

# A Report on the Archaeological Survey Along the Coastal Area of Misamis Oriental, Philippines<sup>1</sup>

Lee M. Neri<sup>2</sup>

## **Abstract**

*This article is the result of the initial archaeological reconnaissance conducted along the coast of Misamis Oriental in the island of Mindanao, Philippines. The team was able to identify possible archaeological sites based on the presence of artefacts and stone ruins. Based on the conventional and prevailing way of archaeological identification in the Philippines, these identified sites are classified as open sites, cave sites, and historical sites. Foreign ceramics were used to establish the relative dates of the archaeological sites in the different municipalities in Misamis Oriental. Forty-one archaeological sites were identified along the coast of Misamis Oriental: 25 open sites, 12 historical sites, and 4 cave sites. This initial archaeological investigation will help generate information on the history of the area and may serve as significant reference for future archaeological research in Mindanao.*

## **Introduction**

Previous archaeological studies conducted in Misamis Oriental in the municipalities of Tagoloan (Cuevas and Bautista 1991), Jasaan (Peralta

---

<sup>1</sup> Editor's note: Earlier versions of the different sections of this paper came out in various publications (Neri and Ragraio 2008; Neri *et al.* 2008, 2009, 2010a, 2010b). The current format consolidates all the archaeological explorations conducted in Northern Misamis Oriental by the author.

<sup>2</sup> University Research Associate, Archaeological Studies Program, University of the Philippines, Diliman.  
Email: leee\_anthony.neri@up.edu.ph

1968), Villanueva (Cabanilla 1970), and Laguindingan (Dizon *et al.* 1991) in northern Mindanao were cursory. To date, there was no extensive archaeological report on the northern part of Misamis Oriental. The dearth of reports on Misamis Oriental may be due to its geographic location, political security, and less interest from the archaeological community.

The general objective of this research is to identify archaeological sites along the coast of Misamis Oriental. These identified sites will be named after the owners of the properties or the geopolitical location. This conventional procedure is done for easy access in the future. Identified archaeological sites were assigned National Museum codes for the province of Misamis Oriental.

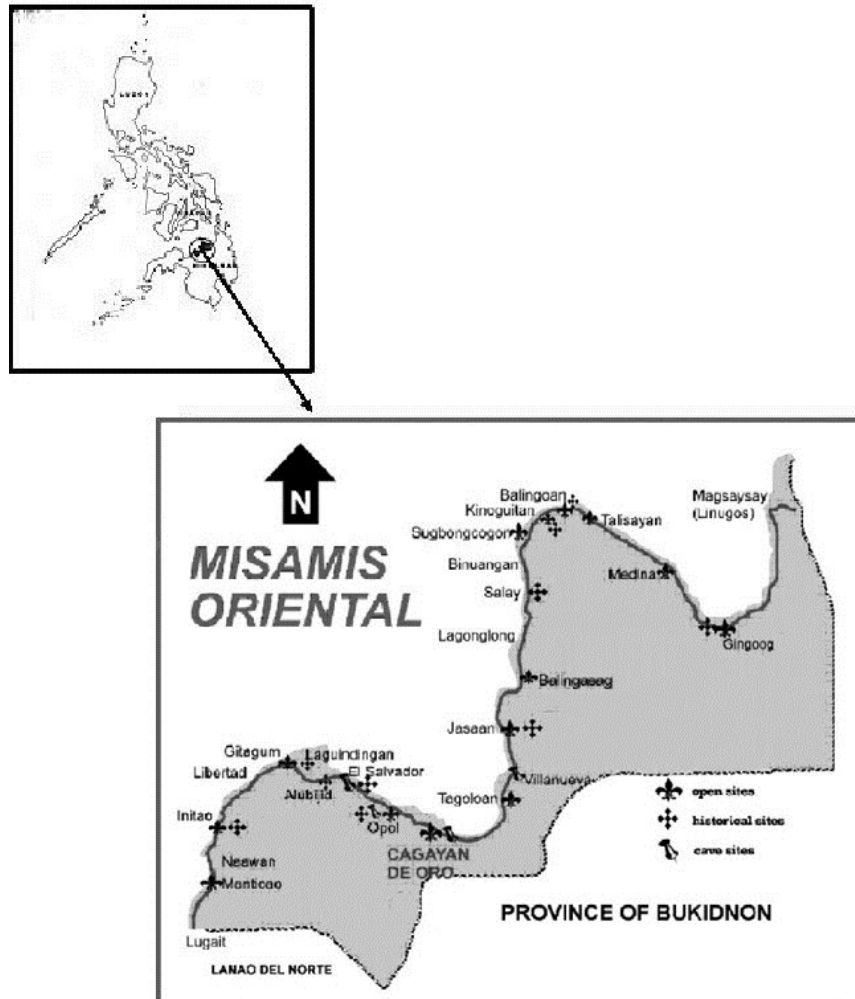
This study will also establish relative dates of the sites based primarily on the foreign ceramics and other cultural materials recovered. The chronology used in this article is based on Fox's (1970) and Evangelista's (1962) proposal: Palaeolithic (250,000–5,000 BC), Neolithic (5000–500 BC), Metal Age (500 BC–850 AD), Protohistoric (850–1521 AD), and Spanish Period (1521–1900AD).

The land surveys along the coastal area of Misamis Oriental were conducted in 2007 until 2010. The team explored the following areas: Cities of Cagayan de Oro (capital of the province), El Salvador, and Gingoog, and the municipalities of Lugait, Manticao, Naawan, Initao, Libertad, Gitagum, Laguindingan, Alubijid, Opol, Tagoloan, Villanueva, Jasaan, Balingasag, Lagonglong, Salay, Binuangan, Sugbongcogon, Kinoguitan, Balingoan, Talisayan, Medina, and Magsaysay (Figure 1).

The following section describes the sites and the artefacts recovered.

### **Manticao**

The municipality of Manticao is located on the east of Iligan City and has a distance of 60 kms west from Cagayan de Oro City. Only one open site has been identified and was named Bungtod Open Site (National Museum code: X-2007-O3). The Bungtod Open Site is a hill, made of Dolomite, with an elevation of 113 metres above sea level (masl). It is located in Purok I, Barangay Camanga, Manticao. The area is privately owned by Captain Arleen Taturan of Barangay Camanga. According to her, part of the hill was quarried during the early 1980s and they found human skeleton associated with tradeware ceramics and a



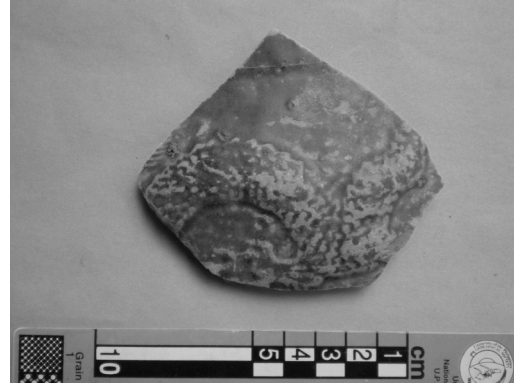
**Figure 1.** Map of Misamis Oriental showing different municipalities and cities and the distribution of archaeological sites recorded from 2007 to 2010.

stoneware placed on top of the skull. The skeleton was found beside the *Iba* tree (*Averrhoabilimbi* L. *Oxalidaceae*). According to folklore, Taduran added, *Iba* trees were used as burial markers in the past by the Higaunon. The Higaunon, also known as the “people of the mountain,” is one of the ethnolinguistic groups that mostly occupy the mountainous regions of northern Mindanao.

The team recovered 93 artefacts such as earthenware sherds, porcelain sherds, and stoneware sherds. Some of these earthenware sherds have stamped and incised designs (Figure 2). Identified tradeware ceramics were associated with the Kitchen Qing (18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries CE) and Vietnamese wares (14<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> centuries CE) (Figure 3).



**Figure 2.** Earthenware with incised design.



**Figure 3.** Annamese ware found in Bungtod Open Site.

### **Initao**

Two open sites have been identified by the team in the municipality of Initao in Barangay Poblacion: *Gamay na Ilihan* (small natural fortress) and *Dako na Ilihan* (big natural fortress).

Mr. Willy Tan and Atty. Jose Amarga are private owners of the *Gamay na Ilihan Open Site* (X-2007-P3). The site is a hill located beside the Initao River. It has a vantage point of Iligan Bay on the north and *Dako na Ilihan* on the south. The team found earthenware sherds, tradeware sherds and animal teeth. These were found at the ploughed area, which was planted with corn (*Zea mays L. Poaceae*) at the time of the survey. Aside from this, a Spanish ruin was also identified by the team found at *Gamay na Ilihan Open Site* (Figure 4). Ms. Luzano, our local informant, believed that the ruin was a wall fortress constructed during the Spanish period. However, based on its geological location and the rectangular remnants of its structure, it could have been used as a watchtower during the Spanish occupation (Neri *et al.* 2009).

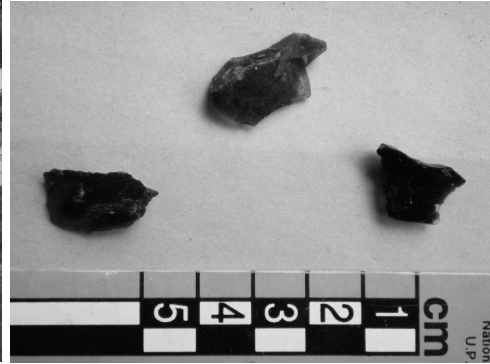


**Figure 4.** Spanish structure found at *Gamay na Ilihan Site*.

*Dako na Ilihan Open Site* (X-2007-Z3) is also a hill, which is part of limestone formation (Figure 5). The site has a vantage point of both *Gamay na Ilihan* and Iligan Bay on the north. This is privately owned by Mayor Enerito J. Acain. We recovered earthenware sherds, stoneware sherds, and chert and obsidian flakes found scattered along the surface of the hill (Figure 6). Some tradeware may be associated to the Late Qing period and Vietnamese wares.



**Figure 5.** *Dako na Ilihan* Open Site.



**Figure 6.** Obsidian flakes found at *Dako na Ilihan*.

We also surveyed the terrestrial municipal park in Initao called Initao-Libertad Protected Landscape and Seascape which covers 57 hectares. We explored four caves: Splitnose Bat Cave, Liza Cave, Open Cave, and Swift Cave. Aside from plastic wrappers and graffiti on the walls, no ancient cultural materials were found inside the caves.

### **Gitagum**

Two open sites have been identified in the municipality of Gitagum. These sites are located beside the Cagayan – Iligan National Road. In the Cagubcub Open Site (X-2007-F4) located in Barangay Matangad, we found stoneware sherds, earthenware sherds, a metal fragment, and chert on the surface cultivated and planted with corn (*Zea mays* L. *Poaceae*). The area is privately owned by Mr. Perfecto Cagubcub. The second site is located in Barangay Pangayawan named as Uy Open Site (X-2007-G4). We found earthenware sherds, stoneware sherds, porcelain sherds, and chert flakes.

### **Laguindingan**

The municipality of Laguindingan was already surveyed by archaeologists from the National Museum of the Philippines in 1991

(Dizon *et al.* 1991). The archaeological survey was conducted to assess the feasibility of the proposed Cagayan de Oro – Iligan International Airport. The project involves an archaeological reconnaissance survey of the proposed runway area and its contiguous vicinities. During the assessment, the team recovered earthenware sherds and porcelain sherds. These sherds were associated with glass fragments of contemporary beer bottles. The major archaeological site that was identified by the researchers was the remains of a *Moog* (fort) located at Sulauan point. The wall has an average thickness of 75 cm with a maximum height of 2 m and has an area of 8.9 m x 8.4 m (Dizon *et al.* 1991). The area was believed to be constructed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century during the Spanish period.

The team went to Sitio Punta Sulauan, Barangay Moog to investigate the ruins. According to Javellana (1997:4), *moog* was considered as “any tower, rocky outcropping, or natural pinnacle that could be fortified, to which evacuees retreated for defense.” The name of the ruins is locally known as *Cuta sa Punta Sulauan* (X-2007-U4) and is owned by the Ayala Corporation. The ruins were constructed on top of the limestone cliff overlooking the Macajalar and Iligan Bays (Figure 7). The structure was made of dressed coral stones bonded with mortar. It has a rectangular formation and the remains of the walls have an average thickness of 70–80 cms with a maximum height of 2–2.5 m. The area has a dimension of 9 m x 5.5 m. A huge and deep treasure hunter’s pit was observed at the side of the southern lateral wall. A new “parola” or lighthouse, which was constructed in 2002, is located on the western side of the ruins. No artefacts were found during the survey.



**Figure 7.** *Cuta sa Punta Sulauan* Ruins.

Analysis of the ruins *Cuta sa Punta Sulauan* shows that it was used as a watchtower during the Spanish period because of its ideal location at the northern tip of the peninsula overlooking both sides of the bays. However, its structural dimension is small thus impossible to accommodate a huge number of people in case of Moro attacks. Its function as a watchtower was mentioned likewise by Javellana (1997), Bautista (1995), and Madigan (1995).

Aside from the ruins, three caves were also explored. These caves are Liyang Bahu Cave and Langob Cave in Barangay Tubajon and La Cueva Con Agua in Barangay Mauswagon. No archaeological materials were found.

### Alubijid

The municipality of Alubijid is 25 kms west from Cagayan de Oro and 67 kms east from Iligan City. The word Alubijid comes from alubijid tree or alubihod (*Spondias pinnata* (L.f.) Kurz Anacardiaceae). It was believed that alubihod was commonly found at coastal area, which is presently Barangay Baybay. Legend mentions Alubijid trees used as markers for traders as a landing site for their transactions.

The team documented a *horno* (X-2007-H4), a local term for kiln, found in Barangay Poblacion (Figure 8). According to the archives, this kiln was built by a Jesuit brother named Juan Costa, who was responsible in training brick makers in northern Mindanao (Arcilla 2000). According to the locals, the *horno* in Alubijid was used during the Spanish period for firing bricks which were then exported to Bohol for the purpose of building a church, possibly the Baclayon Church (Neri *et al* 2008).



Figure 8. Kiln found at Alubijid.

## El Salvador

The city of El Salvador has a distance of 18 kms west of Cagayan de Oro. El Salvador is bounded by Macajalar Bay in the north, by the municipality of Opol in the east, by the municipality of Manticao in the south, and by the municipality of Alubijid on the west.

Liyang Cave Site (X-2007-J4) in Sitio Nilintian beside the Molugan River in Barangay Amoros is located inside the property of Mr. Jake Abesamis (Figure 9). The mouth is 1.2 m high and 6 m wide. It has a geographic coordinates of 8°31'17" north latitude 124°32'33" east longitude with an elevation of 50 masl. Earthenware sherds were found inside and at the entrance of the cave. Possible hammer stones were also found inside the cave. No tradeware ceramics were recovered.

Aside from the cave, two Spanish ruins were also archaeologically investigated. These are located in St. Joseph Academy in Barangay Poblacion and Pinoragit Hill in Barangay Molugan. Stone ruins were found inside the premises of St. Joseph Academy School in Barangay Poblacion (Figure 10). The area is located adjacent to the Macajalar Bay with geographic coordinates of 8°33'46" north latitude and 124°31'22" east longitude. The ruin is only visible on the ground level forming a long rectangular formation. The construction material is corals. The team calls the site St. Joseph Academy Ruins (X-2007-I4). The area was probably used as a church during the Spanish period because of its structural dimension and formation (Neri *et al* 2008). No cultural materials were found.

The second ruins is on Pinoragit/Paragit Hill in Porok 13, Sitio Bagyangon, Barangay Molugan (Figure 11). It is located on top of a



**Figure 9.** Mouth of the Liyang Cave.



**Figure 10.** Ruins located inside the St. Joseph Academy, El Salvador.





**Figure 11.** Spanish ruins found at Barangay Molugan, El Salvador.

limestone formation overlooking Macajalar Bay. The site is situated beside the Amoros River. The site has geographic coordinates of 8°31'50" north latitude and 124°33'12" east longitude with an average elevation of 31 masl. The materials were made of dressed coral stones bound with lime forming a rectangular structure. The hill is privately owned by Mr. Gaudencio Piit. According to the locals, the areas was known as *Karaang Lungsod*, thus the site was recorded as *Karaang Lungsod Ruins (X-2010-Y)*. Earthenware sherds, stoneware sherds, and porcelain sherds were recovered. Majority of the porcelain sherds were Kitchen Qing.

## Opol

The municipality of Opol is the first municipal town of Misamis Oriental in the western side of Cagayan de Oro City. Opol is 11 kms from Cagayan de Oro City.

Daayata Open Site (X-2007-N3) was identified by the team in Barangay Bacogboc, Opol. This is privately owned by Mr. Primo Daayata and is 20 kms south from Barangay Poblacion. The site is located beside the Bongcalalan Creek. A variety of artefacts such as earthenware sherds, obsidian and chert falkes, and stone adzes were found on the hill. No foreign ceramics were found. Another open site has been identified as Chert Hill (X-2008-V) (ASP 2009) where earthenware sherds and chert flakes were found scattered.

The team also surveyed two caves in Barangay Bacogboc. These caves are locally known as Salvan and Bacogboc. No archaeological

materials were found except for a stone mortar found adjacent at the mouth of the Salvan Cave (Figure 12).

Like in El Salvador, two stone ruins were recorded in the municipality of Opol. The first is located in Barangay Poblacion situated beside the Our Lady of Consolation Parish (Poblacion Ruins). The second is located in Barangay Luyong Bonbon (Molugan Ruins).

The Poblacion Ruins(X-2007-K3) exhibits vivid structural design with both lateral walls still present (Figure 13). The ruins has a rectangular formation and made of corals. The site has been excavated by the University of the Philippines – Archaeological Studies Program (UP-ASP) in 2008 (ASP 2009). It has a single nave formation measuring 60 m x 22.5 m composed of two floors supported by wooden beams of *Molave* (*Vitexparviflora* Juss).

The Molugan Ruins (X-2007-L4) is located on top of Molugan Hill (Figure 14). The ruin has a square formation made of corals and currently covered with vegetation and modern garbage. Initial analysis indicates



**Figure 12.** Stone mortar found at Salvan Cave.



**Figure 13.** Poblacion Ruins in Opol.



**Figure 14.** Ruins found at the Molugan Hill, Opol.

that the ruins were probably used as a watchtower during the Spanish Period (Neri *et al.* 2008; Neri and Rragio 2008). Several pieces of earthenware sherds were recovered.

### Cagayan de Oro

The city of Cagayan de Oro, the capital of Misamis Oriental, is located along the central coast of northern Mindanao, where Macajalar Bay borders the city on the north and on the east by the town of Tagoloan. The southern part of the city is bordered by the provinces of Bukidnon and Lanao del Sur and in the west by Opol. The present landform of the city is a result of Upper Miocene to Quaternary uplift, volcanic activities, recent erosion, and sedimentation (DENR 1999; Sajona *et al.* 2000).

Barangay Macasandig has been identified as having a large potential for archaeological investigations (Bautista 1992; Demetrio 1995; Lao 1995; Madigan 1995; Burton 1975; Cabanilla 1970; Neri 2003; Neri *et al.* 2005). Barangay Macasandig is part of the Indahag limestone formation composed of Pliocene to Pleistocene sediments of both marine and terrestrial depositions (Sajona *et al.* 2000; DENR 1999).

Based on the previous archaeological works in Barangay Macasandig, the team surveyed the Huluga area in search for lithic artefacts, Pleistocene faunal remains, and possibly remains of early humans. Unfortunately, only stone tools probably resembling Palaeolithic types were found (Figure 15). Aside from the stone tools, a fossilised leaf was found inside the Kagay-an Resort of Cagayan de Oro with geographic coordinates of 8°25'29" north latitude and 124°38'06" east longitude with an approximate elevation of 31 masl.

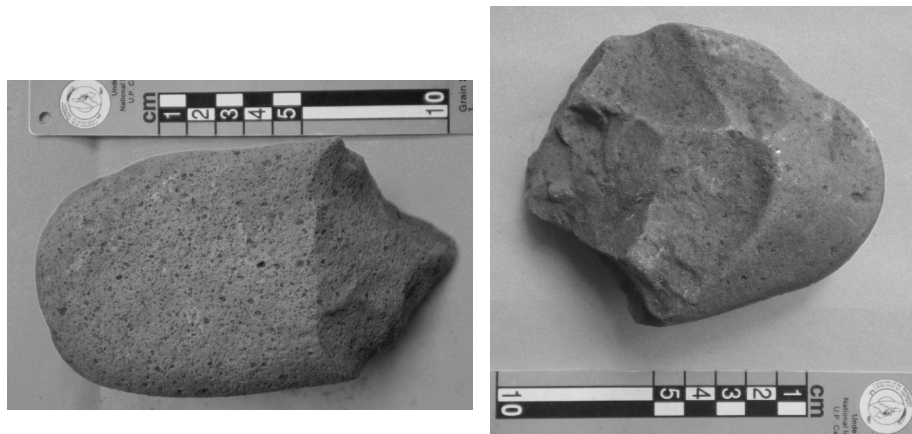


Figure 15. Stone tools found at the Huluga.

Another potential cave site was identified at Barangay Dansolihon. Local people called it Amboy Cave (X-2008-U). The mouth of the cave is approximately 4 m high and 3 m wide. The cave is owned by Mr. Pelik Bongtong. Cultural materials such as earthenware sherds, porcelain sherds, and metal fragments were found inside the cave. The porcelain sherds were associated with the early 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> centuries CE. Human skeletal remains were also found inside the cave (Figure 16). Unfortunately, the cave is heavily looted by treasure hunters and severely quarried by guano collectors.



**Figure 16.** Human remains found at Amboy Cave.

### **Tagoloan**

The municipality of Tagoloan is the first municipality in the eastern side of Cagayan de Oro City. The town of Tagoloan has been thoroughly surveyed by the team but only two open sites have been identified. The first site is known as Neri Open Site (X-2007-M4) located in Barangay Sta. Ana. A tenant recovered a stoneware jar during the construction of a metre-deep septic tank in 2002. The area is open grassland and planted with some coconut trees (*Cocosnucifera L. Arecacea*).

The second site is known as Nanay Open Site (X-2007-T4) located in Barangay Natumolan. The site is a plateau and currently planted with corn (*Zea mays L. Poaceae*). Nine earthenware sherds were recovered.

It is also worth mentioning that there were identified tunnels in Tagoloan which are believed to have been used during World War II. According to the locals, these tunnels were allegedly used by the early Tagoloanons as hideouts to protect themselves from Japanese soldiers. Five identified tunnels were recorded in Barangay Natumolan, namely: U Tunnel, Tunnel #2, Skull Tunnel, Nanay Tunnel, and Nagangga Tunnel. Currently, no archaeological materials were found.

### **Villanueva**

The municipality of Villanueva is bounded on the north by the municipality of Jasaan, on the east by the municipality of Claveria and the province of Bukidnon, on the south by the municipality of Tagoloan, and on the west by Macajalar Bay.

Based on the previous archaeological survey, Tagbalitang Cave, located in Barangay San Martin, was relatively dated between the Neolithic Period to the Metal Age because of the presence of the stone barkcloth beater associated with Metal Age pottery (Cabanilla 1970; Peralta 1968). No National Museum code has been assigned to the site, hence, the team gave X-2008-W as the site code. The Tagbalitang Cave is part of the limestone formation and the mouth of the cave is located at the slope of the hill orientated towards the east. Unfortunately, at the time of the survey, the mouth of the cave has been destroyed due to treasure hunting activities in the late 1980s. According to our informant, treasure hunters blasted the mouth of the cave in search for gold causing the mouth to collapse and thus blocking the opening. The cave is currently located inside the Municipal Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) and owned by the local government. No artefacts were recovered at the foot of the hill.

### **Jasaan**

The Municipality of Jasaan is located on the eastern coast of Cagayan de Oro. Two stone ruins were reported to the team. These ruins are located in Sitio Cota, Barangay Aplaya. The first ruins were locally known as *Cota na Bato* (fort made of stone) (X-2008-V2) and its former name was "Baluarte" (Figure 17). This ruins are located beside the



**Figure 17.** *Cota na Bato*.

Cagayan de Oro – Butuan National Road and inside the property of Carmen Zayas. The ruins have a concave formation made of coral stones. The wall has an approximate thickness of one metre. According to Renato Valcueba, the ruins have been literally moved and transferred in 1975 during the construction and widening of the Cagayan de Oro – Butuan National Road. The local people took advantage of the displacement and the relocation of the ruins by reusing the coral stones as part of their building materials for their houses and barangay outposts. Others used it in decorating their gardens.

The second ruins are located on top of the hill overlooking Macajalar Bay with an average elevation of 52 masl. The area is locally known as *Karaang Jasaan* (Old Jasaan). It was believed that this was the original settlement of the people in Jasaan before they transferred to the present location in Barangay Poblacion (Neri *et al.* 2010a). The site is a complex Spanish structure composed of a church (single nave with courtyard), belfry, and another ruin located in the eastern side of the church. The church has a dimension of 50 m x 46 m. Its courtyard is 14 m x 15 m. The belfry has a hexagonal shape located nine metres from the northern side of the church entrance. The separate ruins found 52 m east of the church is recorded as X-Ruins. The X-Ruins has an L-formation with measuring 12 m x 9 m x 14 m.

Twelve pits were excavated by the UP - ASP in April 2010 (Neri *et al.* 2010b) (Figure 18). Preliminary investigation of the different structures revealed that the area is composed of a church with a courtyard at the main entrance, a hexagonal belfry and a convent. Majority of the artefacts recovered were earthenware sherds and tradeware sherds that may be associated to Kitchen Qing wares.



**Figure 18.** Excavation conducted at *Karaang Jasaan* Site.

### Balingasag

One open site has been identified in Barangay Baliwagan, particularly at the abandoned Santa Filomena church ruins constructed in 1960 (Figure 19). The site is recorded as Filomena Open Site where a small number of earthenware sherds and tradeware sherds were recovered. It has a geographic coordinates of 8°43'13" north latitude and 124°46'98" east longitude with an elevation of 12 masl.

### Salay

The team was brought to the historical site in Barangay Casulog by the municipal officers of Salay. Local people believed that the said barangay was the original settlement of the town before they were transferred to the present location. It was also believed that the area was the landing place of the first Spaniards in Salay where they erected a wooden cross symbolising their presence and the propagation of Christianity. The site is locally called *Santa Cruz de Casulog* (Holy Cross of Casulog) (Figure 20).

According to local accounts, the original cross was stolen by treasure hunters. It was then replaced with a metal cross inscribed with '1883', the year the first Spaniards arrived. The area is beside the Casulog River and approximately 50 m north from the present coast. Although no artefacts were found, the team considers this an archaeological site due to



**Figure 19.** Filomena Open Site.



**Figure 20.** Structural monument in *Sta. Cruz de Casulog*.

its historical importance and assigns a National Museum code of X-2008-Z2.

### **Sugbongcogon**

One open site located on the plateau overlooking Macajalar Bay has been identified. The Micabalo Open Site located in Barangay Sta. Cruz was planted with corn (*Zea mays L. Poaceae*) at the time of the survey. It has geographic coordinates of 8°56'35" north latitude and 124°47'56" east longitude. Seven tradeware and earthenware sherds were recovered. A broken blue-and-white bowl may be associated to the 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries CE.

### **Kinoguitan**

The team surveyed the Sungo-Sungo Point in Barangay Poblacion. The area was part of the peninsula located beside the coast. This is owned by the Holy Child Municipal Parish. Majority of the artefacts recovered were tradeware ceramics probably dating to the 18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> centuries CE. Few earthenware sherds with some incised design were also found. The site is called the Holy Child Open Site (X-2008-G3). According to the local people, the remains of a Spanish ruins were found inside the vicinity of the parish. It was believed that this was part of the Spanish church constructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The remains of the ruins are partly exposed.

The team also identified another open site in Barangay Salicapawan. The site is a hill locally called *Kinigitan* (X-2008-H3) (Figure 21). The team recovered tradeware sherds, stoneware sherds, and



**Figure 21.** Kinigitan Open Site.



earthenware sherds from the surface and some were recovered *in situ* exposed along the vertical profile in the area. A number of Vietnamese wares were found and some 18<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> Chinese wares. To date, five communication towers are erected at the site.

### Balingoan

Another stone ruins, made of coral stones, was identified and documented by the team. It is located in Barangay Baukbauk. The ruin has a rectangular formation measuring 23 m x 11 m (Figure 22). The team was informed that the ruins were used as a fence in the early 1940s in manufacturing abaca (*Musa sp.*) for textile. At present, a chapel of San Roque, built in 1970s, is located inside the perimeter of the ruins. The area is situated beside the beach overlooking the island of Lapinig. Tradeware ceramics associated to the late 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries CE and earthenware sherds were recovered at the site. The ruin was named San Roque (X-2008-Q3).

Blue-and-white sherds and earthenware sherds were recovered in the property of Asuncion Coralles in Barangay Lapinig, otherwise known as Coralles Open Site (X-2008-R3). Annamese wares (14<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> centuries CE) were recovered.



Figure 22. San Roque Ruins.

### Talisayan

One identified open site was recorded by the team. The site is known as Saraga Open Site (X-2008-N3) located at the base of the Sipaka Point in Barangay Poblacion. The team found earthenware sherds scattered along the said property.

## Medina

Four identified open sites were recorded by the team. These sites are Capistrano Open Site (X-2008-K3), Pelaez Open Site (X-2008-L3), Pulang Yuta Open Site (X-2008-P3) in Barangay Duca and Pallugna Open Site (X-2008-M3) in Barangay Portulin. The open sites are all situated beside the coast of Gingoog Bay. Tradeware sherds, stoneware sherds, bottle fragments, and earthenware sherds were recovered from the sites. Majority of the artefacts recovered were tradeware sherds which may be dated between 18<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> centuries CE.

## Gingoog City

Spanish ruins locally known as *Simbahan sa Daan Lungsod* (church at the old town) (X-2008-I3) located in Barangay Daan Lungsod was recorded by the team (Figure 23). The ruins run 100 m south from the coast and measures 29 m x 12 m. The rectangular formation is made of cut coral stones. The team found tradeware sherds, stoneware sherds, earthenware sherds, and white wares scattered inside and outside the perimeter of the ruins. Majority of the tradeware sherds belong to the late Qing period (18<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> centuries CE). Currently, the northern lateral wall is used as pigpens. Treasure hunters' pits were also observed by the team.



**Figure 23.** *Simbahan sa Daan Lungsod.*

The team also surveyed the cultivated property of the Rodriguez Family located in the same barangay. The site was planted with *kamote* (*Manihot* sp.) during the survey. We found celadon and tradeware ceramics, which date to the Kitchen Qing, and some earthenware. The site is recorded as the Rodriguez Open Site (X-2008-J3).

**Material Culture**

The survey generated 965 pieces of artefacts from 41 identified archaeological sites in the province of Misamis Oriental. These artefacts were randomly collected from the surface. The analyses of the porcelain sherds were based on morphology, colour, and design. The results show that the ceramic sherds found are Kitchen Qing wares, Annamese wares, Swatow ceramics, and late Ming to Qing ceramics.

Kitchen Qing porcelain materials are predominantly represented in sites identified in the coastal area in Misamis Oriental. This type of ware was mass-produced in China particularly in the provincial kiln in Fujian and Guangdong in the 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries CE (Willets and Lim 1981). These ceramics were intentionally produced for the general public in China and used extensively for their daily household activities. These wares were also exported outside China to its neighbouring countries in Southeast Asia, including the Philippines (Figure 24). Kitchen Qing porcelains are commonly found in sites identified in the municipalities of Gitagum, Jasaan, Opol, Medina, Manticao, and Gingoog City.

The second most common tradeware ceramic type that was recovered in northern Misamis came from Annam in Northern Vietnam, therefore, referred to as Annamese ware (Figure 25). These Vietnamese

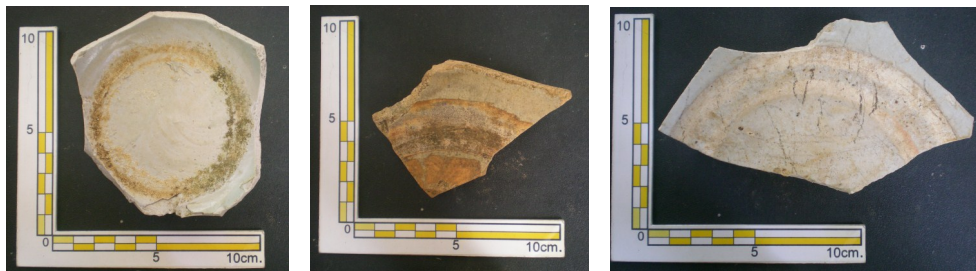


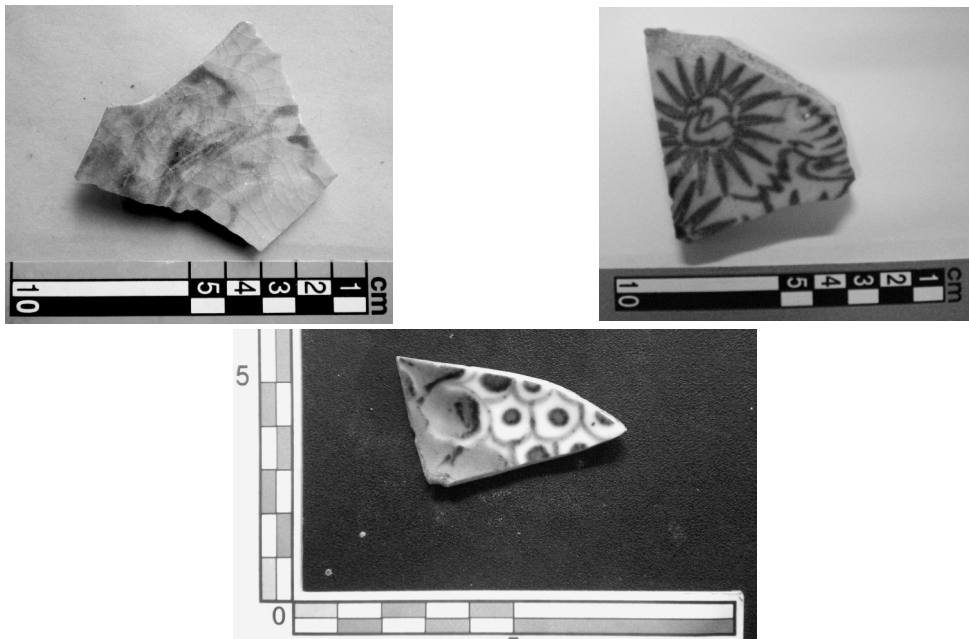
Figure 24. Kitchen Qing ware found in Jasaan.



Figure 25. Annamese found in Gamay na Ilihan, Initao.

ceramics, which have been dated to 14<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> centuries CE, were exported to different parts of the Philippines (Gotuaco *et al.* 1997). Annamese wares were found in the municipalities of Jasaan, Initao, Manticao, Balingoan, and Kinoguitan.

Porcelain materials that may be attributed to the Late Ming to Qing Dynasties dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> to late 19<sup>th</sup> centuries CE and some Swatow ceramics produced in Zhangzhou kiln (Qingzheng 2002) were also recovered in the area (Figure 26). These types of ceramics were widely exported in Europe and Asia including the Philippines (Qingzheng 2002; Tan 2007). In northern Misamis Oriental, these ceramics were recovered from open sites: Ilihan in Initao, Holy Child Open Site in Kinoguitan, *Karaang Jasaan* in Jasaan, and Amboy Cave Site in Cagayan de Oro.



**Figure 26.** Swatow wares from *Ilihan na Dako* Open Site (top left), from Holy Child Open Site (top right), and from *Karaang Jasaan* (bottom).

## Discussion

The dates of the different sites in northern Mindanao were based on the recovered tradeware ceramics found. The initial analysis of the archaeological materials from identified sites located near and along the bay shows a relatively young archaeology, probably dating to the 16<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> centuries CE. In fact, the presence of the Spanish ruins and the archival

documents when the Spaniards first arrived in Misamis Oriental in the 17<sup>th</sup> century would support this time period (Bernad 1996, 2004; Demetrio 1995; Fidel de Blas de la Asunción 1910). This also suggests that the identified sites located along the coast in municipalities Gitagum, Laguindingan, Alubijid, Tagoloan, Balingasag, Salay, Sugbongcogon, Talisayan, Medina, and Gingoog City were already inhabited as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century CE. Based on the local history of the different municipalities, it was also in this period that people started to migrate from neighboring islands like Bohol, Cebu, and Camiguin to resettle along the coast of Mindanao (Demetrio 1995).

Identified sites found further inland exhibits older archaeology probably dating between 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries CE based on the artefacts. This suggests that the sites located in the Bungtod Open Site in Manticao, Ilihan in Initao, Corrales Open Site in Balingoan, and Kinigitan Hill in Kinoguitan were probably occupied as early as the 14<sup>th</sup> century CE. All of these sites are located inland overlooking the sea, except for the site in Manticao. They are also all situated on hilltops.

Archaeological sites identified in Opol (Daayata Open Site), and El Salvador (Liyang Cave) and Cagayan de Oro (Huluga Complex) may exhibit a very early time period, probably dating from Palaeolithic to Metal Age Periods. No imported porcelain wares were found except in the Huluga Complex from which the area has been continuously occupied until the present. The identified sites are located farther inland and located along the river bank. They are also situated on top of hills. These hills are part of the karstic topography of the area. The limestone formation is composed of Pliocene to Pleistocene sediments of both marine and terrestrial depositions (DENR 1999; Sajona *et al.* 2000:175). Currently, the Huluga complex, which is a multi-component site, is the oldest site in northern Mindanao based on the stone tools that were recovered from the site. Other materials found in previous explorations were stone adzes, obsidian flake tools, Neolithic type of earthenware, and porcelain materials that may be attributed to as early as the Song Dynasty (Bautista 1992; Burton 1975; Cabanilla 1970; Neri 2003, 2005; Neri *et al.* 2005).

The survey of northern Misamis Oriental suggests that areas located at the coastal area are younger compared to inland sites which are older. This suggests that sites located inland were first inhabited. Two possible explanations may be inferred: cultural aspect and the geological morphology.

The presence of the Spaniards in northern Mindanao had a major impact to the socio-political situation of the area. The Spanish missionaries were first sent to inland communities to propagate and convert natives to Christianity. In return, the converted natives were promised protection and security against Moro invasion (Arcilla 2000). As early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Moro raiding was very extensive and threatening in Mindanao (Javellana 1997). The raiding for slaves and the confiscation of resources like weapons, valuable items, and hoarded agricultural products were the primary reasons for warfare in different communities in the Philippines (Junker 1999). The extensive raiding for slaves and the conflict between the Moros and Christians, including the converted natives, was also documented in 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries CE in all coastal areas in Mindanao (Warren 2002). In fact, folklore of the different towns in Misamis Oriental suggests this kind of activities (CLUP of Municipality of Lugait 2000; Socio-Economic Profile of Alubijid 2002; Socio-Economic Profile of Manticao 2006; Municipal Profile of the Municipality of Libertad 2007; ASP 2009; Neri *et al.* 2009). Because of this threat, the Spaniards may relocate the inland communities along the coast for easy access for military assistance from nearby towns. This may probably explain why all identified Spanish ruins in northern Mindanao are situated along the seaside.

The second probable explanation why archaeological sites found inland exhibit early time period may be due to the geological morphology of the area. This may indicate that the early coastal area may not be the same as today. The shoreline may be further inland or few kilometers from the present coast probably in the 16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> century CE (Siringan *et al.* 1998). Northern Mindanao is traversed by several rivers draining towards Macajalar and Gingoog Bays. The rapid sedimentation towards the coast brought by these rivers may have produced a rapid advancement of the shoreline and eventually forming a new stretch of land (Siringan *et al.* 1998). The present site of the San Augustine Cathedral, which is the central town of Cagayan de Oro, is currently 5kms south from the coast. In the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, its coastline was 100m south from the said church (Siringan *et al.* 1998). This fast geological sedimentation and the extension of land towards the coast probably played a major role in the archaeology of the area. This may be one of the reasons why artefacts recovered at or near the present coast of Misamis Oriental exhibit a later time period. This may also suggest that if we will look for older archaeology in Misamis Oriental, it should be further

inland towards the mountainous areas of the northern part of Mindanao.

### **Summary and Recommendation**

The team recorded 41 archaeological sites along the coast of Misamis Oriental (see Figure 1). Twenty-five of these are open sites, twelve historical sites, and four cave sites. Majority of these 25 open sites situated on top of hills. Most of the artefacts collected came from cultivated matrix.

The identified stone ruins were Spanish period sites. The Spanish ruins identified in the municipalities of Laguindingan, Initao, and Molugan Ruins in Opol were probably used as watchtowers based on the size of the structure and its architectural design. The rest were likely ruins of churches that also probably functioned as fortresses for defense. Extensive study must be conducted in order to confirm this.

Of the caves explored in Misamis Oriental, only three caves yielded cultural materials. These are Amboy Cave in Cagayan de Oro, Liyang Cave in El Salvador, and Salvan Cave in Opol. All of these caves have high potential for older deposits that needs further investigation. The Tagbalitang Cave in the municipality of Villanueva is also worth mentioning because of its Neolithic finds by previous researchers (Cabanilla 1970; Peralta 1968). Its contiguous areas are worth excavating for further understanding of the site.

The relative dating of the different archaeological sites of northern Mindanao is primarily based on the recovered tradeware ceramics and the presence of the identified Spanish ruins in the area. To date, no scientific dating has been done on any of the materials. This article is a preliminary study in search of archaeological sites in the northern part of Misamis Oriental.

No cultural materials and stone ruins were found in the municipalities of Lugait, Naawan, Libertad, Lagonglong, Binuangan, and Magsaysay. It is recommended that inland areas be surveyed in the future.

### **Acknowledgements**

This archaeological research project would not have been possible without the support of the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research Development (OVCRD) of the University of the Philippines, Diliman and

the Spanish Program for Cultural Cooperation (SPCC). I would like to thank my archaeological team: Dr. Victor J. Paz, Anna Jane B. Carlos, Andrea Malaya M. Ragraio, Emil Charles R. Robles, Anna L. Pineda, Cyril Calugay, and Jessica Peña. They hugely contributed to the success of this project. I am also grateful to Ms. Cynthia Valdes and Mr. Roger K. Davis for analysing the tradeware ceramics found in northern Mindanao.

I greatly appreciate the support and endorsement of the governor of Misamis Oriental, Hon. Oscar S. Moreno. Thank you so much for your kind assistance in making this project successful. This archaeological research will not also be possible without the outmost help and support of the municipal and city mayors and their respective staff. Thank you so much for your trust and cooperation in conducting the archaeological survey in your area. I am also thankful to our informants and the local people who shared valuable information and who guided the team in search for archaeological sites.

I would also like to thank Ms. Mabel Nacasas and her family for their help and information given to the team. We greatly appreciate their enthusiasm and energy in doing surveys in the municipality of Opol and El Salvador City. It is also worth mentioning the kind support provided by the Cagayan de Oro Historical and Cultural Commission of Cagayan de Oro City. Lastly, but not the least, to the people of the Archaeological Studies Program (ASP) and the National Museum of the Philippines for their kind support in this project.

## References

- Archaeological Studies Program (ASP). 2009. Cagayan de Oro River Valley Archaeological Project. Unpublished Manuscript. Archaeological Studies Program. University of the Philippines, Diliman.
- Arcilla, J. S. 2000. *Jesuits Missionary from Mindanao*. Diliman, Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, Vol. 4.
- Bautista, A. 1992. Report on the Archaeological Exploration in Cagayan de Oro and Vicinities. *Field Report*. National Museum. Manila, Philippines.
- Bernad (S. J.), M. A. 1996. The Beginnings of Evangelization and the First Church in Mindanao 1596-1597. *Kinaadman* 18(4):253-268.



- Bernad (S. J.), M. A. 2004. *The Great Island: Studies in the Exploration and Evangelization of Mindanao*. Cagayan de Oro City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, Volume XVIII No. 4. pp. 253-268.
- Burton, L. 1975. Progress Report: Exploration of Huluga Sites, Taguanao Region, Cagayan de Oro, Misamis Oriental. *Field Report*. National Museum. Manila, Philippines.
- Cabanilla, I. 1970. Xavier University-National Museum Research Cooperation. *Field Report*. National Museum. Manila, Philippines.
- Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP). 2000. Municipality of Lugait, Misamis Oriental.
- Cuevas, M. and A. Bautista. 1991. Misamis Oriental Archaeological Survey Project. *Field Report*. National Museum. Manila, Philippines.
- Fidel de Blas de la Asunción, G. 1910. *Labor Evangelican de los Padres Agustinos Recoletos en las islas Filipinas Expuesta en Cuadros Estadisticos de la Provincia de S. Nicolas de Tolentino*. Zaragoza. *Achivo Recoleta de Filipinas*, Quezon City.
- Department of Environmental and Natural Resources (DENR). 1999. *Cagayan River Watershed Profile*. Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). Region X, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines.
- Demetrio, F. 1995. "The Village: Early Cagayan de Oro in Legend and History," in *The Local Historical Sources of Northern Mindanao*. Edited by F. Demetrio S. J., pp. 39-132. Cagayan de Oro: Legacy Sales and Printing Press Inc.
- Dizon, E., M. Cuevas, and M. Aguilera, Jr. 1991. *Archaeological and Historical Survey, Assessment and Evaluation of the Proposed Cagayan de Oro-Iligan Airport in Laguindingan, Misamis Oriental*. Field Report. National Museum. Manila, Philippines.
- Evangelista, A. E. 1962. Philippines Report. *Asian Perspectives* VI (12): 46-47.
- Fox, R. 1970. The Tabon Caves. Archaeological Explorations and Excavations on Palawan Islands, Philippines. *Monograph of the National Museum*, No. 1. Manila, Philippines.
- Gotuaco, L., R. Tan, and A. Diem. 1997. *Chinese and Vietnamese Blue and White Wares Found in the Philippines*. Makati, Philippines: Bookmark Inc.

- Javellana, R. B. 1997. *Fortress of Empire*. Makati, Philippines: Bookmark, Inc.
- Junker, L. L. 1999. *Raiding, Trading, and Feasting*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Lao, M. M. 1995. "Cagayan de Oro, 1622-1901," in *The Local Historical Sources of Northern Mindanao*. Edited by F. Demetrio S. J., pp. 306-421. Cagayan de Oro: Legacy Sales and Printing Press Inc.
- Madigan, F. 1995. "The Early History of Cagayan de Oro," in *The Local Historical Sources of Northern Mindanao*. Edited by F. Demetrio S. J., pp. 1-38. Cagayan de Oro: Legacy Sales and Printing Press Inc.
- Municipal Profile of the Municipality of Libertad. 2007. Municipality of Libertad, Misamis Oriental.
- Neri, L. M. 2003. *Obsidian Sourcing at Huluga Open Site: An Evidence of Exchange?* Master's Thesis. University of the Philippines, Diliman.
- Neri, L. M. 2005. Obsidian from the Huluga Open Site and its Implications. *Hukay* 7:55-67.
- Neri, L. M. and A. M. Ragraio. 2008. The Archaeology of Opol, Misamis Oriental. *Test Pit* 12:20-22.
- Neri, L. M., V. J. Paz, J. Cayron, J. Belmonte, E. Robles, A. Ragraio, M. Eusebio, V. Hernandez, and A. J. Carlos. 2005. 2004 Archaeology of Cagayan de Oro City. *Hukay* 7:1-39
- Neri, L. M., V. J. Paz, A. M. Ragraio, A. J. Carlos, and E. C. Robles. 2008. The Archaeology of the Coastal Area of Northern Mindanao, Philippines. *Proceedings of the Society of Philippine Archaeology*. Katipunan Arkeologist ng Pilipinas, Inc. (KAPI). Vol. 6:78-86.
- Neri, L. M., A. M. Ragraio, E. C. R. Robles, and A. J. Carlos. 2009. The Archaeology of Initao, Misamis Oriental. *Philippine Quarterly of Culture & Society* 37:173-187.
- Neri, L. M., A. L. Pineda, C. Calugay, and J. Peña. 2010a. Archaeological Survey in the Municipality of Jasaan: Prospects and Findings. *Test Pit* 15:3-6.
- Neri, L. M., A. M. Ragraio, M. E. Wright, A. P. R. Roa, A. S. B. Mijares, and T. K. Tandog. 2010b. *The Archaeology of Karaang Jasaan*. Unpublished Manuscript, Archaeological Report. Diliman, Quezon City: Archaeological Studies Program–University of the Philippines.

- Peralta, Jesus T. 1968. *Preliminary Report on the Cagayan de Oro Seminar and Field Survey*. Field Report. Manila, Philippines: National Museum of the Philippines.
- Sajona, F. G., R. C. Maury, M. Pubellier, J. Leterrier, H. Bellon, and J. Cotton. 2000. Magmatic Source Enrichment by Slab-Derived Melts in a Young Post-Collision Setting, Central Mindanao (Philippines). *Lithos* 54:173-206.
- Siringan, F. P., R. D. Berdin, J. S. Doruelo, C. B. Jaraula, Z. R. Mateo, and Y. Y. Yacat. 1998. *Sedimentation Patterns and Sedimentation Dispersal Along the Coast of Macajalar Bay: Establishing Environmental Baselines and Predictive Tools for Coastal Resource management Using the Sediment Record*. Terminal Report. Unpublished Manuscript. Diliman, Quezon City: National Institute of Geological Sciences (NIGS)–University of the Philippine.
- Socio-Economic Profile of Alubijid. 2002. Municipality of Alubijid, Misamis Oriental.
- Socio-Economic Profile of Manticao. 2006. Municipality of Manticao, Misamis Oriental.
- Warren, J. F. 2002. *Iranun and Balangingi: Globalization, Maritime Raiding, and the Birth of Ethnicity*. New Day Publisher, USA.
- Willetts, W. Y. and S. P. Lim. 1981. *Nonya Ware and Kitchen Ch'ing: Ceremonial and domestic pottery of the 19<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> centuries commonly found in Malaysia*. Petaling Jaya, Selangor: Southeast Asian Ceramics Society, West Malaysian Chapter.