

INTERPRETIVE STORIES (*KWENTONG BAYAN*) OF SARIAYA, QUEZON AND TOURISM AS A LIVED EXPERIENCE

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Abstract

This paper discusses the experience of writing stories (*kwentong bayan*) or local narratives about a place and applying them to tourism packages. The stories were analyzed for themes and categories of culture elements from the research site in Sariaya, Quezon and were made part of community-based tourism packages aimed at students (identified as a target niche sector by the tourism council of Sariaya). These themes included the following: “religiosity of the Sariayahins”, “historicizing the present and living the past”, “spirit of community” and “gender, status and power relations”. The insights of the article explain the project team’s understanding of tourism as an activity that goes beyond merely visiting a place, so that it is also a meaningful experience for both locals and visitors (this was validated, for example, through out-of-classroom activities by UP students participating in homestay programs in Sariaya). Through the sharing of specific narratives and of ‘thick descriptions’ that expose diverse reflections on the particularities, nuances and contradictions of Sariaya culture and society, as articulated in written *kwentong bayan* by a local tourism volunteer and by researchers for the purposes of this paper, it is apparent that visitors can engage more closely with local reality and tourism can be an enriching and empowering experience for both insiders and outsiders.

Keywords: *Culture; kwentong bayan; storytelling; tourism as a lived experience; Sariaya, Quezon*

Storytelling and ‘community-based tourism’

Much can be said about tourism as an engine of development in communities. Statistics of tourism arrivals, including average expenditures of visitors, lead to the conclusion that tourism means more employment and income for locals. However, forecasts of an expanding tourism market as well as diverse touristic offerings show that these have both intended and unintended results (Cole, 2006; Gavin & Phipps, 2005; Mowforth & Munt, 2003; Robinson & Phipps, 200; Smith & Robinson, 2006). According to some sectors, the promotion of domestic tourism will yield higher returns as local tourists are

said to spend more than their foreign counterparts. There is also an environmental implication. The Commission on Sustainable Development states a preference for domestic tourism over international tourism in developing countries as “this could reduce many of the negative ecological (air travel), social/economic leakage and cultural transformation effects of long haul tourism” (Ad hoc Working Group on Tourism in the Forum on Environment & Development, 1999). Negative unintended results include noise pollution, tourism bubbles that separate the visitors from the visited, gentrification, commodification of goods and services, and scarcities that lead to more expensive essential goods like food. Problematic as it is, community-based tourism is touted as an alternative worth considering, given the challenges that assert the need for concern over the distribution of benefits from tourism.

‘Community-based tourism’ as a reaction to unintended results of past models in tourism development has many definitions. One definition emphasizes the importance of multiple stakeholder involvement (Beeton, 2006). Stakeholders are defined as any person or group whose interests are affected by the operation of any organization (Bartol, 2001; Robbins & Coulter, 2009; Stoner, 2005;). Examples of ‘community stakeholders’ are local businesses (e.g., they may be negatively affected by the influx of fast food chains); local government officials (who are interested in generating tax revenues from tourism-related businesses); religious groups (whose teachings about morality may be negatively affected by visitors who behave differently from the locals); those engaged in traditional occupations like farming and fishing (who may experience a dearth of volunteer labor because the youth are more attracted to work in comfortable offices found in hotels and restaurants); and families and individuals who will discover that increased demand for goods and services lead to higher prices as evidenced by increasing land values and higher prices of food in tourism destinations. Given these examples, one can infer that practically everybody in the community should be considered a stakeholder as tourism develops. Consideration of stakeholder interests apart from the interests of stockholders in businesses is believed to be the core of social responsibility concepts.

Yet, it is common knowledge that multi-stakeholder participation is easier to accept in principle than to implement. The Philippines has many examples of failed attempts¹. There are some who currently enumerate successful attempts to empower tourism stakeholders, but in these cases a supporting international agency was providing the inputs². The challenge for ‘community-based tourism’ is to empower stakeholders to cooperate to achieve a common objective.

This article proposes that storytelling (or the sharing of '*Kwentong Bayan*') could boost the participation of diverse stakeholders in the development of tourism. Poverty alleviation and supply chain models show how inclusion of out-of-school youth, the unemployed and the underemployed, and the economically disadvantaged sectors in the destination can be considered a strategy in converting exclusive tourism programs that emphasize the importance of big hotels, resorts and expensive restaurants to those which highlight the experience of place, sound, taste and movement that locals are most knowledgeable about, where distinctive competencies in articulating embedded meanings are a specialization of the locals that is very hard to duplicate.³ Munsters and de Klumbis (2005) wrote about the phenomenon of “down ageing, the rise of ‘dinkies’ (double income, no kids) and ‘whopees’ (wealthy, healthy, older people) – all these comprise a market segment looking for diversion from stressful life and hungry for cultural tourism.

The research project embraced the definition of tourism not only as a business concern but as a ‘lived experience’ – an activity that allows visitors to “gather, build, dwell and learn” (Phipps, 2007). To “gather” refers to the experience of seeing, tasting, feeling and hearing that occurs when guests visit a destination. To “build” means that sensorial perceptions of the visitors lead to images of the place being visited. To “dwell” refers to a phenomenon that occurs when visitors blend with the surroundings and eventually lose some of the characteristics of being “foreign” in a destination. “Learning” refers to “images” about the visited place as a result of the trip. This can very well be a strong component of post-purchase behavior that marketers refer to as the driving force for repeat visits. Hence, returning tourists also become drawn in as potential stakeholders for community-based tourism.

The value of the concept of ‘lived experience’ is anchored on the belief that there are many embedded meanings in a destination that are most often unnoticed because trips are constrained by time as well as by a dearth of narratives and stories that facilitate the “gathering, building, dwelling and learning” experiences of the visitor. Thus, given limited time, tourism stakeholders have to assume the role of information provider to facilitate the process of “learning.”

Storytelling is a way by which meanings attached to events, places, people, objects, activities and time by the locals can be verbalized and shared with visitors (Fernandez, 2003). The use of storytelling could also satisfy nostalgic yearnings by the local stakeholders for experiences that may have been lost as a result of urbanization. In addition, it is posited that the use of storytelling provides the uniqueness that tourism destinations need to ensure sustainability of tourism businesses (Steward & Stratern, 2003).

As tourists enter a destination with images of the place obtained from related reading materials and other media and from stories told by friend and relatives, local narratives can be crafted where meanings of cultural artifacts can be negotiated by the visitor and the visited. Related articles in Moscardo (2008) feature a cause-and-effect relationship between stories shared with visitors and behaviors in visited destinations. Of utmost concern in the cited material is the extent to which stories shared during visits have been able to convert visitors to be supporters of social causes valued dearly by visited communities. Behavioral models can be developed to show the connection between storytelling and potential expressions of support for social causes to establish the efficiency of these tools in the development of tourism. Heritage interpretation can be developed with the participation of diverse tourism stakeholders in guided walks, talks, drama, signages, artwork, brochures, audio-guides, etc. (Stewart & Strathern, 2003).

This article examines *kwentong bayan* or stories that are told in Sariaya, Quezon, a picturesque town of eastern Luzon, Philippines. The stories were collected and written down by a local tourism volunteer and by an interdisciplinary team of researchers who have been visiting the site since 2006 when the project officially started⁴.

The tourism profile of Sariaya and the background of the study



Figure 1. Map of Sariaya.

The map shown in Figure 1 shows the proximity of Sariaya, a municipality of Quezon Province, to the National Capital Region and surrounding provinces of Batangas, Laguna, Rizal and Bulacan. Sariaya is accessible via land

transportation; travel time from Manila to Sariaya takes about three to four hours. Sariaya has a total land area of 24,530 hectares. It comprises 43 barangays of which the total population as of 2009 was approximately 130,000.

According to the tourism profile of Sariaya that was written by Mr. Eriberto Dedace (2009), aspects of the place that are of interest to visitors include Sariaya's heritage houses that were designed by famous Manila-based architects. These houses are mostly found close to the Catholic Church, which was built in the 18th century, and to the *municipio* (municipal hall) which is also of architectural significance⁵. The profile also states that Sariaya is home to many festivals (see a brief summary in Appendix A). Sariaya boasts of resorts and mangrove reforestation projects. Sariaya's gastronomic offerings include many unique delicacies (like *Tamales*, *Hotia*, *Kinakao*, *Pinag-ong*, *Minukmuk*, *Broas*, *Apaꝥ*, and *Longaniza*).

Some of the heritage assets are ancestral houses owned by private individuals, but others (the plaza, municipio, Cathedral) are considered public property. Owners of abandoned and deteriorating ancestral houses are looking at the tourism potential of reconstruction and conservation. In the past, spurts of tourism growth were initiated by private businessmen. At present, community-based tourism funded by the local government unit and managed by a group of volunteers is perceived as an alternative that can bring about desired changes. The attraction of community-based tourism in Sariaya has to do with the absence of tourism infrastructure like first-class hotels, high-end restaurants, adequate water supply and other amenities. Yet Sariaya has a rich supply of cultural artifacts that can be documented so that tourism packages can be designed and implemented to attract a niche of potential visitors.

As a result of the initiatives started and developed through the research project, the Sariaya Tourism Council identified students as their strongest potential market niche. Visits to Sariaya can be alternative learning opportunities to understand historical, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental issues that apply to a municipality and the country in general. There is an emerging popularity of trips to the countryside organized by tour operators to cater to employees and students in Metro Manila. A member of an organization composed of owners and relatives of ancestral houses in Sariaya (*Tuklas*) is currently managing tours to different destinations in Quezon Province. Her clients are mostly employees from Makati and students from different schools in Metro Manila (elementary, high school, college and graduate students).

Tourism in Sariaya is perceived to have lagged behind Lukban, another municipality in Quezon (Lazaro, 2010). The 'Pahiyas Festival' in Lukban and

the 'Agawan Festival' in Sariaya occur practically at the same time but the Pahiyas is recognized as a commercial success in terms of corporate sponsorship, variety of touristic offerings, a developed *kiping* art form, and the sheer volume of visitors.⁶

Domestic tourism statistics for Sariaya are sparse or often non-existent. The probable explanation being that prior to the acceptance of tourism as an alternative economic activity, events such as festivals are often perceived as occasions to welcome relatives and friends. Attempts to transform these "personal" transactions into "business" transactions are often disliked. In addition, attempts to cash in on an increased volume of visitors emanate from loosely coupled groups that disband after an event. Different local executives also have different strategies depending on the importance they place on tourism. This is the reason why a contentious issue about tourism councils boils down to whether it will operate as a separate, independent unit or as an attached group in the office of the local executive.

During the research period (from 2006 to 2010) in Sariaya, festivals were major inputs in the design of touristic offerings. Most if not all of the efforts of local tourism stakeholders were spent polishing the content of their touristic offerings with very little spent on marketing activities. For example, practice sessions in the activities showcased in the *Senakulo* consumed most of the resources of the tourism group. It was always assumed that a considerably huge crowd of local visitors would be present. A website was developed independently by a young entrepreneur from Sariaya to promote his own business interests. A local tour operator would bring in local excursionists (day visitors) to sample Sariaya cuisine. There were no statistics on domestic and international visitors.

Tourism assets were enumerated in a planning workshop conducted in early 2010. These included beach resorts, aquaculture and dairy projects of the local government, together with ancestral houses and local cuisine. Mt. Banahaw was included in the list as Monsignor Verastique, the former Parish Priest, had expressed a desire to design activities during Holy Week to include a trek to Mt. Banahaw. No statistics were available to describe the number of visits as well as the nature of the clientele of these establishments. Based on ocular data, the beach resorts in Sariaya can be classified as resorts that cater to the local market. The aquaculture and dairy projects have not been developed to attract tourists. In fact, mention was made about the linkage that can be forged between these projects and a homestay program that was restarted as a result of the visits of students from the University of the Philippines.

In Sariaya, the tourism stakeholders include the Catholic Church (many tourism events are based on religious rites and rituals), the local government (tourism development requires investments in the provision of amenities like water supply and maintenance of secure environment), owners of businesses (beach resorts, restaurants, spas, apartments, souvenir shops, bus, jeep and tricycle operators), schools (offering tourism related courses), owners of ancestral houses (who are looking at tourism as potential source of capital to renovate old ancestral properties), other homeowners (especially those who want to participate in homestay programs). While this may not include a complete list of tourism stakeholders, we should infer that almost everybody in Sariaya can be considered a stakeholder.

Several attempts had already been made to organize the tourism stakeholders before the research project in Sariaya commenced. Data obtained from the tourism report of the research team show that the Sariaya Tourism Council was formed in 1994 with active participation of beach resort owners. The council, however, became inactive in 1998. In 1999, another group composed of volunteers from the Catholic parish took part in the preparation for the 400th anniversary of the church. These volunteers became the members of the Sariaya Tourism Council when it was reorganized in 2004 (Lazaro, 2010). This was the group chosen by the UP research team as its partner.⁷

Apart from the Sariaya Tourism Council, the association *Tuklas* (a group composed of owners of ancestral houses), was considered when the groundwork to identify groups within the municipality was done. The Sariaya Tourism Council at that time had members who were also members of *Tuklas*. The relationship with the Sariaya Tourism Council was formalized with the inclusion of its most active member as part of the UP research team. This was done to ensure that the Sariaya Tourism Council will be actively involved in data gathering and processing.

In the initial months, the generosity and cooperation manifested by local stakeholders were believed to be the offshoot of the goodwill developed by earlier studies made by the Architecture group. At this time, it was difficult to explain to the locals what the research team meant by multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary research outputs. The promise of “improved” touristic offerings seemed to be adequate enough for data to be sourced without much difficulty. Skepticism was expressed however, as other groups had earlier attempted to help develop tourism in the municipality. In addition, as conflicting interests became more apparent—owners of ancestral houses claimed there was “no more distinction between rich and poor” in Sariaya, complaints

surfaced regarding the noise pollution caused by tricycle operators in the poblacion and the existence of a covered basketball court that “destroys” the aesthetic value of the *parke*—the research team had to learn how to succeed and manage to keep going with the project especially during periods when new elected local executives assumed their official duties.

The Sariaya Tourism Council assisted the research team during immersion activities. Data gathering schedules, meetings and accommodation decisions were cleared with them. Culture descriptions were validated with the help of the council and support from the local government. The presence of the mayor was important in generating a sizeable crowd that would listen and react to the outputs of the research team. There was also collaboration with the council regarding a Special Topics subject included in the B.S. Tourism course of the University of the Philippines so that the students visited Sariaya for two days as an out-of-classroom activity (described in Appendix B).

The ‘culture research’ project⁸ in Sariaya, Quezon was conceptualized to describe and develop capabilities that can be included in touristic offerings that utilize indigenous assets and talents. It was also conceptualized to address verbalized complaints about the “appropriation” of culture by communities that are eager to use tourism as a potentially rich source of economic benefits. Specifically, there were complaints against some sectors who allegedly replicate popular festivals without really knowing or understanding their relevance to the unique history of a particular place.

In the process of writing what was understood of the studied culture, validating the data with local stakeholders, and using these cultural descriptions to design tourism offerings, the opportunity to write interpretive stories came about. It was intended to serve as a mechanism to hone the interpretive skills of the research team. As agreed upon by the research team, these “stories” were presented in several symposia attended by colleagues and other tourism stakeholders to obtain feedback deemed useful by the research team. The interpretive outputs were presented in a national conference⁹ whose audience was composed of faculty members from different universities and colleges as well as stakeholders from the research site.

With this material, as well as a collection of stories written by a local stakeholder—Mr. Eriberto Dedace, who is a tourism volunteer and also the Secretary of the Sariaya Tourism Council—, the ‘Tourism group’ composed of faculty from the University of the Philippines Asian Institute of Tourism worked with the Sariaya Tourism Council to identify areas of collaborative

work in data generation, data processing, planning and implementing touristic projects.

A home stay program was re-launched and participating homeowners were encouraged to use storytelling as an activity during meals with the student visitors. Evaluation reports of two trips for a period of two semesters show how the services of local student guides and home stay owners have personalized the experience of visiting Sariaya and how relationships developed during and long after the trips. Home stay participants also expressed confidence in welcoming and taking care of paying guests.¹⁰ *Kwentong bayan* documents were further shared with local student guides (students of a local tourism school).

The narratives that were collected range from fascinating descriptions of food served during special occasions by the landed gentry in the poblacion and folks from outlying places like Mamala and Mt. Banahaw, famous *camparsas* or bands commissioned to play in fiestas of the past, *komedyas* about the conflicts between Christians and Muslims, personal experiences with American and Japanese soldiers, visits of important personalities like President Manuel Quezon and his wife, cockfighting, boxing and street dancing events participated in by the young in Sariaya, not to mention disappearing rituals, rites and ceremonies that can be studied and shared with potential visitors to Sariaya.

Processing cultural narratives or *kwentong bayan*: Concepts and methodology

Stories in the context of this study refer to narratives borne out of prolonged shared histories that are unique to any community. Thus a seemingly ordinary phenomenon assumes a unique meaning as communities have different ways of interacting and negotiating dilemmas borne out of experiencing a phenomenon. Alfred Schultz states that:

Knowledge is always part of a historic situation, and people in various times and places experience the world differently. Reality is socially constructed within the group, which is why no universal reality can be found. What is real for us depends on the categories employed within our culture (Littlejohn, 1999, p. 203).

Culture as defined in this study includes artifacts, value systems and taken-for-granted assumptions borne out of prolonged periods of socialization (Schein, 1992). Artifacts refer to the most visible components of culture (Ott, 1989). Using an iceberg as a metaphor of culture, artifacts are the visible elements that an outsider encounters initially in the study of culture.

Value systems describe social norms – right, wrong, beautiful, ugly, acceptable behaviors of members, etc. These serve as “codes” by which behaviors of members of the community are judged.¹¹ Deep-seated definitions of space, time, objects, individuals, groups, relationships with mortal and immortal beings, etc. may vary across different social groups and classes. For example, in the singing of the *pabasa* (verses on the Passion of the Christ) as part of Holy Week rituals in the research site, the research team saw different definitions of time by groups in the barrio and those in the poblacion. The definitions of time are manifested in the way stanzas in the *pabasa* booklet are sang. The research team uncovered the label “*sampay bakod*” to refer to the singing of the *pabasa* in the barrio (de la Pena, 2011) after household chores have been attended to. The singing of the verses differs from that in the poblacion because apart from being supervised by the church, many of the singers are in a hurry to go home to attend to family concerns.

Schein (1985, 1992) refers to culture as ‘socially constructed solutions’ to ‘critical incidences’ brought about by ‘dilemmas of internal consistency and external integration’. ‘Critical incidences’ are sometimes conflict-laden occasions that test the capacity of groups to address divergent interests of members (‘internal consistency’) in relation to other groups (‘external integration’). Using communities as an example, dilemmas of internal consistency can very well refer to those caused by scarcities of resources in relation to expressed needs like adequate water supply, peace and order and adequate opportunities to earn and maintain a desired standard of living. Dilemmas brought about by the need for external consistency result from conflicting interests of groups in communities, i.e., the church’s objective in developing tourism may be different from that of the municipal government.

These ‘socially constructed solutions’ can also be articulated as Geertz’s “thick descriptions, webs of meaning, frames of meaning within which various peoples live out their lives” (Littlejohn, 1999). For insiders, according to Schein, these solutions orient new members on the “way things are done around here.” For outsiders (including researchers and tourists), thick descriptions are the output of the struggle to convert “experience near concepts” to “experience distant concepts” (Ibid).

Experience-near concepts are those that have meaning to the members of the culture and experience-distant concepts have meaning to outsiders. The cultural interpreter essentially translates between the two, so that observers from outside can gain an understanding of feelings and meanings of a situation for the insiders (Littlejohn, 1999, 211).

The process of extracting meanings from stories is referred to as hermeneutics

...understanding another person's feelings and meanings, understanding the meaning of an episode or event, translating the actions of a group into terms understandable to outsiders, or uncovering the meaning of a written text. (Littlejohn, 1999, p. 207)

The translation of 'socially constructed solutions' into 'thick descriptions' is referred to in this paper as *kwentong bayan*— stories shared by the locals, the objective correctness of which need not be objectively determined because these contain meanings that exist in the minds of the local storyteller. The phrase "*Kwentong bayan*" was adopted by the research to refer to stories embedded in the memory of the locals and which are shared with others. This definition was used as a basis to review the quality of stories (which could be written in English or Filipino) prior to presentation to outsiders. The research team made sure that the stories did not 'legitimize' descriptions obtained from other sources like books and articles written by outsiders.

The "hermeneutic" value (Littlejohn, 1999) of these stories consists of embedded meanings derived from memories of individuals and groups. Taken as descriptions of a destination, these are "mirrors" and "windows" of the community being visited by tourists (Shank, 2002). "Mirrors" refer to the serendipitous encounters of the locals with their taken-for-granted assumptions or "webs of meaning" that are so commonly ignored, while "windows" refer to the privileging of outsiders/tourists to learn more about the culture of the community being visited.

The *kwentong bayan* produced by the interdisciplinary research team (7 stories) were based on participant observation and immersion activities in the research site. As the authors spent time observing, participating in activities and events with members of the Sariaya Tourism Council (such as meetings with local government officials, training programs given to tourism stakeholders, birthday parties, fiestas and religious rituals like processions), senior citizens were actively sought out and interviewed. From these sources the research team was able to put together titles and contents of stories. The titles of the *kwentong bayan* produced by the research team went through a process of negotiation that involved an enumeration of potential titles and an agreement on the ownership of titles. This became necessary as the members of the research team were allowed to pick topics that belong to other disciplines. Agreement meant that once chosen and approved, the concerned member is free to access, process and write stories related to the topic.

In the process of working on culture descriptions, 51 *kwentong bayan* (narratives) produced over a considerable period of time by a local stakeholder were made available to the research team. Eriberto Dedace, who is in his early 40s, was born and raised in Sariaya, Quezon and is fond of documenting events (such as reunion parties) and of writing down memories of his youth (such as picnics, games, food). Some of his stories are very detailed while others are snapshots of an event, object or person. These stories were shared with the research team after they had presented their *kwentong bayan* outputs in a national conference. At this stage the operational definition of *kwentong bayan* as agreed upon by the research team is that which contains definitions, mindsets, schemas, descriptions of objects, relationships and events of the locals. The representativeness of Dedace's stories was not questioned as these contained elements that the research team was most interested to capture.

Based on the data obtained, drafts of *kwentong bayan* were discussed in project meetings scheduled by the research team to determine based on their understanding of the context of Sariaya—whether the stories reflect local definitions, mindsets, schemas, descriptions of objects, etc., as defined in the previous paragraphs—and were further validated with local stakeholders. The content analysis used in this paper made use of expanding matrices that contain data from these stories.

Categories were used to label the matrices. For example, some of the categories are as follows: descriptions of food and cuisine; descriptions of sound and movement (dance, games and sports); descriptions of persons, families and community; descriptions of place; descriptions of time, descriptions of people and families, and spoken words and their meanings. These also represent the disciplines where members of the research team belong. Related data and patterns which are referred to as 'themes' in this paper were isolated, and included the following: "religiosity of the Sariyahins"; "historicizing the present and living the past"; "spirit of community (of Sariaya);" and; "gender, status and power relations".

Historicizing the present and living the past in Sariaya

The *kwentong bayan* of Sariaya document nostalgic descriptions of sounds, events, people, activities, place, and food associated with events linked to "the coconut boom years" in the first half of the 20th century (or the 'American years' before the War).¹² Windfall profits from the export earnings of plantation owners in Sariaya were used to remodel traditional houses. Wealth was manifested in intricate designs of exterior as well as the interior spaces of homes. Grand balconies allowed owners of well-appointed houses to host

exclusive parties and participate in inclusive events like processions and dances (*baylehan*) at the park (*parke*).

According to The Tayabas Chronicles of Donya Concepcion Vda de Umali, during the coconut boom years clients of their copra trading business – the *illustrados* – renovated their *bahay na bato* and commissioned the country's top architects like Juan Nakpil and Andres Luna de San Pedro to remodel their residences. These architects were trained abroad, which explains why the remodeled houses had European fixtures. Skilled carpenters and artisans were hired from Batangas and later from Pampanga. Big, beautifully painted wall murals were in vogue in the 1920s (Dedace, 'Sariaya's Grand Ancestral Houses').



Figure 2. A mansion in Sariaya designed and constructed for a plantation owner.

The *municipio* was built in art deco style by Juan M. Arellano (the architect of the Metropolitan Theater) and was frequented by individuals from Sariaya who gave accounts of acclaimed performances that provided the needed diversion during the Japanese occupation (Kintanar et al, 2006). Other renowned Filipino architects who have designed houses in Sariaya include Juan Nakpil, who designed a Sariaya mansion given as a gift to Donya Carmen Rodriguez, and Andres Luna de San Pedro, who designed the mansion of then Governor Natalio Enriquez. They were lavishly furnished.

Houses of the rich had long antique tables with intricately embroidered table cloth with heirloom *fruteras*...old sala with big floral style crystal chandeliers...wooden columns had intricate

designs where big framed photographs hang, floors used thick and long slabs of wood.... (Dedace, ‘Sariaya’s Grand Ancestral Houses’)



Figure 3. Municipal hall of Sariaya
designed by Architect Juan M. Arellano.

During the Japanese occupation, when travel to other towns was restricted, there were picnics to rivers. Memories of picnics in the Keanuang River (Dedace, ‘*Ang Pagpipiknik sa Talaan*’) mirror the affluence of the early 1940s. The tastes of particular foods are savored as memories of the past were relived in conversations with the locals. In the picnics during wartime, food served included *lechon* (roasted pig), chicken and fish served on banana leaves, *puto* and *dinuguan*, narrates Aguilar (‘*Plazayaw, Dance Socials at the Plaza*’) in her *kwentong bayan* of ‘*piknikan sa Talaan at Castanyas*’.

The *parke* or park figures prominently in the wartime narratives because of an installed radio transmitter tower (Ozaeta, ‘Everyday Life in the Plaza’) that equalized access to favorite programs like those of popular comedians “Tugo” and “Pugo”, and news from Manila (Dedace, ‘The Sariayahin Fiesta and Life of Yore’). The *parke* was also where basketball meets took place—“Competing teams like Spartans, Vikings and Vandals with uniforms of blue, yellow and green competed with one another” (Ulanday, ‘Sariaya Basketball Icons’). Japanese military drills took place at the *parke* with strong memory links to the *sibat* – wooden rods the locals were forced to carry outside their homes. This was a requirement among the locals by the Japanese army. Those caught without the *sibat* were punished (Dedace, ‘Sariaya 1899-1941: The American Years’).

After the war, the *parke* served as the venue of celebrations of social clubs in Sariaya which had intriguing and colorful names like “Ptolomy”, “Rangers”, “Cupids”, “*El Bobo*”, “*Magandaban*”, “Jazzletics” and “*Magandaban 2nd Generation*”, and *comparsas* or musical performing groups like “Morong”, “Canda Stumpers”, “Juan Fajarda”, “Eustaquio Parungao”, “*Banda ng NEPA*”, “Orchestra of Mariano Herrera”, “*Banda ng Sariaya*” and “Music Nuts” (Aguilar, ‘*Plazayaw*, dance socials at the Plaza’).

Many nostalgic memories of growing up in Sariaya, especially of childhood play and games, were documented in the *kwentong bayan*. Among these memories of play were “*titser-titseran*” (play school) and of rubber bands being blown over the opponent’s rubber band. The winners went home with a thick display of rubber bands in their hands (Uy, ‘*Kwento ni Lolo’t Lola*’).

In the house of Mrs. Pilo, we played with gumamela flowers that were crushed and mixed with detergent. We used old clothes and other discarded materials, we pulled each other on imitation trucks. We also made paper boats that we released along canals. There were many kinds of games, *piko* (hopscotch), *tibigan*, *patintero*, *lüksong tinik*, *tinda-tindaban*, *lutu-lutuan* [play cooking and selling] (Dedace, ‘*Ang Babay ni Inanang Pilo*’ [English translation mine]).

These stories also savored memories of popular songs and soundtracks. For example, in family and school reunions, there is preference for English songs of yesteryears like: “Black Magic Woman”, “How Can You Mend a Broken Heart?”, “Massachusetts”, “Our Love (Don’t Throw It Away)”, “How Deep Is Your Love”, “September”, “Sing a Song”. Likewise, foreign musical groups like the “Shadows”, “Ventures”, “Beatles”, “Dave Clark Five”, “Cascades”, “Monkeys” and “Earth, Wind and Fire” were favored (Dedace, ‘A Night with the SJA Student Canteen All Classes (1970 – 1974)’). The Rangers Club was said to have “Home on the Range” as their theme song (Aguilar, ‘*Plazayaw*, Dance Socials at the Plaza’). “White Christmas” was also mentioned as a favorite song during the Christmas season by Dr. Raul Navarro in a paper entitled *Sinariaya: Isang Pagpapakahulugan sa Musikal na Bubay ng Sariaya*, read in a validation session with the locals.

Delicacies like *Pan de Sal*, *Pan de Bonete* (specialty of Mamang Tonyo and Aling Iday), *Pancit* (Aling Petra), *Torta Real* with crispy *Chicharon* (of Inanang Bia), *Bikang-bikang* (banana chips), “*Kolektibista*” (two pieces of round bread joined together with caramelized sugar and toasted peanuts), *Suman sa Ibus*, *Arroz Caldo*, *Binurubas* or *Apas*, *Adobo*, *Afritada*, *Relleno*, *Pastel de Pollo*, *Lechon*, *Morcon*, *Lengua Estofada*, *Leche Flan*, sweetened *saba* banana, *santol* and lemonade

with *Sarsaparilla* were enumerated in Dedace's accounts ('Sariyahin Delicacies on Travel Time', 'Sweet Inspiration', 'Sariyahin Fiesta and Life of Yore').

Stories based on memories give opportunities for "performance" by senior members of communities as storytellers. The attraction of nostalgic "reliving of the past" is explained in many articles as the effect of major shifts in society's way of life brought about by a fast-changing environment (Cole, 2006; Gavin & Phipps, 2005; Robinson & Phipps, 2003). For example, the big difference between how "play" was defined several decades ago compared with what the young are familiar with at present always produces captive audiences. The act of visiting houses that were abodes of those who lived a life of comfort also creates a certain amount of awe among the young. The marked difference in definitions of wealth and its use gleaned from the design of houses, the use of space, the manner of entertaining, eating, drinking, praying, etc., are always interesting topics of storytellers that need no motivation theories to enthrall a listening audience.

The nature of the stories shared with students enrolled in the Special Topics class cannot be accurately determined. Prior to the visits of the students, however, participating home stay owners were instructed to set aside time for storytelling. The effect of these storytelling sessions can be seen in the evaluation of visitors (the students) and the visited (the participating homestay owners) in Tables 1 and 2 of Appendix B.

Religiosity of the Sariyahins

A study of the *pabasa* (the singing of verses that depict Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, His passion and death on the cross) during the Holy Week, and the *Dalit kay San Isidro* (a novena or prayer cycle) by de la Pena (2011), can be cited to describe the spirituality of the Sariyahins.

Perceived miracles of the image of Sto. Cristo de Burgos in the Cathedral of St. Francis of Assisi have been validated by many locals¹³. The power of an Omnipotent God over powerless mortals, the presence of a spiritual contract that increases the possibility of obtaining graces with acts of religiosity sanctioned by the Church, a negotiating God Who gives graces and Who expects that the bestowed graces are reciprocated by participation in rituals like the *pabasa* and *novenas* like the *Dalit kay San Isidro*— are evident in these descriptions.

During the Holy Week, the Passion of Christ is reenacted in different locations in the town, mostly old houses within the *poblacion* (town proper). The activities are participated in by young and old Sariyahins – members of the Samahahang Kabataan, the Pag-Asa Youth Association and the Youth for

Peace. The *pabasa* or ‘reading’ of the passion during Lent is also observed. Mt. Banahaw in Sariaya is frequented by devout Catholics during the Lenten season. For others, the trek to Mt. Banahaw allows the faithful to “enact” the agony and death of Christ. For others, it is the belief that “magical powers” are bestowed on those who visit these “sacred places” during the Lenten season.

Throughout the duration of the study, the research team participated in many religious rituals, including the Lenten street play *Senakulo* enacted every year. Prior to visits of the Special Topics students from UP, an attempt was also made to bring a select group of researchers and students to experience Holy Week in Sariaya. As interpretations of embedded meanings were discussed, an interesting distinction between “path” and “place” surfaced. The distinction is based on embedded meanings behind designs of religious places like churches. Reference to “path” and “place” in these sites can be likened to the Christian belief that Calvary and death precede resurrection, sacrifice precedes sanctification. Thus the distance between the Church entrance and the altar signifies how Christians are made to feel the significance of these embedded meanings. Processions, it is said, have their own “path” and “place” – from the start of the ritual with the priests and the faithful traversing a route (“path”) that ends with a “place” – the altar. From observations in Sariaya, however, a



Figure 4. The statue of San Isidro de Labrador being readied for procession. (Photo taken by Dr. Verne de la Peña)

consensus was made that there is no distinction between the two phenomena for the participants. A funny anecdote has to be told about people climbing over carriages carrying the statues of saints before the end of the procession: the belief being that if flowers or other décor are brought home, a magical power will make the faithful win village lotteries!¹⁴



Figure 5. Cathedral of St. Francis of Assisi in Sariaya, Quezon

The feast of the Sto. Cristo de Burgos (every September) adds an interesting element in the perceived definition of the religiosity of the Sariyahins. The following narrative shows how Sariaya is able to negotiate seeming “dilemmas of internal consistency” (Schein, 1992).

In September, according to *kwentong bayan*, a three-day fiesta used to be observed¹⁵ on September 13, for St. Francis of Assisi (image owned by the family of Atty. Romualdo Enriquez and his wife Josefina Gala); September 14, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross represented by the *Mahal na Senyor*, Sto. Cristo de Burgos (the *santo* owned by the Buendia family); and on September 15, the procession in honor of the the Ninya Maria (*santo* owned by Donya Margarita Rodriguez), wherein pregnant women pray with lighted candles to the Ninya for safe delivery. (Dedace, ‘*Pagsisyam para sa Kapistaban ni Sto Cristo de Burgos at Pagpapatalaga sa Simbahan ni San Franciscong Assisi Bilang Pandiyosis na Dambana ni Sto Cristo de Burgos*’, Sariaya Church and the Santo Cristo de Burgos’).

The above-mentioned combination of activities signifies the manner in which Sariaya is able to negotiate the problem of having many spiritual benefactors (and of the prominent members of the elite in Sariaya society who own the images): a day is set aside to appease each of them. In addition, the

sacral and the secular are manifested in the attractions that await the faithful after religious activities: stalls opposite the church offer local goods for sale, rides (Ferris Wheel) and games (e.g., a game where marbles placed on boards are made to move to earn particular prizes).

During the research team's discussions about the religiosity of the Sariayahins, team members who have a different religion helped provide "windows" that allowed viewing the phenomenon from a different perspective. For example, the spiritual contract, the negotiation with a Supreme Being and an Omnipotent God, surfaced as a potential explanation for the attraction of the locals to church rituals. Prior to these discussions, these rituals had a taken-for-granted assumption that served as a "blinder" as far as the author is concerned. Sensitivity to alternative explanations gave rise to the interpretation of the dilemma of internal consistency in the analysis of three celebrations in honor of the Sto. Cristo de Burgos in September.

Gender, status and power divides

Many of the narratives that were collected describe the traditional roles of men and women in the preparation of food. Heavy ingredients like meat and fish formerly bought from the market made cooking of dishes using these ingredients the monopoly of men while women were confined to the making of desserts (Guevarra, '*Nilupak: The (He)art of Courting*'). Foodmaking is a venue for gendered storytelling. *Huntaban* or storytelling of the women while cooking, cutting and sautéing ("*gayatan ng gayatan, gisaban ng gisaban*"), and during the drinking binges (*barikan*) and *mahjong* parties of the men is described by Dedace ('The Sariyahin Fiesta and Life of Yore').

A description of *mukmukan* as a courting ritual is included in the compendium of *kwentong bayan* (Guevarra, '*Nilupak the (He)art of Courting*'). This ritual is identified with the "*tiga linang*," or people from the barrios, as local implements (wooden mortar and pestle) and ingredients (boiled bananas) are used in the preparation of the dish. The courting ritual through the *mukmukan* was popular at an earlier period as an escape from strict behavior norms that applied to young men and women.

The great divide between the rich and the poor is most evident in the *Agawan* Festival. The festival starts with the procession in honor of San Isidro de Labrador around an area where the houses of coconut plantation owners are located (Ozaeta, 'Everyday Life in the Plaza'). The 'allowed' mad scramble for goodies by the locals after the statue of San Isidro de Labrador has passed one's house during the procession legitimizes the inequality of benefits reaped from the

use of land and labor and showcases the generosity of the powerful class of landowners. The drama of “othering” (Ozaeta, Ibid) is most emphasized by the distance between the rich landowners watching from their balconies while the poor on the streets elbow each other to snatch goodies tied to bamboo poles.



Figure 6. Boy participant in the *Agawan* who successfully wrestled the bunch of bananas.

Embedded taken-for-granted assumptions regarding disparity in the distribution of material benefits can be found in articulated definitions of space, object, time and relationships. For example, the *kwentong bayan* about the art deco motifs of the municipio has assumed a local meaning very different from meanings ascribed to art deco style in books, magazines and the Internet. Memories of the art deco *municipio* extracted from the locals describe the triumph of ‘poor’ candidates over rich rivals during elections, the bonuses given to employees during Christmas, the bravery of local officials who singlehandedly fought bandits, or those who used local government funds to pave rough roads, and person-oriented local executives who “signed documents when asked outside of their offices” (Rodriguez, ‘Municipio of Sariaya, Art Deco?’).

Social hierarchy was felt in almost all spheres of life. Stories were shared about “reserved” places in the Catholic Church with pews marked with family names of the rich: “pews nearest to the retablo were reserved for the elite. Simple folks had to sit “at the back” (Dedace, ‘Sariaya Church and the Santo Cristo de Burgos’). One can see marble slabs with names of the rich who are said to have been buried inside the church. Stories were also told about how high grades and medals of academic excellence were easily given to rich classmates in elementary and high school.

The narratives about social status and power were the most contentious among the stories. The artifacts related to social divisions because of power

and wealth are observable, but varying explanations are given depending on who you share stories with. For example, those who belong to “old rich” families do not want to talk about income inequality. For them, their present condition as employees in organizations eliminates the distinction between rich and poor in Sariaya. Yet the huge ancestral houses, the stories about how the children of the rich were favored during their elementary and high school days, the names of individuals buried in the cathedral, are part of present discourse. The meanings attached to public spaces like the *parke* also vary. For the owners of ancestral houses, the covered basketball court is an ‘eyesore’ while to the municipal employees and tricycle drivers, the covered basketball court is a place where they can participate in competitive games. These different perceptions were discussed in the classroom prior to the visit of UP students to Sariaya to make the visiting students sensitive to issues that may offend homeowners and aware of the contrasting and ever-changing definitions of culture.

Spirit of community in Sariaya, the elite vs. barrio folk

The writing of *kwentong bayan* has brought to light other distinct layers of social hierarchy and nuances of folk life in Sariaya.

For example, the *kwentong bayan* materials provide details of Sariaya’s spirit of community in the pre-war ‘coconut boom’ years from the point of view of the elite who organized *parke* parties (parties in the park) and the *baylehan* (dances) among clubs known as the *comparsas*. Orchestras and bands were hired to provide non-stop music during special occasions. The bands and orchestras, together with famous names like Tirso Cruz, Nemecio Tioco, Serafin Payawal, Pete Aristorenas, Carlos Aguilar and his Rhumbandidos, played at special occasions such as fiestas (Dedace, “The Sariayahin Fiesta and Life of Yore”).¹⁶

There were usually two or more bands or orchestras hired to play in the park. The bands would be positioned at opposite ends of the park. They had to take turns and play different kinds of music... there was music for the young, and music for the old (Aguilar, *Ibid*).

Those were the days when lavish balls were held at the park, with well-coiffed and ...tuxedoed gentry gamely sashaying to at least two, commonly three and at times even four alternately playing local and imported Manila-based orchestras...(Dedace, “The Sariayahin Fiesta and Life of Yore”).

In 1924, the bigger park was inaugurated. The Rizal Day event had *reynas* (event queens) who were paraded atop fancily decorated Model T cars. A prominent guest was then First Lady of the Philippine Commonwealth, Donya Aurora Quezon who served as *Ninang* or sponsor. The reception was held at the house of a prominent member of the Sariaya elite (Dedace, *Ibid*).

The *parke* as space was a stage for elite ‘insiders’ for whom the bands played and who participated in *Danza Madrilena*, *Jota Aragonesa*, *Fandango*, polkas, mazurkas and waltzes (Aguilar, ‘Plazayaw, Dance Socials at the Plaza’). ‘Outsiders’ were spectators in the background watching the activities, usually beyond a fence.

Using the lenses of the ‘people from the barrio’ (“*tiga-linang*”) on the other hand, the spirit of community is found in the ritual of *tagayan*. The word *tagayan* comes from the term “*tagay*” which means a ‘shot’ of alcoholic beverage or ‘to chug’ a drink (i.e. ‘bottoms up’). *Tagayan* refers to a ‘drinking session’ performed by a group of men gathered around a small table. The venue of the session can be the back of a house, beside a sari-sari store, or at the backyard farm (Lazaro, ‘Lambanog as the Main Ingredient of Sariaya’s *Tagayan*’).

Drinking of the local alcoholic beverage “*lambanog*” and verbal jousting are ritual elements of important and delicate negotiations. Negotiations to borrow money, collect borrowed money, obtain permission of parents prior to betrothal and settle conflicts in the community, to name a few, are typically accompanied by a drinking session or ‘*tagayan*’ in Sariaya. *Paawitan* (singing) is also a term used to describe *tagayan* wherein drinking of *lambanog* is accompanied by a sung form of verbal jousting – extemporaneous exchanges accompanied by a local guitarist.¹⁷

The drinking of local wine and the singing were done with shrill voices during the swearing in ceremony of elected village chieftains. (*Sa tagayan at paawitan ang halinhiban at sambutan ...ang pig-it na pig-it na boses.*) “Accompanied by guitar ...these are done during *tomo posicion* or the swearing of newly elected Cabeza de Barangay” (Dedace, ‘The Agawan Festival: A Sariayahin Tradition’).

Meanwhile, from the point of view of the young in Sariaya today, “community spirit” is found by singing and dancing of popular tunes, the holding of dance competitions (hip hop), street dancing and using costumes, which may have been copied from TV programs, with participants wearing “...leopard spotted costumes, feather headdresses and necklaces, American designs with sequins topped by ‘*tambo*’¹⁸ headdresses” (Dedace, ‘The Agawan Festival 2009’).

One more significant activity for the community is “*Arya Bakbakan*” or boxing bouts. These are held in the covered portion of the *parke* during fiestas. Student visitors were invited to watch these bouts.

The stories about *paawitan* were received by the locals with a lot of enthusiasm. This ritual became a touristic offering of the Sariaya Tourism Council and one of the activities most enjoyed by visiting students. Singing, dancing and *tagayan* with lambanog in the *parke* provided opportunities for visitors to engage in activities and ‘be one’ with the locals. From the point of view of the research team, the perceived connection between disappearing rituals and tourism is a compelling reason for tourism to be considered a legitimate academic discipline.¹⁹

Conclusion: *kwentong bayan* and the tourism experience

Kwentong bayan as narratives contain rich accounts of cultural artifacts, value systems and taken-for-granted assumptions. From having very little information about Sariaya, to the appreciation of little-known events like the Sto. Cristo de Burgos festival, to the experience of “being in touch with the culture of the destination,” to “experiencing food and interacting with host families,” “hearing stories about lambanog” (see Appendix B)—all these show how visitors are able to “gather sensorial images of a destination”, “build impressions of the visited place”, “dwell and be part of the community” and “learn” about meanings of the visited place (Phipps, 2007). These experiences also show that tourism is not only a business concern but a “social, economic, cultural phenomenon arising from unique interaction of activity, people and place” (Weed & Bull, 2004, 2).

The experience of tourism as an activity that promotes a strong sense of community was felt by the UP faculty researchers and Tourism students as well as the stakeholders in the community. That relationships developed among the UP students, the student guides from the local tourism school and the homeowners cannot be denied. Hosting of visitors was valued by homestay hosts in the research site because they want to participate in the development of local tourism, meet new friends, help students and engage in animated storytelling. According to the homeowners, participation in the homestay program does not need a lot of capital resources. The only extra expense mentioned was repainting and repair of their homes (see Appendix B). The homestay program brings out the best in the visitor and the visited. Mention was made about students complimenting the preparation of home-cooked meals, participating in household chores, and the homeowners sharing their personal experiences and going out of their way to make the stay of the visitors as comfortable as they can. This reinforces Gavin & Phipps’ assertion of tourism

as instrumental in ‘spontaneous *communitas*’: “the forming and forging of new sets of relations, unmediated togetherness, of alternative ways of doing the work of living, of spending, cooking, talking, washing and sharing” (2005, p.110).

This case lends promise to community-based tourism facilitated as a ‘lived experience’ for visitors and stakeholders alike by the creation of *kiwentong bayan*, local narratives or ‘thick descriptions’ about the place, including all the reflexive revelation of social nuances and contradictions.

Endnotes

¹In the Philippines, those who advocate multi-stakeholder bias in tourism development cite examples like Pagsanjan, Sicogon and Argao to emphasize the flaw in the type of development that is based on the promised trickle-down effect of economic benefits. Pagsanjan was once famous for “shooting the rapids” until this phrase assumed a bad connotation of sex tourism. A commercial movie was made out of Sicogon as an attractive destination. The internet cites a planned reopening of Sicogon (www.exploreiloilo.com) which used to be a popular tourism destination in the 70s and 80s. Argao in Cebu was designed to be the haven of rich visitors. The author had a chance to visit Argao in the early 90s to witness the struggles of a community looking for alternative sources of livelihood after tourism took a bad turn. Argao is no longer the tourist haven it used to be.

²Pamilacan Island in Bohol, for example, claims to have developed eco-tourism as a substitute to dolphin and whale hunting. Initial results were good in that local stakeholders organized themselves to make tourism a viable alternative. A system of cooperation with respect to ownership and scheduling of boat trips to ferry tourists was implemented. A former officer of a non-government organization stated, however, that negative unintended results such as intergroup conflict among local stakeholders started surfacing after the funding agency left at the end of their project.

The expressed difficulty of Filipinos having to work together in community projects has also been highlighted in the experience of supervised credit during the time of President Ferdinand Marcos which made rural banks, development banks, cooperatives and other organizations work hand in hand to address poverty issues. Unpaid loans provided by rural banks, including those that were sourced from national and development banks, attest to the difficulty of this approach.

³Mitchell & Ashely (2010) and Ashley (2006) wrote about poverty alleviation and tourism. In the 2010 book of Mitchell and Ashley, layers of beneficiaries are enumerated as supply chains to be managed in tourism offerings, from the easy to see benefits like increased sales of small businesses, employment of skilled and semi skilled laborers (students as guides, carpenters, electricians), to augmented incomes for agricultural workers like fishermen and farmers and development of infrastructure like paved roads, regular water distribution services and improved peace and order.

⁴Please see the acknowledgments at the end of this article.

⁵The *municipio* itself was designed by Juan M. Arellano, architect of the Manila Metropolitan Theatre and the Post Office at Plaza Lawton in Manila (in the 1940s).

⁶Some object to this comparison because *Pabiyas* ('decoration' or 'adornment') conveys a different message from *Agawan* ('competing to get or grab something') and therefore the comparison can be likened to a comparison between 'guavas' and 'mangoes.'

⁷It must be mentioned that members of the research project's 'Architecture group' had already previously conducted studies on the use of space in Sariaya. This was the reason that Sariaya was eventually chosen as the research site over other alternative sites.

⁸The research team was composed of seven academics representing different disciplines. The faculty members from UP's College of Architecture having worked with communities in Sariaya, Quezon prior to the start of the tourism project had initially expressed their desire to operationalize what they refer to as "capturing the spirit of the place." The faculty members from the College of Music saw the importance in documenting elements of what to them is the "sonic environment." The faculty members from the College of Human Kinetics initially searched for indigenous games, sports and dances while the faculty from the College of Home Economics (where the unit Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Management is lodged) looked at "performativities in the production and consumption of food".

⁹1st UP-AIT National Conference on Tourism and Hospitality, "Community Empowerment: Interdisciplinary Research on an Alternative Model Towards Sustainable Tourism", February 22, 2008, SEAMEO INNOTECH, Quezon City.

¹⁰Details of the participation of Tourism majors of UP in the homestay program and other activities in Sariaya in 2009 and 2010 are in Appendix B.

¹¹In Sariaya, for example, *kiri* is a word used for women seen openly fraternizing with men and aggressively drinking *lambanog* (local wine) during social gatherings. Embodied in *kiri*, according to some locals, are characteristics of uncouth women in the barrios where socialization occurs in open spaces, i.e., village stores. *Kiri* does not describe women from rich families. The reason being that socialization often takes place inside spacious areas within their houses.

¹²The recollections of the early 1900s by Dr. Enrico Viloso, a Sariaya resident and faculty member of UP Iloilo are cited by Dedace,

According to Dr. Viloso, the US Congress through the Underwood Simmons Act of 1913 abolished all quota limitations on entry of all Philippines agricultural products.... In the early years of American occupation, legacy and inheritance taxes were not imposed to encourage the development of plantation economy characterized by large landholdings (Dedace, 'Sariaya 1899-1941: The American years').

¹³More details of the story of this image are in Appendix A.

¹⁴Participation in processions in other places (Tuguegarao) seems to confirm this belief among some Catholics. Thus it is perhaps syncretic practices of a religion that was

“imposed” on us that are being described. This is the reason why questions related to attendance in religious rituals, as a way by which the faithful expects spiritual transformation in the strict sense of the word, are difficult to answer. This is also possibly one reason why tourism as an activity that perpetuates performativities in exchange for substance will not be popular among those who are supporting meanings sanctioned by the Church.

¹⁵For the entire period of research in Sariaya, the author witnessed part of the fiesta that is celebrated in the Cathedral. No data was obtained about celebrations before and after the activities in the Cathedral.

¹⁶In my younger days, I remember watching the orchestra of Serafin Payawal play in fiesta grand balls in my province—Nueva Ecija. These gatherings were attended by well-to-do members of the community and were occasions where symbols of a family’s wealth would be gauged based on expensive attires and jewelries. Most often, children from influential families take turns to be the “muses” in these occasions.

¹⁷This ritual was extensively discussed in the data-gathering activities of the interdisciplinary research team to address concerns about the disappearing ritual.

¹⁸*Tambo* is a grass that is dried and used to make brooms.

¹⁹Tourism is perceived as a vocational course in most schools.

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Kwentong Bayan of Sariaya, Quezon

- Aguilar, M.
Plazayan, dance socials at the Plaza
- Dedace, E.
3RD Belen festival rings in Sariayahin Christmas
A CESO volunteer goes to Sariaya.
A Night with the SJA student canteen all classes (?70-?74)
Activity report Belen Festival 2008
Ang babay ni Inanang Pilo
Ang halaga ng pera nuon
Ang pagpipiknik sa Talaan
Ang talatinigang Tagalog ng Sariaya
Ang wikang Tagalog dito sa Sariaya: isang masusing pagsasalawanan
“Carina”
Cultural mapping template Municipality of Sariaya, Quezon
Dutch Santa act in Sariaya

Gello de Belen

Haring Ponse

Junta directive 2008 holds Flores de Maria

Kasaysayan ng Mahal na Senyor Santo Kristo de Burgos

Kuventong pansit

New Sariaya leadership takes the oath

Pagsisiyam para sa kapistahan ni Sto. de Burgos at pagtatalagay sa simbahan ni San Franciscong Assisi bilang pandiyosesis na dambana ni Sto. Cristo de Burgos

Paskuhan sa Sariaya 2007 ends

Quadro finds a new home

Saint Joseph's Academy alumni homecoming 2007

Santo Kristo: Isang senakulo 2009 (an activity report)

Sariaya (1899-1941): The American Years

The days of '*apog, gugo and uling*'

'Tinapay Sariaya'

Sariaya church and the Santo Cristo de Burgos

Sariaya's grand ancestral houses

Sariaya hosts CSIW 2008

Sariaya Tourism Council presents Senakulo 2008

Sariaya waypoints diving documentation (An activity report)

Sariyahin delicacies on "Travel Time"

Sariyahins embark on a five year tourism program

STC attends workshop on Festival Management

STC does the *pangangaluluwa*

STC facilitates *Senakulo* dramatic workshop

STC launches "*Paskuhan sa Sariaya*" (Belen festival) 2007

STC prepares for *Senakulo* 2008

Summary of Sariaya fiesta activities

Sweet inspiration

"*Talatinigang Tagalog ng Sariaya*" featured on 5th Tayabas Province Studies Conference

The *Agaman* Festival 2009 (An Activity Report)

The Hawaiian-inspired summer of 1972

The *Agaman* Festival: A Sariyahin tradition

The Sariyahin fiesta and life of yore

UP AIT students breeze into town

UP Sariaya community empowerment research team presents a seminar-cultural tour of Sariaya

UPLB History class comes to Sariaya

UST Fine Arts students visit Sariaya

Utos ng matanda

Vigan visitors come to Sariaya (An activity report)

Yellow Belle's party

Guevarra, S.

Nilupak the (He)art of Courting

Lazaro, A.

Lambanog as the main ingredient of Sariaya's *tagayan*

Ozaeta, E.

Everyday Life in the Plaza

Rodriguez, Ma. C.

Municipio of Sariaya, Art Deco?

Ulanday, E. B.

Sariaya Basketball Icons

Uy, G.

Kwento ni lola't lolo

APPENDIX A

Festivals and ritual life of Sariaya, Quezon

The *Agawan* Festival in honor of San Isidro de Labrador takes place during the month of May and is intended to showcase the generosity of landowners. Locally sourced *bagakay* or bamboo poles attached to houses containing harvest from the farms are lowered after the statue of San Isidro passes through during a procession. For example, if the owner of the house where the procession is expected to pass owns a farm where bananas are harvested, a whole bunch of bananas is tied to the upper end of the pole. As the statue of San Isidro passes, the pole is lowered so that devotees in the procession can all have a share of the fruits of the farm.

The *Senakulo* as a community reenactment of the Passion of Christ started in 2006 (Dedace, '*Santo Kristo: Isang Senakulo 2009* [An activity report]', 'Sariaya Tourism Council Presents Senakulo 2008'). Volunteers, mostly young students and professionals, have continuously participated in the performance of the Senakulo with no promise of financial remuneration. The scenes are choreographed by a volunteer as well. Auditions and rehearsals are held with active support of local government executives and other tourism stakeholders. The scenes from the triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the miracles performed to heal the sick, the washing of the feet of the disciplines, the "kiss of Judas,"

the carrying of the cross, and the crucifixion are reenacted all around the poblacion – at the municipio, the parke, and abandoned houses. The locations of the scenes are prepared prior to the event and as logistics would permit, loud speakers are installed so the dialogue could be heard by those who follow the reenactment. Accounts of participants in this ritual describe how their participation as actors and actresses in the scenes moved them to feel Christ’s pain of being mocked and crucified (Dedace, ‘STC Prepares for Senakulo 2008’). The author watched many *Senakulos* and attests to seeing young actors and actresses cry while delivering their lines as the crucified Christ is brought down from the cross to be buried (at the back of the church), complete with sound and lighting effects.

The Santo Cristo de Burgos Town Fiesta in September features a *feria*— commercial activities such as selling of household wares, shoes, bags, and carnival rides are held in the space across the church. In December, the Belen Festival features a Belen-making contest where participants exhibit their interpretation of the Nativity in the *municipio*.

Dalit kay San Isidro is a 27-day novena in Barrio Concepcion Palasan, Sariaya, in honor of their patron Saint – San Isidro de Labrador. The novena is made to ask for good harvest from the patron saint of farmers.

The Catholic Church in the poblacion has St. Francis Assisi as its patron saint but the replica of Sto. Cristo de Burgos occupies center stage in the church’s retablo. Devotees of the Sto. Cristo walk in processions with their bare feet while carrying his image and piously praying for his intercession (Dedace, ‘*Kasaysayan ng Mahal na Senyor Santo Kristo de Burgos*’). The story behind the importance of the Sto. Cristo begins with the arrival of a donated statue from King Philip V of Spain in the 1700s. In the 1700s, a request was made to the King of Spain, King Philip V for a replica of the *Banal na Krusipibo ni Hesukristo* [Blessed crucifix of Jesus Christ] found in a cathedral in Burgos, Spain. This icon is believed to be the patron saint of the Spanish hero Rodrigo Diaz de Vibar also known as El Cid Campeador, in his fight against the Muslims.

...January 1743, a strong earthquake destroyed the church in Lumangbayan [the ‘old town’]. Rocks, mud and water cascaded down from Mt. Banahaw. Pirate Muslims came pillaging. In the midst of the mayhem, the statue remained intact, according to Mr. Recamadora. They transported the statue of Sto. Cristo Burgos and stopped on the spot where the statue miraculously became heavy. This was where they constructed the present cathedral. [...*Enero nuong 1743 ay nagkaroon ng malakas na lindol at nasira ang simbaban sa Lumangbayan. Nababa ng bato, putik at tubig mula sa Bundok Banaban. Muling sumalakay ang mga Muslim. Natuklasan ni Senyor Recamadora na hindi nasunog ang imagen ng Sto. Kristo de Burgos. Binalot nila ang imagen ni Sto. Kristo paakyat sa paanan ng bundok. Ngunit biglang bumigat ang imagen. Dito tinayo ang bagong simbaban*]. (Dedace, ‘Sariaya Church and Santo Cristo de Burgos’). [English Translation mine]

APPENDIX B
Sariaya tourism packages and UP AIT
out-of-the-classroom activities

A Special Topics class was offered to students enrolled in the B. S. Tourism course of the University of the Philippines' Asian Institute of Tourism for two (2) semesters. The classes were divided into sections where the disciplines represented in the research project were given six (6) sessions per semester. The homestay program of Sariaya was revived as the out-of-classroom activity of the Special Topics class. Legwork was done by the research team in coordination with the Sariaya Tourism Council to make a survey of potential homeowners willing to offer their rooms as accommodation for visiting students. Sessions were set aside to orient them about storytelling and their expected role as facilitators in the study of culture in Sariaya. During the first semester, the out-of-classroom activity took place on September 13 and 14, 2009, coinciding with the Feast of the Sto. Cristo de Burgos. For the second semester, the out-of-classroom activity took place on March 21 to 23, 2010.

The Sariaya Tourism Council had a more active role in the planning and implementation of the second out-of-classroom activity. Volunteers in the Sariaya Tourism Council decided to make the students go to a barrio where local food was served. The students were also made to participate in local games, including participation in a "house transferring" activity. Together with local residents, student volunteers helped carry the house from one location to another within the barrio.

Data in Table 1 show descriptions of encounters by students with the locals and how through exchanges of stories, the meanings of place, sound, movement and food were uncovered. Expectations that were not met had to do with topics discussed in class that were not encountered in the tourism destination. For example, a few classroom discussions dwelt on the preparation of a local dish called *ninupak* (mashed boiled bananas), but this was not included in the itinerary for the 1st semester. The student guides were also perceived to need more training. A complaint was made of "hot and uncomfortable rooms." These could be interpreted to mean that some "discomforts" are possibly mixed with the experience of promoting culture tourism.

TABLE 1
Summary of student pre and post evaluation
of the out-of-classroom activity,
1st semester SY 2009-2010

	Pre evaluation	Post evaluation
What do you know about the Sto. Cristo de Burgos Festival?	Responses show very little information about this festival. The out-of-classroom activity was timed to coincide with this festival	Responses show knowledge of the historical beginnings of the Sto. Cristo de Burgos, the meaning of the statue/icon among the locals, and the history of the cathedral

<p>What do you know about the homestay program in Sariaya?</p>	<p>Minimal knowledge about homestay program in Sariaya. Expectations borne out of classroom discussion about “feeling the spirit of the place,” hospitality, experiencing living in Sariaya, mingling with families were mentioned</p>	<p>Students described the experience of immersion as: “being in touch with culture of destination,” “authentic Filipino hospitality,” experience of exchanging culture and storytelling,” “experiencing food,” “Interaction with host family,” “affordable,” “homestay as the best way to promote tourism”</p>
<p>What do you know about food in Sariaya?</p>	<p>“Delicious” food like <i>nilupak</i> (pounded boiled bananas), <i>pinagong</i> (local bread), <i>tamales</i> (steamed rice with spices and meat), <i>broas</i> (local biscuit), <i>apas</i> (local biscuit), coconut, bread and <i>bibingka</i> (local ‘hotcake’) were enumerated</p>	<p>After tasting the distinct flavor of local delicacies like <i>pinagong</i>, <i>broas</i>, <i>apas</i>, and <i>pastillas</i>, students understood why these are the pride of Sariaya. Mention was made of stories about <i>lambanog</i> (alcoholic beverage), <i>pansit bibon</i> and <i>palabok</i> (noodle dishes), <i>patatim</i> and <i>embotido</i> (meat dishes) and social interaction.</p>
<p>What are your expectations about the field trip?</p>	<p>To learn the history of Sariaya, to experience its culture, see architectural artifacts, hear music, see sports, taste food, know the host family and tour guides, listen to <i>kwentong bayan</i> (local stories), understand embedded meanings, get involved in the preparation of food, experience the “tourist gaze,” to understand why the teachers of the course are gung-ho about Sariaya.</p>	<p>Expectations that were met: Hospitality of the locals, conversations with the hosts, learned about their history, experienced the meaning of fiesta in Sariaya, participation in food preparation</p> <p>Expectations not met: Making <i>minukmok</i>, and tasting <i>nilupak</i>, rural ambience, training of tour guides, visit and stay in ancestral houses, “hot and uncomfortable rooms”</p>

The survey administered after the out-of-classroom activity from March 21 to 23, 2010 had 13 participating homeowners. Survey returns from 10 respondents are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2
Select Data from the Evaluation of Homeowner Participants
in the Sariaya Homestay Program, March 21-23, 2010

May alam ba kayo tungkol sa homestay bago kayo sumali? (Did you have prior knowledge of the homestay program in Sariaya before you joined?) *Kung mayroon, sa paanong paraan [ninyo nalaman]?* (If yes, how did you learn about it?)

<i>Meron</i> (Yes)	<i>Wala</i> (No)
From Eric Dedace of the Sariaya Tourism Council From meetings From a daughter/son who is studying at the University of the Philippines in Los Baños From a relative	

Nagpalinis ba kayo ng bahay para maghanda sa 'homestay'? (Did you have your house cleaned for the homestay program?)

<i>Oo</i> (yes) 8 respondents	<i>Hindi</i> (no) 1 respondent
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Namalengke ba kayo? (Did you go to the market to purchase food stuff for the homestay program?)

<i>Oo</i> (yes) 10 respondents	<i>Hindi</i> (no) 0 respondent
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Nagpa-repair ba kayo ng bahay para sa homestay? (Did you have your house repaired for the homestay program?). *Kung nagpa-repair, ano ang ni-repair?* (If yes, what kind of repair work was done?)

<i>Oo</i> (yes) (2 respondents)	<i>Hindi</i> (no) 8 respondents
Nature of the repair- repainting, repair of the bedroom and toilet	

Bumili ba kayo ng kasangkapan? (Did you buy household appliance [in preparation for the homestay program]?)

<i>Oo</i> (yes) 0 respondents	<i>Hindi</i> (no) 8 respondents
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Sapat ba ang binayad ng mga bisita? (Was the amount paid by the visitor enough?)

<i>Oo</i> (Yes) 8 respondents	<i>Hindi</i> (no) 0 respondent
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Ano ang nagustuhan/hindi ninyo nagustuhan sa homestay program? (What did you like/not like about the homestay program?)

<i>Nagustuhan</i> (Liked)	<i>Hindi nagustuhan</i> (Did not like)
<i>Nakakilalala ng bagong kaibigan</i> (I met new friends.) <i>Nakatulong sa mag-aaral</i> (I was able to help the students) <i>Lively sila, may sense of humor at tumutulong sa pinagkainan.</i> (The visitors were lively, had a sense of humor and would help wash the dishes) <i>Marami akong natutuhan</i> (I learned a lot) <i>Nakibalubilo sa amin nang maayos</i> (The visitors had good manners) <i>Pakikisalamuba at pakikipag-ugnayan</i> (I like the camaraderie and the sense of community)	<i>Wala, wala naman.</i> (Nothing, nothing to complain about.)

Pakilabad ang ginawa ninyong pakikitungo. (Please describe how you took care of the visitors)

Nakipagkwentuhan. Nanuod ng DVD. Nagtanong-tanong tungkol sa personal na bubay nila.
(We told stories, watched movies. We shared personal histories)

Ginawa ko labat ang aking makakaya (I did what I can to take care of the visitors)

Kumustaban, balitaan. Pinagusapan ang karanasan (We talked about our experiences)

Tinuring kong parang anak. Nakita ko sa kanila ang aking mga anak (I treated them like my children. They reminded me of my children)

Nagpakilala sa isa't-isa. Na- istorya tungkol sa bayan ng Sariaya

(We introduced ourselves. I told them stories about the history of Sariaya)

Pinakitunguhan ko sila ng maayos (I took care of them)

Pakilabad ang ginawang pakikitungo sa inyo ng mga bisita. (Please describe the behavior of the student visitors)

Friendly, amiable and easy to deal with. Tumulong sa gawaing babay at masayang kausap.
(They helped in household chores. They were fun to share stories with.)

Magalang, mabait, cooperative. (They were well-behaved and cooperative)

Masayang kausap.(We had fun exchanging stories.)

Buong gilw silang nakinig sa aking mga kwentong pangpamilya at karanasan tungkol sa pagtuturo. Laging nakangiti at pinuri ang aking pagluluto (The visitors listened intently to my stories about my teaching experiences. They always smiled and complimented my cooking.)

Magalang (respectful)

Nagpakilala sa bava't miyembro ng pamilya

(The student visitors introduced themselves to my family)

Makabuluhan ba ang pagsali ninyo sa homestay? (Did you find your participation in the homestay program meaningful?).

Bakit? (Why?)

Oo (Yes) 10 respondents

Hindi (No) 0 respondents

Naging bahagi ako sa pagpapaunlad ng turismo sa Sariaya.
(I contribute to the development of tourism in Sariaya)

Nakatulong ako sa batang mag aaral.
(I am able to help young students)

Marami akong natutuhan. Masarap kausap
(I learned a lot. I enjoyed storytelling)

Kwentuhan. (Storytelling)

Maraming nakilala (Met many friends)

The author, as a member of the research team, participated in all of the out-of-classroom activities. She was a visitor in homes all throughout the duration of the Special Topics for two semesters. As a visitor, she experienced the hospitality of homeowners in Sariaya. Her experiences validate the assertions captured from the responses in Table 2.

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