

## **The Archaeology Of Karaang Jasaan**

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### **Abstract**

The University of the Philippines – Archaeological Studies Program (UP-ASP) conducted an archaeological survey along the coast of Misamis Oriental in 2007 and 2008. Forty-one archaeological sites have been identified and reported to the National Museum of the Philippines. One of these historical sites identified was in Karaang Jasaan, Sitio Cota, Barangay Aplaya, Municipality of Jasaan. The Karaang Jasaan Site is a Spanish Complex. Local people believed that the said complex was composed of an old church with a hexagonal belfry, municipal hall, and a cemetery. In 2010, an extensive archaeological excavation and historical research were conducted at the said site. Reconstruction of the site complex was based on the evidence of archaeological excavations and material culture. The Karaang Jasaan Site has a single nave with one main entrance and two subsidiary entrances at the lateral side of the church. It has a hexagonal belfry and a rectangular courtyard. Further from the courtyard was a 2-story convent used by the parish priest. The Karaang Jasaan Site was the original settlement of the people of Jasaan before they were transferred to the present location by the Jesuits ca. 19th century CE. Based on

Archaeological data and archival research, the site may have been inhabited as early as 18th century until the 20th century CE. The municipality of Jasaan is one of the important Spanish historical sites found along the coast of Misamis Oriental.

## **Introduction**

Archaeological researches were greatly concentrated in Palawan, northern part of Luzon, and other areas in the Visayan region. Such studies, meanwhile, are scanty in Mindanao probably due to its location, security situation, and lack of interest from the archaeological community. Because of its meager material and information, less is known about the island, particularly in the northern part.

The province of Misamis Oriental is composed of 23 municipalities and three cities. The University of the Philippines – Archaeological Studies Program (UP-ASP) conducted an archaeological survey in the coastal area of northern Mindanao (Neri 2008). They were able to identify 41 archaeological sites (Neri 2011). One of these Spanish historical sites is located in the municipality of Jasaan (Figure 1). It is geographically located in the eastern side of the city of Cagayan de Oro. This Spanish complex is situated on top of a hill overlooking the Macajalar Bay. According to the locals, this complex, made during the Spanish Period, is composed of an old church with a hexagonal belfry, municipal hall, and a cemetery adjacent to the area. This is the only Spanish site in Misamis Oriental that exhibits multiple ruins in a single area. This complex is locally known as Karaang Jasaan (Old Jasaan) and the local people believed that this was the original settlement of Jasaan before it was transferred to the present Poblacion (Neri 2008; Neri and Ragragio 2008). The Karaang Jasaan is located in Sitio Cota, Barangay Aplaya, municipality of Jasaan, Misamis Oriental (Figure 2). Prior to this study, no archaeological excavations have been done on the said complex.

Thus, in April 2010, the UP-ASP conducted an extensive archaeological investigation in the Karaang Jasaan Site. This research project helped the team understand early Spanish occupation in northern Mindanao and to confirm the local history of Jasaan. Aside from this,

archaeological explorations or land reconnaissances were also conducted in the said municipality. This research generated significant information about the colonial period of the region, which improved our understanding of Philippine history in general. The product of this archaeological research may serve as vital reference for further studies of early peoples in Mindanao and other neighboring islands. In addition, this outcome greatly contributed to our national identity and cultural heritage as Filipinos.

The general goal of this archaeological project is to understand the archaeology of the municipality of Jasaan and how this might illuminate our understanding of the history of northern Mindanao in particular and the island of Mindanao in general.

The specific objectives of this research are as follows:

- a. To conduct a thorough archaeological excavation at Karaang Jasaan in the municipality of Jasaan, Misamis Oriental;
- b. To conduct an archaeological survey and investigate other possible archaeological sites in Jasaan;
- c. To establish the cultural chronology of the area based on archaeological evidences;
- d. To propose a project on conservation, preservation, and protection, if necessary, of the archaeological sites identified for future studies and tourism programs.

The result of the archaeological study may also help promote the ruins in Jasaan as tourist destinations. With the help of the local and national government in upgrading our tourism industry, this may in turn provide a source of livelihood for the people in the area.

## **Literature Review**

The Municipality of Jasaan is the third municipality in the eastern coast of Cagayan de Oro, the capital of the province of Misamis Oriental. It has geographic coordinates of 8° 38' north latitude and 124° 45' – 124° 53' east longitude. It is bounded in the north by the municipality of Balingasag, on the east by municipality of Claveria, on the south by the municipality of Villanueva, and on the west by the Macajalar Bay. Jasaan is composed of 15 political barangays: Aplaya, Bobontugan, Corrales, Danao, Jampason,

Kimaya, Lower Jasaan, Upper Jasaan, Luz Banzon, Natubo, San Antonio, San Isidro, San Nicolas, Solana, and IS Cruz. It has a total population of 45,310 based on the 2007 Population Census (POPCEN).

As early as 1840s, Jasaan was already a municipality but it was reverted into a barangay under the municipality of Balingasag in 1903. Not until in August 18, 1948 did Jasaan regain its original status as a municipality under the presidency of Elpidio Quirino in his Executive Order No. 165. Jasaan officially became independent in November 10, 1948. Currently, the municipality of Jasaan is considered a 3rd class municipality in the province of Misamis Oriental (CLUP of Jasaan 2000-2015).

### ***Archaeology of Jasaan***

There were only three archaeological studies conducted in the municipality of Jasaan. The first was in 1968 by Avelino Legaspi and Jesus T Peralta (Peralta 1968), both from the National Museum. They found ceramic sherds attributed to the Ching Dynasty at Barangay Aplaya. They also noted an old church with a watchtower at the foot of the hill. Cave sites with pottery sherds and human skeletal remains were recorded in Barangay Amparol. In 1991, another team from the National Museum conducted an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) in the municipalities of Alubijid, El Salvador, Opol, Tagoloan, Villanueva, Jasaan, and the city of Cagayan de Oro affected by the development of a water system such as ponds, pumping stations, and reservoirs (Cuevas and Bautista 1991). Unfortunately, no archaeological findings were reported in Jasaan.

In 2007, Neri (2011; 2008) conducted an archaeological survey in the coastal area of northern Mindanao. The aim was to identify archaeological sites located along the coast of the province of Misamis Oriental. The municipality of Jasaan was identified as one of the potential sites to conduct a thorough archaeological investigation because of the presence of the Spanish ruins (church, belfry, courtyard, and a municipal hall). Based on the archaeological survey (Neri 2011), this is the only multi-component historical site found in the coastal area of the province of Misamis Oriental.

Further, Neri (2008) recovered 45 pieces of artifacts composed of earthenware and tradeware materials. The said ceramics were associated with Vietnamese wares and a number of kitchen Qing wares. Before this

project, no intensive and comprehensive archaeological excavation was conducted in the area. The archaeological studies conducted by previous researchers were inchoate and there was no in-depth analysis of the site.

### ***Archival Documents***

Two religious orders were responsible in shaping the history of northern Mindanao. These are the Society of Jesus (SJ), popularly known as the Jesuits, and the Order of the Augustinian Recollects (OAR), also known as the Recollects/Recoletos. In 1624, the island of Mindanao was divided into two religious missions of the said orders using Punta Sulauan/Sulauwan (currently located in the Municipality of Laguindingan) in the north and Cape of San Augustine (Davao Oriental) to the south as a demarcation line. The Jesuits were given the western side of Mindanao while the Recoletos were given the east as their field of mission. When the Jesuits were expelled in 1768, the entire island was left under the sole control of the Recollects.

In 1622, using the Cagayan territory as their entry point, the Recoletos penetrated the northern coast of Mindanao and Jasaan was not exempted from the colonization of Spain. In 1723, the town of Jasaan was founded by the Recollects under the ecclesiastical mission of Cagayan (Jose 2008). In 1830, Jasaan became a parish separated from Cagayan (Demetrio 1995; Javellana 1991; Fernandez 1997) under the patronage of the Purisima Concepcion (Immaculate Conception).

The town of Jasaan was first established in a promontory overlooking Macajalar Bay in the area presently known as Aplaya (Cabonce 1995). The first cura parroco (parish priest) who was assigned in Jasaan was Fr. Jose Casals in 1834 (Table 1). That year, the registered population of the parish totaled 3,699 (Table 2). In 1838, Jasaan was mentioned as one of the pueblos in Cagayan de Misamis with 4 cabecera (Ereccion de Pueblos – Misamis 1808-1839 see also Table 3).

The people of Aplaya were farmers. Unfortunately, their land was not fertile for agriculture. Instead, they used the inland mountainous areas to plant rice, cacao, abaca, corn, and tobacco to be sold to the people in Cagayan. At the same time, women were engaged in making sinamay for exportation (Provincia de San Nicolas de Tolentino de Agustinos Descalzos dela Congregacion de Espana e Indias. Manila. Imprenta del Colegio de Santo Tomas. 1879).

The Recollects built a church made of lime in 1871 (Javellana 1991). Javellana (1991) did not mention the name of the cura parroco who was in charge of the construction of the church. Based on Table 1, Fray Ramon Cabas, may be responsible in building the first Catholic church in Jasaan.

Fr. Mateo Bernad took charge of the missionary work in Jasaan after Fr. Ramon Cabas. Fray Bernad concentrated on the Bukidnon religious mission and he was able to convert a number of people to Christianity. He was successful in propagating the Christian faith and established visitas in Linabo and Sumilao (Demeterio 1995; Bernad 2004).

In 1859, after the expulsion of the Jesuits for almost 91 years, they returned to the Philippines. In 1887, the Jesuit Order took over all evangelical works in Mindanao done by the Recollects (Demeterio 1995; Bernad 2004). One of the main tasks of the Jesuits in taking over Jasaan and Tagoloan was to evangelize the Manobos and the Bukidnons in the mountains (Bernad 2004), which they successfully did.

In January of 1887, the first Jesuit cura parroco assigned in Jasaan was Fr. Nemesio Llorente (see Table 1). Fr. Pablo Pastells was also assigned in Mindanao with its headquarters in Jasaan (Bernad 2004). In 1888, Fr. Juan Bautista Heras was the assigned cura parroco in Jasaan.

Fr. Heras played a major role in the history of Jasaan. The Jesuit priest was born in 1836 in San Juan de Fontaya in Barcelona, Spain. He came to the Philippines in 1872 and taught at the Ateneo Municipal in Manila. He became a superior of the Jesuit mission in the Philippines and, later on, he was assigned to Jasaan as his new religious mission. He was imprisoned in 1899 in Cagayan de Oro during the Philippine Revolution. Most importantly, Fr. Heras was responsible in relocating the old town of Jasaan to Kabulig/Kibulig/Cabulig, which is the present site of Barangay Poblacion.

The place in Kabulig, which was probably named after the Cabulig River, was habitable and suitable for farming (Arcilla 2000). It has a fertile land favorable for planting corn, palay, and bananas. Majority of the families weave and make mats (banig). The area was also suited for planting tobacco, which may be exported and sold to neighboring towns and villages. Aside from this, Kabulig has a potable water supply (Arcilla 2000).

In 1887, Fr. Juan Heras, while still under the missionary works in Balingasag, with the help of the Jesuit brothers Francisco Riera, who built the San Ignacio in Manila, and Juan Costa, a brickmaker and an artist, began the construction of the new church in Kabulig (Javellana 1991; Galende 2007). He built a church patterned after the San Ignacio Church in Intramuros Manila (Javellana 1991). In 1893, the two belfries were already erected (Arcilla 2000) and in 1895, the church was still in the process of completion (Javellana 1991).

The building of the church at the new town in Kabulig was not done in a year. It took time and a series of construction phases to finally complete the proposed plan. In Jasaan, the delay of the construction was due to unavailability of labor, resources, and limited financial budget (Arcilla 2000). Aside from this, the Philippine Revolution in 1896 contributed to the delay of the construction (Galende 2007; Javellana 1991).

In 1909, three religious sisters opened a Catholic school named Escuela Parroquial (Alvino 1986). The name of the school was changed to Jasaan Catholic School in 1934 when the American Jesuits took over. This school is currently called the Mary Immaculate Academy.

On July 31, 2001, together with the San Juan Bautista Church in Jimenez, Misamis Occidental, the Immaculate Conception Church in Jasaan was declared by the National Museum of the Philippines a National Cultural Treasure due to its unique artistic design and its outstanding historical and cultural values to the Philippines.

### ***Archaeological Excavation and Reconnaissance***

The Karaang Jasaan Site is located on top of a hill with an average elevation of 52 meters above sea level (masl). It has a vantage point of the Macajalar Bay towards the east. The site is a Spanish complex composed of a church, courtyard, belfry, and an X-ruin (located in the eastern side of the church).

In total, 12 trenches were archaeologically excavated in the area (Figure 3). Majority of these trenches were found in the church ruins. These trenches were named as: Trench sa Pader; Trench sa Poste; Trench sa Gitna ng Simbahan; Trench sa Altar A; Trench sa Altar B; Church

Entrance South Trench; Church Entrance North Trench; Courtyard Entrance Trench; Trench sa Labas ng Pader; and trenches located at the X-ruins, such as: X-Ruins (Trench A); X-Ruins (Trench B); and an Open Trench (further discussion of these archaeological trenches can be found in the archaeological report by Neri et al. 2010).

Archaeological survey or land reconnaissance was also conducted in the municipality of Jasaan. Caves, rockshelters, and open areas were explored for possible archaeological site. Barangays San Antonio and Kimaya were archaeologically explored by the UP-ASP team (Table 4).

Barangay San Antonio is located in the northern part of Jasaan (Figure 2). It has a land area of 497.86 hectares. The area was explored because of the presence of limestone formations. Two areas were identified as archaeological sites: Villabongga Cave and Llausas Rockshelter. Both areas are located proximate to the coast of Macajalar Bay.

Villabongga Cave has geographic coordinates of 8° 41' 33" north latitude 124° 45' 27" east longitude and 53 masl. It is located in Purok I, Barangay San Antonio (Plate 1). The cave is located in the property of Jennefer Tabamo. The mouth of the cave has collapsed. The flooring of the internal portion of the cave is covered with boulders from the collapsed ceiling and mouth. No cultural materials were found at the surface of the cave. Due to its location and proximity to the coast, the cave may have been used as habitation. Further archaeological excavation may test this hypothesis. Because of its geological formation and possible use as habitation, the team assigned a National Museum site code of X-2010-V

Another site that was explored was a rockshelter located beside the Cagayan-Butuan National Highway. The area is privately owned by Nicasio Llausas in Purok 7 of the same Barangay. According to the locals, they recovered earthenware sherds in the area before it was used for storing coconut husk (Plate 2). As such, the team assigned a National Museum site code of X-2010-W and coined it as Llausas Rockshelter Site. It has geographic coordinates of 8° 40'47" north latitude 124° 44'25" east longitude with 38 masl.

Barangay Kimaya was likewise explored (Figure 2). This barangay is located at the eastern part of Jasaan between Barangays Natubo and Luz Banzon. It has a land area of 403 hectares. The area was explored because of its vantage point facing Macajalar Bay and its abundance of spring water.



An open site has been identified by the team in Sitio Hilltop, Purok 6, Barangay Kimaya, in front of the Tuburan ni Faustina Resort. The site is a slope that is occasionally plowed and planted with corn. Three sherds of tradeware ceramics were found, probably dating to the late Ming Period. The team called the site as Tuburan ni Faustian Open Site (Plate 3). It has a National Museum site code of X-2010-X and geographic coordinates of 8° 38'33" north latitude 124° 46'20" east longitude and 47 masl. The area is owned privately by Tita Banaag.

### **Archaeological Interpretation of the Karaang Jasaan**

#### **Site *The Church Ruins***

The Karaang Jasaan Site was ideally patterned after the Spanish model where there is a church, courtyard, belfry, and a convent. Like the typical Spanish churches in the Philippines, the church in Barangay Aplaya is a rectangular structure with a single nave. It measures 50 m x 14 m. There is no evidence of buttresses. The church has one main entrance and two subsidiary entrances located at the rear entrance of the church (Figure 4).

The main entrance may have had a semicircular arch made of wood that was flanked to the post. The post was confirmed by the excavation in the Church Entrance North Trench, where remains of wood identified as Molave (*Vitex Parviflora* Juss.) were uncovered. Also, the main entrance has a perpendicular beam-lock made of mortar and lime. A beam-lock is a horizontal beam that connects and fastens two structures to make them stable and sturdy. This is also used as the base of the wooden frame, usually doors at the entrances.

Two pairs of post locks are still visible in the internal portion of the church. These are located near the main entrance of the church. The post lock's cross-section is square in shape, strongly suggesting that the wooden post that once stood there also has the same shape. Its dimensions are approximately 40 cm x 70 cm.

Based on the result at the Trench sa Poste Trench, a rubble feature was uncovered at 75 cm from the surface. It was surmised that the rubble feature was actually the fill of a short and shallow trench dug to align with the post lock to help facilitate the raising of the wooden post. Following the rubble fill, this trench was deepest at the portion going into the post lock, and shallowest at the southwest end, so that the floor of the trench itself

went down at an angle into the post lock. The wooden post could have been placed in this trench, with the bottom end of the post aimed at the post hole. The trench's angle could have made it easier for the post to slide into the post hole, and the job could have been completed by pulling ropes tied around the upper end of the post to make it stand upright (Figure 5).

The raising of the post, as part of the construction of a church or a house, was an important community event in the past. In the Municipality of Balingasag in Misamis Oriental, people cried "Viva Santa Rita!" every time a post was being raised to honor their patron Santa Rita de Casia (Javellana 1991:180). This may have also happened in Jasaan. Every time a post was raised, people may have shouted "Viva Immaculada Concepcion!"

The post lock and the wall were built simultaneously, meaning, the builders intentionally designed this portion of the church to bear some sort of load, to be supported by a pair of posts. Spanish churches usually have a choir loft or an elevated area made of wood at the rear of the church opposite the altar and over the main entrance. These postlocks could possibly have served this purpose, leading to the idea that this church, while it was still functioning, could also have had a choir loft. A choir loft or *coro*, usually located at the main entrance of the church, is where musicians were positioned to perform during celebrations of the ecclesiastical mass (Jose 2008).

Artifacts recovered at the Trench sa Poste were composed of square nails and cut capiz shells (Plate 4). These provided clues on how the church may have looked like during the time of its active use. We may assume that there were windows made of square capiz shells used for ventilation, probably small and semicircular arch located at the façade of both lateral walls of the church, evident in old Spanish churches and houses in the Philippines.

Based on the excavations conducted in Trench sa Poste, Trench sa Pader, Trench sa Gitna ng Simbahan, and Trenches sa Altar A and B, there were no evidences of brick tiles, *piedro china*, and glazed tile used for flooring inside the church. This may indicate that a natural groomed ground or compact earth was used at the time the church was functioning. This compact earth is made of clay identified as Jasaan Bolinao Complex. This type of clay is the most dominant type of soil, which comprises

50% of the land area in Jasaan (CLUP of Jasaan 2000-1015). Due to the abundance, according to the locals, the bricks used in the construction of the Immaculate Conception were made from the local clay.

The wall at this portion of the church is consistent in terms of material and construction technique with the rest of the structure. It is made of coral stone and was built using the lapatan method, wherein the trench for the foundation had been excavated to exactly fit the foundation (Figure 6). The wall was then built up as a series of successive layers, with each layer being shored up then filled with construction material (the coral rubble and cementing material), then left to harden, upon which the next layer would be built. The average height of this layer is 40 cm with a thickness of 80 to 90 cm.

### ***Courtyard***

A courtyard is a patio attached to the church, serving as an extension of the church. It is an enclosed area with low fortification or wall. In Karaang Jasaan Site, the courtyard is located outside the main entrance of the church and has an estimated size of 14 m x 16 m (Figure 4).

Like the entrances of the church, the courtyard also has three entranceways. One is adjacent to the main entrance of the church and the other two are located at the lateral side of the courtyard. Based on the archaeological investigation at the Trench sa Courtyard, post holes were found in both corners and at the side of the entrances. These post holes have a square formation measuring 20 cm x 20 cm. Remains of the post were also uncovered and these were identified as molave. These wood posts were probably used as support of the fence that fortified the courtyard. This was supported by the presence of a notch visible on the wall of the courtyard. The notch may have served as a lock for vertical structures.

At the center of the courtyard is a square stepped structure made of coral and lime. This functions as an atrial cross or a religious statue placed at the center of the patio. Local witnesses attest to the presence of a wooden cross erected and placed on top of the structure before this was treasure hunted. This is a typical religious design still seen in many Spanish churches in the Philippines, such as the Lady of the Abandoned Church in Sta. Ana, Manila and St Martin de Tours in Taal, Batangas.

Further investigation of the team at the courtyard revealed a step for every entrance. Each step has a height of 10 cm down to the flooring of the courtyard. In addition, the flooring of the entire patio is covered with cemented lime. Some tiles made of baldosa are still attached to the steps and the floor. According to the locals, the entire courtyard was decorated with baldosa before they were stolen. Some of these tiles were used in constructing the new church in Poblacion.

The pouring of lime and the laying of the baldosa at the courtyard were very contrary to the natural compact earth used inside the church. Why was the flooring at the courtyard decorated with tiles when not even a single tile or baldosa was found inside the church? What is the importance of the courtyard during the Spanish Period?

The team pondered on these questions and came up with reasonable and justified explanations: first, the courtyard was purposely cemented because the area was totally exposed to wet and dry climates making the clay sticky and muddy without protection. Unlike the church, the natural earth was protected by a roof possibly made of nipa. Second, the courtyard was well decorated for aesthetic purposes. The beauty of a courtyard may attract people to go inside the church or may draw people to actively participate in religious activities.

### ***Belfry***

At the northern side of the Karaang Jasaan ruins are the remains of a hexagonal belfry. The main function of a belfry (belltower or campanario) is calling people to mass. The bells back then, were also used for heralding significant events or activities in the area and for warning people of a possible danger. Because of the belltower's height, the belfry may also function as a lookout for raiders (Javellana 1997; Warren 2002). According to Jose (1992), the ground level of the tower is usually used as baptistry.

Currently, the belfry has been made into a chapel in honor of San Roque, patron saint of the Karaang Jasaan. The campanario is located nine meters northeast from the northern side entrance of the church. The internal and external walls were painted white. The belfry is made of corals and lime and has the same construction style as the church. Though there was no excavation conducted in the belfry, the huge treasure hunters' pit revealed significant information of its stratigraphy.

The entrance is located at the south facing the rear part of the church. Only the base of the belfry is left. Its architecture is very massive. It has an enormous and robust structure that may architecturally support walls placed on top of the remaining structure. This may also indicate that the height of the original structure was towering and tapered on top like the typical belfries found in different parts of the Philippines. Having a huge and massive size, the belfry might have been three-story high.

Unfortunately, no bells were found at the belltower. Bells may reveal important information of the church. Usually imprinted on the bells were the name of the patron saint, the year it was cast, the name of the town, and the parish priest who requested the bells (Jose 1992). Often times, bells were already in the area even before the construction of the church and belfry was finished. In 2007, during the archaeological survey conducted in the province of Misamis Oriental, the team noted the three bells in the municipality of Tagoloan (Neri 2008). One of these bells has an inscription of pueblo de Jasaan ano de 1855 (Plate 5). Would this indicate that the construction of the church in Aplaya started in 1855? Was it Fray Ramon Cabas, the parish priest, who requested for the bell? And, was the request made before or during the construction of the church in Aplaya?

### ***Wood***

The remains of recovered wood from the postholes at the courtyard and at the entrance of the church were examined and identified at the Forest Products Research & Development Institute, University of the Philippines in Los Baños, Laguna. All wood samples were identified as *Vitex Parviflora* Juss. or commonly known as molave.

The molave tree, locally called tugas, is one of the most abundant type of trees in Mindanao. This tree was preferably used in the construction of a church because it lasts longer and is not easily infested by any (termites). During the Spanish Period, molave tree was commonly used as principal post of constructions because of its durability and compactness (Jose 1992).

### ***The X-Ruins***

The X-Ruins is one of the challenging archaeological area in Karaang Jasaan Site. It is located 35 meters southwest from the church ruins and has an L-shaped form. Local people believed that this ruin was used as a

municipal hall during the Spanish Period. They even erected a Philippine flag to symbolize its political function. The excavation at the X-Ruins provided several significant details as to how the structure must have looked like and how it was used during the Spanish Period.

The external stone pavement, possibly walkway, recalls the intricacy with which the church's courtyard was built. The thin crushed coral and shell floor present in both the internal and external areas of the X-Ruins may be a manifestation of their efforts to manage environmental phenomena, particularly, rain and mud formation (Figure 7).

All features and artifacts found in the X-Ruins were associated with the colonial period. Most of the artifacts from these trenches can be considered as household items, such as: earthenware and porcelain sherds, glass shards, metal fragments, and a number of animal bone remains. The two metal implements from this trench were both parts of machetes or sundang in the vernacular. These types of artifacts are to be expected in Spanish ruins, which could have served domestic and utilitarian purpose supporting the hypothesis that household activities were done in the X-Ruins during the time of its function.

Based on recovered and identified artifacts and features, the X-Ruins may have functioned as a convent, and less likely as a municipal hall. A convent, also called casa parroquial, is the residence of the cura parroco or parish priest (Figure 8). This is the living quarters of the assigned priest where guests were received and entertained. The place consisted of a receiving, dining, and kitchen areas. Aside from the church, a convent was a very important place. The Spanish priests usually requested the local people to construct a convent for them to have a place to rest after their missionary works.

Further, identified post locks in the area indicate that this portion of the structure must have borne some weight, possibly a second level for the building. The circumference of these postholes further suggests the weight of the construction may have been made of light material like wood to sufficiently support the structure. Unfortunately, there is no other material evidence to confirm or refute such hypothesis.

Aside from this, the Open Trench may also support the function of the X-Ruins as a convent associated with household activities. A number

of animal bones and teeth belonging to Bos/Bubalos (Cattle/Buffalo) and earthenware and porcelain sherds suggest domestication. A posthole that was uncovered may further indicate a community settled beside the convent. As seen on the current houses built in the area, these communities may have had houses built on stilts. This idea must be further investigated for confirmation.

### ***The Relocation of Town***

The original settlement of the people in Jasaan was located in a promontory overlooking Macajalar Bay. Currently, this place is locally called Karaang Jasaan in Barangay Aplaya. The first religious order that penetrated the community was the Recollects. It became a parish in 1830. In 1871, Fray Ramon Cabas built the church in Aplaya and made it the central political area in Jasaan. When the Jesuits took over the missionary work in Jasaan in 1887, they transferred the central government to Kabulig or Cabulig (currently called Poblacion). Under the auspices of Fr. Juan Bautista Heras, the Jesuits built a new church patterned after the San Ignacio Church in Intramuros, Manila. This church is known today as the Immaculate Conception Church.

Why was there a transfer of the church/political government from Aplaya to Kabulig? What are the reasons considered by the Jesuits in relocating the area? Based on our assessment, the reasons why Aplaya was abandoned include scarcity of potable water and the lack of fertile soil to agriculture.

It is known that people usually settled along the major rivers for nourishment, cultivation of agricultural land, and household activities. Potable water is very vital and essential in a community. In the case of Jasaan, there are three major rivers in the area: Cabulig, Dumagook, and Solana that drained towards Macajalar Bay (Figure 2). Geographically, the Karaang Jasaan Site is far from these rivers, hence, people experienced scarcity of water. This may be one of the reasons why Fr. Heras transferred the town to Kabulig, which is located beside the Cabulig River. According to Arcilla (2000), Cabulig River was very pleasant for drinking during the time of the Spaniards. Aside from this, both Aplaya and Kabulig (presently Poblacion) are geologically located in a promontory overlooking Macajalar bay.

In addition, based on archival documents, people in Aplaya were farmers. Unfortunately, the soil in Aplaya was not suitable and fertile for agriculture. The people in Aplaya, under the Recollects, made use of the inlands in planting their crops. Unlike in Kabulig, the soil was suited for planting corn, palay, and bananas. The people in Jasaan took advantage of the fertility of the soil, thus they were able to export goods to neighboring towns and villages.

The relocation of the old town to its present site was not unique in Jasaan. The Recollects primarily established a community and built a church for religious activities. These churches were sometimes used as forts as protection from raids. After the turnover of the religious mission to the Jesuits, old towns were transferred to areas where there was an abundant water supply, fertile soil, and proximity to the coast. This was the case of the towns in Balingasag and Tagoloan in Misamis Oriental, which were both relocated to their present site when the Jesuits took over the religious mission.

### ***Artifacts***

A total of 675 pieces of artifacts were recovered from the excavations and explorations conducted in the municipality of Jasaan. Based on Tables 6 and 7, ceramic (67%) is the most abundant type of artifacts recovered (Figure 9). The quantity of the materials would indicate the extensive use of the item in the municipality of Jasaan.

Porcelain ceramics have been imported to the Philippines as early as ca. 900 CE (Scott 1984). Blue and white sherds are the predominant materials recovered in Jasaan. Majority of these porcelains came from China and Europe. The analyses of these sherds were based on morphology, color, decoration, and design.

Kitchen Qing porcelain materials are predominantly represented in Karaang Jasaan Site (Plate 6). This type of ware was mass-produced in China particularly in the provincial kiln in Fujian and Guangdong in the 18th to 20th centuries CE. 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 neighboring countries in Southeast Asia, including the Philippines. Aside from Jasaan, Kitchen Qing porcelains were also found in different municipalities in northern Mindanao such as: Gitagum, Opol, Medina, Manticao, and Gingoog City (Neri 2011).



Manila Ware sherds were also recovered in the Karaang Jasaan Site (Plate 7). This type of ware was first manufactured in San Pedro, Makati in the late 16th century until the early 19th century (Beyer 1946). The texture is between stoneware and earthenware with incised, carved, and in some plain designs. Manila Wares collected in the site were composed of mouth rim, body parts, and base with a clear red brick color. This type of ware may date back to the 18th or early part of the 19th century CE.

Aside from the Kitchen Qing and Manila Ware, a number of European wares were also found at the site (Plate 8). Majority of these wares were composed of mouth rim and body parts. European wares are hand painted blue underglazed with Chinese motifs. This type of wares was popular in Europe in the middle to late 18th century CE (Copeland 2000). Distribution of European wares in the Philippines began in 19th century as a substitute to the importation of the Chinese ceramics.

### ***Summary and Conclusion***

The Karaang Jasaan Site is a Spanish complex composed of a single nave church, courtyard, hexagonal belfry, and a convent. The Karaang Jasaan Site is considered the first settlement of the people in Jasaan before the town was transferred to its present location in Barangay Poblacion. The scarcity of water supply and the unsuitability of soil for agriculture are the major reasons for its relocation.

The church in Aplaya has a rectangular formation with semi high-pitched roofing made of nipa hut. The altar of the church points toward the Macajalar Bay and extends towards the southeast where the main entrance of the church faces away from the coast. It has a semicircular arch windows located at the façade of both lateral walls of the church. The people used the natural compact earth as flooring inside the church. Outside the main entrance of the church is the courtyard that has low fence. Its flooring was overlaid with baldosa tiles. It seems that the people responsible for the construction and maintenance during its time of use gave particular attention to the external environs. Most of the wood used during the construction was molave (*Vitex Parviflora* Juss.) due to its durability.

The following chronology of the construction is taken from the observations in the trenches that were opened inside and outside the ruins.

First, the church was constructed: the lapatan foundation of the wall and later the successive layers of the vertical walls were set in place. This was followed by the raising of the wooden post that would serve as a principal post of the church. Second, the courtyard was constructed: the low fence was then covered with palitada, followed by the pouring of lime that would serve as the flooring. The baldozas were then laid over the flooring. Finally the horizontal ledges attached to the side entrance wall of the church, a step found in each entrance of the courtyard, and the atrial cross located at the center of the patio were simultaneously constructed.

The northeast side of the courtyard is where the hexagonal belfry stands. It may have been 3-story high and the ground level used as baptistery during the Spanish Period. Meanwhile, the X-Ruins may have functioned as a convent, a place where the parish priest received and entertained guests. It may be a 2-story structure in which the first floor was made of coral stones while the second level was made of wood.

A total of 675 pcs. of artifacts were recovered from the 12 trenches excavated and from the explorations conducted in the Municipality of Jasaan. Majority of the artifacts were attributed to Kitchen Qing, Manila Ware, and European ware dating back to the 18th to 20th centuries CE. The possible dates of the artifacts and archival documents both confirmed the late time period in Jasaan. Further, no evidence of early settlement in Aplaya was uncovered. The prominent area to look for older archaeology may be located in the northern part of Jasaan, where the Villabongga Cave and Llausas Rockshelter were found. The area may reveal antiquity farther upland in Barangays San Antonio, Danao, and IS Cruz.

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Thank you also for the support of the Aghasa-A Explorer. To the teachers and students from Jasaan National High School and Aplaya National High School, thank you for visiting the site and helping us uncover the local cultural heritage of Jasaan.

**Table 1. List of cura parrocos in the Municipality of Jasaan based on Blas and Fidel (1910), Jose (2008), and Demetrio (1995)**

Municipality of JASAAN			
Year	Cura Parrocos/Misioneros	Religious Order	Remarks
1834	Fr. Jose Casals	OAR*	
1838	Fr. Manuel de Sta. Rita	OAR	
1844 - 1845	D. Vicente de Dolores	interino	
1843	Fr. Gregorio Lagrono del Dulcisimo Nombre de Maria	OAR	
1852 (?)	Fr. Fernando Ramos de la Encarnacion	OAR	
1851	Fr. Ramon Cabas	OAR	del Patrocinio
1877	Fr. Mateo Bernad	OAR	de San Miguel
1882	Fr. Benigno Jimenez	OAR	
Jan 26,1887- June 25,1887	Fr. Nemesio Llorente	SJ**	
June 25,1887 – Oct. 8,1887	Fr. Pablo Pastells	SJ	
Oct. 8,1887 – Dec. 19,1887	Fr. Juan Terricabras	SJ	
Dec.19,1887- Oct. 28,1888	Fr. Gregorio Parache	SJ	
Oct.29,1888 – Oct. 30,1888	Fr. Juan Casellas	SJ	
Oct.30,1888 – Sept.17,1915	Fr. Juan Bautista Heras	SJ	

\*OAR (Order of the Augustinian Recollect)

\*\*SJ (Society of Jesus)

**Table 2. Number of population from 1834-1990**

<b>JASAAN</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of Population</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1834	3,699	
1838	3,993	
1843	5,259	
1847	6,174	
1851	3,160	
1857	4,020	
1861	4,796	
1866	4,248	
1871	4,903	
1877	5,825	
1878	5,878	
1882	5,849	
1884	1,809	
1903	3,175	
1918	1,476	Jasaan was under Balingasag
1939	2,660	Jasaan was under Balingasag
1948	6,035	
1960	11,676	
1970	15,732	
1975	18,486	
1980	23,486	
1990	29,146	

**Table 3. Number of cabecera since 1838 - 1903**

<b>JASAAN</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of Cabecera</b>	<b>Comment</b>
1838	4	
1877-1878	10	
1882-1883	11 or 12	
1886-1887	12	
1892-1898	13	
1903	6	



**Table 4. Identified archaeological sites in the Municipality of Jasaan**

Barangay	Archaeological Sites	Type of Site	National Museum Code	Geographic Coordinates	Total No. of Artifacts
San Antonio	Villa Bongga Site	Cave Site	X-2010-V	8° 41' 33" N 124° 45' 27" E	None
	Llausas Rockshelter	Rockshelter Site	X-2010-W	8° 40' 47" N 124° 44' 25" E	None
Kimaya	Tuburan ni Faustina	Open Site	X-2010-X	8° 38' 33" N 124° 46' 20" E	3

**Table 5. Number of artifacts recovered and its specific distribution.**

Artifact	Type	Number of Artifacts
Ceramics	Earthenware	142
	Stoneware	21
	Porcelain	274
	Manila ware	18
Metal	Square Nails	21
	Fragments	52
	Slag	1
	Coins	2
Animal remains	Bones	68
	Teeth	24
Religious relic		1
Glass		34
Capiz shell		7
Masonry		6
Others		4
TOTAL		675

**Table 6. Total number of artifacts and its general distribution.**

Artifact	Total Number of Artifacts
Ceramics	455
Metal	76
Animal remains	92
Religious relics	1
Glass	34
Capiz shell	7
Masonry	6
Others	4
TOTAL	675

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Figure 1. Map of the Philippines showing the location of the municipality of Jasaan, Misamis Oriental

(<http://www.globalpinoy.com/gp.topics.v1/viewtopic.php?postid=4d6398d2a2054>)

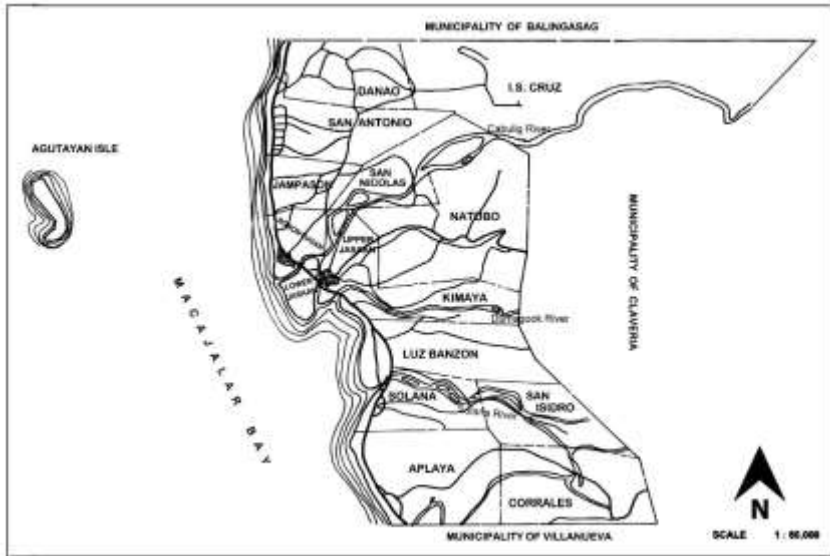


Figure 2. Map of the Municipality of Jasaan showing the location of Karaang Jasaan Site in Barangay Aplaya, Jasaan (CLUP of Jasaan 2000-2015)

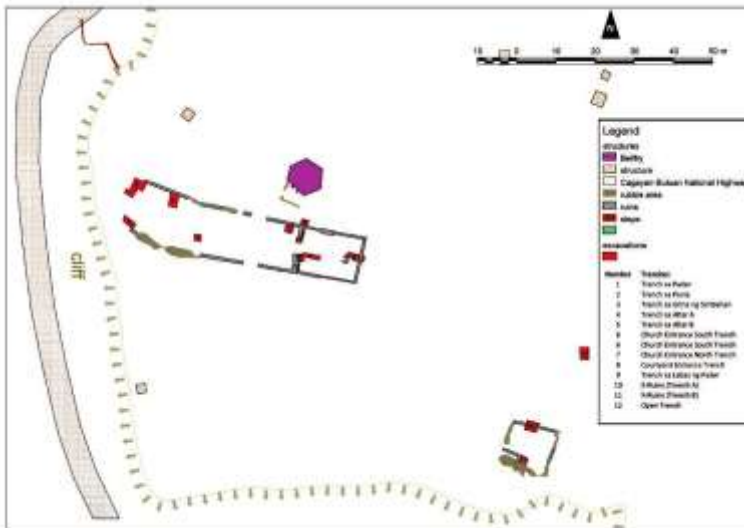


Figure 3. Map of the Karaang Jasaan Site with its respective trenches (by Armand Mijares and Emil Robles)

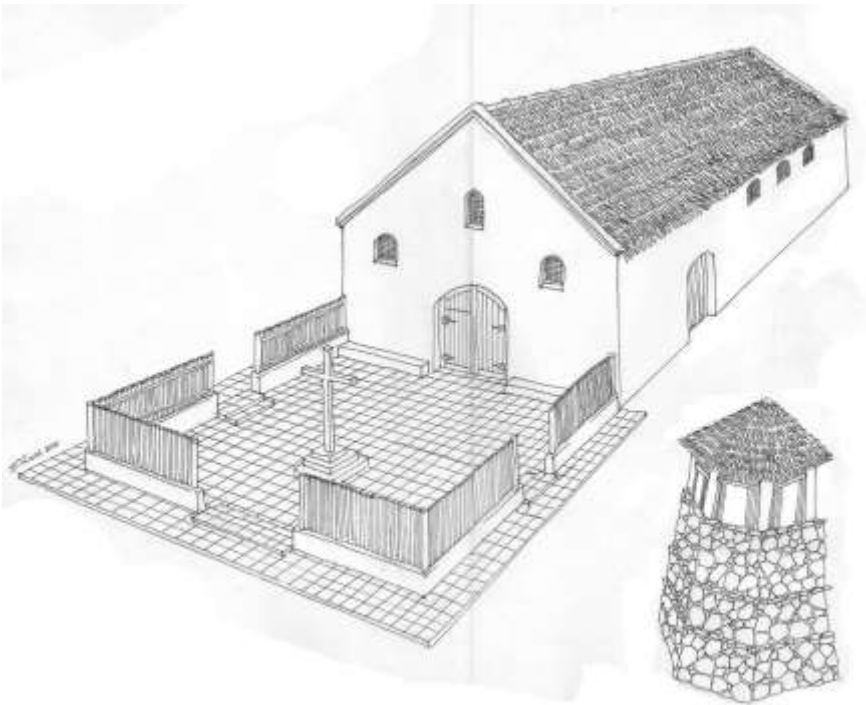


Figure 4. Reconstruction of the church in Aplaya (by Enrico Lluch)

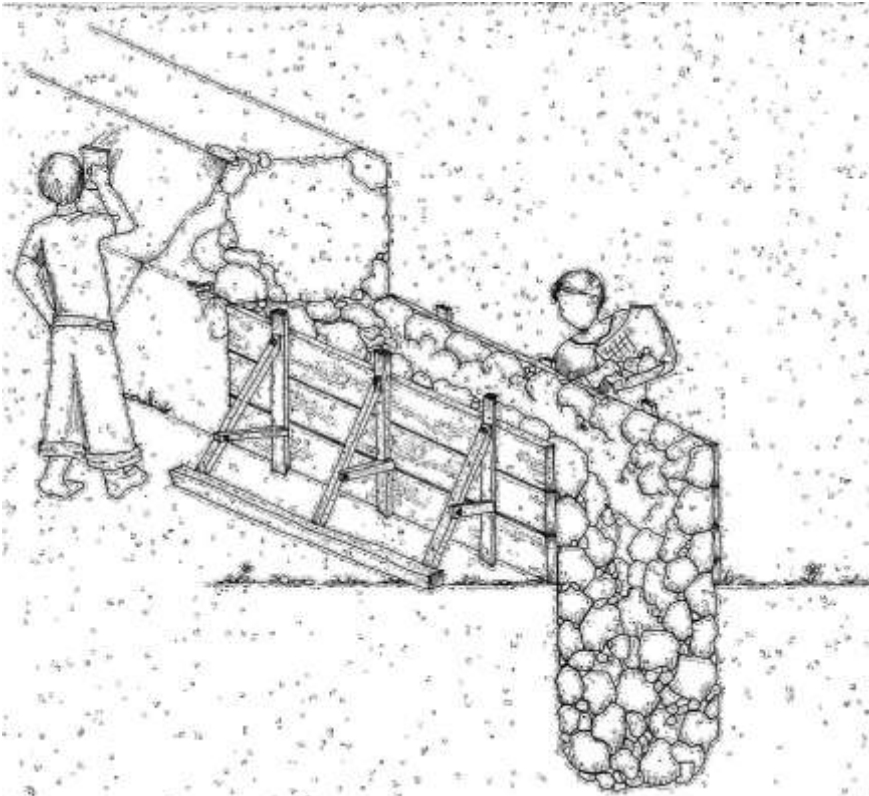


Figure 5. Raising of the post during the construction of the church (by Andrea Malaya Ragragio)



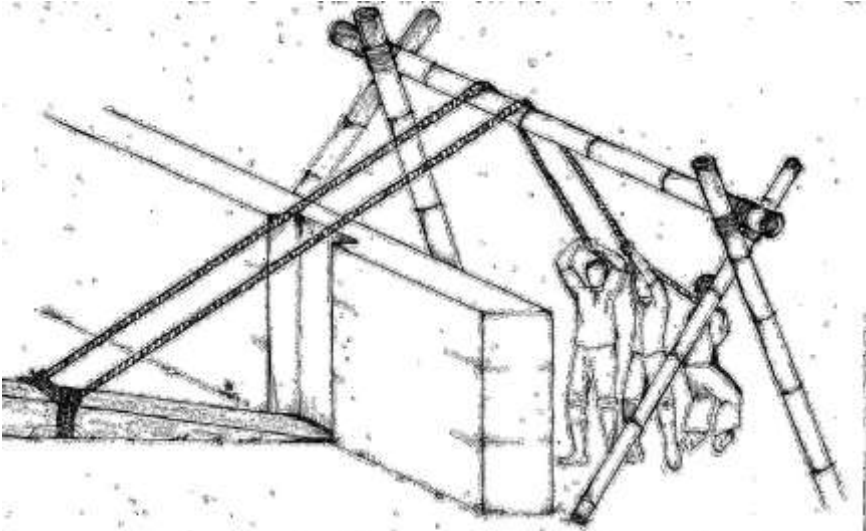


Figure 6. The lapatan method used in the construction of the walls of the church in Aplaya (by Andrea Malaya Ragrajio)

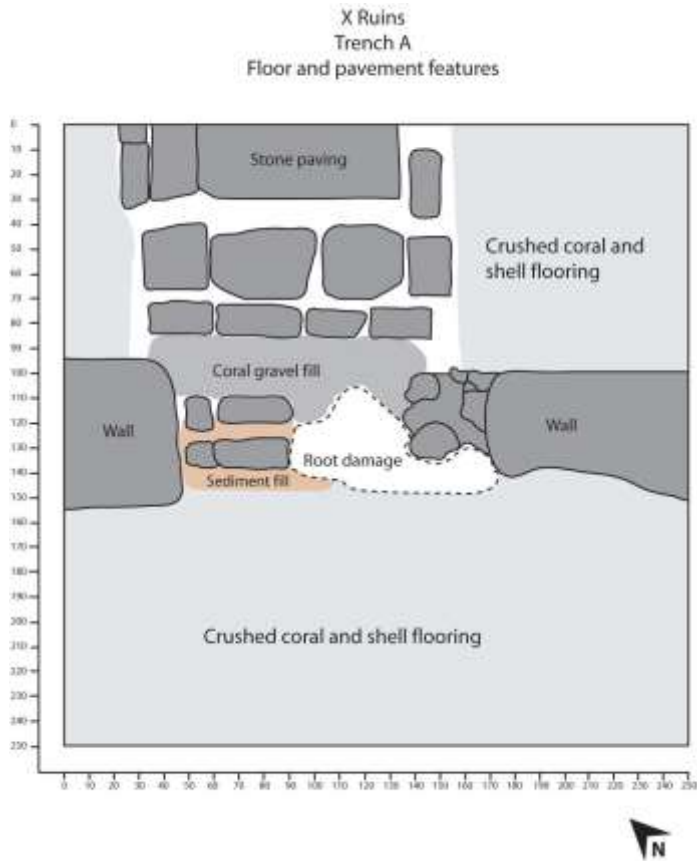


Figure 7. Horizontal profile showing floor and pavement features

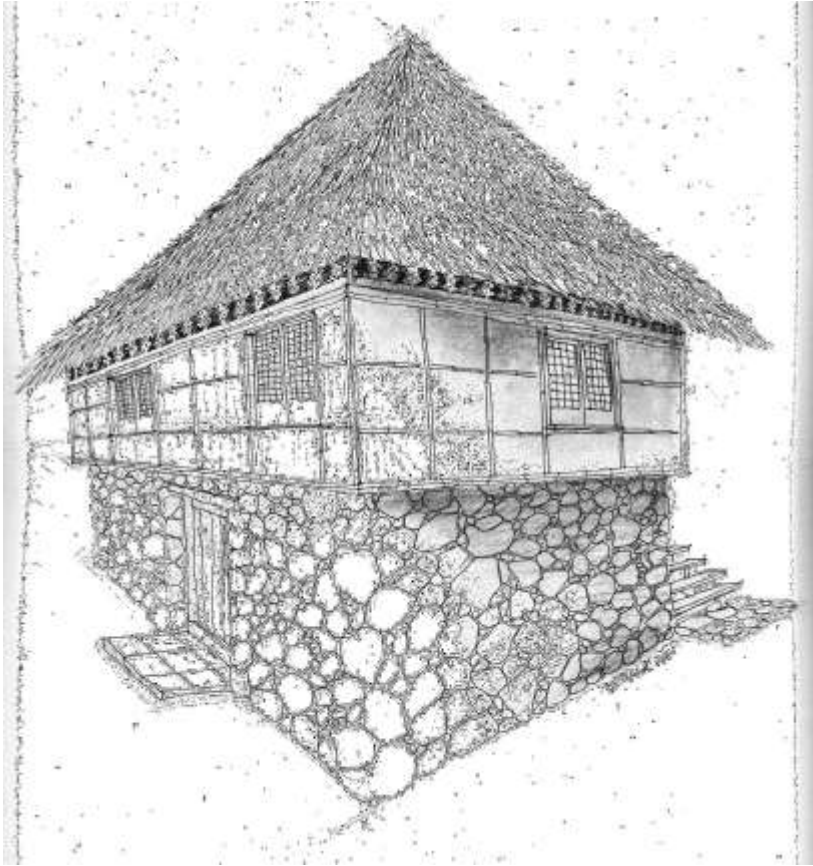


Figure 8. Reconstruction of the casa parroquial (by Enrico Lluh)

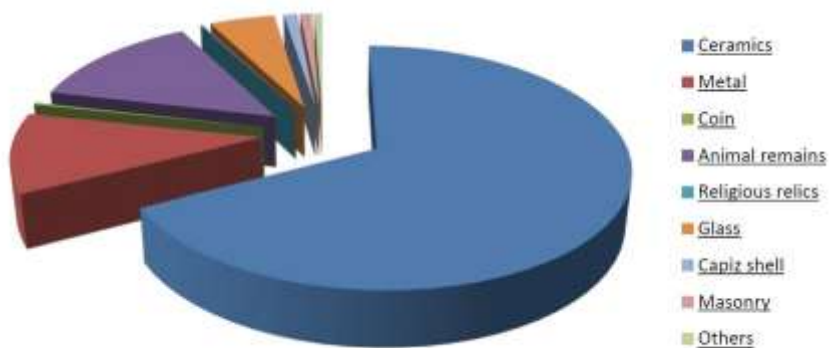


Figure 9. Graph showing the percentage of artifacts recovered



Plate 1. Mouth of the Villabonga Cave in Barangay San Antonio



Plate 2. Llausas Rockshelter in Barangay San Antonio



Plate 3. Tuburan ni Faustina Open Site in Barangay Kimaya

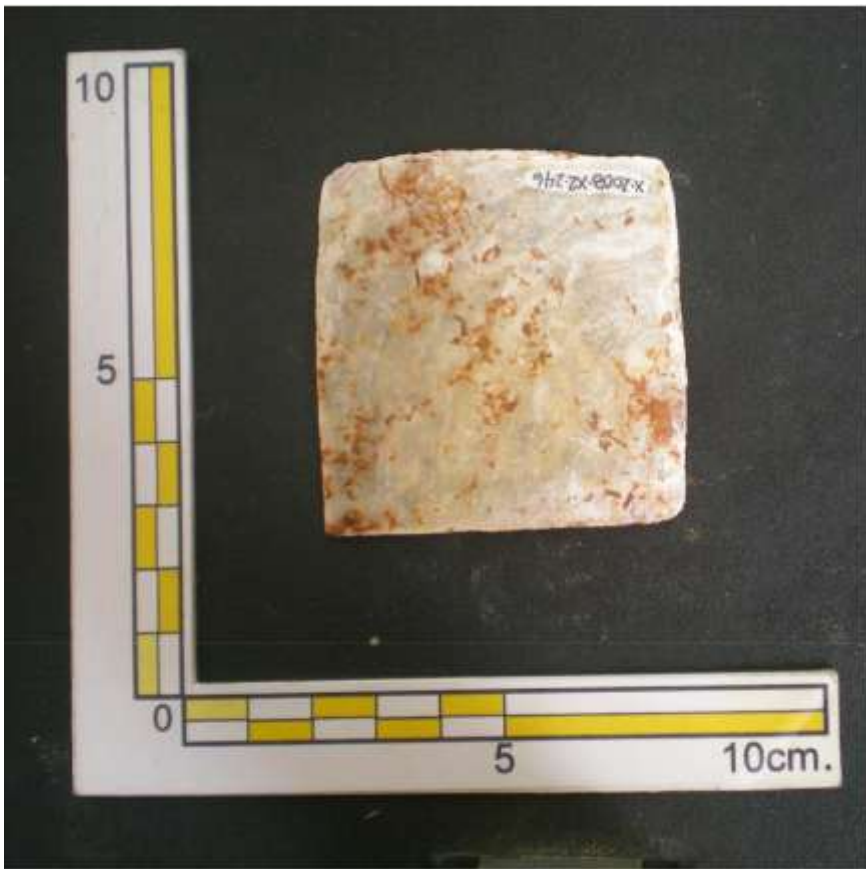


Plate 4. Cut capiz shell uncovered at Trench sa Poste





Plate 5. Inscriptions of one of the bells found at the Nuestra Señora dela Candelaria Parish Church in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental



Plate 6-a. Kitchen Qing wares found in Karaang Jasaan Site (a,b, and c)



Plate 6-b.

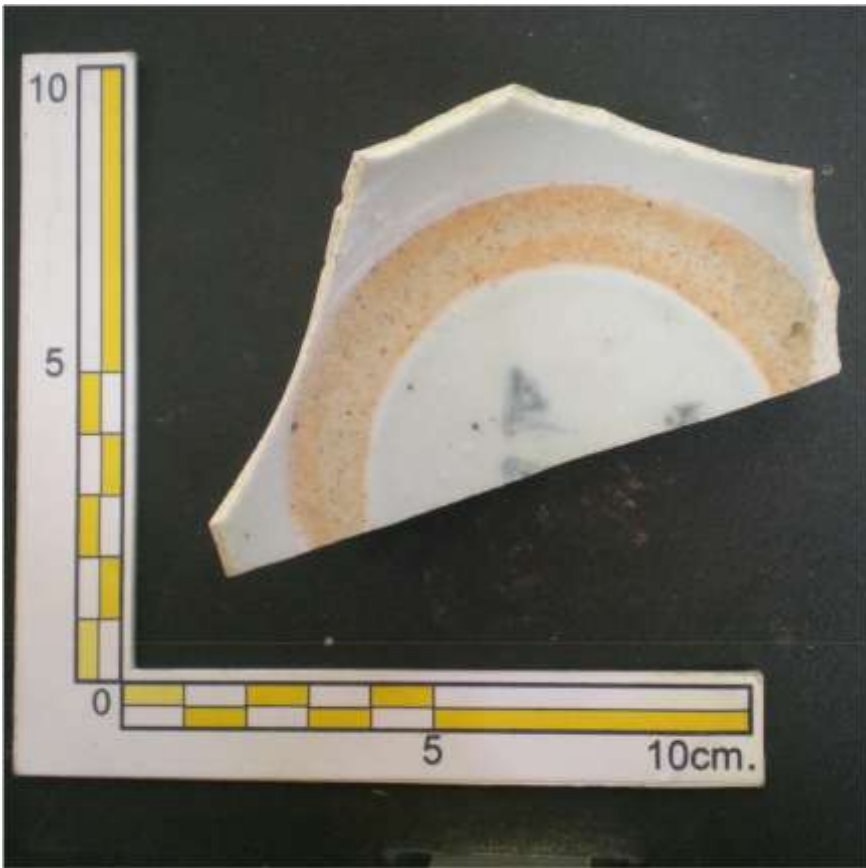


Plate 6-c.

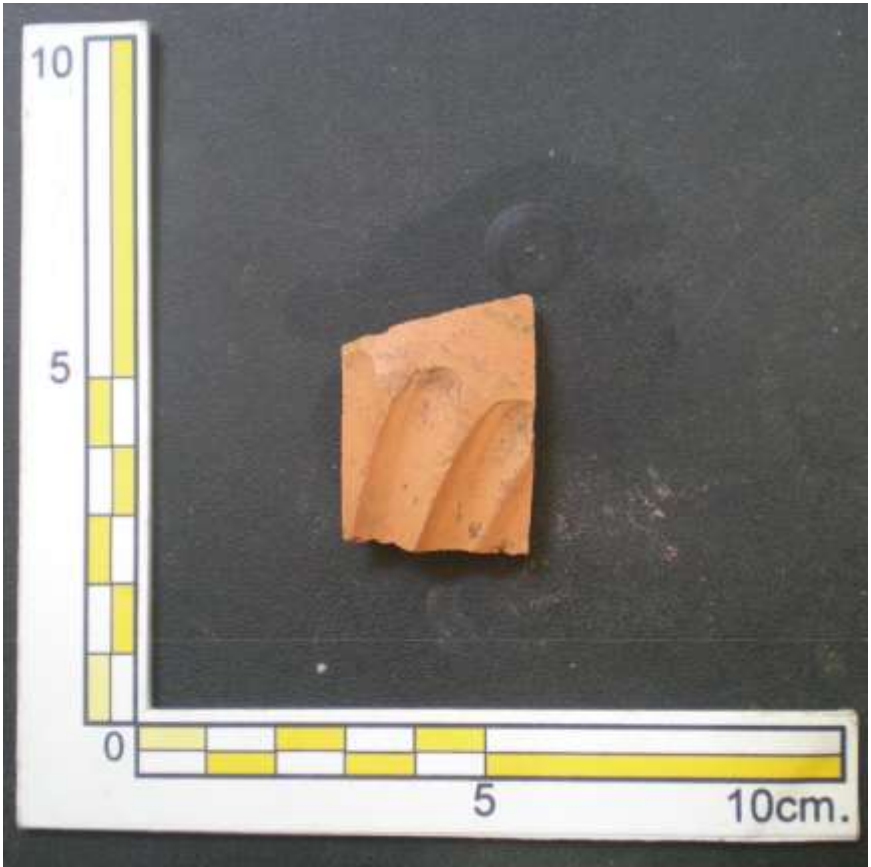


Plate 7-a. Manila Ware sherds

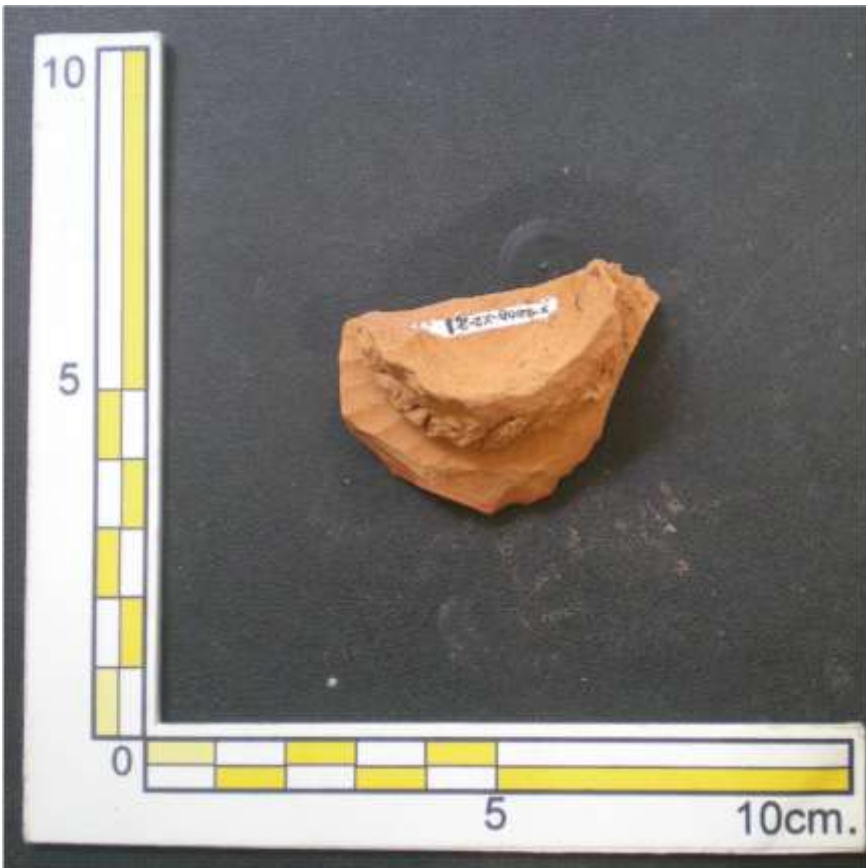


Plate 7-b.



Plate 8-a. European Ware sherds

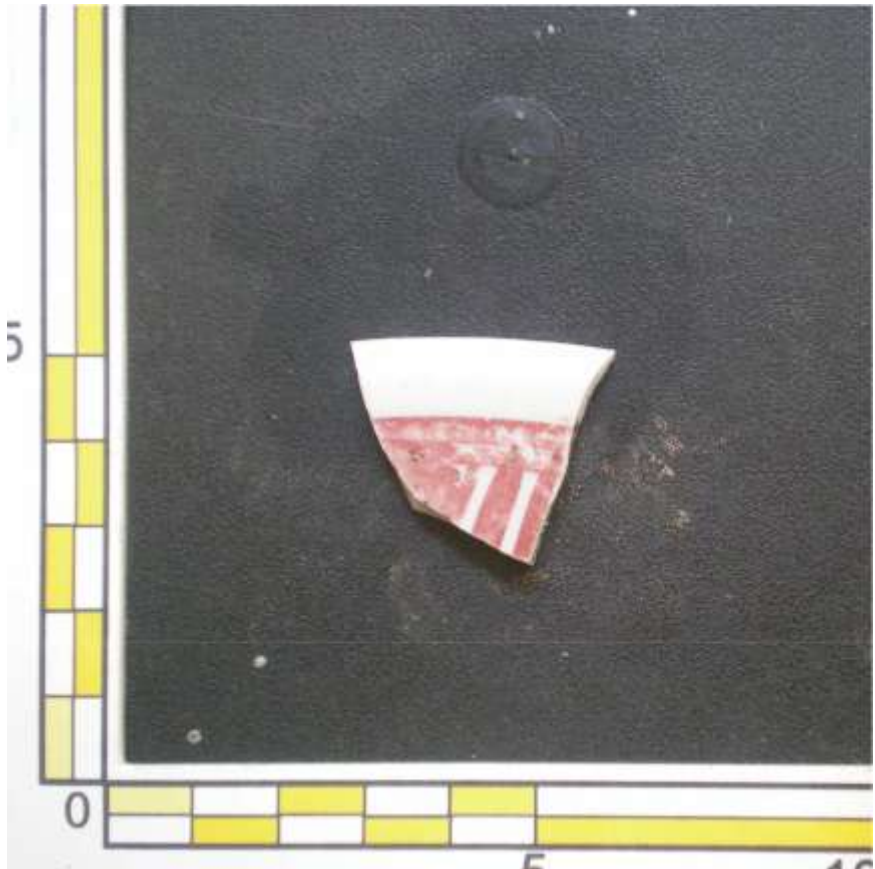


Plate 8-b.



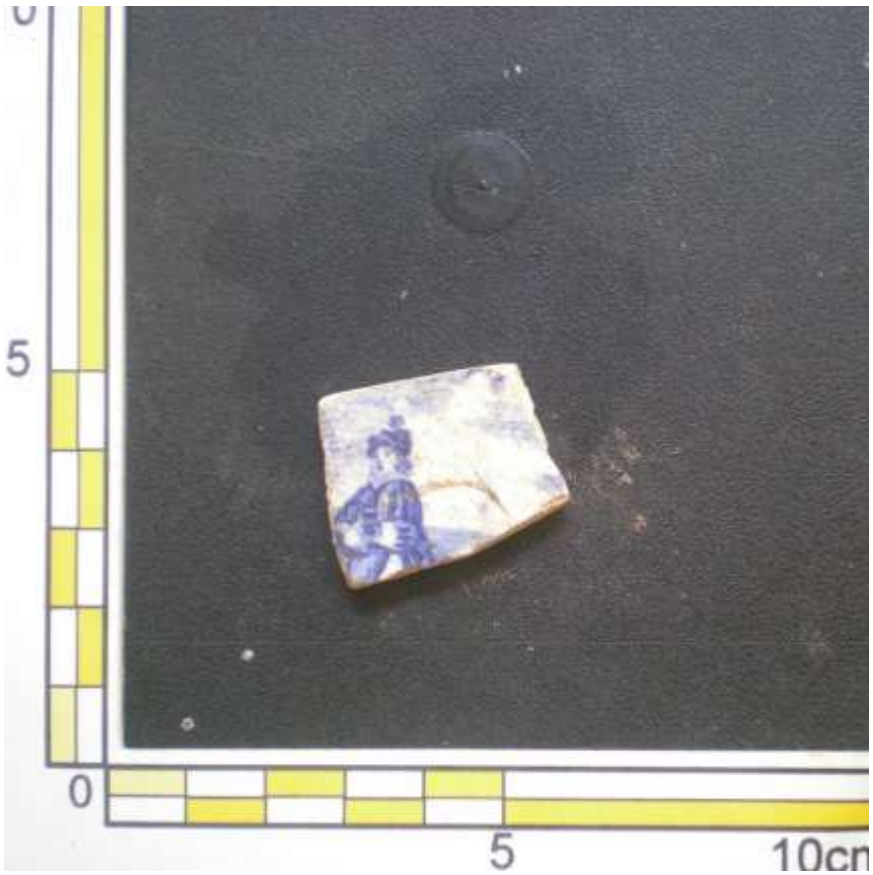


Plate 8-c.

