources.

Its collections would thus include prehistoric, old, recent, and contemporary material. The gallery museum aimed to be an active partner of indigenous communities in protection, maintenance and further development of their heritage, and made plans to build a clientele among Cordillera youth groups to assist in the transmission of heritage from generation to generation.

Having a museum is useful for accentuating the niche of UP Baguio in advancing Cordillera studies and the arts in the region. It reinforces the role of the university as a place of culture and higher learning in northern Luzon, and beyond. The museum would have a contribution to public relations of the university and communicate with communities in the wider world through themed exhibitions, symposia, lecture series, virtual presence in the website, cultural performances and demonstrations of invited local artisans and cultural bearers from the Cordillera region (and other ethnolinguistic groups).

This vision is aligned to what museum educators such as Willard Bord (1993) have noted— that museums are deeply rooted in educational institutions and have potential to become centers of lifelong learning. Melanie Kelly (2001) argued that:

“university museums are powerful resource centers for higher education institutions wishing to maximize the impact of their teaching and research and to reach new audiences in the region and beyond. They therefore have a unique bridging role in the dissemination of knowledge and of the understanding of science

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Indigenous Peoples/Ethnicity Studies, Sustainable Development and Language and Literature Studies, among others” is in the agenda of current UP Baguio Chancellor Raymundo Rovillos, which includes the program of establishing a museum for the ‘material and visual expressions of Cordillera cultures’.

<sup>4</sup> In the capsule proposal submitted by then UP Baguio Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Dr. Wilfredo Alangui.

– besides their primary roles as keepers of collections in various fields” (Kelly 2001:5).

The UPB Museum would not only be a repository of tangible and intangible objects of Cordillera culture and the arts, but should be distinguished by the scholarship culled across the different colleges and/or disciplines in UP Baguio.

To conceptualize toward establishing the *Museo Kordilyera*, a memorandum of agreement was signed on August 24, 2012 between UP Baguio (represented by Chancellor Raymundo Rovillos), and the National Museum (represented by Director Jeremy Barns and Assistant Director Dr. Ana P. Labrador). The agreement manifested a commitment to develop research and educational cooperation on the basis of equality and reciprocity as well as to promote mutual understanding between UP Baguio and the National Museum until 2015. It provided for “Cooperation in researches of common interest to the Museum and the University and the presentation of research results” and “Exchange of Museum collections, research materials, publications and other scientific information subject to respective guidelines.”

Immediately after the signing of the agreement, a two-day workshop on the protection of cultural properties was held for UP Baguio faculty and stakeholders. Forty participants attended the museum workshop, including faculty members from the colleges of Science, Arts and Communication, and the Social Sciences. The workshop, participants also benchmarked museums in Baguio City, such as the Baguio-Mountain Provinces Museum, the Saint Louis University Museum of Arts and Crafts, and the BENCAB Museum guided by the question: “*what makes the envisioned UPB Museum different from the other museums?*” Brainstorming, assessment, and evaluation sessions led to the suggestion that the university museum should be interdisciplinary (see discussion below) and distinct from the other museums in Baguio City.

The opening of the exhibits of the *Museo Kordilyera* was seen as a critical step in the formation and dissemination of knowledge and practices that have meaningful connections to the various communities that the University serves. As an ethnographic museum, the museum’s mission is to cultivate understanding of and respect for the identity and culture of the indigenous peoples of the Cordillera and Northern Luzon as an integral part of the evolving Filipino culture; it is dedicated to the preservation and enrichment

of the indigenous cultures of the Cordillera and its neighboring areas in Northern Luzon (see Fig. 1). The major ethnicities (*Bontok, Ibaloy, Ifugao, Isneg, Kalinga, Kankana-ey, and the Tingguian*) and the smaller groups native to the region provide the University with a rich ground for research in various disciplines, and opportunities for social interventions. The UP Baguio has identified Cordillera and indigenous studies as its niche. The *Museo Kordilyera* accentuates this niche while reinforcing the role of the University as the premier arts and science institution in northern Luzon.

The *Museo Kordilyera* building is a three-level structure that follows the university's terrain and topography. Only its reception level is visible on the surface, most of the essential facilities are in the second and third lower levels, these include: a permanent collection and curatorial space for ethnographic materials; a temporary exhibition space for loaned exhibitions and collateral activities by students, faculty and alumni; a visitor's room for museum orientation purposes; an audio-visual room; and a museum shop and café.

### **What makes Museo Kordilyera ethnographic?**

Ethnographic museums are defined as institutions for collecting, preserving, and displaying artifacts in order to represent societies and cultures, to “not only serve as purely educational, but ... (also) providing better access for research that will help restore the contextual background of artifacts necessary for their understanding” (Feest 1993: 87).

What makes a museum “ethnographic?” James Clifford avers that: it is based on research, a museum that is organized around fieldwork to fill in its collections: meaning observation, translation, critique and inventive appropriations by its scholars. He further argued that “ethnographic museums are new destinations, other kinds of research centers, and alternate places of consumption” (Clifford 2013). As outlined by McLeod (2005), the development of ethnographic museums can be understood in reference to the main roles which they have traditionally assumed, which are: (1) to accumulate material with emphasis on acquiring actual items of material culture from the society concerned and other forms of evidence such as photographs, films, sound recordings and written fieldnotes; (2) to preserve this material from damage, and to display a proportion of it so as to express or illustrate the life of its original makers and users; and (3) to catalogue, to publish materials of use to both scholars and to the general public, and to carry out research (McLeod 2005:216-218).

Moreover, ethnographic museums establish and strengthen relationships between the University and ‘communities of origin,’ as the communities from which these collections derive have become known (Stanton 2011), by serving as a platform for continuing dialogues between the University, communities and other stakeholders.

As an ethnographic museum, the *Museo Kordilyera* is focused on the collection, preservation, and display of objects associated with the unique societies and cultures of the Cordillera region. It has an essential connection to anthropology, particularly the mode of anthropological research and discourse known as ethnography, characterized by detailed and holistic knowledge produced through extended fieldwork and immersion in the culture of the communities that are studied. It is also distinguished by its integral connection to the scholarly activities and output of the faculty from the different colleges of UP Baguio (Salvador-Amores 2016).

The scholarly output of the faculty from the University of the Philippines Baguio has significantly contributed to a massive body of literature on Cordillera studies. This knowledge production at UP Baguio dates back to 1980, with the inception of the Cordillera Studies Center (CSC), the research arm of the university. In the first decade of the CSC, research was focused on “highland agriculture, environment, local governance, women and gender, local economic, political and social institutions; indigenous knowledge and world views; local history, and health” and the CSC was “propelled largely by social science research, but it was also able to accommodate the research interests of faculty from the humanities and natural sciences” (CSC Brochure). As of 2014, at least 112 publications had been produced by the CSC, including working papers, issue papers, monographs, conference proceedings, research reports and issues of *The Cordillera Review*.<sup>5</sup>

The University of the Philippines Baguio has played an important role in facilitating discussions on Cordillera ethnography and indigenous peoples’ issues through several regional and international conferences on Cordillera studies organized by the Cordillera Studies Center. In the first international conference in 2008 the general theme of “*Indigenous Peoples and Local*

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<sup>5</sup> [Cf. “The ‘Indigenous’ in the Cordillera Studies Center of UP Baguio” by Raymundo D. Rovillos and Paula Pamintuan-Riva, Posted on July 22, 2014 in *UP Forum*, <http://web-old.up.edu.ph/the-indigenous-in-the-cordillera-studies-center-of-up-baguio/>]



*Communities in Transition*,” directed attention to significant transformations in the Cordillera region of Northern Luzon, Philippines where contemporary forces of change such as globalization, electronic technology, and migration are profoundly altering the lives of the indigenous peoples often given the collective designation of “Igorot”. The second international conference was recently held in 2017, addressing the theme of “Indigenous Studies in the Philippines: Issues and Prospects”. It provided a platform for discussion of not only issues of the indigenous societies in the Cordillera region but also elsewhere. These landmark international conferences have convened hundreds of participants working on the Cordillera.

### **Circulating anthropological knowledge through the Museo Kordilyera**

The inaugural offering of the *Museo Kordilyera* consists of three distinct exhibits: *Batok (Tattoos): Body as an Archive*, based on extensive research on the tattooing traditions of the Cordillera region by Anlyn Salvador-Amores; *Jules De Raedt: Life Works, Lived Worlds*, an exhibit on the process and requisites of ethnographic research as seen through the work of the late Dr. Jules De Raedt, who conducted fieldwork among the Buaya people of Kalinga in 1964-66 and taught anthropology at UP Baguio for many years; and *The Indigenous, In Flux: Reconfiguring the Ethnographic Photograph*, the photographic documentation by Roland Rabang of how indigenous societies, as dynamic entities, are bound to their past but also firmly connected to the present.

These are exhibits that generalize anthropology and are more effective with students and visitors than technical exhibits labeled with anthropological jargon. The three exhibitions involved a museum team, student volunteers, and the communities in all phases of the exhibition, including planning, undertaking research for the collections, curatorial work, display, and cataloguing.

How then is anthropological knowledge circulated through the *Museo Kordilyera*?

#### ***Ethnographic foci and scholarly content of the inaugural exhibitions.***

Different kinds of exhibitions may illuminate various approaches to understanding Igorot culture and disseminating anthropological knowledge. This may require choosing objects other than for their aesthetic reasons; the educational purpose of the museums should be overriding. Scholarly exhibitions at the Museo Kordilyera rest on the solid research of the UP

Baguio faculty. Ethnographic curation is done by scholars who conducted extensive research in the Cordillera in their respective fields. To complement this, the faculty donated and loaned their own research collections to the museum, including artifacts, photographs, field notes, and relevant publications, thereby providing first-hand content culled from anthropological and archival research.

The exhibit *Jules De Raedt: Life Works and Lived Worlds*, curated by UP Baguio anthropology professor Victoria Diaz demonstrated the ethnographic research process, particularly how Jules De Raedt (JDR) practiced it when he conducted his investigations in the village of Buaya in northern Kalinga (Fig. 2). The visual display of objects is a representation of how anthropological knowledge on the Kalinga was produced: from understanding the fieldsite (represented through display of maps and census), the encounter with informants and research collaborators (through kinship charts), understanding the social life of the Buaya people (through file boxes of extensive and voluminous fieldnotes), documentation of rituals (through photographs), and the final output of the research (through published monographs and books) (see Figs. 3-5). The audience gains an intimate view of how raw data are gathered and processed, and how anthropologists need to attain a certain competence in doing ethnography in order to effectively represent and communicate the social life and culture of a group of people studied. This exhibit demonstrated the value of anthropological fieldwork, fieldnotes, and analysis.

The Jules De Raedt exhibit was built on existing archival materials from the UP Baguio Northern Luzon Archives. Relevant photographs and objects were borrowed from the CICM Archives and the Saint Louis University Museum of Arts and Crafts in Baguio City. In the exhibit, biographical context is provided on the life of De Raedt as a missionary and anthropologist in the Cordilleras. To contextualize JDR's life, relevant objects were borrowed from the Baguio Diocese Museum that houses religious paraphernalia and other objects that pertain to the missionary and anthropological work of the CICM missionaries in the Cordillera region. Close reading of the scholarly publications of JDR was carried out to elucidate further the images that were used from the time of his fieldwork in Kalinga.

***Visual instruction from ethnographic images.*** In the history of anthropology, there has existed a strong link between photography and ethnography. The Igorots, the different ethnolinguistic groups in Northern

Luzon, had been documented in early photographs taken by Dean Worcester, Albert Jenks, and Alexander Schandenber, and by contemporary photographers such as Eduardo Masferre and Tommy Hafalla. The content of the exhibit of photographs by Roland Rabang, a professor of the UP Baguio College of Arts and Communication entitled *The Indigenous, In Flux: Reconfiguring the Ethnographic Photograph*, shows both the traditional and changing life of Sagada Igorots, and how one emerges from the other. It was curated by professor Delfin Tolentino.



**Figure 2.** The exhibition on the production of anthropological knowledge through Jules De Raedt, former Belgian missionary and anthropologist in Buwaya, Kalinga, curated by UP Baguio anthropology professor Victoria Diaz.

Rabang’s black and white photographs are based on a research project (2010) that he undertook documenting the lives of the people (Figs. 6-8). Instead of digital photography, Rabang opted to use an old film camera and to process the images in the darkroom. For Rabang (2016), these are the conditions that gave “feelings” to his fieldwork. He adds that:

“The photographs that I made at the heels of Masferre and Hafalla served to rationalize the assertions that I made to support the “sublime” in their works.

If they have influenced me because I prefer to use black and white film in my photography hence, I can only supplement the conclusions I had made in my study of their photographs by saying that “social realism” is not about depicting the colors of the world. Rather, it is about noting the subtle changes that occur in the tones, highlights, as well as in the shadows of culture.”

The exhibit content, the photographs and informative captions, communicate to the audience a visual instruction on “how to read images”— specifically how these ethnographic images show the everyday and sacred lives of the Sagada Igorots, and how they tell a story from the perspective of the photographer and from the representative members of the culture that goes beyond the essentialist notion of indigenous society. The underlying theme of the ethnographic images is the evolving tradition, to show that culture is not static and the need for change in adaptation.

The exhibit demonstrates a fine example of visual anthropology, where fieldwork in the Cordillera is documented not only in texts, but also photographs that themselves become “texts” contributing to anthropological knowledge. As I have asserted, museums are concerned with knowledge and its communication; they should explain their own goals and offer as full an account of the context from which their exhibits come as possible, and they must address the fact that they are the product of various processes.

***Ethnographic artifacts as pedagogical tools.*** A common characteristic among all museums is their role as educational institutions (Pitman 1999). While not all museums acquire, conserve, or study objects, all museums are public spaces devoted to engaging the public in learning, in disseminating knowledge. “The museum is a learning place, the action of teaching, and the action of learning” (Lucas et al. 1986). Museums are unique educational environments that can provide resources for life-long learning, and complement studies in university programs. They offer opportunity for knowledge and its development in a wide environmental and cultural context. As a pedagogical tool and a learning resource for anthropological teaching, the *Museo Kordilyera* then serves as an educational platform not only for the students, faculty and staff of UP Baguio but also for the various communities that it serves.



Figures 3-4: The researcher's paraphernalia, in the exhibition on Jules De Raedt, include tape recorder, reel recorder, movie camera and the slides he took during anthropological fieldwork in Buwaya, Kalinga.

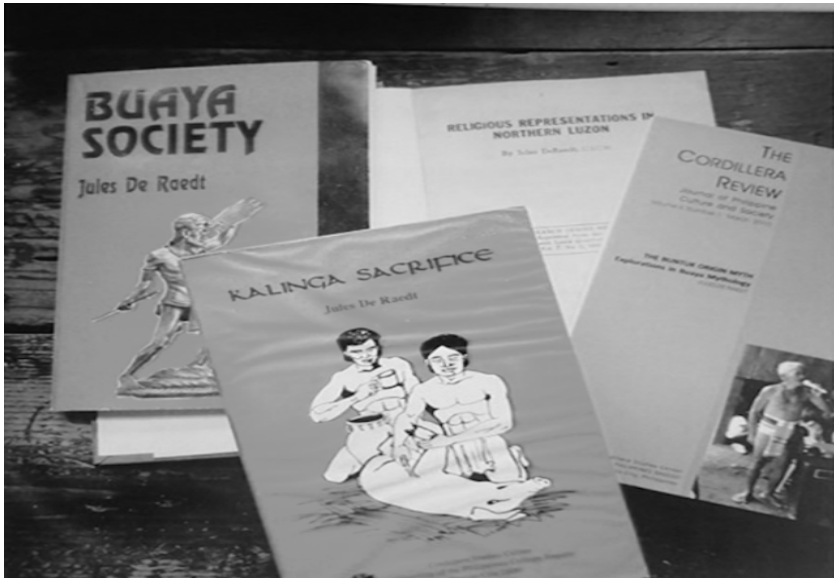


Figure 5. Some of Jules De Raedt's published works on the Buwaya, Kalinga. (Photograph by Delfin Tolentino, Jr. 2016).



Figure 6. Photographs of Roland Rabang at the Museo Kordilyera show both the traditional and changing life of the Sagada Igorots.



Figure 7. Halloween in Sagada: The influence of American missionaries is evident in the performance of the American custom “trick or treat” around the community during Halloween. (Photograph of Roland Rabang, 2014).



Figure 8. The *babayas* in Sagada. Captioned as: “While a bride already wears a western-style wedding dress, the wedding in Sagada still goes by its traditional term, *babayas*.” (Photograph of Roland Rabang, 2014).



Achieving the optimal relationship between the university and museum learning strategies requires an understanding of the role of museums and what they have to offer. A museum's role lies in providing diversity of objects or specimens, and in allowing contact with 'the real thing' rather than text-based information. Further, one can authenticate theoretical teaching by providing original artifacts for practical study that enrich the learning experience. Traditionally, museums conveyed information to their visitors through the exhibit of real objects. Museum scholarship grasped the expressive and pedagogical power of objects on display and embodied in the exhibition apparatus that consists of accompanying texts (captions, wall texts, and later museum brochures, catalogues), display technology (walls, photography, audio and video), installation, layout and design, and overall architecture. As a form of visual instruction, objects do not present a series of "lessons" either. Instead, they combine with the exhibition apparatus to produce a "narrative" that unfolds within a broader social and material context. In short, through their ordered display, objects make arguments. Here, we can see the meaning making in the museum.

Even the plain caption that identifies the maker, object's name, use and provenance, and narrative, supplies thematic, biographical, historical and technological contexts in which to understand the work. Captions and wall texts mediate the museum's interpretation of objects to visitors and these explanations affect how visitors understand what they see.

For instance, *Batok (Tattoos): Body as Archive* was curated by anthropologist AV Salvador-Amores based on her own extensive research on tattoos (2013). The exhibit demonstrates how tattoos act as an archive. Various tattoo designs are found on the bodies of the different ethnolinguistic groups in northern Luzon (Fig. 9).

Early documentation of indigenous tattoos in northern Luzon shows that the human body was fully tattooed with distinct and abstract patterns. Most of the tattoos documented in the pre- and early contact periods were abstract, geometric designs that followed a similar pattern and form, covering a man's chest and back, and a large portion of other parts of the body. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, tattooing was already a common practice among the Bontok, Ifugao and Kalinga, the major warrior groups in the Cordillera region of northern Luzon. The Itneg of Abra and the Ibaloy and Kankana-ey of Benguet also practiced it. *Batek* or *batuk*, "to strike" or "to hit," is the general term for traditional tattoos, but among the different ethnolinguistic groups in the region, collectively known as Igorot, other terms are used: *batók* (Kalinga),

*fatek* (Bontok), *bátok* (Ifugao), *bátek* (Ilocano, Ibaloy, Lepanto, Sagada Igorots and the Itneg of Abra) and *bátak* (Kankanaey). The traditional tattoo functions as a painful rite of passage, bodily decoration, talisman against malevolent forces, mark of bravery, visible marker of religious and political affiliations in the community, and symbol of status or affluence. *Batok* is an inscription of culture—religion, politics, warfare and ritual—on the body. By their permanence, body tattoos can be seen as a cutaneous archive: a repository of stored memories, experiences, and information. *Batok* is a record of the biography of the person, the complex tradition of the community, and collective ethnic identities.



Figure 9. Tattoo artist Pen with the title board of the exhibit on *Batok: Body As Archive* at the main exhibition hall of Museo Kordilyera.

A holistic approach would show how tattoos are part of social life of the Igorots from the social, political, and religious affiliation of the tattooing tradition. In the inaugural opening, the *Museo Kordilyera* mounted life-sized resin mannequins showing the distinct tattoo patterns of the Ibaloy, Kalinga, Bontoc and Ifugao, supplemented with associated objects on tattooing (Fig. 10). Here, the visitors are able to touch and appreciate the distinct practices of tattooing in the region. The exhibit featured the technology of tattooing, including the tattoo instruments, ink, and payment for the services of the

tattoo practitioner (Fig. 11). In addition, tattoo designs visibly manifested on objects like pottery, textiles, musical instruments, and other objects of bodily adornment (Fig. 12) were also displayed. The exhibit approached the practice of tattooing as fluid and not static; there is interplay of tradition and modernity. It also featured modern renditions of tattoos as graphic designs on shirts; and it took a comparative approach to tattoos by also featuring tattoo instruments found in Taiwan and other parts of Asia. The captions interacted with the objects and their installation. This display strategy focuses attention on the agency of the tattooed people, of the curators in producing these texts, and, more broadly, of the exhibit. Since the formal opening of the museum, the tattooed mannequins have been a platform for learning employed by teachers, professors and art educators in teaching Cordillera culture.

Lastly, the *Museo Kordilyera* has a visible storage area for its ethnographic collections. These are germane to the UP's mission of teaching and research, and have been acquired in accordance with professional standards and ethics (Figs. 14-15). The artifacts are now being used to introduce the material culture and traditions of the Cordillera people.

### **Enhancing the ethnographic exhibitions**

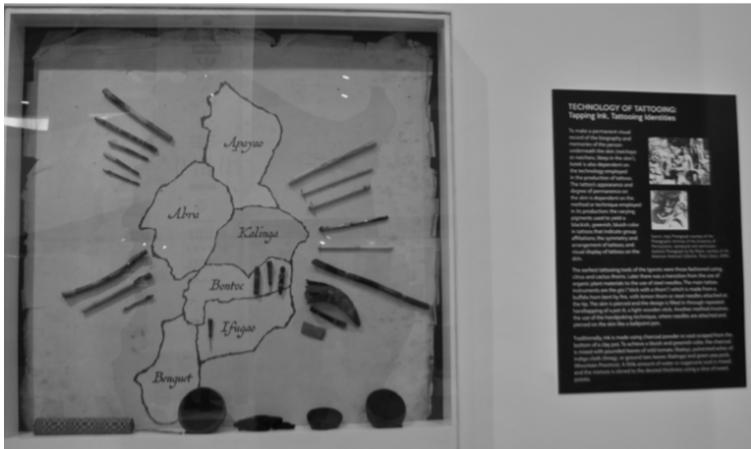
The *Museo Kordilyera* intends later on to utilize a variety of displays—interactive, innovative, open display exhibitions (hands-on), videos, and multi-media—as effective museum programs for education and learning. Museum educators suggest that if museum visitors are interested in an exhibit, they should be engaged through sensory, intellectual, and emotional faculties, they should be ready to experience an intrinsically rewarding, optimal experience (Csikszentmihalyi & Hermanson 1995:59). Publications of featured exhibitions are also a vital resource for learning and instructional materials for teaching.

More importantly, museum collections have value for continuing research. Objects in the museum can be argued to be vessels of knowledge (Taborsky 1990); one can think of them as instructive of distant lives or histories even though the objects have been removed from their original environment and refer to their original contexts via instructive labels, juxtaposition, and mediation of experts. Over the past years, anthropological museums have made extensive efforts to incorporate other voices and conflicting interpretations into their exhibitions, and work has been done to integrate source communities around whose objects the exhibitions are based (Philipps 2000). The objects and their representations can function as

powerful vehicles of knowledge sharing when infused with multiple ontological voices.



**Figure 10:** Life-sized resin mannequins with distinct tattoo patterns representing Ibaloy, Kalinga, Bontoc and Ifugao and associated objects on tattooing are mounted at the main exhibition hall of the Museo Kordilyera.



**Figure 11:** The tattoo exhibit features different tattooing instruments from northern Luzon.



**Figure 12.** Along with tattoos are other temporary bodily adornments from different ethnolinguistic groups in the Cordillera region. These adornments were used as payments for tattoo services in the past.

The use of museum collections is so widespread, and the scope of research they benefit is so varied, scholars often travel to museums to study their collections, and museums may loan specimens to interested researchers. The immense knowledge disseminated by the curators of these museums often stems from the reference collections themselves. I would argue that we could not overestimate the importance of objects as a conduit for teaching and learning specifically, and generally as a key rallying point for cultural revitalization.

### **Conclusion: future directions of the *Museo Kordilyera***

The *Museo Kordilyera* is currently open to the public, and it is hoped that this ethnographic museum will strengthen UP Baguio's research programs. An example would be the museum collection's links, and how these can be used for new developments in the curricula, for revitalization of programs, offering courses in museology, and linking anthropology with the other

disciplines, and to keep the dynamic relations with the other natural science and humanities disciplines for interdisciplinary co-curation. The faculty should be encouraged to include objects from the museums in their courses and to engage the students in the study of ethnographic artifacts, documents, archival materials and original photographs. The more students and faculty are seriously involved; the better the museum is fulfilling its mission.



**Figure 13.** On display are Kalinga pots incised with tattoo patterns similar to the patterns found on the skin.



**Figures 14-15.** The visible storage space of the Museo Kordilyera contains artifacts and other paraphernalia stemming from the research of UP Baguio faculty.

Like all academic institutions, the museum should also participate actively in scholarly dialogues through independent efforts as well as collaborative work with faculty, the communities, other museums, and other stakeholders. This may be through publications, travelling exhibitions, lectures, and other forms of communication. The sharing of expertise and knowledge will also lead to research and can serve as a resource to develop or enhance academic courses, as well as make a contribution to scholarship. Anthropological research is a core activity in sustaining ethnographic museums.

It is hoped that there will be continuing cooperation with other museums in northern Luzon, with the National Museum of the Philippines, scholarly institutions, universities and overseas bodies. These would be of aid in providing duplicates and documentary materials, and helping train the staff in museum work. Active links with university departments in which anthropology, archaeology and history, and others are taught to carry out relevant research should also be maintained. Along with these is the constant engagement with the communities, which may eventually give rise to a new set of community curators and turn the museum into a site for civic association and reconciliation.

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