

**REVERSE APPROPRIATION OF THE STATE'S CULTURAL
NATIONALISM: THE CASE OF THE BANTOANON INDIGENOUS
CULTURAL COMMUNITY AND THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S
RIGHTS ACT OF 1997**

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ABSTRACT

Despite the growing corpus of research on cultural nationalism, the state's role in producing cultural nationalism in a post-colonial and non-western setting and the phenomena from a bottom-up perspective continues to be little explored. This study examines the conditions under which national political leaders pursued policies to protect the cultural heritage of the country's indigenous cultural communities for the aims of political nationalism. From a top-down perspective, the study looks at the context, intent, content, state's implementation and caveats of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997. While from the bottom-up perspective, the study looks at how the Bantoanon indigenous community mobilizes and organizes to navigate through state bureaucracy and 'reappropriate' the state's nationalism to meet their cultural goals. To examine the phenomena, the study on the textual analysis of existing written primary and secondary sources supplemented with oral interviews of key informants and a review of available literature. It finds that at the national level, political motives partly animated the support of political leaders for indigenous cultural heritage protection policies; that the state used heritage protection policies to pursue its political purposes; and that the support for political leaders for indigenous cultural heritage protection policies was premised on the condition that it did not interfere with the state's interests and diminish the state's rights. While at the Bantoanon indigenous cultural communities level, it finds that despite the caveats embedded in the country's heritage protection policies, the indigenous cultural community could mobilize and assert its rights, thus enabling it to 'reappropriate' the state's political institutions to meet its own cultural objectives. This thesis, therefore, argues that the relationship between the two parties under IPRA is mutually beneficial, with both the state and indigenous cultural communities finding some utility in the law.