

PHILOSOPHIZING ON TRAVELOGUES

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Introduction

The importance of philosophy in relation to travel cannot be ignored. One's experience with the destination is influenced, positively or negatively, by the intentionality and awareness as one travels. The traveler's experience is always rich due to the simultaneous encounters between the individual and new physical environment, other people, societies, and cultures. The meanings generated by the events and those encounters largely depend on one's subjectivity. The meaning of experiences could be best derived using phenomenology. Continuing reflection is a must.

This article is offered to all types of travelers, whether local or international, occasional or frequent travelers, tourists or explorers, young and old. It is an offshoot of gathered experiences and reflections in travelling. This is written for three reasons. First, I do it to do philosophy personally. I need to draw the meaning of my inclination to traveling by putting together my travel experiences and gain wisdom from it. For this, I need to share highlights of my travelogue. Second, to broaden my view on my experience and validate how philosophy enhances travel of others, I consider other philosophical references to augment my personal reflections. Throughout my rational discourse, I will be guided by phenomenology, particularly, Gabriel Marcel's framework, applying primary reflection and secondary reflection. And third, in the spirit of participating in the cultivation of a cosmopolitan culture worldwide, I share my Traveler's Code of Ethics. I consulted other references that expound on philosophical foundations for crafting a good code of ethics. The notions of globalization and cosmopolitanism come into play as the travel context is global. For traveling to thrive, ethical standards must embrace this complex reality and address the challenges of traveling around the globe.

Traveloguing

Traditionally, a travel journal would be the best repository of a traveler's experience. Writing is still a fantastic way to capture the moments, observations and reflections during the trip. In reality, I do not have a travel journal. Instead, my collection of digital photos, posts in Facebook and Instagram, passports, and e-mails comprise my travelogue. I go to them whenever I need to revisit my travel experiences or reflect on them. My travelogue also includes private and public records of dialogues with myself, the family, friends, and others during the travel. I subscribe to Wittenberg's (2012) philosophy of narrative or storytelling as expounded in his book, *Time travel: The popular philosophy of narrative*.

The gem of traveling attracted me early in life. When I was a kid, I already manifested the desire for travel. I mainly explored. I walked around. I ran around with friends in our barrio (village). I also recall joining my mother (Mama Paquit) who constantly traveled, doing her catechism activities and pilgrimages around my province (Pangasinan). Whether with my family or with childhood friends, I explored one barrio to another and one town to another, walking, or riding bicycle, tricycle, jeepney or our minibus. We went to beaches in Pangasinan, including the Hundred Islands in Alaminos, Bolinao, Bani, Dasol, Binmaley, San Fabian, Bonuan, and other local travel destinations. Then, as I became more independent, I travelled to farther places in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao (the three island groups of the Philippine archipelago). Much later, my siblings and Mama went out of the country. Consequently, my travels expanded to Asian countries, then to America and Europe, for leisure and to visit other family members. I fully enjoyed them all when I was a bachelor, thinking of the aesthetics of travels as well as keeping in touch with my family abroad.

In other words, I started with myself as an explorer. And I was somehow encouraged because of my Mama's activities and my family's whereabouts, which deserves another narrative. I was curious and my curiosity led me to explore farther and farther. Traveling helped me discover, think, reflect, and enjoy my life. I got married in 2003 and enjoyed the blessing of the family. Once I got settled and the children grew to a point when they can survive and appreciate traveling, I started to feel the desire to travel again. As Norman would put it:

To journey, to seek out a destination, to look back from afar upon our homelands, upon our people, and upon ourselves, these things have captivated the human imagination, it seems, for as long as we have been able to record our thoughts materially (2013: ix).

I next shared my interest for traveling with my family. We always made sure that we visited family and relatives locally and abroad, recognizing that our family is spread out in different places. When possible, we joined or were joined by other members of the extended family. In fact, the trips to America, Europe, and our families' provinces were always a combination of family visits and leisure tours. These travels added spice to our family bonding and holiday seasons. Beyond those, target destinations were influenced by the children's particular province or country of interest, triggered by school lessons, the books they read, or even their entertainment idols. We planned, discussed, prepared, and anticipated them as field trips. As of this writing, the family's completed educational trips with the kids include Tours of America (2013 and 2015), and Tours of Europe (2015), South Korea (2017), Singapore (2017), Malaysia (2017), Japan (2018), Vietnam (2018), Cambodia (2018), and Thailand (2019). At the same time, we explored and enjoyed more Philippine islands, visiting both must-see and not-so-known places in the country.

As a basic practice, we bask in our destinations by eating local foods and drinks. We seek out the popular and traditional food, and those we read about in books and the Internet. We learn a little of the language. We realize and get to appreciate that people in places we visit have distinct time concepts and thought patterns, similar or different in varying degrees from your own. This does not make them superior or inferior, only different.

Picture-taking is very important as memory markers. There are arguments, especially when the children resist to stop their explorations because I ask them to pose for the camera. On their own, we allow them to take as many selfies, groupies and videos as possible, on anything that catches their attention. Sometimes, they write or draw on their journal. At the end of the day, we spend time reflecting on the daily experiences in an attempt to deepen our understanding

of the things that struck or disturbed us. They could be things, people or events that are funny, annoying, shocking, amazing, or simply interesting.

Aside from family journeys, we joined pilgrimages. The children seldom joined us because pilgrimages were not that interesting for them yet. As a couple or as a family, we started visiting local churches in Manila and provinces. Then we joined our parish sojourns in nearby provinces before our ultimate trip to the Holy Land in 2016. We visited Jordan, Israel, and Egypt. We renewed our marriage vows as well as our baptismal vows. We dared and successfully climbed Mt. Sinai in Egypt. It was an amazing pilgrimage. Travelling can be spiritually fulfilling. Thus, in 2018, I took an opportunity offered by my school to visit Europe as a pilgrim, this time with my colleagues. We visited France, Rome, Florence, and Pompei. We referred to ourselves as the Benilde **HOP**(*Heart of Pierre*)pers. That pilgrimage was named after our patrons and founders: Saint John Baptist De La Salle and Saint Benilde Pierre Romançon, in celebrating the 30 years of our school.

We usually travelled with the help of travel agents in processing our papers and securing travel visas. Outside the family visits, we needed tourist guides, transportation arrangements, and help from others to reserve hotels and fine tune our itineraries. Travel for the family is primarily a learning activity. As an academician, educator and philosopher, I impressed on my kids that travelling is part of their education. We see to it that we travel in the spirit of humility and with a genuine desire to learn more about peoples, places and countries. We should be keenly aware of the ways of other people to prevent what might be an offensive behavior on our part. We buy and support local goods and products, observing and dining consciously. We listen well to the tour guides. Though tired, we try to cultivate the habit of listening and observing, rather than merely hearing and seeing. This way, we acquaint ourselves with local customs.

The latest addition to my travel activities are local and international lectures and other academic events in Philosophy. That is how my travels are growing with me: from child exploration to family travel, and now, to work travel. So, I resonated with Norman when he said: “Wonder at something new is, at least for the moment, something innately

human. So too our seemingly insatiable quest for knowledge; a quest that is intimately bound with the act of travel” (2013: ix).

It was Prof. Rolando M. Gripaldo (1947-2017), my mentor and colleague in philosophy, who poked me to incorporate some academic agenda into my travels, which he noticed were intended solely for relaxation and vacation. Slowly, in 2017, I took notice of opportunities and invitations to conferences and lectures. What followed was a frenzy of unforgettable travel conferences. In 2018, I was able to attend three major events: the Asian Conference on Ethics, Religion & Philosophy (ACERP) in Japan; inter-religious and interfaith academic events in Romania; and the 24th World Congress of Philosophy in Beijing, China. For each event, I managed to prepare two to three papers or lectures. Indeed, meeting and working with people from different countries added depth into my travels. I got to know better the cultures and traditions of the host country and other nationalities, because of the interactions and conversations with colleagues. And since they are intentionally educational, we grow in our disciplines, personally and professionally.

Being the Chairman of the Philippine National Philosophical Research Society (PNPRS) and the Managing Editor of *Philosophia International Journal of Philosophy (PIJP)*, traveling that comes with organizing and joining lectures and conferences becomes necessary. In 2019 to 2020, we managed to stage and join events in Baguio City, Dumaguete City in Negros Oriental, and Cebu City. Being the explorer that I am, I always reserved time and space for side trips after each conference. I organized or joined opportunities to explore and enjoy the places. Our side tours and mini-tours included visiting restaurants that offer the local cuisine, seeing a place showcasing local art installations, enjoying unique gardens and landscapes, music, and so on. The travel mode enables one to see the potential of a place to offer relaxation and enjoyment after work. As attending and organizing conferences got fully incorporated into my travel life, travel-for-learning now forms part of my definition of lifelong education. It makes my professional life interesting and dynamic as it truly becomes a chance to reflect, energize, and be inspired.

Then, the COVID-19 broke out. The United Nations described the scale of its impact in its Policy Brief as follows:

The COVID-19 pandemic has created the largest disruption of education systems in history, affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries and all continents. Closures of schools and other learning spaces have impacted 94 per cent of the world's student population, up to 99 per cent in low and lower-middle income countries (UN, 2020: 2).

This was echoed by many institutions, among them was the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s recognition that "The COVID-19 pandemic has not stopped at national borders. It has affected people regardless of nationality, level of education, income or gender" (Schleicher, 2020: 4). The pandemic's consequential community quarantine put a sudden brake into my travel plans. Prevented from organizing public events, the latest conference of PNPRS turned into a webinar. Without any certainty on when and how the health crisis will be resolved, I take this chance to write and philosophize. I am still traveling with my mind.

World views on traveling

What must our attitude be towards travel? Does travel enhance life? When I was a kid, I was not aware of such questions. All I cared for was to explore, to know people, and be kind to them. Until I got to study philosophy, reflecting, and thinking on the whys of things and life. Tribe's book, *Philosophical issues in tourism*, explores such primordial questions in the field, among them are: Who is a tourist? Why are some destinations considered beautiful? Why is tourism desirable? What is good and bad tourism? The more we travel, the more we dwell in the perennial questions in philosophy. He sums it up this way: "For at its very simplest, philosophizing is the ability to extract ourselves from the busy, engaged world of making and doing things, to disengage and to pause for reflection and thought especially about meaning and purpose" (Tribe, 2009: 5).

Norman's book on *Journeys and destinations: Studies in travel, identity, and meaning* provides 13 scholarly contributions about travel practices and expositions on the meaning of travel, elucidating on its role in

understanding the lives of human beings. There is always joy of exploring, but each experience is unique and distinct. For instance, Sanders' experience in the Kokoda Trail, highlights how there is always meaning in every activity, revealing and defining your identity (Norman, 2013: 23-45). Then, Köhler-Ryan's article, *The beginning that is already an end: Finding the significance of labyrinthine travel* (Norman, 2013: 87-108) also shows the joy of exploring and discovery. With the renaissance of interest in the ancient symbol of the labyrinth, societies, books and theories about labyrinths abound, and labyrinths are built, replicated, and used in various spiritual and therapeutic capacities.

There are growing reflections and thoughts on traveling, as there is a perceptible increase in travel activities worldwide. Huggan, in *Extreme pursuits*, sees tourism or travel as the result of globalized modernity. He noted that as the emergent system of cultural and economic interconnections push toward the creation of a single global tourist space, it also generates as many differences as similarities in activities, producing "differentiated tourism" (2009: 12).

Thomas (2020), in her article, *Why philosophy is an ideal travel companion*, noted that in 2019, there were about 1.4 billion international tourist arrivals globally. Considering that the planet's 7.7 billion humans, she reckoned that a lot of us are travelling. She then cited the World Tourism Organization reports noting two major motivations in the growing activity; one could be traveling to change or to show. The former is associated with the quest for local experiences, authenticity, and transformation, while the latter is associated with the desire for *Instagramable* moments and destinations. I find these categories quite limiting. But if forced to categorize myself, I would probably be on the first category.

In the article, *Travel and celebrity*, Clarke defined another group of travelers, whose travels are a display of lucrative lifestyle and business, which he categorized into travel celebrities and celebrity travelers. Here is an extensive excerpt from his work:

In the West, travel has long afforded opportunities for fame beyond the strictures of class, gender and caste, and travel writing has served as one of the principal media through which celebrity associated with travel has

been produced, circulated and consumed. [...] The entanglements of travel, and especially travel writing, and celebrity can appear as recent phenomena of the globalized and diversified fields of media production. [...] those that might be termed ‘travel celebrities’- Paul Theroux, Robyn Davidson, Bill Bryson, William Dalrymple, Benedict Allen, Peter Mayle, Frances Mayes, and Bruce Chatwin [...] are known to reading publics [...] through their travel writing. [...] they are writers who are called [...] to perform certain cultural functions: as role models; as ‘historians’, ‘ethnographers’ [...] as trendsetters and arbiters of taste, and so on. [...] another group of ‘celebrity travellers’ – people like Michael Palin, Peter Carey, Don Cheadle, Angelina Jolie, Bob Geldof, and so on. [...] have previously acquired fame and fortune in other domains and frequently use their established celebrity and their subsequent travel for a range of purposes: to broaden and diversify their media images or to effect a transition from one media career to another; to promote various humanitarian, political, environmental or economic causes (2009: 145-146).

The Philippines, too, have such celebrity travellers. The described lifestyle are common among politicians and elites from the local entertainment and business industries. Meanwhile, Malamud (2018), in his article, *It's time for a new approach to travel*, calls attention to travelers and traveling influenced by globalism, associated with the old imperialist impulse to come with power and leave with booty. He traced such mindset to traveling in the 16th to 19th centuries, when destinations were seen as conquests, leaving them worse off than before the visitors came. Malamud's invitation then is to encourage *traveling as a humanist*, to get lost and ingest cultures elsewhere. While there is always the option to go where the home conveniences are, he said that there are proofs suggesting that the more unfamiliar destinations are better in boosting one's creativity, flexibility and ability to trust, among other benefits.

I join Malamud in his call for traveling as a humanist. But since Malamud spoke more of travelers from used-to-be imperial countries and not much of travelers from former colonies, it might be fitting share the perspective from the conquered ones. The Philippines was passed on from one colonizer to the next, the major ones being Spain, Japan and America. Yes, there were others in between and some are still

attempting to colonize our country. Indeed, the remnants of globalism remain. And there is a corresponding travel attitude depending on the country's position in the system. Until recent times, outgoing global travel traffic in the Philippines has been remarkably dominated by people-for-work rather than tourist-for-enjoyment. Far from an organized scheme to establish global economic dominance, individual Filipinos migrate to take jobs in foreign lands that locals cannot fill in. Many of these jobs are low-paying by the host countries' standards but better-paying by the migrant workers' local job or business. From our end, the emergent system is more of a global workplace, rather than tourist space. Traveling is associated with uncertainty and sacrifice, including family separation. Rather than the feeling of dominance, travelling is still an extension of the experience of serving more dominant cultures.

It is not a coincidence that as a Filipino traveler, I experience the added hurdle of still needing to secure our travel visa to most countries before we can be allowed to visit. My propensity to travel for enjoyment somehow breaks the assumption that only citizens from rich countries can and like to travel. Discrimination in traveling certainly exists.

Fraenkel, in his 2015 article entitled *Philosophical toolkit in tow, scholar travels to conflict zones*, underscores the practice of philosophy, specifically the utility of philosophical techniques and virtues in meeting people from other viewpoints. Situations of engagement are inevitable when traveling. Globally, it could be said that there is more universality in facilities and food than in people's beliefs. I consider conferences and other organized academic events as one of the more viable venues for scholars who are interested in participating in global dialogues. I witnessed that authentic ecumenical and dialogical discussions can happen if the atmosphere is friendly and non-threatening, and there is space for personal interaction.

Skowroński (2015) relit a more philosophical, even spiritual, take on travel by featuring his exploration on Santayana's *The philosophy of travel* (1964). Santayana considered the human existence itself as a form of journey through a foreign world, and accordingly viewed migration, exploration, wandering, pilgrimage, and tourism as representations of

the different forms of a good life. Santayana had more immersive experiences, but I find his perspective of travelling more similar to mine in its manner of inclusiveness and comprehensiveness.

Van den Abbeele shares a similar view in his *Introduction to the economy of travel* by saying that “the metaphor of travel to thought conjures up the image of an innovative mind that explores new ways of looking at things or which opens up new horizons” (1991: xiii). As travelling opens up new perspectives, new views, and new encounters, it can broaden and even change one’s values. It might change your view. When the mind is open and critical, it explores possibilities. It becomes conditioned to modify and adjust its assumptions. Its connection to education is natural and has long been acknowledged by philosophers. In the section entitled *Pedagogy and the teleology of travel: Emile*, Van den Abbeele pointed to how “educational voyage is thus especially dependent upon its completion, upon the return home of the neophyte who set out on the grand tour” (1991: 86). Voyages are good or bad depending on the effect on the child, such as the shaping of character, or testing the truths learned in books. When and how long exactly it should be done will depend on one’s purpose, otherwise, its educational value could be lost. That is why there is a need to continuously reflect, rethink or contemplate on our philosophy of travels.

Doing philosophy

I love doing philosophy. As a philosophy teacher and family man, doing philosophy helps me in the setting up of my objectives and goals in life; in the selection and preparation of my trips; in the study of principles for guidance in everyday affairs; and in the study of truths or principles. There is wisdom, knowledge and understanding to be pursued. Mindfulness in and of every activity makes life beautiful. For me, to philosophize requires one to be simultaneously logical, critical, ethical, creative and reflective thinker.

I made use of the primary and secondary reflection of Gabriel Marcel as explained in *The mystery of being*, which was based on the Gifford lectures he delivered at the University of Aberdeen in 1949 and 1950.

Marcel's lectures were captured in *Reflection and mystery* (1950) and *Faith and reality* (1951). This article is an application of primary and secondary reflection, as expounded in Chapter 5 of *Reflection and mystery*.

Marcel ascertained this, "the point about philosophic thought is that it is reflective" (1950: 77). Meaning, it is aware of itself. It is critical. He then demonstrated "how reflection has its own roots in the daily flow of life" (77). Manny Dy's annotation and interpretation of Marcel's text underscored the following: "1) reflection comes after a certain break in the daily routine of life; 2) reflection is called for because something valuable is at stake; 3) reflection is a personal act, nobody can reflect for me; 4) reflection is linked to personal experience" (2012: 66).

In my words, live and appreciate life first, then reflect and do philosophy. One has to experience life before one can do philosophy. How could we philosophize without living? Experience plays a vital role in philosophizing. Experience awakens and invites us to go deeper. It is difficult, even impossible, to philosophize without experiences. Some experiences are so rich that they magnetize the consciousness more than the others. One does not get tired of repeatedly going back to them, because they speak to us about ourselves. They invite us to reflect.

According to Marcel there are at least two types of reflection, primary and secondary. The secondary, as he presented in all his lectures, is "the special high instrument of philosophical research" (1950: 83). To quote his distinction between the two, primary reflection "tends to dissolve the unity of experience which is first put before it," while secondary reflection "reconquers that unity." To illustrate the difference, he reflects on the reality of the self, or, more concretely, on the I who ask myself "who I am" and what I mean by "asking myself that question" (1950: 84). Thus, to answer the question "who I am," using primary reflection, I may use some of society's categories such as I am a teacher. If I employ the secondary reflection, I will try to answer in a manner that summarizes all the categories that may describe me and more to capture the totality of who I think I am at this point. According to Anderson, "Marcel's initial response to those questions is that he has a feeling of not being the one who is described in the various categories entered on an identity form, even though everything on that form is true of him" (2006: 41).

What is the role of traveling in the journey of life? Travel experiences brings in added excitement. Traveling brings joy to doing philosophy. There is an affinity, an identity that one gets, drawing attention to the destination. Traveling heightens and sustains one's sense of awe and wonder. One never fully realizes it until further reflection. The role of reflection is to cross the line, from traveloguing to philosophizing. Enabling one to access and illuminate the connection between one's travel experiences to one's broader and primal life endeavors.

Marcel's primary and secondary reflection method is instructive. Applied to travelling, primary reflection examines the travel experience by abstracting, analytically breaking it down into parts. It problematizes and dissects experiences into speakable categories. It includes recalling the events as vividly as possible until one is able to recognize the episodes, the related details, the circumstances, and the factors that came into play. In contrast, secondary reflection is synthetic as it unifies rather than divides. This is when and where one recognizes the "*Aha moment*" or "*Eureka*," where one gets to experience some nuggets of wisdom in particular sites, events, or encounters.

The application of primary reflection and secondary reflection is necessarily a continuing process. Its application connotes the use of at least two movements and two views on experiences to complete the reflection. It is good to acquire it as a habit and even as a discipline. The exercise is meant to be enjoyed, to give renewed meaning to life. The basic message here is to use doing philosophy in everyday life.

I find Antonnete Angeles' (2020) *Magisterial lecture in doing philosophy* a very effective appropriation of Marcel's primary and secondary reflection. Angeles discusses philosophical reflection in ordinary life using Filipino terms like *bulabog* (literally, disturbed to the point of grabbing full attention) and *bulaga!* (heartfelt surprise) many of which were popularized by the renowned Filipino priest and philosopher Roque J. Ferriols, S.J. The effect of secondary reflection is so penetrating that it cannot be ignored, it is disturbing as it is mind-boggling. The secondary reflection is achieved because, and only when, we are in relation with others. What one cannot capture categorically, that the I in fact exists, is affirmed only by engaging and encountering others.

Secondary reflection brings one back into a whole that is bigger than oneself. Realizations after further reflections are moments of self-realization that cannot be replicated. *Aha moments* or *Wow experiences* cannot be boxed, as Ferriols would say. The moments, memories, encounters, and joyful instants are fleeting experiences. We can feel them, as validated by others. Brendan Sweetman describes it thus:

This realm of human existence is best described as “mysterious,” from the philosophical point of view, because it cannot be fully captured and presented in concepts. It is even difficult to reveal or evoke in phenomenological descriptions. Many human experiences are “mysterious” because they intimately involve the questioner in such a way that the meaning of the experience cannot be fully conveyed by means of abstract conceptual thinking, that is, by cutting the individual subject off from the experience. This would include experiences of fidelity, inter-personal relationships, religious experiences, and experiences involving ethical responses to human beings and situations (2008: 57).

A secondary reflection is distinct, but it can naturally proceed from a primary reflection. For instance, the categories that emerge in the primary reflection also becomes clearer as we become more aware of who or where we are at the moment. When we ask, “What happened there?” we realize that our answer varies through time and that the experience is more than all the categories combined, and that there are always lessons to be learned, whether positive or negative. We will note that the lesson is almost always simultaneously self-referential and other referential.

We progress as phenomenologists as we accept our everyday experiences. Reflection and experience become one and yet distinct from each other. As Dy said in his commentary, “We may even dare to say that the richer the experience the more reflexive it becomes, and the more reflexive a person is, the richer his experience is” (2012: 70). Let me share some of the *Aha moments* in my travels.

I grew to realize my mortality and human limits in several moments. This struck me as we navigated, with little kids in tow, the risky but beautiful trek to Aninuan Falls in Puerto Galera, Mindoro in 2013; in the 2016 exploration of the Sumaging Cave in Sagada, Mountain

Province; in the challenging and fulfilling climb to Mt. Sinai in Egypt in 2016; and in the family's White Water rafting in Cagayan de Oro in 2017. But the closest encounter with death happened in my most recent weekend in Hundred Islands in Alaminos, Pangasinan in 2019. I was so relaxed, that I fell asleep while floating in the shallow water. Without me and my colleagues knowing it, I already drifted to the blue waters. When I woke up, we realized that I was too far that I had to be rescued by our boatman. I only lost my footwear that day, but a rush of insights flooded me. Indeed, I am daring and bold, as expressed in my adventures. I even surprise myself on what I can achieve with my body. Limitations and finiteness of physical existence asserts itself whenever we experience jet lag and cross out some stops out of tiredness. Safety measures should always be part of the plan. While it is fun to be free and independent, the buddy system is essential during travels. We should practice the ethics of care.

That I am a Filipino gets heightened and awakened every time we secure a travel visa to most countries. Coming from the Philippines, we must prove that we have the capacity to travel, and that we will return home. As previously mentioned, while citizens of certain countries only need to buy their tour and plane tickets, we still need to justify our travel to gain entry in other territories. Our enjoyment of the sights and tours are sometimes punctuated by moments when we catch a curious glance or a remark from strangers implying that we are an unusual sight or an unexpected company. Even as I respect the disparity in laws, we do experience the pinch of discrimination. But we choose to be rational, to let it slide, and just hope that the next generation will be freed from the prejudice that stem from our inherited nationalities. And so, we continue to endeavour and teach our children well. We always remind them to be free, independent and stand equal with people, regardless of country of origin. We educate them well so that they can make wise choices and commitments for a better country in a better world. And that, regardless of what others think, we can be proud of our heritage.

And then there are the humbling moments. We get varied sorts of these. We are humbled by the vastness of the universe, the beauty of architecture and landforms everywhere, the kindness of people, and

the human efforts and brilliance, especially when I attend lectures and conferences. Some of these moments are coupled with a greater sense of gratitude, and some are accompanied by a resolution to do better on what we do. To these belong the moments when we experience spiritual fulfilment and joyful anticipation for next travels and encounters.

Most of our travels are motivated by our desire to try new things. We want to know more, do more, and to be more. We seek to self-transcend by finding a higher value or goal in life. As we travel and realize how vulnerable we are, the more we accept that we are relational and social beings. We are interdependent. We need one another to live, to grow, and to become. We are also historical beings. Our context and way of thinking and how others perceive us are influenced by our respective past and the country we live in. But we are also shapers of the future. We have some power to influence future history. And that although each traveller is unique, there are commonalities among people.

Call for ethics

Traveling moves me to participate in the promotion of common ethical standards by formulating my own Traveler's Code of Ethics. The exercise provides me an opportunity to apply and practice what I teach in ethics and critical thinking. Other scholars are also exploring ethical theories and principles towards building their personal Code of Ethics. For example, in their article *Good actions in tourism*, Jamal and Menzel presented three major ethical paradigms that to them are particularly relevant to tourism: Utilitarian ethics of the greatest good; Kantian ethics of respect for persons; and Aristotelian virtue ethics (Tribe, 2009: 227-234). While in the article *Ethics and Tourism*, Fennell discussed three traditions: Teleology-Seeking the end; Deontology-Seeking the means; and Existentialism-Seeking authenticity (Tribe, 2009: 216-224).

I am a traveler who promotes tourism in our country, certifying that it is more fun in the Philippines. But I also go for international tourism because it is important for me to be connected around the globe. In August 2020, Zurab Pololikashvili, UN World Tourism Organization

Secretary-General, pronounced how tourism can serve as a driver of solidarity and development. He thus encourages everyone to fully harness its power to bring people and communities together and to abide by the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (GCET). The Global Code's purpose is to promote tourism that contributes to delivering better opportunities and sustainable development across the globe. I find article one, number 1 foundational.

The understanding and promotion of the ethical values common to humanity, with an attitude of tolerance and respect for the diversity of religious, philosophical and moral beliefs, are both the foundation and the consequence of responsible tourism; stakeholders in tourism development and tourists themselves should observe the social and cultural traditions and practices of all peoples, including those of minorities and indigenous peoples and to recognize their worth (UNWTO, 1999).

Proceeding from these, I appropriated some universal values and principles to serve as the backbone of my code of ethics. I call this code of ethics as my guide for responsible travel. It is basic. To be a good traveler, one has to be a good person.

1. Respect all persons at all times. It is my duty to honor my co-travelers, the locals, tour agencies and service providers, by respecting their rights, their responsibilities, and their traditions. I will do my best to get to know basic greetings, expressions, customs, and mores in my destination. I will respect the philosophical opinions and traditions of others, without prejudice to those who hold contrary positions and beliefs.
2. Do good at all times. An act of kindness and charity is bound to help at all times. I must be an agent of goodwill. I will do my best to bring something from home that I can offer or share with others in the spirit of building global and cosmopolitan communities, and to exchange notes about our countries. I will also keep in mind co-Filipinos all over the world who would like to see or taste something from the Philippines and meet someone from home.
3. Treat people as equals at all times. It is my duty to consider all people, including myself, as moral equals in status, rights, and

opportunities. I will treat people with dignity, recognizing that each nation and culture has distinct expressions of respect, even if others believe or behave otherwise.

4. Uphold justice and respect rights. It is my duty to treat all fairly and respect their rights, rules and duties, cognizant of the local and international laws.
5. Not to harm at all times. It is my duty to avoid wishing or causing harm to anyone anywhere. I will be careful not to say or do anything that will hurt the host family, country and environment.
6. Observe universal rules. It is my duty to observe rules that hold for everyone, regardless of time, place, age, gender, or citizenship.
7. Be caring and careful I will do my best to keep myself and my family safe and away from unnecessary risks. It is my duty to heed the local safety guidelines and be mindful of the buddy system.

Conclusion

The ultimate goal of traveling and doing philosophy is to live the fullness of life. They are means to avoiding entrapments and seeking balance in living. Reflecting on travels makes one's life fulfilling and meaningful. Applying phenomenology captures the wisdom as we balance movement and stillness. We travel to live, learn and thrive. Let us continue to explore by travelling while philosophizing. It is a choice we can pursue or let go.

Travelers of all sorts can contribute to promoting wisdom through mindfulness and cosmopolitanism in the global community. Forging my own traveler's code of ethics is my way of participating in the creation of ethical traveling environment worldwide. Let us continue to adventure on our way to reach our destination in every sphere of our life, in every endeavor that we would like to achieve.

To grow in wisdom, I philosophize in my travels and everyday life. I agree with Francis Bacon (82) who said that "Travel, in the younger sort, is a part of education, in the elder, a part of experience." Whether the destination is near or far, I bring this advice from the Chinese philosopher Confucius, "Wherever you go, go with all your heart"

(2016:13). And I end with Gabriel Marcel's call for reflective thinking. Whether as traveler, educator, theologian, doctor, lawyer, and so on, it is always good to ask, WHO AM I? Let us live and do philosophy.

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