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Richard Gavina Castor

richard.castor@cbsua.edu.ph

Central Bicol State University of Agriculture https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9929-4288

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Cultural Heritage Mapping: Charting Tourism Potentials and Inscribing Calabanga's Tangible Heritage

Richard G. Castor

College of Arts and Sciences, Central Bicol State University of Agriculture - Calabanga, Philippines

Abstract

This study integrates three cultural mapping investigations of tangible heritage in Calabanga, Camarines Sur, Philippines: the Amang Hinulid Chapel as built religious heritage, the Teacher's Monument as postwar civic built heritage, and the image of La Inmaculada Concepcion de Quipayo as movable sacred heritage. Using qualitative, place-based, and participatory approaches, the component studies combined cultural mapping, archival and documentary research, site observation and documentation, oral-history and key-informant interviews, focus-group discussions, and community validation. The integrated analysis demonstrates that Calabanga's tangible heritage cannot be understood solely through physical fabric. The Amang Hinulid Chapel derives significance from its long history as a pilgrimage site, devotion to the dead Christ, oral narratives, ritual practice, and community stewardship. The Teacher's Monument, constructed in 1955-1956 and modeled on actual local teacher and pupils, embodies postwar esteem for education, civic memory, and the role of governance in public commemoration. La Inmaculada Concepcion de Quipayo, an undated wooden Marian image estimated through oral and historical accounts to be approximately 200-300 years old, combines distinctive sacred artistry with continuing rosaries, chants, processions, Flores de Mayo, and other intergenerational devotional practices. Across the three cases, tangible and intangible heritage are mutually sustaining: structures and objects anchor memory and ritual, while community practices continually renew their meaning. The sites also present complementary tourism potentials for pilgrimage, heritage walks, educational visits, and community-based cultural interpretation. Their development, however, requires conservation-led planning, formal documentation and recognition, heritage education, trained local interpretation, and tourism practices that protect authenticity and sacred character. The study positions cultural mapping as both a documentation method and a planning instrument for linking heritage conservation, community identity, education, and sustainable local tourism.

Keywords: Calabanga; cultural heritage mapping; tangible heritage; built heritage; movable heritage; cultural tourism; faith-based tourism; heritage conservation

1. Introduction

Cultural mapping provides a participatory means of identifying, documenting, interpreting, and mobilizing the cultural resources through which communities understand place, memory, and identity. The three component studies assembled in this article share this premise and treat tangible heritage not as isolated physical objects but as cultural resources whose significance is produced through relationships among material form, historical narratives, community values, ritual practices, and contemporary use.

Within Calabanga, tangible heritage assumes different but connected forms. The Amang Hinulid Chapel represents built religious heritage sustained by pilgrimage, devotion, oral tradition, and community stewardship. The Teacher's Monument represents postwar civic built heritage and the public commemoration of education and teachers. La Inmaculada Concepcion de Quipayo represents movable sacred heritage whose material, artistic, and iconographic qualities are inseparable from continuing

Marian devotion. Taken together, the cases allow cultural mapping to move beyond the documentation of individual properties toward a more integrated reading of Calabanga's cultural landscape.

The combined paper therefore asks how these three tangible heritage resources embody local history and identity; how tangible and intangible dimensions interact in sustaining their cultural significance; what conservation issues emerge from their continuing use and physical condition; and how the mapped resources may be responsibly incorporated into heritage education and sustainable tourism. By bringing the three studies together, the article charts complementary tourism potentials while inscribing a broader account of Calabanga's tangible heritage.

archiving, and leveraging cultural assets and activities to fortify communities, enabling local groups to pinpoint elements of significance (Oppusunggu et al., 2019). The increasing recognition of holistic heritage management necessitates a framework for such interventions (Nanda & Khare, 2018). It is facilitated through the leadership of Local Government Units and other stakeholders, which aids in uncovering the diverse cultural assets within a community while ensuring the meticulous documentation of heritage resources for future reference (Gravagnuolo et al., 2021). This process cultivates heightened awareness and interest in heritage properties among both users and non-users (Brown & Murtha, 2019). Cultural mapping encompasses the appreciation of both tangible heritage, such as structures and artifacts, and intangible elements, including traditional customs and oral narratives (Nanda & Khare, 2018). It is evident that appreciating local cultural activities requires active involvement from the community (Haqqi & Soeparto, 2020). Through this initiative, communities can establish heritage conservation councils responsible for safeguarding local cultural heritage, as well as drafting policies and regulations to ensure its preservation (Briggs & Huang, 2016). The preservation of cultural heritage is of immense importance to a nation and its society since it reminds people of their history, acting as a source of knowledge and inspiration, and playing a significant role in building social capital (Pathak et al., 2021). Cultural infrastructure includes both existing cultural heritage and spaces for cultural stimulation (Suresh & Reshmi, 2020). Cultural heritage management involves undertaking activities to care for heritage items or assets (Cros, 2009). Effective management of cultural heritage requires a comprehensive understanding of the intricate relationships between tangible and intangible cultural elements, as well as the active involvement of communities in preservation efforts (Usmaedi et al., 2024).

buildings, and artifacts, and the meanings, values, and contemporary social behavior associated with these tangible forms of heritage (Brabec & Chilton, 2015). Intangible cultural heritage, on the other hand, encompasses traditions, knowledge systems, and practices that are transmitted across generations, shaping cultural identity and community resilience (Anuar et al., 2021). Cultural heritage is essential in representing national or regional identity (Kamal, 2019). The preservation of cultural heritage is crucial for maintaining social identity and cohesion, and promoting sustainable development. Heritage conservation is a wide-ranging concept and is closely linked to the idea of sustainability since the conservation of heritage requires strategies and policies that integrate heritage concerns with environmental, economic, and social factors. Inclusive strategies are necessary to engage diverse community sections to enrich anthropological interpretations of society, support social stability, and foster positive social change (Billore, 2021). Furthermore, cultural heritage can be seen as a means of sustainable development and cultural tourism, especially with the rise of digital technology (Abdullah et al., 2024).

This article consolidates the three studies as a multiple-case account of tangible heritage in one municipality. Rather than treating a chapel, a civic monument, and a sacred image as unrelated inventories, the analysis examines how each material resource becomes meaningful through stories, rituals, caretaking, education, governance, and everyday use.

The study is guided by four questions: (1) What historical, physical, artistic, and cultural characteristics define the Amang Hinulid Chapel, the Teacher's Monument, and La Inmaculada Concepcion de Quipayo? (2) How do community narratives and continuing practices sustain the significance of these tangible resources? (3) What conservation issues and institutional responsibilities emerge from their present condition and use? and (4) What forms of heritage and faith-based tourism can be developed without compromising authenticity, sacred character, and community ownership? The paper argues that cultural mapping is valuable not only because it inventories heritage, but because it reveals the relationships that make heritage viable as a resource for education, identity, conservation, and sustainable local development.

2. Methods

The integrated article uses a multiple-case qualitative synthesis of three completed cultural mapping studies undertaken in Calabanga. Each component study was qualitative and place-based, but the specific procedures reflected the type of heritage being mapped. Across the studies, evidence was triangulated from material/site documentation, documentary and archival sources, oral testimony, community participation, and validation activities. The present paper does not introduce a new empirical sample; rather, it integrates the documented methods and findings of the three completed studies.

The three component investigations used qualitative, exploratory case-study designs grounded in cultural mapping. The approach was place-based and participatory: the physical properties were documented in their actual settings, while community members and institutional stakeholders were engaged to recover historical narratives, meanings, practices, and conservation concerns. This design was appropriate because the significance of the three properties extends beyond measurable physical characteristics and depends on collective memory, religious experience, local biography, and patterns of community use.

2.1 Amang Hinulid Chapel

community values (Usmaedi et al., 2024). Two significant key informants are elders (ages 102 and 85) and cultural bearers of Hinulid in Calabanga. They were interviewed informally on several occasions and formally invited to a focus group discussion which comprised of nine (9) elders, caretakers, local leaders and writers – all of them are from Calabanga and are stakeholders of the Chapel and the devotion to Amang Hinulid. Alongside, data collection included document studies (Widari et al., 2019) from written and unpublished record of the family and caretakers of the Chapel. These qualitative data was analyzed thematically to identify key patterns, narratives, and perspectives related to the Chapel's heritage (Yao et al., 2024). The research likewise adopted a participatory action research approach, actively involving community members in all stages of the research process, from data collection and analysis to interpretation and dissemination of findings (Babić et al., 2019; Pérez et al., 2021). After writing the initial report of the cultural mapping project, a community validation activity was held with 27 stakeholders confirming the heritage value of the Chapel. The community validation was spearheaded by the Local Government Unit and was facilitated by cultural mapping experts from NCCA. This approach recognizes the community as the primary stakeholders and custodians of the Chapel's heritage, empowering them to shape the research agenda and contribute their knowledge and perspectives. The research design incorporated iterative feedback loops, allowing for continuous refinement and adaptation based on community input and emerging findings. The findings of the research shall be disseminated through multiple channels, including community workshops, public presentations, academic publications, and online platforms, to ensure that the research is accessible to a wide audience. By prioritizing community involvement, this method seeks to overcome obstacles to

The research on the Amang Hinulid Chapel through heritage mapping necessitates a rigorous ethical framework to ensure the respect, protection, and accurate representation of the cultural heritage and the community associated with it. Prior informed consent was obtained from all participants, including local community members, religious leaders, and relevant stakeholders; this process involves clearly explaining the purpose of the research, the methods to be employed, the potential benefits and risks, and the rights of the participants to withdraw at a specified period of time without penalty. Confidentiality and anonymity of certain participants was strictly maintained by using pseudonyms or codes in data analysis and reporting, and any identifying information was securely stored and protected from unauthorized

2.2 Teacher's Monument

study employs multiple data collection methods to enable triangulation, thereby enhancing the reliability and validity of the findings. The data collection process includes archival research, field observations, site documentation, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions, each contributing unique insights into the monument's multifaceted significance. Archival research involves reviewing historical records, municipal documents, newspaper articles, photographs, and previous studies to trace the monument's origins, design, and development over time. Field observation and site documentation are conducted through on-site visits to record architectural features using detailed observation, measurements, and photo/video recording, which helps assess the monument's physical characteristics, materials, and stylistic influences. These spatial mapping techniques when integrated with historical narratives and oral histories, offer a comprehensive understanding of the cultural landscape and its evolution (Nanda & Khare, 2018). Furthermore, the collection of quantitative and qualitative data through various survey methods adds depth to the analysis, allowing for the examination of community perceptions and values associated with the monument.

Key informant interviews are conducted using semi-structured interviews with local historians, government officials, teachers and retired educators, elders and longtime residents, and cultural bearers and artists. These interviews serve to explore the monument's significance across various dimensions, including historical, social, political, spiritual, economic, scientific, and aesthetic aspects. Focus group discussions provide a platform for community members to collectively reflect on the monument's role in shaping local identity and fostering social cohesion. By triangulating data from diverse sources, the study aims to provide a holistic and nuanced understanding of the monument's cultural value and its impact on the community (Suprapti et al., 2020). The use of multiple data collection methods ensures that the research findings are robust and well-supported, reflecting the complexities and nuances of the monument's cultural significance. This methodological approach is essential for capturing the multifaceted dimensions of heritage sites, ensuring that both tangible and intangible aspects are thoroughly investigated (K.C. et al., 2018). Furthermore, architectural heritage has historical, memorial, cultural/ideological and aesthetic aspects (Ponomarenko & Ivanova, 2020). The detailed documentation and analysis of architectural features, materials, and stylistic influences provide a foundation for understanding the monument's historical context and its place within the broader cultural landscape (Zlot et al., 2013). Combining surveying and imaging techniques supported by Building Information Modeling could save time, reduce costs, errors and inconsistencies, and enhance the possibility of analyzing information regarding cultural sites (Lerones et al., 2021). Employing these surveying techniques further aids in observing the building's structure, recording changes and damages, and performing meaningful structural health assessments (Heß et al., 2017). Moreover, 3D models acquired through laser and structured light scanning, along with digital photogrammetry, are valuable in cultural heritage for archaeological surveys, museum collections, and packaging design (Morita & Bilmes, 2018). The use of terrestrial laser scanning allows for the quick acquisition of a substantial amount of 3D data, which can be

combined with high-resolution digital images (Duca et al., 2011) (Remondino et al., 2005). The integration of these technologies optimizes data collection efficiency, geometric accuracy, and visual quality of the collected 3D models (AlKheder et al., 2008). Laser scanning technology can be used to map historic buildings (Zhang et al., 2015). Laser scanning is increasingly important as a means of gathering in-situ geometric data, with a rising presence in the Architecture, Engineering and Construction industry (Sanhudo et al., 2019). This method illuminates a target with laser light and measures the reflection with a sensor to gauge distances (Rahaman, 2021). It is also useful for digitization, design and analysis of multistoried buildings (Bhatti et al., 2021). The research was conducted with strict adherence to established ethical research principles, ensuring the protection and respect of all participants (Ghimire, 2021).

2.3 La Inmaculada Concepcion de Quipayo

This approach allows for a holistic understanding of the convergence of tangible and intangible elements associated with the images (Kavoura & Bitsani, 2014). Qualitative methods, including case studies, will facilitate an in-depth exploration of the research topic through detailed data collection within a specific timeframe (Salim, 2021). Ethnographic techniques, focus group discussions, and qualitative interviews will be central to data collection (Crang & Cook, 2007). These methods align with qualitative research's emphasis on natural settings and the influence of environmental context (Austin & Sutton, 2014). This multifaceted approach is designed to capture the complexities of the research subject, providing a rich and nuanced understanding of the images of saints within the community (Malagon-Maldonado, 2014). Qualitative research methodologies like ethnography, grounded theory, and phenomenology will be employed (Froggatt, 2001). Such methodologies allow the investigator to be part of the study while enhancing the research outcomes (Grossoehme, 2014). This study will specifically employ consensual qualitative research, qualitative case studies, and phenomenological research (Im et al., 2023). This qualitative approach will utilize various data collection techniques, including open or closed interviews and focus groups (Guerra et al., 2015). This will provide an opportunity to reframe the participant's description of their own experience (Sacks, 2015). The qualitative case study methodology will provide a framework for investigating the complex phenomena within their contexts (Baxter & Jack, 2015). This approach enables the development of theories grounded in empirical data derived from real-world settings (Mendoza &

elders, students and other community members) in the mapping process; this has allowed for the inclusion of diverse perspectives and knowledge, as well as the identification of cultural assets that may not be immediately apparent to outsiders. This involved all the major stakeholders of the heritage through purposive selection of research participants. and other sources to identify and document cultural assets that have a historical significance. In this research, mapping involved tracing the lives of the significant personalities and to certain extent the community from which they belong. The archival method was the mode of data collection but the investigation has also included research participants who are considered experts (seniors, heirs and caretakers) of artefacts and records of the mapped heritage. exist within a community. This allows for the identification of key cultural actors and institutions, as well as the flows of information and resources that sustain heritage. The method assisted the researchers in the validation of reliability, accuracy, confirmability and credibility of research results. Alongside, the researchers utilized the standard cultural mapping (CMAP) forms of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) which required investigators to take into account (1) background information, (2) biography, and (3) significance. In accordance to the cultural mapping framework of NCCA and with the ethical conduct of research, this study adhered to certain principles as approved through the Research Division.

Across the cases, triangulation was achieved by comparing documentary and archival evidence, material/site observations, oral testimony, and community validation. Content and thematic analysis were used to identify recurring patterns of historical significance, social meaning, spirituality, aesthetic value, conservation, and tourism potential. The integrated article then compared the three cases to identify common heritage processes and site-specific differences. Claims regarding antiquity, provenance, miracles, and other matters derived from oral tradition are retained as community narratives rather than presented as scientifically verified facts. This distinction is especially important for the Quipayo image, whose exact age, wood species, pigments, and provenance require further scientific examination.

3. Results and Discussion

Across the three cases, cultural significance emerges from the interaction of physical heritage, collective memory, and continuing social practice. The findings are presented by heritage property and then synthesized comparatively to show how Calabanga's tangible heritage can support a connected, conservation-led tourism narrative.

3.1 Amang Hinulid Chapel: Built Religious Heritage and Pilgrimage

presents a modest yet spiritually compelling structure. Its unembellished exterior reflects its deep religious purpose, featuring a simple entrance and a rectangular layout constructed from traditional materials such as wood and concrete. The pitched roof enhances its classic, rural aesthetic. Inside, the Chapel houses the revered image of the dead Christ in the main prayer hall, complemented by smaller spaces for candle lighting and personal devotions. The low wooden ceiling and plain tiled floor contribute to a warm and intimate setting, maintained with care and cleanliness. Several sacred images are also placed within the Chapel, enhancing its contemplative atmosphere. Historically, the Chapel dates back to the early 1800s and has since become a well-known pilgrimage destination, especially during Lenten season and every first Friday of the month. Devotees gather to pray, ask for blessings, and join the traditional "pabasa" or chanting of Christ's Passion. The local community annually celebrates the feast of Amang Hinulid every September 7, reinforcing its cultural and spiritual significance.

is a key figure in preserving the Chapel's legacy. As a fourth-generation caretaker, she carries on the family's spiritual duty that traces back to Doña Bartola Repolito, her great-grandmother. According to family oral tradition, the sacred image of Amang Hinulid arrived from Spain aboard a galleon and was purchased for 500 pieces of silver. Doña Bartola, a native of Sta. Cruz, Laguna, was married to Kapitan Cleto of Calabanga. The image was entrusted to their niece Maria Panay, who later had a miraculous child, Gerarda Repolito. Following tradition, Gerarda chose her daughter born on a Friday—Rebecca—as the next custodian. Rebecca continues to uphold the sacred role with unwavering devotion.

involves a man delivering nipa leaves for a house he believed was commissioned by her father, Julio. Although Julio denied the request, the man claimed to have met a mestizo stranger who resembled the image of Amang Hinulid. Interpreting it as a divine sign, he left the nipa leaves as an offering. Days later, another man arrived with wood under a similar story, which was likewise donated. Skilled carpenters from different provinces, including Legazpi, were said to be drawn to the site by spiritual calling, voluntarily building the chapel beside the family home in 1931. Despite the constant lighting of candles, no fire ever damaged the wooden structure—a testament, they believe, to divine protection. Msgr. Francisco Reyes soon visited and celebrated the first Mass in the newly built chapel. The number of pilgrims increased steadily. In 1962, a Chinese businessman named Vicente Uy shared that Jesus had appeared to him in a dream, prompting him to visit Calabanga. Upon seeing the image, he wept and later donated funds to improve the chapel's roofing. The following year, he returned with news that a massive

fire had spared his house and store, which he attributed to the blessing of Amang Hinulid. These accounts, passed down by Aling Rebecca, reflect the enduring power of faith surrounding the Chapel. She also shares how a mysterious hole in the back of the image disappeared over time, as though healed—a sign of the divine, accordingly.

to preserve the Chapel fosters a strong sense of local identity, solidarity, and voluntary service. Historical. The Chapel's roots in the 17th century highlight its role in the continuity of Filipino Catholicism through colonial and post-colonial periods. Its narrative—traced through family history, miracles, and structural transformations—serves as a living archive of Calabanga's religious and cultural evolution. Events such as the building of the chapel and contributions from faithful devotees like Vicente Uy are milestones in its enduring story. Aesthetic. Though simple in appearance, the Chapel exudes an atmosphere of solemn beauty. Its wooden beams, low ceilings, and tiled floors create an intimate setting for prayer and reflection. The minimalistic design enhances its spiritual focus, drawing pilgrims into a peaceful environment that fosters introspection and reverence. Despite its modest size, the Chapel continues to accommodate vital religious activities, including Eucharistic celebrations, Lenten rituals, Ralakawan (Alay Lakad) pilgrimages, and the La Sagrada Montaja exhibit. To keep pace with the growing number of visitors, caretakers and community supporters have undertaken periodic renovations to maintain the Chapel's relevance, accessibility, and sacred ambiance. The sustained efforts to conserve the Amang Hinulid Chapel exemplify the community's deep commitment to safeguarding their cultural and religious legacy for future generations. Structural improvements, accessibility upgrades, and spiritual programming continue to enhance the Chapel's significance as a beacon of faith and heritage in Calabanga.

social, political, economic, spiritual, scientific, and aesthetic—reveals its multi-layered importance. From a historical standpoint, the Chapel represents a tangible link to the past, preserving memories and traditions that have been passed down through generations. Socially, it serves as a gathering place for the community, fostering a sense of belonging and solidarity. Politically, the Chapel may have played a role in local power dynamics, influencing community decisions and social movements. Economically, it attracts pilgrims and tourists, generating income for local businesses and supporting the livelihoods of community members. Spiritually, it provides a space for worship, reflection, and personal connection with the divine. Aesthetically, the Chapel's architecture and natural surroundings contribute to the area's visual appeal, attracting visitors and enhancing the overall quality of life. The traditional concepts of "religious duty" and "social obligation" are now intermingled with travelers with a less religious objective or a mixed motive agenda (Brunn & Gilbreath, 2015). Preserving the Chapel contributes to the sustainable development of the region by promoting cultural tourism and supporting local economies (Anuar et al., 2021). The exploration of the challenges and opportunities for sustainable tourism and economic development related to the Amang Hinulid Chapel is crucial for ensuring its long-term preservation and contribution to the community. Tourism can generate significant earnings for environmental protection and give economic value to cultural heritage (Perera, 2013). Heritage tourism can lead to high tourist arrivals and receipts, create multiplier effects within the industry, and provide employment opportunities for the local community (Chong & Balasingam, 2018). However, it also poses potential threats to the Chapel's physical integrity and cultural authenticity. Therefore, strategies for sustainable tourism must be implemented to balance economic benefits with the need to protect the site's cultural and natural resources. This entails implementing responsible tourism practices, such as managing visitor flow, promoting environmental conservation, and supporting local businesses. Involving local stakeholders in heritage management programs increases their values and willingness to participate in heritage preservation efforts. Additionally, collaboration and involvement among stakeholders,

stakeholder empowerment, and adaptive reuse approaches are essential for effective heritage management (Chong & Balasingam, 2018). Religious

potential to foster sustainable tourism and invigorate local economic development, presenting a compelling model for heritage conservation in the context of modern development. As heritage conservation and tourism increasingly converge, the Chapel exemplifies a harmonious blend of tradition and modernity, where spiritual devotion and cultural memory are preserved amidst ongoing social and infrastructural transformations. This convergence not only sustains the Chapel's cultural and spiritual values but also generates economic opportunities for the local community, creating a symbiotic relationship between heritage preservation and economic growth (Chong & Balasingam, 2018). Moreover, such integration enhances the site's appeal to a broader audience, including those interested in cultural heritage and sustainable tourism, thereby contributing to its long-term viability and relevance (Wahyuni et al., 2023). This intricate dynamic underscore the idea that the commodification of culture does not necessarily diminish its sanctity; rather, it can reinforce cultural identity and foster social integration within local communities (Syafrini et al., 2020). Ecotourism development stands out as a particularly relevant strategy for preserving nature and culture, while simultaneously providing economic benefits to local communities and governments, creating a sustainable cycle of preservation and prosperity (Girikallo et al., 2019). To ensure sustainable tourism, it is crucial to strike a balance between tourist satisfaction and environmental considerations, managing both resources and tourist needs effectively (Dewi et al., 2020).

Taken together, the evidence positions Amang Hinulid as living built heritage rather than merely an old chapel. The structure is sustained by a chain of caretaking, devotional practice, oral memory, and repeated community investment. Its tourism value therefore lies less in architectural monumentality than in the experience of place: pilgrims encounter a modest sacred setting whose meaning is narrated through family custodianship, Lenten practice, first-Friday devotion, prayer, and stories of favors and miracles. This makes interpretation essential. Tourism promotion that detaches the chapel from these practices would weaken the very cultural qualities that make the site distinctive.

3.2 Teacher's Monument: Postwar Civic Memory and Educational Heritage

Located at the intersection of Barangays San Francisco and San Pablo in Calabanga, Camarines Sur, the Teachers' Monument is a unique sculptural work that features a teacher with two students—one male and one female—modeled after real individuals from the 1950s. These three figures are positioned atop a three-layered triangular platform. A notable feature of the structure is the inscription "Dedicated to the Filipino Teachers." Directly beneath this, an embossed torchlight painted in green and gold represents the enduring symbols of education. Surrounding the monument is a modest garden with six medium-sized benches designed to accommodate both tourists and passersby. The area is equipped with streetlights for proper illumination. Standing behind the monument is a towering, old narra tree that adds natural character to the site. The monument was constructed between 1955 and 1956 to pay homage to Filipino educators. It is believed that the sculpted figures reflect actual individuals from that era. In his book Calabanga, Malanyaon (1993) featured a photograph that depicted the original placement of the monument at the front of the parish patio, just outside the gates of the Parish of Our Lady of La Porteria. In the 1990s, it was relocated to its present site, close to educational institutions like Calabanga Central School (now Calabanga West Central School) and San Lorenzo Ruiz Educational Center (now Dominican School of Calabanga). This move was largely prompted by a request from Dr. Maria DT. Sadia, then President of the Calabanga District Teachers and Employees Association (CADISTEA). She petitioned then Mayor Ruben B. Medroso to relocate the monument to preserve its dignity, as it had been disrespected by vendors who were hanging clothes and other items on it. The initiative to establish the

Teachers' Monument was spearheaded by Eulalio Menla Sr., who served as the District Supervisor of Calabanga from 1955 to 1956. The objective was to elevate the morale of the teaching profession. The individuals who served as models were Miss Josefina F. Dumalasa (Teacher), Erlindo Tordilla (male student and brother of Zenaida T. Bonete), and Eva Maria Salvosa-Fabricante (female student). Eva Maria Salvosa-Fabricante shared her personal recollection of why they were selected: at that time, the municipal mayor was Gerardo Dumalasa, Josefina's father; the school principal was Pedro Tordilla, Erlindo's father; and she was the granddaughter of Menla Sr. She also described the detailed photo-taking process that was conducted from all angles—front, side, and back—to ensure accurate sculptural representation. A complementary account can be found in the blog post "Watch Found First Monument Dedicated to Filipino Teachers - CBANGA360" by Danton H. Pascual. While Pascual corroborated that the monument was built in the 1950s, his version of the leadership involved differs and merits further verification.

The Teacher's Monument in Calabanga stands as a material embodiment of the Philippines during the mid-20th century, encapsulating the era's societal values and aesthetic sensibilities (Aguas, 2016). The monument's construction, which spanned from 1955 to 1956 under the supervision of District Supervisor Eulalio Menla Sr., occurred during a crucial period of national reconstruction after the devastation of World War II, indicating a renewed emphasis on education as a cornerstone of societal advancement. This period witnessed a surge in efforts to rebuild national identity and infrastructure, with education being perceived as a crucial tool for fostering civic responsibility and economic development. The monument's dedication to Filipino teachers underscores the elevated status and respect accorded to educators during this epoch, recognizing their vital role in shaping the minds of the youth and instilling values of patriotism and diligence. The selection of the parish patio, situated in front

relatable dimension, transforming it from a mere abstract symbol into a repository of lived experiences and local narratives. This deliberate act of immortalizing ordinary individuals elevates the monument's significance, turning it into a poignant reminder of the contributions made by everyday citizens to the collective identity of Calabanga and the nation as a whole. The photographic process used in modeling the figures further exemplifies the commitment to realism and accuracy prevalent in mid-20th century Philippine art and sculpture.

The evolution of built heritage is a multifaceted process, influenced by physical, socio-cultural, and environmental factors that collectively shape its identity and significance over time (Hodges, 2009). The monument's journey encapsulates the complex interplay between preservation, adaptation, and community involvement (Matthews & Grant-Smith, 2016; Oyarzún, 2017). The monument's relocation during the 1990s represents a pivotal moment, symbolizing a shift in its intended purpose and audience (Usmaedi et al., 2024). Initially enshrined within the sacred confines of the church, a space traditionally associated with religious reverence and spiritual contemplation, the monument's relocation closer to schools marked a strategic recontextualization (Croce et al., 2022). This repositioning sought to engage a younger demographic, fostering a sense of civic pride and historical awareness among students, effectively transforming the monument into an educational tool (Billore, 2021). This change also reflected a proactive response to address the challenges posed by vendors and informal settlers who were misusing the monument's surroundings, thereby compromising its dignity and accessibility (Zhong & Leung, 2019).

anticipation of the town's fiesta on September 8th, exemplify a community-driven approach to conservation (Araoz, 2011). These practices, while aimed at preserving the monument's visual appeal, have inadvertently altered its original appearance, raising pertinent questions about the balance between preservation and authenticity. The act of repainting, while seemingly benign, can introduce non-original

materials and techniques that deviate from the monument's historical fabric, potentially diminishing its intrinsic value. Despite facing the relentless onslaught of frequent typhoons and the potential for environmental degradation due to its proximity to a large tree, the monument has demonstrated remarkable structural integrity. This resilience underscores the robustness of its original construction and the efficacy of ongoing community-led preservation efforts. The integration of modern conservation techniques with traditional practices can further enhance the longevity and integrity of such monuments (Ejikeme et al., 2020). Physical preservation encounters considerable obstacles, as traditional materials like stone and wood are vulnerable to erosion over time, further complicating conservation strategies (Buragohain et al., 2025). The integration of advanced scientific techniques, such as non-destructive testing and material analysis, can offer valuable insights into the monument's composition and structural condition, enabling more informed conservation decisions (Dhingra et al., 2020).

The multifaceted significance of a local monument can be evaluated through several interconnected lenses, encompassing its historical, social, political, economic, spiritual, and scientific dimensions, and aesthetic qualities. The monument's historical significance lies in its unique embodiment of local history, specifically commemorating a profession deeply ingrained in the community's lived experiences (Kiriama & Onkoba, 2020). This is achieved through the incorporation of real individuals, transforming the monument from a mere symbol into an integral component of the town's historical narrative, deeply intertwined with familial and collective memory (Apaydın, 2017; Wunderlich et al., 2021). Socially, the monument functions as a visible expression of appreciation for educators, cultivating a sense of collective pride among both teachers and residents, particularly those with direct connections to the families memorialized (Herrick, 2014). This creates a focal point for community engagement, serving as a customary backdrop for photographs, storytelling, and intergenerational remembrance among students and alumni. Politically, the monument's origins trace back to the initiative of local education leaders and political figures, underscoring the role of governance in cultural commemoration. The active participation of district supervisors and municipal officials emphasizes the high value placed on public education as a cornerstone of nation-building during the 1950s (Bellentani & Panico, 2016). Economically, while the monument may not currently be a primary tourist destination, it holds considerable potential to attract educational field trips, historical tours, and heritage walks, thus establishing it as a valuable resource for cultural tourism (Cudny & Appelblad, 2019). Developing the surrounding area into a comprehensive heritage circuit could stimulate economic growth, benefiting local vendors, artisans, and service providers (Lewis et al., 2013). The monument's original placement near the church, coupled with the annual tradition of cleaning and preparing the site for the town fiesta, connects it to spiritual and religious practices, which highlights the local belief that honoring educators is a civic duty and a moral and spiritual imperative. This interweaving of the secular and the sacred elevates the monument's status within the community's value system. The detailed modeling methods implemented in the 1950s, including comprehensive photo documentation from various angles, represent an early application of scientific principles to public sculpture. This rigorous approach to documentation and construction highlights a commitment to accuracy and longevity, aligning the monument's creation with

based development, encounters significant obstacles that must be addressed to ensure its sustainable integration into the local tourism and educational ecosystem (Vera et al., 2020). A primary concern revolves around the monument's preservation, as repetitive repainting, coupled with relentless environmental exposure, poses a continuous threat to its structural integrity and aesthetic appeal (Brooks, 2015). The monument's vulnerability is exacerbated by the absence of formal recognition or proactive promotion as a designated heritage site, hindering access to crucial resources and protective measures necessary for its long-term conservation (Dhingra et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2022). This lack of formal

status undermines its potential to attract both domestic and international tourists interested in cultural heritage, thereby limiting its economic impact on the local community (Abdullahi et al., 2019).

opportunities for fostering sustainable tourism and bolstering local economic development. The monument's intrinsic historical and cultural value positions it ideally for transformation into a prominent local heritage landmark, seamlessly integrated into educational curricula and cultural tourism programs (Munjal, 2019). By weaving the monument's narrative into the fabric of local education, a sense of ownership and responsibility can be instilled in younger generations, ensuring its appreciation and preservation for posterity. The monument is ideal to become a focal point for storytelling initiatives and expertly guided tours centered around its rich history. Such endeavors not only foster a deeper understanding of local heritage among both youth and visitors but also stimulate economic activity through tourism-related services.

The Teacher's Monument differs from the two religious cases because its primary commemorative language is civic and educational. Yet the mapping shows that it is similarly sustained by intangible associations: memories of the real people represented in the sculpture, stories of its creation and relocation, annual maintenance, school-related use, and the symbolic connection between teaching and community progress. Its relocation nearer to schools can be read as a recontextualization of heritage rather than simple displacement, because the new setting reinforces its pedagogical meaning. At the same time, repeated repainting illustrates the tension between community care and conservation authenticity. Well-intentioned maintenance can preserve visibility while altering original finishes, underscoring the need for conservation guidance.

For tourism, the monument is most viable as part of an educational heritage walk or municipal cultural circuit rather than as a stand-alone destination. Interpretation can connect the postwar history of public education, the biographies of the local models, the monument's artistic production, and its changing location. Such a circuit can encourage longer visitor engagement with the town center and create opportunities for guides, small vendors, artisans, and educational programming. However, the study does not establish current visitor demand or economic impact; these remain areas for subsequent tourism and carrying-capacity research.

3.3 La Inmaculada Concepcion de Quipayo: Movable Sacred Heritage and Living Marian Devotion

This enduring presence underscores its significance not only as an object of religious devotion but also as a tangible link to the past, embodying the spiritual and cultural heritage of the region (D, 2016). The image's antiquity is further substantiated by its unique artistic features, reflecting the craftsmanship and aesthetic sensibilities prevalent during the Spanish colonial era (Mejía, 2020). These artistic elements provide valuable insights into the historical context of its creation and the evolution of religious art in the Bicol Region (González, 2021) (Jewell & Ebener, 2025). The image serves as a cultural artifact that encapsulates the religious devotion and artistic traditions of the Ilonggo people (Pedroso, 2020). The image plays a crucial role in festivals, which highlights residents' religiosity (Rosario, 2019). The image's significance is amplified by its central role in local religious practices and traditions, fostering a sense of community and shared identity among devotees (Tiatco, 2020). These practices, deeply rooted in popular religiosity, demonstrate how the Church has historically utilized religious images to encourage devotion and address theological issues (Navarro, 2013). Its role as a source of cultural identity may have been influenced by the Catholic Church during the Spanish colonial era (Montera & Lin, 2018). Furthermore, the image's provenance within Quipayo, the first Christian settlement, positions it as a foundational element in the religious history of the area. Its continuous veneration reinforces its role as a symbol of faith and a repository of collective memory for the community. Its cultural importance lies in its

representation of historical and tourism identity (Izaguirre, 2009). Its accessibility to both locals and tourists alike enhances its position as a significant cultural and historical landmark. Its presence is integral to understanding the interplay between religious conversion, artistic expression, and community formation in the Bicol Region. The image is a

bolstering community resilience and providing spiritual solace amidst a constantly evolving world. Its presence also indicates that religion is not confined to the private sphere but is openly expressed in the community's way of life (Torre & Martín, 2016). This architectural philosophy enhances the Catholicism symbolism within the basilica, reinforcing the faith of the parishioners and prospective priests (Sembiring et al., 2021). Conserving these symbols ensures the preservation of tangible and intangible cultures, allowing future generations to appreciate the community's heritage (Estacio et al., 2021). Its presence in the community contributes to the growing number of district-scale or structure-scale restorations and conservations, improving the assets of historical origin (Yulu & Kapan, 2020). The image of La Inmaculada Concepcion can be viewed as a crucial component of this cultural and historical memory, as its preservation helps maintain the essence of the community's identity (Montejano- Castillo & Salcedo, 2015). Its role as a symbol of faith is comparable to other religious structures, such as Byzantine churches, mosques, and Roman pantheons, each representing a unique facet of the divine and serving as a focal point for community identity and spiritual expression Its role also preserves collective memories and

nature of faith and heritage, highlighting the necessity of maintaining these cultural assets for future generations (Marcelo et al., 2021). This preservation ensures the retention of cultural heritage, and sustains the significance of the structure (Morganti et al., 2019) (Zheng et al., 2024). As such, the image represents a defined space for the presentation of faith, embedded in the community and creation (Ekroll, 2015). Its historical and cultural significance is integral to shaping urban identity and distinguishing it from other locations (Nursanty et al., 2024). The church represents both creation and salvation, serving as a connection between the terrestrial and divine realms (Ekroll, 2015). It functions as an intergenerational repository of cultural meaning, forming an important part of the cultural history of the settlement and acting as a dispenser of cultural identity (Matthews & Grant-Smith, 2016). These spaces epitomize the integration of religion and culture, offering opportunities for intercultural dialogue and cohesion through shared practices (Hosagrahar et al., 2016).

craftsmanship and facial expression of the image do not bear strong resemblance to locally carved Inmaculada Concepcion images in Bicol or elsewhere in the Philippines, suggesting that the piece may have European origin or strong European influence, possibly brought through theManila-Acapulco Galleon Trade or early missionary shipments.

artistic sensibilities (Guzmán, 2022). The image is deeply theological and iconographic: The white robe signifies Mary’s purity, while the blue sash symbolizes her pivotal role in the divine plan of salvation. At her feet are the three Archangels mentioned in the Bible—Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael—underscoring her celestial queenship. She is depicted standing on a crescent moon, in reference to Revelation 12:1, and crowned with twelve stars, a traditional representation of her as the Queen of Apostles and Evangelization. These iconographic details reveal a sophisticated understanding of Mariology and sacred art, demonstrating not only religious devotion but also theological catechesis embedded in artistic forms. This blend of European symbolism with local craftsmanship would have served to create a powerful visual and spiritual focal point for the community, deeply resonant with both imported religious concepts and familiar artistic expressions (Sánchez, 2020) (Egenhofer et al., 1994). More than an artifact, the image of La Inmaculada Concepcion de Quipayo is a living heritage—continually revered in the daily, seasonal, and annual rhythms of parish life. Unlike other parishes where historical images are withdrawn from public view, the original image remains enthroned at the central retablo, reinforcing her continued

presence in the spiritual consciousness of the faithful. Devotion is woven into everyday practice: The daily 5:00 AM Rosary, Saturday Salve Regina chant with priestly incense offering, Month of May Flores de Mayo celebrations with children offering flowers, and elders chanting oraciones in ancient Bicol—preserving oral traditions passed down through generationsThese practices highlight the central role of the image in the community's spiritual life, fostering a deep connection to Marian devotion (Jewell & Ebener, 2025). The image therefore acts as a locus of cultural and religious identity, deeply embedded in the collective memory of the parish (Navarro, 2013). The continuous veneration of La Inmaculada Concepcion underscores the burgeoning

The combined evidence identifies La Inmaculada Concepcion de Quipayo as a convergence of movable and intangible heritage. The image remains publicly venerated rather than withdrawn from devotional use, and its cultural significance is renewed through the daily, weekly, seasonal, and annual rhythms of parish life. Daily rosaries, Saturday rites, Flores de Mayo, ancestral Bicol prayers, barangay visits, processions, novenas, and the December solemnity transform the object from a static artifact into a continuing participant in community religious life. This continuity is particularly important for heritage transmission because elders, children, clergy, families, and visitors encounter the image through repeated practice rather than through museum display alone.

The report estimates the image to be approximately 200 to 300 years old on the basis of oral traditions and historical accounts and notes possible European origin or strong European influence. These propositions are significant research leads but should not be treated as settled provenance. The recommendation for formal dating, wood-species verification, and pigment analysis is therefore central to future conservation work. Scientific study can complement, rather than displace, oral history by distinguishing what is materially demonstrable from what communities have remembered and transmitted.

Faith-based tourism is a plausible extension of the image’s existing devotional geography, especially when linked with Quipayo Church and other Marian and pilgrimage sites in Calabanga. Yet the sacred image should not be reduced to a tourism commodity. Visitor interpretation should foreground liturgical context, community reverence, local prayer traditions, and appropriate behavior in sacred space. Training local interpreters and coordinating tourism schedules with parish activities can help balance access with worship, while digitization of novena booklets, hymns, oral histories, and photographs can broaden educational access without placing unnecessary physical pressure on the original object.

3.4 Cross-Case Synthesis: Inscribing Tangible Heritage and Charting Tourism Potentials

The three mapped resources demonstrate different registers of tangible heritage—chapel, monument, and sacred image—but their cultural value is consistently relational. The Amang Hinulid Chapel is animated by devotion to the dead Christ and pilgrimage practices; the Teacher’s Monument is animated by educational memory, local biographies, and civic commemoration; and the Quipayo image is animated by Marian prayer, processions, chants, and the liturgical calendar. In each case, tangible heritage provides a durable anchor for practices and narratives, while those practices and narratives keep the material heritage socially meaningful.

The cases also form a complementary tourism portfolio rather than three competing attractions. Amang Hinulid supports pilgrimage and Lenten visitation; the Teacher’s Monument lends itself to heritage walks, educational field trips, and interpretation of Calabanga’s postwar civic history; and La Inmaculada Concepcion de Quipayo can anchor carefully managed Marian pilgrimage and faith-heritage interpretation. Their combined potential is strongest when presented as a cultural circuit that connects faith, education, artistry, memory, and community life.

Tourism development, however, should remain subordinate to conservation and cultural meaning. The component studies repeatedly identify the need for formal documentation and recognition, preventive and expert-guided conservation, digitization of associated records and oral histories, heritage education, community participation, and trained interpretation. For sacred properties, visitor management must preserve reverence and liturgical function; for the civic monument, restoration and maintenance should protect authenticity rather than merely improve appearance.

Viewed together, the cases show the planning value of cultural mapping. Mapping makes visible not only where heritage is located, but also who carries its stories, what practices sustain it, which institutions share responsibility for it, and what forms of visitation are culturally appropriate. This makes cultural mapping a practical bridge between heritage inventory, conservation policy, community education, and sustainable local tourism.

The cross-case comparison reveals three complementary forms of heritage experience. Amang Hinulid offers pilgrimage centered on the dead Christ, family custodianship, and Lenten religiosity. The Teacher's Monument offers civic remembrance centered on educators, postwar social values, and public space. La Inmaculada Concepcion de Quipayo offers Marian devotion centered on a historic sacred image, parish ritual, and intergenerational prayer. A municipal heritage circuit can therefore move visitors across different registers of Calabanga's identity—faith, education, artistry, memory, and community life—rather than presenting heritage as a single theme.

This complementarity strengthens tourism potential because it supports varied forms of visitation: pilgrimage, educational field trips, heritage walks, cultural interpretation, photography, local storytelling, and parish-based encounters. It also allows visitation to be distributed across sites instead of concentrated in one location. However, the mapped properties have different thresholds for tourism use. The chapel and Marian image remain active sacred resources whose primary function is worship; visitor management must therefore defer to religious practice. The Teacher's Monument is a public civic site and can accommodate more open interpretive use, but its material authenticity still requires protection.

Community participation is the common governance principle across all three cases. Caretakers, elders, teachers, parish leaders, local officials, cultural workers, youth, and descendants hold different kinds of knowledge and authority. Cultural mapping makes these relationships visible and can help local government and heritage institutions design management arrangements that do not transfer interpretive control away from the community. This is particularly important when tourism introduces commercial incentives that may simplify, sensationalize, or standardize local narratives.

The findings also suggest that conservation and tourism should be planned as one process rather than sequential activities in which a site is first promoted and only later protected. Baseline documentation, condition assessment, heritage recognition, conservation protocols, interpretation, visitor management, and community benefit-sharing should precede or accompany promotion. Digital documentation can support this process by creating records for conservation and educational use, while physical interventions should be guided by qualified conservation expertise. For the Teacher's Monument, this includes careful treatment of repainting and finishes; for the Quipayo image, preventive conservation and scientific material study are priorities; and for Amang Hinulid, structural care must remain compatible with its continuing devotional function.

Finally, the three cases demonstrate why tangible heritage should not be equated with material fabric alone. A chapel without its devotees, a monument without the biographies and educational memory it commemorates, or a Marian image without prayer and ritual would each lose a substantial part of its heritage value. The mapping process therefore "inscribes" tangible heritage by documenting the social

relations, narratives, and practices that make material resources meaningful. In this sense, tourism potential is not simply a property of the site; it emerges from the capacity to interpret these relationships responsibly for visitors while sustaining them for the community.

4. Conclusion

The integrated findings establish the Amang Hinulid Chapel, the Teacher's Monument, and La Inmaculada Concepcion de Quipayo as complementary expressions of Calabanga's tangible heritage. Their importance lies not simply in age, architecture, sculptural form, or material survival, but in the dense networks of memory, devotion, education, identity, and stewardship that surround them. The Chapel demonstrates how a built religious site becomes living heritage through pilgrimage and oral tradition. The Teacher's Monument demonstrates how a postwar civic structure can preserve local biographies and collective esteem for education. The Quipayo image demonstrates how movable sacred heritage can remain culturally vital through continuing public veneration and intergenerational ritual transmission. Together, the cases support an understanding of heritage conservation in which tangible and intangible dimensions are inseparable. They also reveal viable tourism potentials—faith-based visitation, heritage circuits, educational tours, and community interpretation—provided that tourism is designed around authenticity, sacredness, community participation, and long-term conservation. Cultural mapping is therefore not only a means of recording Calabanga's heritage; it is a means of inscribing local memory into planning and charting culturally responsible pathways for sustainable tourism.

The integrated analysis strengthens the case for treating Calabanga's heritage as a connected cultural landscape. The three properties differ in material type, historical trajectory, custodial arrangement, and tourism function, yet all demonstrate that heritage is continuously produced through use, memory, care, and interpretation. Their future value therefore depends on maintaining the relationships between people and heritage, not simply preserving physical objects. Cultural mapping provides the evidence base for this approach because it records both material characteristics and the community knowledge that gives them significance.

For local tourism planning, the most defensible strategy is a conservation-led heritage circuit rather than isolated site promotion. Such a circuit can link pilgrimage, Marian devotion, civic history, and educational heritage while allowing each property to retain its own protocols and meanings. The objective should not be to maximize visitation at all costs, but to create meaningful encounters that reinforce heritage awareness, support local livelihoods where appropriate, and generate resources and constituencies for conservation. In this way, charting tourism potentials and inscribing tangible heritage become mutually reinforcing tasks.

5. Recommendations and Implications

An integrated conservation and tourism framework should be developed for the three heritage resources. Priority actions emerging from the component studies include formal heritage recognition where appropriate; baseline and continuing documentation of physical condition; expert-guided preventive conservation; digitization of photographs, oral histories, devotional materials, and other associated records; and community-based monitoring.

Heritage education should connect the three sites through locally grounded learning materials, guided walks, pilgrimage interpretation, and intergenerational storytelling. Teachers, parish stakeholders, elders,

cultural workers, youth, and local government personnel can serve as co-interpreters so that tourism narratives remain rooted in community knowledge rather than being reduced to promotional descriptions.

Tourism initiatives should differentiate the character of each property. Sacred sites require reverent visitor protocols and coordination with parish life; the Teacher's Monument requires historically accurate civic and educational interpretation. A linked Calabanga tangible-heritage circuit can nevertheless present the three as parts of one cultural landscape, creating opportunities for local guides, artisans, vendors, and service providers while dispersing visitor benefits.

Further research should address evidence gaps identified in the component studies. These include scientific material analysis and dating where warranted, particularly for the Quipayo image; comparative research on teachers' monuments and other postwar civic memorials; systematic condition assessment of built heritage; visitor and carrying-capacity studies; and evaluation of the social and economic effects of heritage-tourism interventions.

At the municipal level, these actions can be organized through a shared heritage-management plan that identifies custodianship, conservation responsibilities, documentation standards, interpretation protocols, visitor-management measures, and mechanisms for community participation. The plan should distinguish verified historical evidence from oral tradition while preserving both as important layers of heritage knowledge. Any formal cultural-property nomination should be based on the applicable legal criteria and supported by appropriate technical documentation.

For publication and future research, the study would benefit from a subsequent phase that measures visitor profiles, willingness to participate in heritage circuits, local economic linkages, resident attitudes toward tourism, and site-specific carrying capacities. These data would complement the present qualitative mapping and allow the tourism potentials identified here to be tested empirically. Scientific examination of materials and provenance, particularly for the Quipayo image, would also strengthen claims about antiquity and origin and provide a firmer basis for conservation decisions.

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