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Will a Haiyan Museum Heal or Traumatise? Insights from Survivor-Curators

Jan Gresil S. Kahambing

Abstract:

To commemorate the tragic event of Super Typhoon Yolanda (International Name: Haiyan) last 2013, local leaders of the province of Leyte, Philippines, are speculating on establishing a Haiyan Museum in 2023, a decade later. With connotations of 'dark tourism', one way to look at the speculative decade-inspired establishment is through Amy Sodaro's 'memorial museums' with the purpose of 'education-based memorialization.' Juxtaposing this with Paul Morrow's philosophical perception of objects in memorial museums as possible provocateurs of repulsive feelings, there is a lingering suspicion of whether exhibits in the museum can really flesh out educational, therapeutic reflections or healing. Then, the crucial question to be addressed is: will this Haiyan Museum house feelings of healing, 10 years later, or trauma? To answer this question, I take insights from survivor-curators or the museum curators of Region VIII, Philippines, who experienced the Haiyan tragedy at, or proximate to, the landfall and aftermath first-hand. The notion of a 'survivor-curator' is a vital coinage that would represent a close perception of the museum and its museum objects. The responses are then thematised into a more coherent discussion to see how museums can be spaces of healing in their communal aspect and future museum projects.

Keywords: Haiyan Museum, healing, trauma, Survivor-Curator

The Haiyan Experience and the Haiyan Museum Proposal

Last 2013, Super Typhoon Yolanda (International Name: Haiyan) devasted the Philippines, particularly the Eastern Visayas Region of central Philippines. Haiyan was 'the most powerful storm in 2013 and one of the most powerful typhoons of all time' (World Vision), with the highest winds maxing 195 km/h (120 mph). To date, it is still considered the costliest typhoon in the Philippines, with damages totalling $2.2 billion. It is the concern of this paper to gather insights from curators in the region about Haiyan and establishing a museum for it. Using their preferred nicknames, they were initially asked about their experience of Haiyan. A few of the curators' experiences could be testaments to the tragedy. Lei described it as 'fearful and devastating.' After experiencing Haiyan, Nilds felt speechless and said that overall, it was 'very hard to explain' except for the fact that she considers it her 'second life.' 'From a normal sunny day and an evening of talking to friends on the 7th day of November,' which Mel associated with 'the calm before the storm, Haiyan suddenly changed everything. Around four in the morning on the 8th day of November, communication was already cut,' and there were 'heavy rains and strong winds until noon.' This was Mel's 'vivid memory.' John described it as 'horrifying' albeit coming from a place 100 kilometres away from the landfall area.

CJ, who was away in the region, was in shock at the television and media footage of familiar places. 'The next days and weeks kept me busy trying my best to establish contacts with friends whom I considered family already. I also shared my time to do some volunteer work because I knew back then that the people in devastated areas need food and other basic needs,' he said.

Since then, the city of Tacloban and some parts of the region would light up candles every 8th day of November, especially in the alleys, roads, and buildings where dead bodies were located the day of and later after the storm.

In commemorating the tragic event, there are talks and speculations about establishing an exhibit or, at best, a Haiyan Museum in 2023, a decade later. This proposes a more lasting testament of tragedy aside from, for instance, some memorial glass stand with a few names of dead persons besides the Redemptorist Church in Real, Tacloban. In this paper, I will navigate into the connotations of dark tourism, which focuses on sites of grief that evoke memorialisation. With the city commemorating and the lack of museums or sufficient memorial sites, one might ponder on memorialisation's intangible nature. Is it really necessary to have a museum? To equivocally use the words in Christopher Wren's memorial at St. Paul's Cathedral, London: '*Si monumentum requiris circumspice* - 'If you want a memorial look around' (Seaton, 2018: 21). Joy, one of the curators, says that the Haiyan experience is 'a journey from disaster to healing.' A common-sensical question might be asked from Joy: how? Or in this case, in what way can a museum provide healing from a devastating experience? Are museums that ideally promote healing from disastrous events exempt from dark tourism?

My goal in this paper is generally to offer a more coherent discussion of the Haiyan museum proposal from the insights of curators from Region VIII, Philippines. By gathering responses from what I call 'survivor-curators,' a term coined for this article to mean a museum-related professional whose work is associated to their experience of a natural disaster, I will focus on the aspects of healing and trauma and whether a more tangible museum proposal can be recommended based on those.

Healing and Trauma amid Dark Tourism

The idea that an establishment can exhibit and create value is what generates tourism (Lukáč et al., 2021). However, creating value out of death, disaster, and suffering, would be referred to as 'dark tourism', also called *thanatourism* (Lennon and Foley, 2000). Skinner (2018), for instance, takes note of a disaster location, Pompeii, as a 'Dark and Stormy Tourism', following Edward George Bulwek-Lytton's words. Dark tourism is, in one sense, about focusing on sites that confront the value created through the memory connected with death. It can either concentrate on disasters categorised as human-caused (e.g. human rights atrocities, genocides) or naturally-caused (e.g. earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, or typhoons).

One way to look at the speculative decade-inspired establishment of the Haiyan museum for the disaster is through Amy Sodaro's 'memorial museums.' Sodaro (2018) seeks to explain such museums as a 'new "hybrid" cultural form of commemoration' between the past and education. The hybridity portrays the interplay of 'education-based memorialization' and commemoration or remembering with the community. Hinged on an ethic of 'never again', a memorial museum has three functions: 1) to provide evidence of the past as a form of historical truth-telling, 2) to become symbolic reparations of healing and restoration, and 3) to be a space for morally educating the mind and heart. Sodaro provides analyses of exhibiting atrocities and their past political violence to encourage empathy and engage communal dialogue. She analyses five museums, namely, the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, Budapest's Terrorhaza, The Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre, Chile's Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos

Humanos, and New York's National September 11 Memorial Museum. Knowing the political contexts and exhibits of violence from the five mentioned, the aim is to see the museum as a public institution that fosters public conversations from close readings of the experiential and affective characteristics of the exhibit. Hence, memorialisation is supposed to provide healing by learning valuable positive lessons from an event.

However, experiences that tarry with the memorialisation of death, and therefore of memory, seem to make us reflect and ask 'whether dark tourism and inherent memorial messages are getting through' (Stone, 2018: 152). We should, thus, have the 'the ability to locate ourselves in a "dark tourism world" where memorials are insufficiently narrating hurtful memories calls out for philosophical responses' (Stone, 2018: 152).

Comparing and contrasting this memorialisation is Paul Morrow's philosophical engagement of objects within supposed dark tourism establishments. Morrow (2016) writes in the collection *Philosophy and Museums* his piece asking through its title 'Are Holocaust Museums Unique?' and claims the negative, since we still face the same generic ethical or epistemological questions in them. Morrow alludes that objects in Holocaust museums, or in this case, memorial museums, can create feelings of revulsion and therefore act as provocateurs of repulsive feelings. Morrow (2016: 142) makes the case of boxcars in Holocaust museums and the 'the grim function performed by these.'

Both the symbolic and material qualities of museum objects have varying significance to the visitor, albeit yet again the objects might not suffice in terms of instruction. Here, there is a lingering suspicion of whether museums' exhibits can really flesh out educational, therapeutic reflections or healing. The assertion that objects can also evoke traumatic sentiments is perhaps the glaring objection to the idealistic model underpinning the establishment of a memorial museum.

The crucial question to be addressed in thinking through the proposal is: will this Haiyan Museum house feelings of healing, 10 years later, or trauma? To answer this question, I take insights from survivor-curators or museum curators from Region VIII, Philippines, who experienced the Haiyan tragedy at, or proximate to, the landfall and aftermath first-hand.

Contrary to other memorial museums of tragedy that have few living survivors or first-person witnesses of horror, like Holocaust Museums worldwide, one could imagine that most or a lot of native visitors would be survivors of the region. The experiences of seeing objects from the recent past may awaken personal or collective traumatic feelings. Such experiences might even vary because the cause of the disaster in this case is natural, which may address the inherent presuppositions of our relationship with nature, or God (in a disaster location with many Catholics and other religious denominations). Inviting the survivors who are at the same time curators can better provide initial expert and experiential opinions. Such curators would have deeper understanding of the role of heritage, conservation, and memory-making exhibits, along with the experiences of the disaster that is the object of the study.

The Participants of the Study and the Notion of a 'Survivor-Curator'

There are 9 museum practitioners or researchers who consented to respond to the study. 5 (55.6%) were females, and 4 (44.4%) were males (one identified as homosexual). As to age, 4 (44.4%) are less than 35 years old, 3 (33.3%) are between 36-45 years old, and 2 (22.2%) are more than 55 years old. Their preferred tag names are J, Dior, Lei, Nilds, Jill, Joy, Mel, John, and CJ. They represent, in no particular order, the following art/heritage institutions within Region VIII: Samar State University Museum & Archives, Leyte Normal University Museum, Calbiga Cultural and Heritage

Center, Nuestra Señora de Salvacion Historical and Ecclesiastical Museum, UP Visayas Leyte-Samar Heritage Center & Leyte-Samar Heritage Society, Inc., University of Eastern Philippines Museum, Christ the King College Museum, and The National Commission for Culture and the Arts-National Committee on Museums. Their years of work experience from affiliations with the art/heritage institution they belong to vary. 5 (55.6%) are affiliated in less than 10 years, 2 (22.2%) are affiliated between 10 and 20 years, and 2 (22.2%) are affiliated between 21 and 30 years.

The notion of a 'Survivor-Curator' is a vital coinage in this article. Andrea Witcomb has explained through the idea of testimony the 'intense' and 'personal' effects of artworks on curators who are also survivors. She mentions Saba Feniger, 'the volunteer survivor curator who collected [artworks] for the Holocaust Museum' who acquires the 'double function of memorializing by testifying' (Witcomb, 2013: 261). Aside from this modifying use of 'survivor' on the 'curator', my use of 'Survivor-Curator' is more direct as a noun and is more fluid in terms of context. The term would represent someone with a close perception of the museum and its museum objects - not just in the form of testifying but also of supervising them. While Witcomb sees in a 'survivor curator' the function of curating as a later response from the survivor's experience, in this paper, the curators became survivors of the disaster later and deals with the memory of it.

Moreover, the notion of survivor in this case is in reference more to naturally-caused disasters, rather than the oft-connoted reference to human atrocities such as the Holocaust. Hence, a 'Survivor-Curator' in this case refers to an individual 1) who experienced the typhoon or its aftermath and 2) whose professional capacity covers that of overseeing or involving oneself in the transmission of knowledge or showing expertise regarding museums and their museum objects. This coinage, then, does not merely represent the professional capacity of a Curator only but also of other museum-related professionals whose tie to the Haiyan experience lies in their link to their home, wellbeing, and relationships within the region during or after the typhoon's landfall. Among the respondents, 6 (66.7%) directly experienced Haiyan, and 3 (33.3%) did not but were there during the aftermath to check on their families or homes. Moreover, the professional capacities of the respondents are museum-related and may overlap in terms of office, expertise, or scholarly interest. Among the respondents, 5 (55.5%) identified as Curator, 2 (22.2%) as Museum Director, 3 (33.3%) as Educator, 1 (11.1%) as Conservationist, 1 (11.1%) as Historian, 5 (55.6%) as Researchers, 1 (11.1%) as a psychometrician and 1 (11.1%) as Municipal Tourism Operations Officer.

It can be noted, again, that the use of the term 'Survivor-Curator' in this context is unique apart from its application, for example, in Holocaust Museums, given that the distribution and experience are different in each historical situation. First, there are still many Haiyan survivors but there are now only a few living Auschwitz survivors. The Hong Kong Holocaust & Tolerance Center, with the participation of the University of Macau, hosted a three-part workshop on the Holocaust composing 1) a seminar from a Holocaust expert, 2) a virtual tour of the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum, and 3) a sharing from a Greek Auschwitz survivor. From a video call in Athens, one of the very few left to tell the story, Lola Angel, remembers the horror of the Nazi concentration camps very much when 83% of 59,000 Greek Jews were exterminated. Because of the trauma she experienced, she has not spoken about the experience for about seven decades until her sharing during the UN Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration. She clarified the trauma quite clearly: 'I was but a child, but I forgot nothing. The memories still haunt me, and the intense smells of the camp are ever-present.' Indeed, 'there is a fundamental difference between death caused by a natural disaster, such as an earthquake, and massive death caused by human activity, such as is the case of the

Holocaust' (Stylianou and Stylianou-Lambert, 2017: 3).

If we compare this to the trauma experienced in Haiyan, which Dior says 'was life-threatening' and 'apocalyptic' since there was 'massive destruction, loss of lives,' and 'damaged properties,' the embodied perception is different. J can only explain the trauma in terms of pain. J describes it as a '*traumatic* and painful' trial: 'The agony of having no communication with loved ones had intensified the worrisome experience. It was, above anything else, a test of our faith and our humanity.' J specified the trauma not only to the loss of material resources, the 'inadequacy of the government to respond to the immediate needs of the people,' and difficulty of the transport system, but more significantly to the loss of his 'relatives, a former teacher, friends, and former classmates.' As a survivor, trauma survives in pain: 'although we survived, the mental torture and the pain of losing our loved ones remain.'

Using a first-person authority perspective, only the people who experienced it can tell the varying ways in which their experiences had shaped their lives, their intensity, and duration of suffering. The correlation of the Holocaust and Haiyan experience are at best associative, and the differences involve complex pathways of meanings, emotions, and dispositions on an individual level.

Method

Due to the restrictions and stringent protocols of the COVID-19 pandemic, the survey or interview template was completed online through Google Forms. Some members who can be easily reached and are available for face-to-face follow-up were consulted for clarifications. Members of the Eastern Visayas Association of Museums (EVAM) responded with consent statements following research ethics.

The participants agreed that their participation was voluntary, that there were no conflicts of interest, and, except for one, that their archived identifying information and responses would be shown only when proper authorities under fair and ethical conditions necessarily request them. The survey and interview template included questions about the respondents' Haiyan experience, their impressions on the proposed establishment of the Haiyan museum, the supposed contents or museum objects of the museum, whether the objects will be therapeutic or traumatic, learning from the Haiyan museum, the other feelings that might be evoked in seeing the objects, whether they would recommend its proposed establishment, and additional insights they wanted to add.

Results and Discussion

Impressions on the proposed establishment of the Haiyan museum

The survivor-curators were mainly in support of a Haiyan museum. The agreements primarily span from 'okay,' 'very much okay,' to being 'grateful' for the proposal. Nilds views the museum as a good 'lesson' for the future, which for Jill can make up as 'memorabilia.' This makes the museum 'timely and relevant' for John, and Joy explains its relevance in the context of its 'educational' element and most especially in 'environmental awareness, cultural sensitivity, [and] empowerment.' Despite its timeliness for others, Dior, a registered psychometrician, and psychologist, strongly opposes it because 'it brings back repressed/traumatic memories. The artifacts may symbolise loss and survival, but they may trigger traumatic memories people wish to never think or be part of their consciousness [anymore].' However, Joy and John both believe that the Haiyan museum is 'necessary.' And John forwards a caveat: 'while it is painful, it is necessary. However, careful analysis and consideration of many things/factors should be observed – careful

that it may not be traumatic and hurtful to the people who are still suffering the pain of that historic and painful event.'

The supposed contents or museum objects of the Haiyan museum

Based on the responses, it can be said that the supposed contents of the museum must have narrativity and temporality. Aside from the materiality of objects like 'paintings from local artists' or 'photos of people and places after the Typhoon,' most 'Survivor-Curators' suggest 'survivor narratives,' especially those which exist in a temporal framework. These are what John calls 'non-tangible assets.' Nilds focuses on 'pre-Haiyan and post-Haiyan struggles,' or as what Mel illustrates, a 'gallery to make a good story for the visitors – like the day before Haiyan, during Haiyan, [and] the story of the survivors after Haiyan.'

There are phenomenological and performative elements of this temporal narrativity: 'narratives of different forms of coping (art, poetry, performance acts, etc.)' or 'the work of arts (poetry, drawings, painting, photos, sketches) of people who experienced Haiyan' must form a 'good storyline.' It can be assumed that what makes a story 'good' is not just displaying 'facts, stories, experiences and the like of those loved ones who died.' Such stories and lived experiences must be 'meaningful artifacts and visuals' whose character can be defined, according to Joy, as 'people-oriented' and 'survivor-sensitive.' In keeping in line with environmental awareness and its manifold meanings, the survivor narratives can be well-embedded with scientific and cultural perspectives. CJ perhaps strongly acclaims the defining character of the objects: 'The best feature is how the affected places and people rise and continue to be resilient after the super typhoon Haiyan.' Within the narrative timeline of the museum's contents, there is an emphasis on artistic coping and resilience.

Trauma, healing, and other feelings

Given the varying degrees of experiencing Haiyan, the 'Survivor-Curators' are mostly realistic in their assessment of how the objects can evoke feelings. There is a particular aspect of contingency that is at play. According to the curators, there are three different contingencies here.

First, Jill argues for object dependency where the feeling that can be evoked is contingent 'on the contents of the museum.' In this view, the objects are quite independent, and Jill seems to accentuate this as a fundamental exigency.

Second, CJ thinks that the evocation of feelings will depend not on the objects but on their curation or presentation: 'It depends on how the museum objects will be presented to the public. If the goal is just to present the tragic event, for me, this will cause trauma to the people. If [the goal is to present the] resiliency of the people, for sure, it is going to be different.' In this view, the ethical question of curation arises, and it is the responsibility of the curator to design an arrangement that is educational, rather than disruptive, to visitors' perception.

But it seems that there is a much weightier contingency with which most 'Survivor-Curators' align their thoughts. Finally, Nilds asserts that the contingency lies on the museum visitors themselves, who may also be survivors, as 'it depends on the person's acceptance of the event.' Mel expounds that 'to some it may be traumatic, seeing it [a Haiyan museum object] again will bring bad memories, but to some, it could also be therapeutic.' This is highly possible as the 'experiential' feature of the objects, John claims, 'both presents reliving the trauma (pain) and healing.' In this feature, the degree of the experience can be argued again. Lei takes note of this by saying that 'it can be therapeutic but for those families whose experiences are [the] worst, it could be traumatic for them.' J supports this by stating that 'the appreciation (or disdain) of the museum objects may differ from one visitor to

another, depending on the depth and gravity of one's experience.'

Without limiting the issue to the healing-trauma binary alone, there are other feelings that the objects can evoke. Moreover, these are ambivalent, or as Lei says, 'diversified' and 'varied.' On the one hand, there is 'pain,' 'grief,' 'anxiety,' 'depression,' 'fear, sadness, and guilt.' On the other hand, there are also lessons of survival, hope, 'joyful moments,' the urge to 'overcome the pain,' being 'grateful to God' and an appreciation of the 'gift of life.' The overcoming of pain, J maintains, helps to 'realize acceptance and healing.'

Given the three different contingencies and varied feelings at hand, what can possibly be done? Because the possibility of evoking both trauma and healing presupposes the exposition of the objects, J thinks there is a need 'to have a sort of "preparation" or "debriefing" before (or after) a museum tour.' He also emphasises the need for 'preliminary research' and 'an expert on psychology, about the profound effects of seeing the museum objects.' Herein lies a psychological opinion from someone working in a psychology clinic. Dior rules out the possibility of healing at this point and banks singularly on trauma: 'For me, it will be traumatic. Memorializing the horrifying experience of Yolanda [Haiyan] is not something therapeutic.' Although this still needs research, Dior believes it to be the case.

Interestingly, despite the traumatic possibility of viewing the objects that can 'bring bad memories,' Mel nonetheless forefronts the museum's necessity and futurity. Says Mel, 'regardless, people will still see it as something that we should share with the world because the world knows what happened and this should not happen again.' This argument of necessity is also what Joy believes. Accordingly, the museum objects would be 'necessarily therapeutic' because they will provide 'healing' and 'empowering for survivors.' Representation of resiliency or being represented as resilient can conjoin with the 'asset' claim, and this necessarily provides empowerment. Joy argues that the necessity of the museum can help with the 'resolve to help prevent disaster' and that the form that empowerment takes can also be epistemological, sustainable, and inclusive. That is, to be 'empowered through knowledge of history, science, and cultures, [the] sense of connection with the rest of humanity, [to] be healed and help heal, understand the politics of disaster, respect the sacred in disaster communities, help improve relief, recovery and rehabilitation systems, help set policies in the protocol and management of disaster dead, lift the spirits of people and communities, strengthen human potential, be concerned with [the] children, youth, elderly, persons w[ith] disabilities, [and] indigenous peoples' (Joy).

Empowerment is a crucial feature that retains its significance in the aspect of healing, as it allows doing more concerning the future. Despite the possibility of trauma, this healing as empowerment rests on the resolve to overcome.

Learning from a Haiyan Museum

Some lessons can be learned in establishing a Haiyan museum as a memorial-based educational institution. In this 'house of memory,' J enumerates the following reminders:

1. The inevitable role of natural disasters in our lives and the challenge of addressing the risks they bring.

2. It will serve as a reminder of how painful a disaster can be vis-a-vis the concern of preparedness.

3. It will serve as a way of acceptance of the facts, events, and hopefully, healing. It will also give insights into the myriad ways people survived and moved on with their lives.

These reflect Jill's lessons 'to save the environment,' to 'always be ready,' and find 'hope after the storm.' The 'Survivor-Curators' seem to

put a premium on climate change, the people, and a sustainable future. These compose the guiding themes to be learned. Dior emphasises 'coping mechanisms' or, to use Lei's words, 'to be resilient in so many ways.' The plurality of approaches in the ways people practice resiliency can perhaps be asserted from Mel's insights on not being 'too dependent with our government' and on 'always be[ing] ready with everything (flashlights, food, improvised floater, etc.).'

In terms of the vital relationship between the people and the environment, Joy sends the message that the museum should help us 'learn to love our planet, nature, and communities.' Additionally, we should 'be proactive towards disaster prevention and natural and cultural heritage conservation and [have a] deeper sense of historicity and social transformation.' In this proactivity, John recommends 'interactive approaches' that will enable participation.

Ultimately, it is an intergenerational learning experience. For CJ, it is about 'educating the next generations of the impacts of typhoons on communities, how we can act as a people against the climate crisis, and [learn from the] science of climate change.'

Recommending the establishment of the museum

All of the 'Survivor-Curators' except one are amenable to recommending the museum's establishment. The sole opposition stems from the psychological recognition of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). For Dior, 'some people (no matter how many years [have passed]) are still dealing with their loss, still grieving and encounter[ing] problems in coping with the Yolanda [Haiyan] experience [...] Memorializing it will be really tough for these vulnerable individuals.' This memorializing, however, is viewed as a positive thing for the others. The intergenerational takeaway is to carve an indelible mark 'in memory of our loved ones and those who have struggled to live' (Lei). It will be 'a significant historical event of our times. It would be a gesture of remembrance to the people who perished on the fateful day, and a reminder to the future generation on the impacts (on all aspects) that the ST Yolanda had brought to our lives' (J).

It is for us to be 'reminded each day that people will help each other' (Jill). 'Aside from [being] educational for generations to come,' Nilds says, it can showcase 'memorabilia for survivors, [an] acknowledgment or gratitude for those who helped: [...] friends, relatives, and organizations.'

The Haiyan museum will, therefore, 'provide the present and future generations important information and help them recount their (survivors) feelings and experiences' (John). The intergenerational and educational reasons are necessary. Mel resounds a strong 'yes', 'because we need a place where we can see what really happened, hear real stories, and see the resiliency of the survivors. Museums are places where people see what really happened in the past.' Joy derives from the arguments of empowerment an inclusive feature because she means to involve as many as possible in the task of healing. For CJ, a Haiyan museum will positively 'immortalize the strength and resiliency of our people.'

And by 'our people,' the museum 'should be inclusive. It should gather stories not only centered in Tacloban but more so to people who had faced the typhoon first: the people of Eastern Samar and elsewhere in Eastern Visayas' (Dior). This means that its establishment should cater to the cooperation of everyone in the region, to 'tap private institutions, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), people's organizations to partner with the government and formulate policies and systems for sustainability, perhaps, and institutionalize by way of Republic Acts or Laws or Ordinances' (Joy).

Museums as Spaces for Community Healing

The question of establishing a Haiyan museum delves into the aspects of social, personal, and intergenerational trauma and recovery. Apart

from human disasters brought about by political violence and atrocities, museums of natural disasters seem to present a novel case both in the literature and the field (Kahambing and Lao, 2022). The role of museums for planetary health is crucial as it tarries our vital relationship with the environment amid calls for sustainability. To address the climate change issue, the recent openings of climate museums, both in the traditional and mobile senses, come to mind here (Newell, 2020; Massie and Reyes, 2021).

Though riddled with real contexts, the necessary hope of these museums is to educate the public about the capacity for healing and prevention of further disasters. Fair suggestions for disaster preparations in the Philippines, which is frequented by typhoons, are coupled with ecological knowledge (Kahambing, 2020; 2021). Local knowledge can be a potent source of providing spaces for intangible cultural heritage and the tangible role of museums as those very spaces. By organizing 'these spaces using a framework that reflects the cultural values of the particular community, they will provide the safe space necessary for the individuals of a community to implement the necessary components of healing in order to transcend the trauma' (Van Noy, 2007: 84).

Amid problems with operational definitions faced by the recent 2019 ICOM description of a museum, Chiovatti (2020) maintains that museums must be clearly and openly classified as educational institutions. In museums of natural disasters or, in our case, the Haiyan museum, the spaces must 'create a physical, tangible place where survivors can share their stories, acknowledge the trauma and continue to educate and remember their cultural history' (Van Noy, 2007: 85). Morrow (2016) even claims that apart from signs warning for children, a careful exhibition of the objects 'can be used to educate museum visitors' (135; 140). To borrow some sustainability features in museums where everyone is engaged in the process, 'this healing museum model can provide one mechanism through which communities successfully engage in the healing process' (Van Noy, 2007: 85). To address the potential for re-traumatisation, one will have to take note of the three contingencies mentioned by the 'Survivor-Curators.'

The museum can foster connectivity and meaning-making to objects and visitors through a therapeutic engagement of the museum setting. This means promoting social activity with the community and providing therapeutic organizational development. Examples of which are ensuring strong empathy with the 'Survivor-Curators' as mentors of the healing process, training staff and volunteers in compassion fatigue, facilitating therapeutic encounters and visibility and providing space for reflection (Cowan, Laird, and McKeown, 2020).

It is important that the visitors who may be survivors are 'seen' as humans with complex histories and they should not be treated as passive observers. As cautions, the museum should have prior warning of potential emotional activation and therefore must craft 'appropriate trigger warnings' which seek 'to inform but not alarm, to give visitors options and reminders of their own capacity' (Cowan, Laird, and McKeown, 2020: 182). Suppose the Haiyan Museum will be established, it is both an 'opportunity and responsibility that we move forward, striving to further understand the power and potential of objects and continue to explore their remarkable capacity to awaken in us our fundamental humanity' (Cowan, Laird, and McKeown, 2020: 199).

Conclusion

I have shown in this paper the insights of 'Survivor-Curators' of Region VIII, Philippines on the establishment of a Haiyan museum. Specifically, I have presented their responses on the issue of trauma and/or healing within the supposed memorial-museum establishment. My presentation of the memorial-museum is bent

more towards naturally-caused disasters, particularly the Super Typhoon Haiyan, and the perception of the 'Survivor-Curators.' My analysis of the wider literature on the topic of Typhoon-caused memorial museums, as opposed to memorial museums on volcanic eruptions or earthquakes (Hammond, 2017), is hampered not just by the paucity of information but also by the reality within which the proposal is yet to be. Hence, the paper has not been exhaustive on real factors, given its primary approach to speculation.

There are, however, crucial findings introduced. We have seen the different contingencies that are at play for making a healing museum. That the objects themselves, the manner of presenting them, and the curators and visitors' view and emotions factor in together the diversity of responses and responsibilities in making a healing museum, the approaches to establish a Haiyan museum requires a great sense of sensitivity. It is hoped that the sensitive approaches could lead to empowerment in a sense of preserving and learning from survivor identity and the value of community. The healing part may involve some dark aspects, as a healing museum can be associated to dark tourism, but the intergenerational necessity and the manner of moving forward through museums are crucial steps to begin with.

Following this seminal work, then, and based on the results of the study, the article suggests further investigations. I recommend gathering further insights from potential visitors who are survivors themselves in the form of either psychological intervention or epistemic perception. From a hierarchical expertise perspective, opinions from national and international museum experts should be consulted. As to the idea of linkages, there is a need to follow up with relevant institutions on the supposed establishment of the museum for further context. And finally, to further exhaust the philosophical implications of this study, it is necessary to follow up on the many conceptual schemes that can be found in dealing with subjects and their objects of experience through the relatively emerging field of philosophy of museums.

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