

# REPORT ON THE CAGAYAN DE ORO ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

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#### IV. Discussion and Recommendations

##### **Huluga was a Habitation, But Unlikely a Settlement**

Scholars and advocates from Cagayan de Oro have placed much value on the Huluga Open Site. Received wisdom explains that the site is where the precursor settlement of colonial Cagayan de Oro was located as inferred from Spanish chronicles. The landscape however of Cagayan de Oro, with its deep gorges and pronounced river terraces makes several locations along the river candidate to the description of the location of this pre-colonial settlement. The discovery of archaeological materials through various surveys, and the confirmation of the existence of an archaeological site through test excavations, increased the likelihood that the Huluga area, especially the area called "obsidian hill" was the location of this settlement. Artist's renditions of how the settlement looked like, with its well-made log-wall fortification, is now imprinted in the minds of most people interested in the history of Cagayan de Oro. However, based on the initial findings, the Huluga Open Site failed to reveal any trace of structures or features that could indicate the existence of a settlement in the area, e.g., postholes, hearths, and middens. It is beyond doubt that the Huluga Open Site is an archaeological site and at present it may be established that the area may have been a habitational site, with people using the space for domestic activities, but were not permanently settled. The place may have been used in antiquity, possibly for camping or production activities such as the making of obsidian-based implements. At a probable earlier period, people fashioned and left stone tools in these camp-like sites.

The results of the statistical analysis of the artifact distribution from all the excavation areas are still forthcoming. The team, however, thinks that fresh insights may be generated from this approach.