

The Formation of an Everyday Object Collection from the Perspectives of an Ifugao Indigenous Community's Collector and Contributors

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ABSTRACT

The process of collecting has primarily been studied in the Western context and from the collectors' perspective. Considering the perspectives of both the collector and the contributors, this essay presents a case study of an everyday object collection in an indigenous community in Ifugao Province, the Philippines. Interviews and participant observations revealed the collector's motivation and collection-making process, the objects' production and usage history, and their journey from the contributors' custody to the collector's. The collector's realization about the changing and disappearing local culture motivated this collection, driven by the modern concept of cultural preservation. Contributions followed multiple modes: making (or helping to make), selling, bartering, or giving objects. Such variety was possible only because of the everyday objects' fluidity in terms of their marketability, reproducibility, and ownership. Thus, everyday object collections are hybrid products of modern concepts and vernacular relationships between people and objects as nurtured by the local community.

Keywords: : everyday object collection, collector, creator community, agency, Ifugao, indigenous community

Introduction

Collecting, or the process of forming a collection within and beyond museums constitutes an area of research within the fields of anthropology, psychology, and sociology. In *The Cultures of Collecting*, Elsner and Cardinal (1994) describe Noah from the Bible as the first collector, with his collection of living things serving to save species from extinction and as "the unique bastion against the deluge of

time” (14). Resonating with this notion, in the same book, Baudrillard suggests that the fundamental project behind all types of collecting is “to translate real time into the dimensions of a system” (Baudrillard 1994, 32–33). Collecting here is not only a salvation from the passage of time but also enables “the creation of a new whole” (Stewart 1993, 151–153) or “the creation of a new and better world” (Elsner and Cardinal 1994, 14). As Baudrillard suggests, this creative world-making is a dimension of real as well as imaginary existence, enabled by the physical possession of objects (Baudrillard 1994, 32–33). Objects can help us to cope with the “irreversibility of time” and the “relentless passage from birth to death” (Baudrillard 1994, 32–33; 1996, 95–97).

The formation of collections has also been investigated as a social phenomenon, given that even in private collections, “the process of collecting cannot be considered separately from the cultural characteristics of the society undertaking it” (Cannon-Brookes 1984, 115). Hence, previous studies have investigated collections as “cultural constructs,” resulting from and located in specific social, political, economic, and historical contexts (Kreps 2003, 5). Investigations of the history of collecting – especially by the Europeans from the temple collections after 1000 BC, to the collections of exotic objects as a new category of curiosities after the sixteenth century, and ethnographical collections since the colonial era in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – have followed this approach (cf. Pearce 1992, 1995; Lucas 2010). Museums and collections in the non-Western world have also been studied and recognized as important instruments for creating and reworking the identity of nations or indigenous communities (e.g. Kaplan 1994).

However, the studies cited above have mostly focused on the collector’s perspective. Despite recognizing that collections are a product of various social, political, or economic factors, these studies limit themselves to the points of view of collectors, often simply accounting for the conditions or reasons that made them collect objects. In contrast, the book *Unpacking the Collection: Networks of Material and Social Agency in the Museum* (Byrne et al. 2011) focuses on the role of diverse actors and their relationships behind the cultural practice of collecting and other museum activities, and reveals the spatial and chronological reach of the networks comprising various persons, places, and things by tracing the biography of the collected objects. In the first chapter of this book, Byrne et al. suggest that drawing on insights from actor-network theory enables us to observe multiple types of agents and their agency that contribute toward museum collections (Figure 1), and clarify that the formation of collections involves the participation of all agents transforming and co-creating objects in a non-hierarchical manner (Byrne et al. 2011, 6–11). They also emphasize the distributed nature of agency; collectors cannot exercise

the agency of collecting objects by themselves. Rather, they rely on creator communities, middle-persons, brokers, auction houses, and other human and non-human agents to extract items and assemble them into collections. Understanding the process of collecting and collection-formation in complex societies requires investigating the practices of each actor and their networks.

CREATOR COMMUNITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • production • use/display • gifting/selling • withholding/hiding
FIELD AGENT/COLLECTOR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collecting • stealing/taking • selecting/disposing • classifying, recording, storing, publishing • exhibiting • gifting/selling/exchanging
COLLECTOR/MIDDLEPERSON/BROKER/AUCTION HOUSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • selecting/disposing/selling • exchanging/selling • classifying, recording, storing, publishing • exhibiting • gifting/selling/exchanging
MUSEUM/CURATOR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • selecting/disposing • exchanging/selling • classifying, recording, storing, publishing • exhibiting • re-engaging with creator communities (repairing/acquiring things and knowledges)
PUBLIC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • visiting/not visiting • viewing • learning • passing on knowledge/contesting • circulating references/images

Figure 1. Examples of the multiple kinds of agency expressed within the complex long-term historical processes that contribute to museum collections (Byrne et al. 2011, 7).

Following Byrne et al.’s attempt to unpack the networks behind collections, this study focuses on the role of the creator community in collecting. Although such communities are usually referred to as source communities, Byrne et al. chose the term creator community to “recognize them as active and participatory in the same way that the terms ‘collector,’ ‘curator,’ ‘trader,’ ‘visitor/consumer,’ and ‘researcher’ imply” (2011, 8). Byrne et al. also note that the importance of the particular creative engagements of those who initiate the collecting process has largely been disregarded in historical records

and accounts of ethnographic collections. Indeed, in museum documentation, detailed descriptions of creator communities are often omitted; at best, only names and addresses are recorded. Limited descriptions of creator communities can obstruct a fruitful analysis of the collection formation process, leading toward biased representations and a fixed, ahistorical appraisal of communities and their cultures. Museums have often been criticized for inheriting this legacy from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, presenting indigenous material cultures as “frozen in a historyless stasis” (Pietz 1996, 198).

This is a persistent problem, partly because collecting inherently involves “forgetting,” as Stewart describes in *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, and the Collection* (1993). She argues that a collection seeks a form of self-enclosure of the past, which is possible because of its “ahistoricism;” that is, a collection “replaces history with classification.” Thus, the time denoting the collected objects does not represent its origin but rather “all time is made simultaneous or synchronous within the collection’s world” (151). In this self-enclosure, the collection works in the combination of its elements toward the “creation of a new whole,” which forgets or “supersedes the individual narratives that ‘lie behind it’” (151–153). This kind of collecting process integrates individuals into a whole, which can then be fixed or cast as the traditional or indigenous culture.

To address this problematic reductionism, the study emphasizes the creator community’s involvement in and contributions to collection-formation by analyzing the relationships between people and obsolete everyday objects in the community, the process through which they created and used “collectible” objects in their daily lives, and how they ended up delivering these objects to the collector. Such a description can serve as a historical record of individuals and their lives in the community. Moreover, instead of forgetting individuals and the stories of their lives behind a manufactured image of the whole, this study suggests that the collection of everyday objects is an “expression of democracy” in which the community’s focus on everyday life and its individual citizens forms the collection as cultural heritage (Eriksen 2014, 157).

The study’s arguments are built on an analysis of everyday object collections created and maintained in a local indigenous Twali community of Ifugao Province, the Philippines. I chose the collections of an Asian indigenous community as the object for my investigation because studies on collecting have primarily centered on Western contexts. Although collecting is a universal human activity (Cannon-Brookes 1984; Pearce 1992), and although even non-Western societies have indigenous museum models and concepts of preserving cultural heritage (Bazin 1967; Simpson 1996; Kreps 2003), the practice of

systematically collecting, curating, and preserving everyday objects of ordinary households as cultural heritage or historical or ethnographical specimens is considered a product of modern Western development. While everyday tribal objects have been targeted for collecting by museums, antique shops, and dilettantes in the Western world since the colonial era, local indigenous communities regard these objects as an integral part of their daily necessities, becoming neglected as modern and industrial commodities replaced them. However, these objects are now collected and preserved even by indigenous peoples with the rise in identity politics highlighting indigenous peoples’ rights and the felt need to “preserve” their cultural heritage. Such collections are gradually growing in number and are increasingly being vouchsafed in national or regional museums. In *Liberating Culture: Cross-cultural Perspectives on Museums, Curation and Heritage Preservation*, Kreps (2003) explores how and why the museum as a “characteristically western institution” has been implanted in non-Western societies through a case study on the management of the Provincial Museum of Central Kalimantan, Museum Balanga. She suggests that the museum is a site of “cultural hybridization where local approaches to the interpretation and representation of cultural materials were being mixed with those of a wider, international museum culture” (34). Following her lead, this study attempts to reveal how a collection of everyday objects is formed as a hybrid product of modern concepts introduced from the West and vernacular customary elements from indigenous communities. The target collection was formed not only through the collector’s approach to preserve the cultural objects but also the creator community’s relationships with household items or ordinary objects, relationships which they maintain on the level of the everyday. Finally, this study suggests that collecting happens not only because of the modern concept of museum or cultural heritage preservation but also because of the vernacular conditions of the creator community: their customary relationships with their everyday objects under changing material and cultural situations.

To summarize, this study has two objectives. One is to record the creator community’s conditions and relationships with their everyday objects, which induce them to engage in collection-formation. The aspiration here is to contribute toward increasing the historical records of indigenous communities and their current and evolving material cultures, enabling transparency, at least on the community level itself, regarding the collection process. It also democratizes ethnographic collections by resolving the ahistoricism of museum records and cultural representation. The second objective is to demonstrate that museums and collections are not simply modern entities but the hybrid products of modern concepts and vernacular relationships between people and objects as nurtured in local communities, here borne out by the case

study on everyday object collection in an Asian indigenous community. In providing a new analysis of collecting from a non-Western society, this study hopes to help facilitate a multidirectional understanding of indigenous communities undergoing change. In the process, the study might identify important implications for the designing practices of museum collection management in local communities.

1. Background on the Target Collection

Consisting of 11 municipalities, Ifugao Province has 12 everyday object collections¹ located in six municipalities.² These collections have different custodial bodies, as shown in Table 1.³

Table 1. Number of collections under each custodial body in Ifugao Province's six municipalities.

Custodial body of the collections	Number of collections in municipalities					
	Lamut	Lagawe	Kiangan	Banaue	Hungduan	Mayoyao
Private Household				5	1	
National government			1			
Provincial government		1				
Municipality						1
Barangay			1			
NGO			1			
University	1					

Of the 12 collections, I selected one private collection from Hungduan to conduct interviews and participant observations with the collector and contributors from the creator community.⁴ For the interviews, I asked the collector regarding his reasons for and methods of collecting objects. I asked contributors how they created, acquired, and used these everyday objects and ultimately relinquished them to the collector. During participant observations, I joined the collector on his collecting jaunts to document how and where he finds the items for his collection, and related activities on-site.

This collection was selected as the research target because of its recency compared to the other collections in the province, making it easier to trace the process of collecting as the informants' memories about it remained fresh. The social and human relationships behind the collecting process were also less complex as the collection was owned and maintained by the single collector. It was also helpfully

convenient, as the collector hosted me in his house for the weeks needed to conduct my survey.

The target collection consisted of a native house⁵ rebuilt in the collector's yard (Figure 2) and artifacts which he collected, on the belief that they were related to indigenous culture. The collector, however, had not recorded any data on the items. I thus began the study by cataloguing the items and taking pictures and measurements of them. The collection consisted of 77 items in nine categories (Table 2), the largest proportion of which consisted in household items such as utensils, furniture, clothes, accessories, and toys (29 items), followed by implements for farming, gardening, and animal husbandry (12 items). Most of these items were various types of baskets or wood-carved products.

The ethnographic account that follows, based on the interviews and participant observations, delineates the process of forming the collection from the perspectives of both the collector and the contributors.

Initial Motivation to Collect

The collection is owned by Antonio Y. Daulayan, male, born in 1966 and raised in barangay Hungduan. He lives with his wife and son in a three-story concrete house by a roadway going through a mountain's hillside. After he left junior high school, he worked as a part-time laborer in building construction and water irrigation, and also maintained a vegetable garden as well as raised, pigs, dogs, and domestic fowl on his land. He was elected barangay *kagawad* (councilor) for the first time in 1994 and then for another consecutive two terms until 2007.

Antonio is drawn to what he calls "old culture," including traditional knowledge, techniques, and artifacts, especially those which he thinks are rooted in Ifugao indigenous culture. He loves learning the techniques for making utensils such as spoons, spatulas, and cutting boards by carving wood or bamboo. He is also interested in weaving fish traps and chicken cages with rattan and crafting items, and enjoys playing traditional musical instruments. Whenever the opportunity presents itself, he asks the barangay elders to share their local knowledge and life-skills with him. During the annual town fiesta, he energetically joins the cultural parade and participates in the ritual representations in full traditional attire. His enthusiasm for the culture also involves collecting cultural artifacts, which he calls "old things." When I asked him about when his fascination with old culture and artifacts began, he answered, "only after I realized [that the] old culture is disappearing. I thought [that] old things are nice after listening to stories from old folks" (personal communication,

Table 2. Number of items by category.

Category of items	Number of items
1. Building	1
2. Implements for farming, gardening, or animal husbandry	12
3. Implements for fishing or hunting	8
4. Implements for forestry or gathering natural products	2
5. Implements for carpentry, blacksmithing, or other kinds of manufacture	3
6. Household utensils, furniture, clothes, accessories, or toys	29
7. Implements for religious rites or rituals	6
8. Musical instruments and implements for performance and sports	7
9. Artwork	9
Total number of items	77

**Figure 2.** Native house containing the collection (Photo taken by the author in July 2017).

19 February 2018). His taste for traditional artefacts and culture most likely developed when he was a barangay *kagawad* from 1994 to 2007.

During this time, he spent considerable time talking to the villagers and overseeing the problems in the barangay, which made him concerned about the change in the people's lifestyle and the disappearing culture. According to him and other people in the barangay, many "old things" started disappearing in the 1970s and the 1980s, when antique dealers from Bontoc and other places started purchasing old artifacts such as baskets, wood-carved utensils and figures, accessories, and ritual tools. Sometimes these goods were

purchased with money; at other times, bartered for plastic or metal plates, cups, and pots, used clothes, blankets, and other items. Antonio recalls that the dealers hired local villagers to carry these antiques to their stop points in the municipality's central area. Visiting each hamlet, talking to people to understand their concerns, and observing the changes in people's lifestyles, might have encouraged him to collect and preserve old cultural artifacts. As he asserted in one interview "I want to lift up old things and old cultures. Otherwise, [all will] be lost" (19 February 2018).

His desire for collecting and preserving the culture and its objects was not only personal. Asked about what made him so concerned about saving these old artifacts, he answered: "because now the younger generation is learning [about their culture] in schools. If these [old artefacts] are lost, our culture is no more [would no longer remain]" (personal communication, 16 May 2017). Because children learn about their culture only in schools, and not as part of their everyday lives, Antonio believes that without deliberately collecting and preserving these old artifacts, children in his community would lose the opportunity to learn about and practice their culture. In his municipality, from elementary to high school, the school curriculum included lessons on Ifugao culture since 2016, after the Department of Education of the national government started implementing the K to 12 basic education program, strongly recommending schools to include lessons on indigenous knowledges and local cultures in their curricula. According to Antonio, a local elementary school teacher had once asked him to host a tour for the school pupils to see his collection, an experience where he recognized the social value of his practices in collecting and preserving cultural heritage.

In 1997, Antonio began his collection by retrieving some old utensils at his parents' old house. Around 1998 or 1999, he saw a native house built in the then municipal mayor's yard: "I saw the native house in the mayor's house yard and thought it is good to have a native house. Then, I started to collect some artifacts, and after [I] built the native house, I added more artifacts" (personal communication, 3 June 2017). According to Antonio, it was around this time when he started thinking about relocating his parents' old native house to his own house's yard. The house was originally built by his parents in the 1960s, who lived there with their children until they moved to another sitio in 1972, after which the house was abandoned. When Antonio visited the house in 2009, it had almost rotted. In 2010, he dismantled the house and picked up the posts and beams as these were the only parts of the house that could be saved, and then used this material to reconstruct the house. With his friends' help, he rebuilt the native house with old and new materials in his yard, after which he began to collect and store artifacts intensively.

Collecting Routes and Routines

Antonio mainly sourced the artifacts for his collection from the barangay. Usually, he would purchase the artifacts or barter them with alcohol he buys at shop. He tended to find old artifacts in sitios on the lower side of the mountains, rather than on the hillside near the road (he calls the lower area “down,” meaning downhill, in contrast to the area along the road where he lives).

Sometimes Antonio hikes down from his house through narrow pathways along terraced rice paddies and stops by the hamlets on the way. Most of the houses in these hamlets are either raised-floor or low-floor style, with walls made of wood, tin, or concrete, or a combination thereof, and galvanized iron roofs. A similar style of house can be seen along the road as well, but many houses in the “down” are relatively old and shabby because most of them have undergone repairs repeatedly and have been extended while being passed from generation to generation. The “down” area used to be the center of the barangay where most of its people lived, until the roadway was constructed, at which point many people moved to areas along the road. In the old center, an increasing number of houses now appeared to be uninhabited and abandoned. The people who live there are either elderly or relatively poor, and have no choice but to live in old houses and use old utensils because of poverty or the inconvenient distance from the roadway through which materials are distributed to markets or households (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Houses in the “down” (downhill) with the roadway visible along the hillside (Photo taken by the author on 31 May 2017).

While roaming around the hamlets and sometimes stopping to talk to people, Antonio surveys old houses to see if he can find something to collect: even an abandoned house might yield some collectibles. On one of his jaunts which I joined, Antonio found a house in which he and his parents and siblings had once lived now occupied by another family. This practice of freely occupying abandoned houses and taking possession of household items left therein is common in this area. While passing a raised-floor-style house, Antonio found a *baliyag* (a pannier for collecting rice or other crops) lying underneath the floor (Figure 4). He meant to ask the owner about it later and negotiate to buy it if it was still in good condition.



Figure 4. *Baliyag* left under a house (Photo taken by the author on 21 June 2017).

In some cases, he needed to negotiate with owners, if there were any, for these found objects; in other cases, he simply picked up items that had been discarded. In 2007, he picked up a pair of old *bululs* (wooden figures of male and female rice guardian deities; see Figure 5) in an abandoned house in a sitio in the “down” while passing through it.

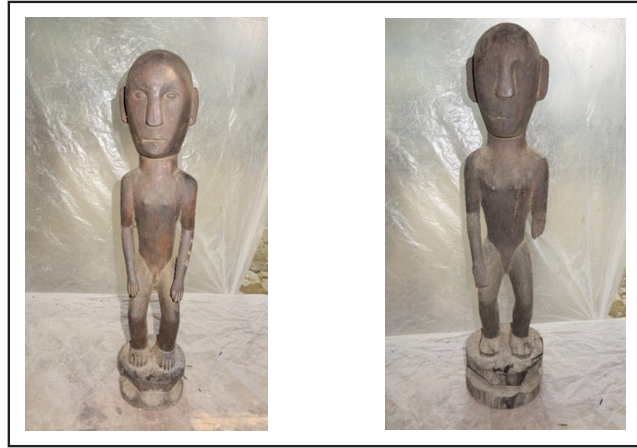


Figure 5. Pair of *bululs*.



Figure 6. Wooden spoon made by Antonio the collector.

Aside from collecting the artifacts in these ways from the hamlets, Antonio also makes brand-new artifacts himself or hires skilled persons to make items such as baskets, wooden utensils (Figure 6), and wood-carved decorations for the walls or beams of a native house. These newly crafted items make up more than 60% of the total items in the collection. Had he only confined himself to antiques and used artifacts, it would have been quite difficult to form a complete set (he says in another interview that he preferred to collect items by complete sets, e.g. per household) because many kinds of antiques have become scarce and are thus not easy to find in the province. However, in the barangay and other places in Ifugao, some people still have the skills to create these artifacts. Antonio knows these

people and often asks them to make new artifacts or to teach him their techniques. In this way, he enriches the variety of his collection while sometimes practicing the techniques and knowledge himself.

Contributors and the Backgrounds of their Contributions

This section shares the stories of seven contributors who made (or helped to make), sold, bartered, or gave their artifacts to the collector Antonio. Each contributor is identified by their first name only; details of their place of residence, such as the name of barangay and sitio, are omitted for their protection.

- Contributor 1: Mariano (male, age: 70 plus); Interviewed 1 and 21 June 2017

Contribution:



Figure 7. *Baliyag* (Pannier for gathering and carrying harvested rice bundles or other crops).

Mariano sold his old *baliyag* (a pannier for gathering harvested rice; see Figure 7) to Antonio. According to Mariano, in 2000, he asked a skillful weaver Peter (Contributor 4) to weave the *baliyag* and bartered a loincloth woven by his wife in exchange. He used the *baliyag* to harvest rice in a field that he rented in a neighboring barangay. He retired from rice cultivation in 2013 and moved from a native house in the “down” area to a new house along the road in 2017, leaving the *baliyag* in the old house. Later, Antonio found the abandoned *baliyag* and purchased it from Mariano.

Mariano was a *mumbaki* (a native Ifuago priest), but retired from this capacity by the end of the 1980s as by then few people raised the hogs and chickens needed to conduct rituals. In his words, “I gave up, surrendered” to the change. Remarking on other changes in the community, he cites changes in children’s behavior under outside influences. Previously, when advised by adults, “do not go there; there is a bad spirit,” they would obey. Now, the children do not listen to their elders, being obviously under the sway of movies and TV programs from the outside. He also recognizes the changes in traditional rice cultivation in Ifugao because of climate change and modern technology. Rather than repine, he started participating in seminars as a lecturer to teach local children the *mumbaki* rituals. But despite some interest in cultural preservation, he did not seem interested in preserving physical cultural artifacts, as he had a native house and old household items, such as the *baliyag*, but abandoned them when he moved to a new house. For him, cultural preservation concerns practices and customs, not material culture objects.

- Contributor 2: Ballatong (male, age unknown; possibly in his 90s) and Bugan (female, Ballatong’s wife, age unknown; possibly in her 90s); Interviewed 3 July 2017, and 9 February 2018 (with collector Antonio as interpreter)

Contributions:



Figure 8. *Kulbung* (container for pounded rice).



Figure 9. *Luhung* (mortar) made of wood.



Figure 10. *Luhung* (mortar) made of stone.



Figure 11. *Bayu* (pestle to pound rice).



Figure 12. *Udal* (large fish trap).



Figure 13. *Duyu* (plate) with a *punahinan*.



Figure 14. *Talluku* (container for cooked rice).



Figure 15. *Hukup* (container for potatoes).



Figure 16. Japanese soldier's gun.

Collector Antonio's parents, Ballatong and Bugan, added nine heirloom items to his accumulation. They did not know when the *kulbung* (Figure 8), *duyu* and *punahinan* (Figure 13), *talluku* (Figure 14), and *hukup* (Figure 15) were made because these were items which, in turn, they inherited from their parents. According to Ballatong, during World War II, his father had to hide the *kulbung* underground to prevent Japanese soldiers from stealing rice. The family used to own a ceramic jar for rice wine, but it was lost to the fire which burned down their house several years after Ballatong got married. Ballatong and Bugan used these *kulbung*, *duyu* with *punahinan*, *talluku*, and *hukup* when they lived in a native house that is now relocated to and reconstructed in their son's yard, and in another house where they moved with their children in 1972. The couple moved to their daughter's house along the road in 1990 without taking these old utensils with them; Antonio found and retrieved these utensils in 1997.

In the 1990s, Ballatong made the wooden *luhung* (Figure 9) and the *bayu* (Figure 11), which he used to pound rice. However, when he acquired a stone *luhung* (Figure 10) around 2002, he used it more often because it was better than the wooden ones. The stone one was made by a skilled craftsman who lived in the barangay and had already passed away. Around 2005, Ballatong and Bugan retired from rice cultivation in tenanted fields and stopped pounding rice because of old age. Antonio received these two mortars for his collection in 2010.

Ballatong wove the *udal* (Figure 12) in 2012 upon Antonio's request because people with such skills had become fewer with the passing of years. Ballatong learnt how to weave an *udal* from his

father, who was also skilled at making *apayos* (small fish traps) and *kubis* (chicken cages). Antonio also learned how to weave *apayo* by observing Ballatong and made some to add to his collection in 2015 (Figure 17). According to Antonio, people in Ifugao used *udal* and *apayo* to catch eels, fish, and crabs in the river in earlier times, but they now tend to use storebought goggles and projectiles made of iron and rubber (Figure 18).



Figure 17. *Apayo* (small fish trap) made by collector Antonio.



Figure 18. Goggle and shooting tool made by Antonio.

Ballatong's father acquired the gun (Figure 16) from Japanese soldiers around 1944 and 1945. According to Ballatong and Antonio, Japanese soldiers had left behind some of their personal effects upon returning to Japan at the war's end, and the Ifugao people took possession of them. The guns were used for hunting in the forests. Ballatong passed along the gun to Antonio when the latter turned twenty; Antonio has repaired it and it remains a part of his collection even if used still for hunting.

Although many people in Ifugao sold or bartered their household artifacts for money or modern products brought in by antique dealers, Ballatong and Bugan said they had never done so. They kept their things around the house even when they were no longer in use, and simply left these objects behind when moving to a new residence.

Contributor 3: Hanape (male, age: 90 plus); Interviewed 21 February 2018, (with Efren, Hanape's grandson in his 40s; and Antonio as interpreter)

Contributions:



Figure 19. *Aloog* (water container).



Figure 20. *Pinokla* (ritual charm).

While Hanape did not give any items to Antonio, he taught him how to make an *aloog* (Figure 19) and a *pinokla* (Figure 20). *Aloog* is a bamboo container that carries water from the river. Hanape taught Antonio how to carve decorative wavy lines on the surface. Antonio took some bamboo from the slope near his house and made an *aloog* in 2015. A *pinokla* is a charm to cure sickness or prevent nightmares; Antonio made one of wood and rattan and placed it on the wall of his native house in 2012.

Hanape became a *mumbaki* when he was twenty years old, after World War II. His uncle taught him how to perform rituals. A leading *mumbaki* in the barangay, he trained four younger *mumbaki*, including his grandson Efren. Hanape retired in 1990. Recognizing that an increasing number of people were converting to Christianity, he performed a divination by butchering a pig, which revealed that he should retire from being *mumbaki*. He followed this divine advice and converted to Christianity. Efren discloses that Hanape's old ritual tools were inherited by his relatives who were also *mumbaki*. However, according to the owner of another private collection in Banaue (interviewed 15 March 2018), after retirement, Hanape was about to

burn all the tools and objects he had used for his rituals. As soon as the Banaue collector heard of this, he hurried toward Hanape's house and acquired the *bulul* and ritual box from him.

Hanape used to cultivate his own rice fields but retired in 1998, after which his children and grandchildren inherited and tended to them. He used to live alone in his old native house in the "down" until 2015; thereafter, he moved to Efren's house along the road because he was unable to cook food or carry firewood by himself anymore. His old native house stands abandoned in the original place but Efren was thinking of dismantling the house and rebuilding it with a proper cogon roof along the road someday, it being the largest and oldest native house in Hungduan (it was built just after World War II).

- Contributor 4: Peter (male, age: 70 plus); Interviewed 24 February 2018

Contributions:



Figure 21. *Halidung* (men's rain hat).

Peter made and sold a *halidung* (Figure 21) to Antonio in 2014. He resides in the "down" with his family and makes a living by cultivating his rice fields in the barangay, as well as by weaving rattan and baskets during the rainy season. He learned weaving from his father and uncle in the 1970s. His father was especially good at weaving *kubi*, *ayud* (a spoon container), and many other kinds of baskets. Peter can also make, among other items, *ligau* (winnowing basket), *kubi*, *halidung*, and *tudung* (women's rain cloak). After he started producing baskets, many people in the barangay and from other places would put in orders for them, and long thereafter.

- Contributor 5: Antonio (male, age: 60 plus); Interviewed 21 February 2018 (with collector Antonio as interpreter)

Contributions:



Figure 22. *Gamlang* (sickle to harvest rice).



Figure 23. *Kinama* (net to catch bats).



Figure 24. *Kuldahing* (bamboo musical instrument).

Contributor Antonio made "gifts" of three items for collector Antonio. These can perhaps be described as gifts, given their friendship and frequent visits to each other's houses. Contributor Antonio lives in a native house built on a steep area above the barangay roadway. He has been a *mumbaki* since 1982 and cultivates his rice fields and grows vegetables to make a living. He produces various items that he and his family require for their daily lives; he does some smithing and weaves baskets such as *kubi* and *kayabang* (a basket to carry harvested potatoes).

Contributor Antonio made a *gambang* (Figure 22) upon the collector's request in 2004. The collector received it and sometimes

uses it for harvesting rice; according to him, not only women but men also harvest rice in the barangay, while it is mostly women's work in other places in Ifugao.

In 2012, Antonio made a *kinama* (Figure 23) using a net brought from the market and *bilau* (*Miscanthus Andersson*) collected in the forest. He learned how to make this object in the 1960s and 1970s by observing elderly people. These are used to hunt bats; Antonio aims the *kinama* at the bats when these feed on fruit trees (between November and January). In 2016, collector Antonio asked for the *kinama* because the contributor had another new one; this *kinama* now hangs on the wall of the collector's native house.

Contributor Antonio also made a *kuldahang* (Figure 24) in 2013. He said that he had learned how to make it from his father, and played the instrument to kill time or to amuse children at home. In 2014, collector Antonio saw the contributor playing the instrument by the roadside and made a request of it from the latter. It is now stored in his native house and he sometimes learns how to play it during drinking sessions with his contributor-friend.

Contributor Antonio also helped the collector make some of these items by supplying materials. For example, the contributor gave the collector some pieces of narra wood (*Pterocarpus indicus*), which the collector carved to make a sheath for a knife paraded as ornamental wear at fiestas (Figure 25). Along with his friends, the contributor also helped the collector rebuild his native house in 2010, and also taught him cultural practices, such as the right way to perform *mumbaki* rituals.



Figure 25. the collector Antonio's knife with wooden sheath and decorated belt.

- Contributor 6: Daniel (male, age: 70 plus); Interviewed 21 June 2017
Contributions:



Figure 26. *Ludy* (pepper crusher).



Figure 27. *Pamaahan* (bowl for rice wine).

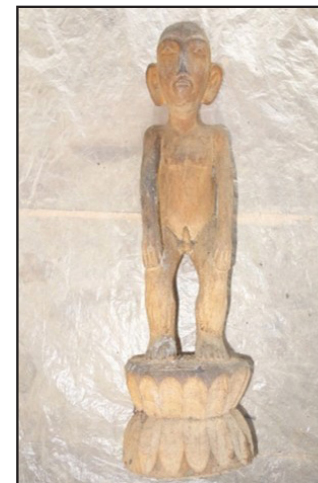


Figure 28. *Bulul* (wooden figure of a male head).



Figure 29. Wooden figure of the rice guardian deity.



Figure 30. Wooden figure of an Ifugao warrior (male and female ancestors).



Figure 31. *Wigan* and *Bugan*.



Figure 32. Door decoration.



Figure 33. Beam decoration of a carab.



Figure 34. Beam decoration of an old *mumbaki*.



Figure 35. Pillar decoration of a bearded man.



Figure 36. Rat guard decoration of frog.

Daniel is a vegetable farmer who lives in a house along the road in another barangay in the municipality, and has made and sold or given eleven items to collector Antonio. Apart from cultivating his fields to make a living, he also does woodcarving. He learned how to carve wood from a local woodcarver at seven years of age. After graduating from high school, he worked in an office for eight years, but found it better to work as a farmer and, as he puts it, “be my own boss.”

Daniel mostly tends to his field, but does woodcarving whenever he receives orders for it. To obtain wood, he goes to the highest mountain in the municipality and selects good-quality wood. He has also taught woodcarving to the local people, including collector Antonio. For example, Daniel made a *ludy* (Figure 26) and gave it to the collector in 2013, and Antonio fashioned two *ludys* by copying Daniel’s techniques. Daniel made a *bulul* (Figure 28) in 2011 when the collector brought a fine piece of wood and paid money for the statue, and made the *pamaahan* (Figure 27) in 2013 when the collector ordered it in exchange for alcoholic drinks. The collector bought two figures made by Daniel, one of the male heads (Figure 29) in 2013 and the other of an Ifugao warrior (Figure 30) in 2014, as artworks to display in the native house. In 2011, Daniel carved the *widan* and *bugan* (Figure 31), beam decorations (Figure 33 and 34), pillars (Figure 35), and rat guards (Figure 36) for the native house rebuilt in the collector’s yard. In 2014, Daniel finished making a decorative door (Figure 32). The collector paid money for all of these decorative objects.

- Contributor 7. Gulpina (male, age unknown: possibly in his 80s or 90s); Interviewed 18 April 2017 (with Efren, the grandson of Contributor 3, as interpreter)



Figure 37. *Pahiking* (backpack).



Figure 38. *Baling-gaw* (sling bag).

Gulpina crafted the *pahiking* (Figure 37) and *baling-gaw* (Figure 38) himself for his personal use. These were *pahiking* made at around the time his seventh and last child was born, over four decades ago. He also used to weave various kinds of baskets, such as *kubi* and *ligau*, and gave them away to his family and relatives. He acquired these skills by watching other people weave (Gulpina started weaving after World War II, upon his marriage). Efren notes that people who are interested in weaving in Ifugao can learn it by observing others in the community do it.

Gulpina usually wove the baskets at home. To make the *pahiking*, he reaped the rattan around his house, where it grew naturally and plentifully. He made the *baling-gaw* in another municipality, when he was staying there temporarily, working in rice cultivation and the stone walling of rice terraces.

Collector Antonio used to see Gulpina carrying the *pahiking* or *baling-gaw* with him in the fields, forest, or on occasions such as wedding parties or funerals in the community. For Gulpina, the *pahiking* or *baling-gaw* proved convenient for carrying betel nuts to chew or bringing home leftover meals from weddings or funerals he attended. In March 2018, when the collector asked Gulpina to give him the *pahiking* and *baling-gaw* in exchange for a bottle of gin, Gulpina acquiesced because his children had bought him modern bags and he no longer needed these old implements.

Almost all the products Gulpina wove for practical use were bequeathed to his children and grandchildren, except an aged *hukup* I saw lying outside his house (the object was made some two decades ago and stopped being of use, replaced by plastic plates). It was his declining eyesight which made him stop making baskets. While he wanted to teach weaving skills to the younger generation, he has not taught anyone because of the disinterest in it among them (as Efren observes, people now prefer modern backpacks).

Discussion and Conclusion

Collector Antonio’s motivation to collect everyday objects that have been produced and used in the indigenous community stems from his interest in, and liking for, old culture and artifacts. He developed this interest during his career as the barangay *kagawad* upon realizing the changes in people’s lifestyles, which according to him, were induced by the antique business boom in the 1970s and the 1980s, and the fact that today’s children only learn about their culture in school, rather than as part of their daily lives. This realization drove him to collect and preserve everyday objects and related cultural practices that are now disappearing. Dramatic changes in the material environment of indigenous cultures characterize modern society and have been known

to spur cultural preservation and rejuvenation. Antonios's attitude toward culture-collecting reflects fast-changing local conditions and the new transformations of age-old traditions.

The conditions and realities which this study found in the creator community suggest that culture-collecting is not merely a product of modernity but is or can be a form of tradition itself. Through the contributors' stories, I found that the collection was formed through diverse types of contributions of everyday objects that were newly made, used, abandoned, sold, bartered, and freely given, along with the related skills taught to the collector. These various contributions bespoke the fluidity of everyday objects, a trait of their material and cultural conditions (nurtured through the people's livelihood and daily lives in the community).

I argue that the community's everyday objects – as these have been collected by locals like Antonio – are fluid in three respects. First, everyday objects recognized as Ifugao traditional cultural artifacts have not been spared by commodification, privileged now as economically valuable objects of the trade in cultural antiquities or tourism.⁶ Thus, local people, understandably, tend to be unwilling to donate artifacts without receiving recompense for them. Relying on citizen's voluntary donations alone may hinder a museum's process of collecting and program of acquisitions. For example, the municipal museum in Mayoyao has been struggling to maintain and grow their collection; many citizens may want to sell their artifacts to the museum but the government is unable to afford the cost involved.⁷

Second, although these objects no longer form part of the mainstream material culture and economic production in Ifugao, many people in the community still make a living from producing them. After all, some of these everyday objects are still used by households or sold at souvenir shops. The traditional techniques of woodcarving, basketry, or textile weaving are not strictly passed on as hereditary cultural property or artisanship and are, therefore, always in danger of disappearing. However, these skills are open for anyone to learn, as seen in collector Antonio's case. Additionally, there is always a possibility of people producing alternative expressions and products to meet their personal artistic sensibilities and objectives, in the manner in which Daniel (Contributor 6) produced art for the collector's native house.

Third, people tend to leave used objects behind when they no longer need them, especially when moving between old and new domiciles.⁸ Unlike rice fields as property, people in the community do not necessarily inherit houses and everyday objects from their parents. In Ifugao, when children grow up, they tend to live in houses separate from their parents,' especially upon and after marriage, a custom while native houses constituted the major prototype for

housing in the province (Conklin 1980, 5; Goda 2001, 66). As seen in Antonio's hunt for collectible artifacts, the native houses in the "down" are often abandoned when the residents move out. In their place, another family might move in, or someone might take possession of what has been left behind in these dwellings. This fluidity of family property is probably a function of the structural features of the native house. Easily dismantled, transferred, or abandoned, they therefore do not contain as many objects as concrete or larger housing structures. People inhabiting native houses tend to leave behind things or objects which are no longer in-use under the raised floor or in thickets around the house. However, as more and more concrete houses are built with greater storage space, people's behavior and relationships with these household items may change; they might start hoarding no-longer-used things. For a better understanding of their relationships with everyday objects, it is crucial to keep tracking the changes in housing construction.

This flexible relationship between people and everyday objects is illustrated in the responses by Mariano (Contributor 1) and Hanape (Contributor 3), two retired *mumbaki*. They both left their native houses and household things in the "down" when they moved to new housing closer to the road. Hanape even reportedly intended to burn his ritual tools after retiring as a *mumbaki* and converting to Christianity. Nevertheless, both seemed willing to share their traditional knowledge and skills with others, even as Mariano lamented the changes in the young's behavior due to outside influences. Although their native houses and household items form part of their culture, neither of them had a concern for the preservation of artifacts, due likely to the thinking that material objects are fluid, if replaceable, and are secondary to local knowledge and artisanal skills which they believe to be transmissible to posterity.

In sum, everyday objects in the creator community are fluid in terms of marketability, reproducibility, and ownership. This fluidity corresponds to the current relationships between people and everyday objects in the creator community, and underwrites the practice of everyday object collection, as shown in the case of Antonio's collection-making. Nevertheless, this same fluidity may cause a critical loss of these everyday objects as tangible cultural heritage, as has already occurred, despite efforts like Antonio's. In indigenous communities, the collectors of everyday objects are those who are able to appreciate the customary fluidity of things, and the active nurturance of the human and social relationships in the creator community which ultimately secure them.

This study aimed to elucidate the process of collection-formation in Ifugao Province, the Philippines, by considering both the collector's and contributors' perspectives about it. It aimed

to record and reveal the creator community's conditions and relationships with their everyday objects, which influenced personal decisions to contribute to the collection, and which suggest that local museums and collections are a hybrid product of modern concepts and the community's vernacular practices. The collector's attitude toward collecting objects was induced by a realization about the changing lifestyle and disappearing culture, inspired by the concept of cultural preservation, to which he was exposed through the community's educational ethos. In this sense, the collection can be shown in interplay between the modern and internationally standardized concept of and emergent local traditions of cultural heritage preservation, an interplay which appears at work in societies where people, like Antonio, experience such realization about change and reckon with its cultural consequences.

Key to managing a collection toward such ends in the community is an understanding of the background and process of the collection-formation from both the collectors' and contributors' perspectives. Investigating and recording the process of collection-formation and other similar initiatives in Ifugao emerges as a crucial imperative, as each collection involves different actors, specific background conditions, and personal motivations. With such documentation and discussion, culture-collections are vouchsafed from forgetting, neglect or loss.

END NOTES

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1. Here, "everyday object collection" is defined as an assemblage of everyday objects collected from more than two households to distinguish it from "family heritage," which can be defined as a group of everyday objects used, kept, and inherited among family members of a single household.
2. All the information on everyday object collections in the province provided in this section was collected from fieldwork conducted in Ifugao over almost six months in total between March 2016 and April 2018. It should be noted that the numbers or custodial conditions might have changed after the fieldwork.
3. "Custody" here implies physical custody of collected objects, which is distinguished from legal ownership. This research focuses on custody rather than legal ownership because some collections have different bodies for these purposes and custodial bodies

4. play a role in the management and caretaking of the collections.
4. "Contributor" in this study refers to those who have made contributions to a collection, which includes all acts of making, donating, selling, bartering, and giving that have resulted in the transfer of objects to the collector.
5. A traditional style of dwelling house in Ifugao is called "native house" in the province, which is a one-storied and raised-floor house with four posts and pyramid-shaped roofing.
6. For the development of tourist-oriented wood carvings in the province, see previous studies such as those of Roxas-Lim (1973) and Tolentino (2012).
7. This information is from an interview with a municipal tourism officer in charge of the museum management conducted on 13 March 2018.
8. This behavior is also mentioned in an account documented on 26 May 1969 by Conklin (2002, 57).

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