

A University in Northern Philippines: A Throwback

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ABSTRACT

This study traced the roots of the university from its humble beginning as an educational institution through a visual research called “Rephotography”. It stimulated a throwback in time showing several landmarks and places that play a significant role in the transformation of the university. A qualitative visual sociological research method approach was used comparing photographs. An interview with a former administrator who has enough knowledge was conducted on these landmarks to determine their impact and significance. It was noted by the key informant that study rooms of what is now known as University of Northern Philippines (UNP) were conducted in various places due to lack of sufficient classroom facilities. The output of this study unwrapped the door to consciousness and preservation of the landmarks that were used during the early years of UNP as an educational institution. This as shown by Photograph Sets 1-8 whereby private houses and edifices were offered to be used as classrooms by the accommodating owners. These photographs shall provide a “collection memorabilia” of what was left as privileged circumstances of a growing University. The establishment of a repository area where these precious photographs could be archived is recommended.

Keywords: *social science, fine arts, rephotography, descriptive research, geographical map*

INTRODUCTION

This study traced the roots of the University of Northern Philippines in Vigan City from its humble beginning as an educational institution through a visual research called “Rephotography.” Rephotography is an act of taking a photograph at same location where a previous photograph was taken. It is a presentation of two pictures taken from different time showing two situations like “then and now” (Soria, 2014). The “Thens” are collected photographs from previous administrators who are still alive and witnessed the university’s turning point. While the “Nows” are produce of modern technology. This research provides the historical significance of what it means to have 1906 and 1952 dates in the university seal. Stimulated travel back in time showing several landmarks and places that took place as part of its transformation into a university. Even those identified sites which cannot be traced anymore that once part of the university’s social changes are presented. It is because photographs are memories and important documents which will link the past to the present. The challenges of the old pictures are just negatives extracted by today’s digital technology to

present the old photos into positive films, although, the film resolution by grains are unlikely incomparable to the digital resolution by pixels of the present technology. This study was disseminated through a photo exhibit. The photograph showcased evolution of the university and hopefully will create awareness to the community that these structures located in the downtown area are once utilized during the early beginning as an educational institution. As part of its sustainable awareness of the structures outside the school, there should be an agreement between the university and the local government unit to transcribe the structure's contribution with the consent of the owner. The photographs will become a collection to be kept in the university museum and archives, and be posted in the University website showing its 100 years of existence as an educational institution.

The study is a qualitative visual sociological research that showcases the evolution of the University of Northern Philippines. Specifically, it (1) presents the evolution and historical significance of the different sites of the university through photograph in order to raise awareness on the institution's development; (2) describes each photograph based on its presentation through the "Then" and "Now"; (3) discusses the historical significance and impact of the different photographic sites; and (4) conveys concerns to the scientific community on raising public awareness on the conservation/preservation of structures and landmarks.

The generation of today use the term "throwback" in popular social media site to recall memories and flashback's memorable moments through photos. Historicity and ideas of collective memory, consciousness and self-reflectivity of the concept and practice, are all important for sustaining one's cultural heritage (Norman, 1994). It is a way of revisiting the same place of long history at a different time through visual arts or photo-documentation. The importance of visual sociology like the use of photographs, film, and video to study visual artifacts in a society is magnified (Harper, 2001). This kind of study includes analyzing relationship between visual sociology, anthropology and documentary photography. Visual sociology through documentary photography was used to trace traditions over a hundred years ago in Europe. The importance of a photograph relies on what it presents that can be learned from collected historical practices of people involved in institutions (Tinkler, 2013). In comparative photography, Hall (2001) states that comparison photo monitoring of existing conditions were compared with conditions shown in a set of photographs, while repeated photography was characterized as the way of taking photographs of the same landscape, tract of ground. Rephotography uses both the sciences and the arts in studying history of practical and theoretical importance (Klett et. al., 2003). Rephotography was established to understand and document environmental change and stability. Since the discovery of Rephotography in 1977, Hales (1987) mentioned that it is already called Rephotography. In Rephotographic Survey Project, he uses this term for the 120 government survey photographs that he conducted like the American West

project which was first recorded in 1870's (Klett, 1987). The project successfully presented a precise rephotographs of the site, and reshoot them after a century of the old west. Rephotography is a useful visual method of researchers in sociology and the visual communication that aims to represent social investigation of changes (Rose, 2007). Common approaches are used like photographs of places, participants and the function or processes examining elements of continuity. Based on the Heritage Homeowner's Preservation Manual of UNESCO, the structures in Photograph Set No. 1 to Photograph Set No. 7 are under the 17.25 hectares (figure 1) of zoning area ordinance (Wing, 2009). These structures are identified and included in the historic core and buffer zone that qualify them to be included in the category of Historic Urban Sites and Heritage Groups under the Hoi An Protocol. This means that the structures inside the area are cultural property category under Article 1 of the 1972 World Heritage Convention.



Figure 1. The 17.25 Hectares of Protected Core and Buffer Zone Area

METHODOLOGY

This study made use of historical, descriptive and visual research methods. It presented old photograph collection borrowed from **Mr. BONIFACIO ROSALES**. He started in service in 1948 and retired in the university on September 30, 1985, as the Executive Vice President. However, these old photographs were extracted from an “Ektachrome” film negatives designed for carousel slide projectors. The “Ektachrome” negatives were scanned at a high resolution through a flatbed scanner to make the negative ready for digital presentation. The old pictures were just negatives extracted through a scanner and present the results into positive photos. The film resolution by grains is unlikely incomparable to the digital resolution by pixels of the present technology. This study compared photographs to show the historical roots of the University. Social constructivism is employed to experience the social changes as the university started as Trade School in 1906 until it became a Level IV state University. The Rephotography was taken closely to where the previous photograph was taken. Interviews provided necessary information to support the set of photographs that were presented in this paper. The visual comparison using Rephotography in the history of the University of Northern Philippines started from humble beginnings as a Trade School until the Republic Act 4449 signed in 1965 turning the old Ilocos Sur School of Arts and Trade into a state University called the University of Northern Philippines. However, there are some photos that could not be captured exactly at the same location because of the presence of structural barriers that rise beside the subject. There are challenges in Rephotography like in the case of urban changes in the scenes (Klett, 1987). This happens when the original buildings to be reshot have been completely obstructed by the presence of subsequent structures. The Rephotographer still finds the closest point to shoot the original view to duplicate the original position of the previous photographer. The modern cameras today like the Digital Single Lens Reflex (DSLR) differ from older lenses. A Rephotographer should consider into an account that the range and capability of the lens and the depth of field in the composition. The Rephotographer has taken the shot where the old photography has taken to align the exact composition in comparing the “Then” and “Now” presentation of the significant evidence of the university.

The map below shows the location of the different sites identified with the evolution of the University of Northern Philippines.

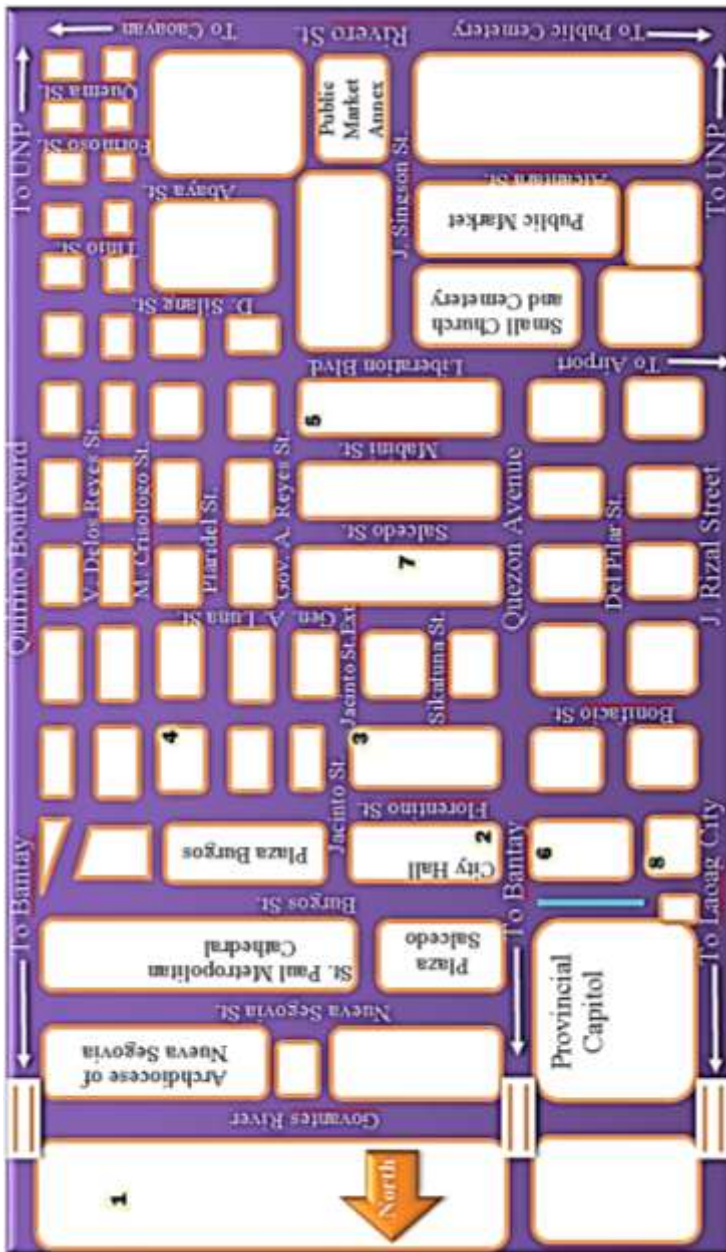


Figure 2. Geographical Map

Legend:



Bridge

- 1 Pres. Elpidio Quirino Stadium
- 2 Vigan Culture and Trade Center (VCTC)
- 3 Verzosa Building
- 4 JTC Grocery former Kairuz Building
- 5 Formoso Building
- 6 Gregoria Rivera Memorial Library
- 7 Ignacio Florendo y Singson Building
- 8 Burgos East Memorial School

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The humble beginnings of the University started as the old Vigan High School. **Mr. BONIFACIO ROSALES** said that the buildings kept transferring because the university had no permanent structures constructed yet. For example, in 1949, the school used the 2nd Floor of the Verzosa Building as Academic Building and Drawing Room with the permission of the owner **Dr. VINCENT VERZOSA** under the administration of **Mrs. CARIDAD SIPIN-VERZOSA** as the Academic Department Head.

Photograph Set No. 1. VIGAN HIGH SCHOOL SHOP DEPARTMENT



THEN (1906)

1906. The Vigan High School Department was later transformed to the Vigan Sports Complex which was situated at corner Quezon Avenue and Florentino Street.

The Shop Department, headed by Mr. McCOMB, an American, taught woodworking and drawing and it was created during the Administration of Governor FELIX ANGCO. It became the Administration Building of the Ilocos Sur Trade School (ISTS) in 1935.



NOW

Now, the former Sports Complex is renamed Vigan Culture and Trade Center (VCTC). It is adjacent to the Vigan Heritage Hall. Conferences, seminars, workshops, theatrical presentations and exhibits are held at the VCTC.

Photograph Set No. 2. VIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC BUILDING



THEN (1906)

1906. This is one of the buildings that UNPians just happen to pass by every time without noticing that it contributed to the school's pre-university days.

The structure was maintained but did not have much alteration and change in the color. The building was formerly occupied as the Vigan High School's Academic Building way back in 1906.



NOW

The former Vigan High School Building is now a warehouse of Tan Pue Hardware leased by the owner **Engr. ANTONIO FORMOSO**.

Photograph Set No. 3. VIGAN TRADE SCHOOL ACADEMIC BUILDING



THEN (1910)

1910. The Vigan Trade School Academic Building formerly the Vigan High School Shop Department was converted into another school known as Vigan Trade School. Intermediate course of instruction was offered with Academic classes conducted in the ground floor of the building.



NOW

The former Vigan Trade School became the National Library branch named GREGORIA RIVERA Memorial Library. This is located along Quezon Avenue.

Photograph Set No. 4. VIGAN TRADE SCHOOL



THEN (1927)

1927. The Vigan Trade School was changed to Ilocos Sur Trade School which led to the opening of the Secondary Trade School. The Ignacio Florendo building located at Salcedo Street was used as Academic Building.

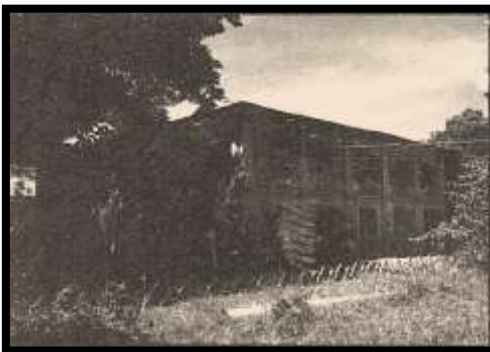
The Ilocos Sur Trade School (ISTS) was under the administration of Mr. Genaro Pedro in 1928.



NOW

In the 90's, the Ignacio Florendo y Singson Building was leased by the former Macro Computer Center now the Macro Computer College.

Photograph Set No. 5. ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT BUILDING



THEN

1936-1937. The Academic Department Building (Vigan Trade School) was moved from Ignacio Florendo y Singson Building to the former Provincial Dormitory located at Fr. Jose Burgos Street adjacent to the Burgos Museum.



NOW

At present, the former Academic Department Building is still used as an educational institution serving basic education known as the Burgos East Central School.

Photograph Set No. 6. ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT AND DRAWING CLASSES



THEN (1949)

1949. The 2nd floor of the former Christian Hospital owned by **Dr. VINCENT VERZOSA** was used as Academic Department and Drawing Classes. The building was located at corner Bonifacio Street and Jacinto Street.

In 1948, Mr. Rosales entered service under Mrs. **CARIDAD SIPIN-VERZOSA** as the Academic Department Head. In 1949, the Verzosa Building owned by Dr. **VINCENT VERZOSA** accommodated the school to use the second floor as Academic Building and Drawing Room.



NOW

The Verzosa Building was leased by Dr. **SEAN VERA CRUZ**, Eljins Tailoring, Jo-Lai Internet Cafe and JRS Express.

Photograph Set No. 7. FORMER DRAWING ROOM



THEN (1949)

1949. The Kairuz Building was also used for Drawing Classes. It was located at corner MENA CRISOLOGO Street and Bonifacio Street. The building formerly became Breadwinner Bakery.



NOW

The Kairuz Building became Breadwinner Bakery in the 80's and at present it is now the JTC Grocery Store Heritage Village branch.

Photograph Set No. 8. ACADEMIC AND DRAWING CLASSES



THEN (1954)

1954. The Quirino Stadium in Bantay, Ilocos Sur was also used for Academic and Drawing Classes for more than one year of the Ilocos Sur Trade School (ISTS) and then later became the National School of Arts and Trade (NSAT) by House Bill 1129 on June 14, 1954. Then the NSAT was later transformed into North Luzon School of Arts and Trade (NLSAT) authored by Congressman FLORO S. CRISOLOGO under R. A. 647.



NOW

The President ELPIDIO QUIRINO Stadium in Bantay, Ilocos Sur is usually flooded during rainy season so it is now fully renovated and restored to comply with the standard of a sports complex in preparation for the ASEAN Integration.

Photograph Set No. 9. COLLEGE OF TEACHER EDUCATION



NOW

The Bachelor of Science in Industrial Education (BSIE) program is now accredited level 3 program together with other course offerings like Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED), Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSE). The youngest among the programs is Bachelor of Library and Information Science which is accredited level 1. To maintain the Laboratory Schools, the Antonio Luna Hall housed the College of Teacher Education and the Laboratory Grade School and High School which are currently under the K to 12 program.

Photograph Set No. 10. COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES



THEN (1967)

1967. Bachelor of Arts was opened at Father JOSE BURGOS Hall in UNP.

The building was twice burnt.



NOW

After surviving two fires, the Fr. JOSE BURGOS Hall in UNP was restored to house the Department of Languages and Humanities, Social Sciences and Mathematics. To the left is the College of Communication and Information Technology and to the right is the Burgos Hall Annex.

Photograph Set No. 11. COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION AND ACCOUNTANCY



THEN (1971)

1971. Bachelor of Science in Business Administration was opened and housed at **VICENTE ENCARNACION** Hall.



NOW

The **VICENTE ENCARNACION** Hall is still used by the College of Business Administration and Accountancy. The University President Dr. GILBERT R. ARCE also used a part of the ground floor as his temporary office during the construction of the Administration building. The President's temporary office is now occupied by Quality Assurance and Accreditation Center personnel. The new Administration Building was constructed to house administrative offices.

Photograph Set No. 12. LEONA FLORENTINO HALL



THEN

1968. The 1st program that was housed in Florentino Hall in UNP is the Bachelor of Science in Nursing. In 1976, the Bachelor of Science in Criminology is the 2nd program to occupy the same building and in 1978, the 3rd program assigned to Florentino Hall is Bachelor of Science in Social Work.



NOW

The building is now serving the College of Criminal Justice, College of Social Work and the College of Teacher Education. The College of Criminal Justice and Social Work merged and the College of Nursing is housed in the College of Health and Sciences Building.

Photograph Set No. 13. INSTITUTE OF FINE ARTS



THEN (1971)

1981. The Institute of Fine Arts became a distinct and separate unit and occupied the **JUAN LUNA Hall Annex**.



NOW

2004. The Institute of Fine Arts became College of Fine Arts which offers Bachelor of Fine Arts major in Painting and Bachelor of Science in Interior Design.

2015. The former College of Fine Arts was renamed College of Fine Arts and Design.

Photograph Set No. 14. Roque Ablan Hall



THEN (1974)

1974. ROQUE ABLAN Hall which was the building for Graduate Courses.



NOW

The ground floor is used for Child-minding classes while the 2nd floor is used for Kindergarten and Laboratory High School Drafting Classes.

The results of the rephotographic survey was exhibited in the university's 50th Golden Anniversary celebration on October 12 to 16, 2015. The President of the university initiated the construction of a new university museum in which the rephotography collection will be showcased and archived.

CONCLUSIONS

Since the discovery of Rephotography by Mark Klett in 1977, the procedure was still a precise image-based photographic documentary research adapted to the present. The old photograph collections kept were memories that define the historical evolution of the present day development of structures. The output of the Rephotography opens the door to awareness of the structures that were used during UNP's early years as an educational institution. These structures still exist today. Most of these structures were old Spanish houses and are now modified for commercial utilization like in Photograph Set no. 1. Although not all the structures are open for public consumption as shown in Photograph Set no. 2 because it belongs to a private individual. Photograph Set no. 3 shows that some of the structures became government enterprises and landmarks. Other structures are now utilized for commercial lease like in Photograph Set no. 4 and Photograph Set no. 6. Other buildings remain serving as education classrooms like in Photograph Set no. 5. In Photograph Set no. 7, one of the old buildings was fully restored for commercial consumption and the site is located at the World Heritage area in compliance to the building conservation policies of the city government. Not all the early buildings were utilized for business and commercial purposes, Photograph Set no. 8 shows that the structure is now renovated to serve as a venue for sports. The building that housed the earliest program of the University was renovated to give a better quality of education in Photograph Set no. 9. Photograph Set nos. 10 and 13 as shown by the outcome of Rephotography did not get the exact location and clear shot due to intervening structures near the subjects. Modification of the building and presence of modern landscape alter the original appearance the building as shown in Photograph Set nos. 13 and 14. The set of old pictures shows aging through the harsh tropical environment. Hence, the technology of using the film resolution by grains is unlikely incomparable to the digital resolution by pixels of today's technology. Most of the structures were improved and developed in accordance to the present purpose. They are all under the Cultural Heritage protected area, which is a total of 17.25 hectares Core and Buffer Zone of UNESCO.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Agreement between the university, the local government units (LGUs), and the building owners in putting a transcription in the structures stating its contribution in the pre-university days of University of Northern Philippines. Rephotography collection should also be on the university website. Rephotography should be considered a document for development planning

sustainability, protection and other methods for improvement of facilities. Strategic planning should be done to recommend other measures and interventions in cultural preservation and revival. Similar studies shall be conducted to open the door of improvement for this study.

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