

Summary of NHCP Undertakings for the Maintenance and Conservation of San Agustin Church in Paoay, Ilocos Norte

REYNALDO A. INOVERO

ABSTRACT

Today's younger set of travelers and the popular social media have played a big role in building people's awareness and appreciation of historical and cultural landmarks, like Paoay Church in Ilocos Norte. This article, however, presents Paoay Church as a special case and relates the contributions of the National Historical Commission of the Philippines and its predecessor institutions to the popularity of this church heritage. These contributions are presented in a timeline for simplicity, with emphasis on the numerous projects undertaken and the long period of involvement by our government in the preservation and development of Paoay Church. Project photographs are included. In addition, a technical information sheet about Paoay Church is provided for a quick reference.



Highlighted view of the church and bell tower from a local visitor and souvenir center, enhancing the historic fabric of the town
(NHCP-HPD photo collection)

INTRODUCTION

Paoay Church is so popular that its images can be seen almost everywhere in the country on posters and billboards, television specials, at major airports and metrorail stations, at provincial bus and interisland ferry stations, and at hotels accredited by the Department of Tourism (DOT). One search for Paoay Church at Google Images will immediately show hundreds of photos posted by travel agents and people who are very happy to have visited the place. Today's younger set of travelers and the popular social media have played a big role in building people's awareness and appreciation of historical and cultural landmarks, like Paoay Church in Ilocos Norte. First-time visitors to Paoay will surely be moved by the awesome presence of the church's facade, the powerful height of

its bell tower, and the rhythmic perspective of its buttresses. A visit to Paoay guarantees excitement with a little more knowledge gained as travelers enjoy themselves seeing and experiencing the place.

The popularity of Paoay Church goes with the popularity of the town. The growth of cultural tourism in our country is quite promising, but this is not the main reason why this church is so popular and well liked. It is also important to know what the national government has done and achieved to help popularize the historic Paoay Church of Ilocos Norte.



Some promotional materials and official seals featuring Paoay Church
Sources: Ilocos Norte official website; PLDT touchcard.

NHCP’S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OF PAOAY CHURCH

The national government has been working with the local government and church authorities for the conservation and development of Paoay, with special attention to Paoay Church. The National Historical Commission of the Philippines

(NHCP) sees three important features of Paoay that should be strengthened: (1) the church-tower-atrium-convento ensemble—by opting to remove the additional structures around the church, and completing the restoration works (historic preservation shall stabilize the material fabric and shall restore the appreciation and values of the site and structures for their proper interpretation and presentation); (2) the town and its community—by adopting a land-use plan and the recommended buffer zone delineation, or opting to adopt NHCP's Guidelines, Policies and Standards for the Conservation and Development of Historic Centers/Heritage Zones, which integrates both land use and buffer zone; and (3) the environment—by maintaining cleaner and greener open areas, having lesser hardscape, and regulating advertising billboards and signages.

Getting to know the historic preservation works of the government will bring to light the reason why it is not only tourism and the social media that move heritage appreciation forward in this country. Highlighting the intrinsic values and characteristics of the historic property is essential to cultural tourism and heritage education.

Our historic landmarks are like commodities that we offer for cultural tourism. It is quite important, therefore, to see to it that these places be preserved, respected, and maintained. The main objective is to preserve these heritage properties and bequeath them to our future generations in their fullest authenticity. This is where government comes in. To promote cultural tourism and heritage appreciation, government agencies have to work together as a team to bring out the best in our historical and cultural properties, which are also known as cultural goods. Cultural goods should mean good values, good conditions, good management, and good benefits. The government also has to take appropriate and necessary measures

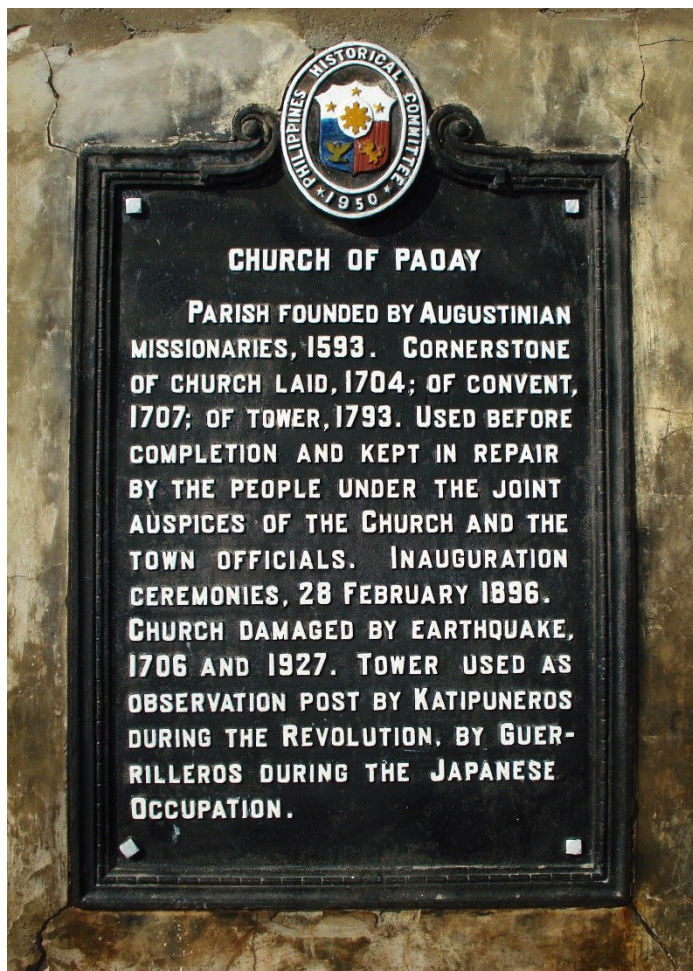
in terms of their protection and development. Churches are prominent tourist attractions, but their religious functions and rites, which are also part of Filipino culture, should be given due respect. The government has always maintained a good working relationship with the church when it comes to preserving historic/heritage churches. Sometimes there would be arguments and issues, but these have been mutually resolved for the benefit of preserving the church heritage.

The government recognizes that conservation and development are two complementary goals. Cultural tourism, heritage appreciation, and historic preservation are essential components of the government's integrated development plan. The government has to work hand in hand with the church in all its commitments to historic preservation of heritage churches. Church and state separation does not necessarily apply in this case. Government even funds and implements church restoration.

Good management is essential to preserve the heritage value of old churches and to guarantee their physical longevity. In this regard, the historic preservation of Paoay Church may be considered as an exemplary contribution of the NHCP.

For years, the NHCP has been engaged in numerous projects in the preservation of Paoay Church. It sourced out project funds, collaborated with other cultural and funding agencies, and coordinated projects with stakeholders.

The NHCP's technical team is composed of trained professionals from its Historic Preservation Division (HPD) and Materials Research Conservation Division (MRCD). These two divisions have always been involved in major historic preservation works for Paoay Church.



Historical marker installed at Paoay Church by the Philippines Historical Committee (NHCP's predecessor) in 1950, signifying the historic significance of the national landmark (NHCP's photo collection)

1933–1972

Historic preservation in the Philippines was started by the NHCP's predecessor institution, the Philippine Historical Research and Markers Committee (PHRMC). Established

in 1933 by then governor-general Frank Murphy, PHRMC pioneered the process of historical research, survey, and documentation of important historic sites and structures in the country. Historical markers were installed on all documented historic sites and structures.

A systematic classification of important sites and structures began when Presidential Decree (PD) No. 1 of 1972 ordered the reorganization of the entire executive branch of government. The National Historical Institute (NHI) absorbed all the functions, responsibilities, and properties of its predecessor institutions and all heroes' centennial commissions.

The historical marker for Paoay Church was installed in 1950 by the Philippines Historical Committee (PHC), another predecessor of the NHCP. In the same year, many historic buildings were installed with markers, and were restored by Architect Juan F. Nakpil (declared National Artist in 1973) for the Philippine government. Nakpil undertook the partial restoration of Rizal Shrine at Fort Santiago in Intramuros, the Rizal House in Calamba, Laguna, and Quiapo Church in Manila. In 1984, Architect Jose Maria V. Zaragosa and his son Ramon Zaragosa undertook expansion and renovation works for Quiapo Church.

1972–1986

For historic and heritage preservation work, this period was the era of presidential decrees. Presidential Decree 260 was the mother decree on declaring National Historical Shrines, National Historical Monuments, and National Historical Landmarks. PD 260 specifically declared Paoay Church a National Historical Landmark in 1973. All the marked sites and structures in the PHRMC list were classified. Succeeding declared and classified sites and structures were marked correspondingly.

New research studies for several historic sites and structures were continued. New presidential decrees, executive orders, and presidential proclamations were issued to support the funding and implementation of new projects. Permanent markers made of cast iron were installed at the site or on the structure in order to signify its importance.

Also during this period, historic preservation and cultural development were given special attention and support by the government. Several other pieces of legislation designed for the preservation and promotion of historic sites and structures nationwide were issued. These laws were used as legal bases to authorize government to spend public funds on the restoration and rehabilitation of declared national landmarks, including churches and other private properties.

The best architects of the country were commissioned to undertake projects for cultural development. The shrine (house) of Juan Luna in Badoc, Ilocos Norte, was restored through a collaboration between the then National Historical Institute (NHI) and the Ministry of Public Works and Highways within a period of sixteen calendar days.

In the early 1980s, Architect Francisco Mañosa restored the Las Piñas Church. The restoration of Intramuros was started by the National Historical Institute and the Intramuros Restoration Committee using the plans prepared by Architect Carlos Da Silva. The NHI had to hire several architects to do the working details of the restoration plan and, later, to supervise the implementation of the Intramuros restoration works. When the Intramuros Administration (IA) was organized through PD 1616, it took on the restoration of Intramuros.

In the early 1980s, there was increased participation of architects in historic preservation works. The NHI sent its architects to Europe and Japan to train and specialize in architectural restoration and conservation technologies. Later in the 1980s and 1990s, the NHI established and maintained small conservation workshops at its head office (National Library Building) and at the Quezon Memorial Shrine, to provide treatment conservation to movable objects such as heroes' memorabilia. Those small workshops have been transformed into a modern conservation laboratory with better scientific equipment and well-trained technical staff for the scientific study and conservation treatment of both movable and immovable objects. The NHI also maintained a small maintenance crew of highly skilled traditional carpenters and masons to complement the laboratory personnel.

1987 CONSTITUTION

The 1987 Constitution was prompted by the restoration of democracy; however, the government continued to support the preservation and development of Philippine arts and culture.

Under Article XIV on Education, Arts, and Culture of the 1987 Constitution, the government is mandated to preserve, protect, and develop our cultural heritage, and to educate our people about them. Sections 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18 under Arts and Culture are used by all cultural agencies as basic elements of their thrusts and program plans.

Section 14. The State shall foster the preservation, enrichment, and dynamic evolution of a Filipino national culture based on the principle of unity in diversity in a climate of free artistic and intellectual expression.

Section 15. Arts and letters shall enjoy the patronage of the State. The State shall conserve, promote, and popularize the nation's historical and cultural heritage and resources, as well as artistic creations.

Section 16. All the country's artistic and historic wealth constitutes the cultural treasure of the nation and shall be under the protection of the State which may regulate its disposition.

Section 17. The State shall recognize, respect, and protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions, and institutions. It shall consider these rights in the formulation of national plans and policies.

Section 18. (1) The State shall ensure equal access to cultural opportunities through the educational system, public or private cultural entities, scholarships, grants and other incentives, and community cultural centers, and other public venues.

Section 18. (2) The State shall encourage and support researches and studies on the arts and culture.

For NHCP's historic preservation works, sections 14 and 16 are adopted by all its programs, projects, and activities, including those works intended for Paoay Church restoration.

1993

Prior to the UNESCO–World Heritage Committee (WHC) listing of the Baroque Churches of the Philippines in 1993, maintenance and minor repair works for Paoay Church

were done by a small maintenance crew of the church. The municipal government assisted the church in maintaining the church grounds, and provided equipment to speed up the needed tasks.

The Church of San Agustin in Paoay, Ilocos Norte, was one of the four Baroque churches included in the World Heritage List in 1993. The nomination for San Agustin Church in Paoay and three other churches (the Church of San Agustin in Intramuros; the Church of Santo Tomas de Villanueva in Miagao, Iloilo; and the Church of Nuestra Señora de la Asuncion in Santa Maria, Ilocos Sur) were handled by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) with the assistance of the UNESCO Philippine Commission. The NHI prepared the nomination for the Miagao Church, and the rest were done by the NCCA.

1995–2012

In compliance with the requirements of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee on the preservation and protection of the four Baroque Churches of the Philippines and the twenty-six colonial churches declared as National Cultural Treasures, a technical working committee (TWC) was organized, with members from the church, the cultural agencies, and local government executives and technical representatives, to learn the basic management procedures for maintaining, monitoring, and protecting the four Baroque churches in their respective localities. Members of the TWC were gathered together on several occasions for workshop training, project assessment, and reporting.

On 14 March 1996, President Fidel Ramos issued a memorandum to NHI (Lead), NCCA, DOT, and the mayor of

Paoay to constitute a Task Force for the Restoration of Paoay Church. There were projects proposed and initiated under the task force and the TWC. Later on, however, it was deemed necessary to just have a single conservation plan that will fulfill the requirements of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. It was agreed by the TWC and the Paoay Task Force members to designate the NCCA as the lead agency, since it is directly responsible for all matters pertaining to the World Heritage Site (WHS) commitments and representations to UNESCO-WHC.



Telltale crack monitoring device (NHCP-HPD photo collection)

As part of the TWC Conservation Plan for Paoay, the NHI initiated in 1998 a scientific study and produced computer-aided drawings of Paoay Church walls, mapping and assessing the extent of its deterioration. The conservation plan prioritized the initial technical documentation of the church's walls.

In September 1999, a master plan for the development of Paoay heritage district was prepared and presented by the TWC and

the Paoay Task Force to the Paoay and Ilocos Norte government officials, church authorities, businessmen, and townspeople.



Dr. Hanazato inspecting damaged wall of Paoay Church
(NHCP-HPD photo collection)

The Detailed Engineering Studies for Paoay Church was prepared and submitted to the NCCA-TWC by E. A. Saguid Construction in September 1999. These studies included detailed drawings and proposed structural intervention for the existing roof trusses.

In the same year, the NHI-HPD acquired portable global positioning system (GPS) instruments for its map-based information management system on historic sites and structures, which followed existing international conservation practices and monitoring standards. These instruments were used to update data on Paoay Church.

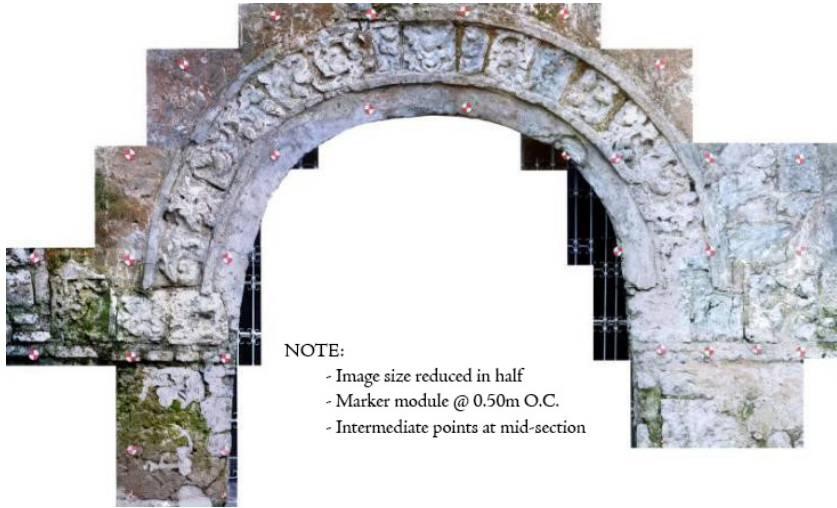
In July 2000, the Reactive Monitoring Mission of Dr. Toshikazu Hanazato, in connection with the preservation and restoration of Paoay Church, was undertaken. Dr. Hanazato undertook seismic analysis with the assistance of engineers from the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs). Two architects from the HPD participated in the technical survey and documentation of the existing structures for the use of Dr. Hanazato in his investigative studies, feedback report, and recommendations to Philippine authorities. The HPD architects were assigned to make a condition mapping of the wall materials and damage/deterioration, and to prepare an illustration of the wall cross sections to show the typical wall construction methods.

A copy of the completed detailed engineering studies (DES) was given to the NHCP. The report and recommendations of Dr. Hanazato were incorporated in the DES and drawings submitted to the NCCA. In his report, Dr. Hanazato emphasized the effect of micro tremors on the church foundation. As a result, vehicular traffic near the church was restricted, and some roads leading to the church were closed. This decision was not totally favored by majority of Paoay residents and churchgoers. Roads were reopened later as appealed by the residents.

In order to find out if small ground movements really affect the church structure, in 2001, the NHI installed telltale crack monitoring devices at strategic places across cracks in the walls. For about a period of one year, NHI architects and engineers visited and monitored these devices, and did not see any significant movement or change in the markings. This was a good indication that the church structure and foundation were still stable during that time.

In 2001, the NCCA and UNESCO Philippine Commission designated the NHI to provide a permanent World Heritage Site

marker for each of the four Baroque Churches of the Philippines funded by UNESCO-WHC. The NHCP completed the project in December 2001.



Rectified photograph showing details and amount of deterioration for scientific study use (NHCP-HPD photo collection)

In 2002, the NHI-HPD developed its own rectified photography techniques in producing photographic and graphic hybrid representation of historic buildings to enhance the scientific studies for all heritage objects.

The cleaning of church walls, the rehabilitation of doors and windows, the cleaning of the bell tower walls, the provision of bell tower staircase, and the restoration of the church interiors in 2003 to 2004 constituted the major undertaking of the NHI and its TWC partners for the Paoay Church restoration. It was funded by the NCCA/UNESCO. Large tree growths and accumulated dirt and loose surface materials were removed and walls

were again cleaned. The NHI requested a follow-up local fund for the wall consolidation, which should have included the repointing of the cleaned stone and masonry walls. Unfortunately, however, the expected fund was not approved, and after a period of twelve months, vegetation on the walls reappeared.

The interior wall surfaces were refinished, and the three Baroque altars were rehabilitated in 2006.

In 2007, the TWC conducted orientation and training workshop for all DES contractors in order to help their technical people produce more substantial scientific data and standards for the DES. Technical professionals from the National Historical Institute and the National Museum served as training resource persons.

The landscape improvement with the provision of outdoor lighting for the front atrium of Paoay Church was the contribution of the Department of Tourism and the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) in 2010.

2011–2012

The Restoration of Paoay Church Facade, also a major undertaking, was implemented by the National Historical Commission of the Philippines from November 2011 to March 2012 with funding support from the NCCA amounting to PHP 1,234,950.

Before the actual implementation of the restoration works, the NHCP conducted studies, including photo-

documentation, and ocular observation and analysis. A condition report and material test analyses were conducted by the NHCP's Materials Research Conservation Division. The report included the following:

- material and detail losses due to erosion (coral, brick, and mortar)
- moving and unstable finials above the pediment
- presence of plant growths and cavities
- movement and displacement of material components
- presence of cracks above the doorway arch
- falling stones/debris due to adhesion loss (mortar and coral/brick bonding)
- presence of dark deposit on pediments due to pollutions and biological growth

Restoration methodology applied: “CLEAN – REPAIR – REPLACE and RESTORE” and the half-restoration techniques for the Restoration of Paoay Church Facade.

The objective of restoring the Paoay Church is not to return the object or artifact to its primitive splendor. Rather, it is to conserve the originality of the object as it appears after so many years have passed since its completion. Factors that detract from the correct interpretation of the structure, such as deterioration, must be removed.

The scope of work for the restoration of the facade of Paoay Church included the following:

- project documentation (before, during, and after restoration)
- provision of temporary facilities, scaffoldings and protective devices
- cleaning of facade
- mechanical cleaning
- chemical cleaning
- consolidation of facade wall
- replacement of missing masonry blocks and stone cornice
- grouting of major cracks (exterior and interior)
- repointing of masonry joints
- retrofitting and refinishing of main door
- clearing and cleaning of site

CONSOLIDATION OF FACADE WALL

The concept of wall consolidation is to unify the fragmented wall components, which means sealing off the ledges of the facade by applying specially formulated mortar.

Preparation works for the consolidation of the wall include mechanical and chemical cleaning to remove loose

surface materials, biological growth, and accumulated dirt and sooth.

For large eroded coral blocks, plain San Esteban stone blocks from San Esteban, Ilocos Sur, were cut and installed to replace the missing and severely eroded coral blocks. The use of coral material was ruled out as a matter of existing NHCP policy to refrain from using or extracting coral materials for its historic preservation program, except loose coral chips gathered from the vicinity and nearby towns. Hence, the NHCP considers compatible material substitute in terms of physical properties. Laboratory tests yielded that the San Esteban is a coralline type of material with an average compressive strength of 21 psi compared to the 22 psi of coral material.

The mixture of mortar and plasters was based on the analytical studies conducted before the implementation of the Restoration of Paoay Church Facade. The special mortar is a mixture of one part white Portland cement, three parts hydraulic lime, and twelve parts powdered coral and river sand (color-selected). The cement part is quite small in proportion to the whole mixture. Powdered coral was used for material compatibility, and the 1:3:12 mixture is the least applicable mortar strength.

- Existing materials used for the construction are coral stone and brick wall facing, rubble core, and lime mortar.
- The deepest portion of eroded coral and brick facing measured from twenty centimeters to twenty-five centimeters.

- Depth of voided stone joints range from five centimeters to fifteen centimeters at different areas of the facade walls.
- San Esteban stone was used to replace the missing and eroded coral block (stone inserts).
- Eroded bricks were replaced with new bricks fabricated in Paoay.

The use of white mortar filler in stone joints was stopped because the treatment made might be noticeable even from a distance. Samples of tinted mortar were prepared for color selection to blend with the general facade color.

The repair of large cracks was done by grouting, stone and brick inserts, and injection of calibrated flexible epoxy high pressure injection; small cracks were repaired by high pressure injection of calibrated epoxy.

All works were coordinated with the NCCA, UNESCO Philippine Commission, church authorities, and the Municipality of Paoay.

Recent work by the TWC and the NHCP on the facade restoration was criticized because of the color and texture mismatch of the substituted stone and mortar materials. The NHCP acknowledged the color mismatch of the substitute stone material and admitted it was a minor fault. It can be corrected, however, by color rematching without causing any harm to the facade materials and structure. Further, the NHCP disagreed that the work was a desecration, since the work was not really meant only for facade restoration but also for facade wall consolidation.

OTHER PROPOSED WORKS

As mentioned earlier, one work was not implemented due to the non-inclusion of the proposed project in the government budget. Another scheduled project for the archaeological exploration near the altar area of the church interior was not implemented by the TWC and the National Museum.

2013

On 5 July 2013, the World Heritage Committee decided to amend the boundary description of the Paoay Church to include the area of the ruins of the old convento in response to the request of the member state (the Philippines) represented by UNESCO Philippine Commission and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

CONCLUSION

The NHCP's long involvement in the historic preservation of Paoay Church has been instrumental in the development and improvement of restoration and maintenance procedures for other churches. Both NHCP's HPD and MRCD have been studying and coordinating the restoration of earthquake- and typhoon-damaged churches of Bohol, Cebu, Leyte, and Iloilo, hopefully in order to develop and improve scientific study treatment and rehabilitation technologies. Together with other government cultural agencies, the NHCP envisions the success of historic preservation work in the country, with a wide participation of organizations and individuals who appreciate and care for our national heritage.

Maintenance, maintenance, and maintenance!

International conservation practitioners have always acknowledged the value of this campaign slogan. The NHCP-HPD and MRCD agree that maintenance is the simplest, most cost-effective, and safest method for preserving church structures. These two technical divisions of the NHCP work together to improve scientific conservation work, and train church and local government personnel, and even community volunteers, on DIY (do-it-yourself) church building maintenance.

We at the NHCP believe that if we help one another maintain our historic/heritage churches, we would not be spending too much for larger repairs and rehabilitation works, and we would be helping these important landmarks maintain their intrinsic values and significance. The rest is history!

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ACRONYMS USED

DES	Detailed Engineering Studies
DOT	Department of Tourism
EO	Executive order
GPS	Global Positioning System
HPD	The Historic Preservation Division of the NHCP has long years of professional experience and expertise in architectural and engineering conservation works, including preservation, development, and protection of historic centers and heritage zones.
MCC	The Materials Conservation Center was created by NHI in the early '80s to handle the conservation treatment of heroes' memorabilia and history museum objects; transferred to HPD as a section in the late '90s and began to be involved in the building materials study and conservation treatment; acquired laboratory equipment from Japan, and its technical staff trained abroad for conservation sciences specialization; predecessor of the MRCD.
MRCD	The Materials Research Conservation Division of the NHCP is now a modern conservation laboratory for both movable and immovable heritage objects; has acquired modern laboratory equipment and manned by experienced and highly trained conservation personnel.

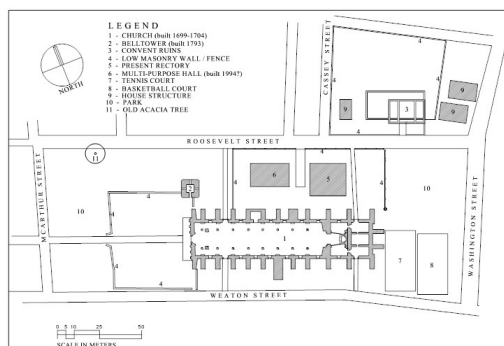
NCCA	National Commission for Culture and the Arts
NGO	Nongovernment organization
NHCP	The National Historical Commission of the Philippines was created through Republic Act 10086 of 12 May 2010.
NHI	The National Historical Institute, the immediate predecessor of the NHCP, created through Presidential Decree No. 1 of 24 September 1972, which reorganized the entire executive branch of government, and signed by President Ferdinand Marcos.
NM	National Museum of the Philippines
PD	Presidential decree
PHC	The Philippines Historical Committee of 1937 during the Commonwealth period, replacing the PHRMC. It has marked 444 sites and structures.
Phivolcs	Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology
PHRMC	The Philippine Historical Research and Markers Committee is a predecessor of the National Historical Commission of the Philippines created through Executive Order 451 on 23 October 1933 by Governor-General Frank Murphy.
TIEZA	Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (former Philippine Tourism Authority or PTA)
TWC	Technical Working Committee (from NCCA, NHCP and NM)
UNESCO- ICOMOS	United Nations Educational and Scientific Organization–International Committee on Monuments and Sites
UNESCO- WHC	United Nations Educational and Scientific Organization–World Heritage Committee

QUICK FACTS ABOUT PAOAY CHURCH (2 AUGUST 2014)

Name	San Agustin Church of Paoay or simply Paoay Church
Location	Municipality of Paoay, Province of Ilocos Norte
Ownership	(Private) Diocese of Laoag, Roman Catholic Church
Use	Church
Coordinates	N18 3 12.00 E120 31 50.00 (WHC official data)
Compass orientation	The church facade faces Northwest, meaning that its planning followed the Laws of the Indies (Royal Ordinances Concerning the Laying out of New Towns) decreed by King Philip II in 1573. “From the plaza the four principal streets are to diverge, one from the middle of each of its sides and two streets are to meet at each of its corners. The four corners of the plaza are to face the four points of the compass, because thus the streets diverging from the plaza will not be directly exposed to the four principal winds, which would cause much inconvenience.”

Site profile  Church is situated on a plane area.

Site map



Site condition, 1995

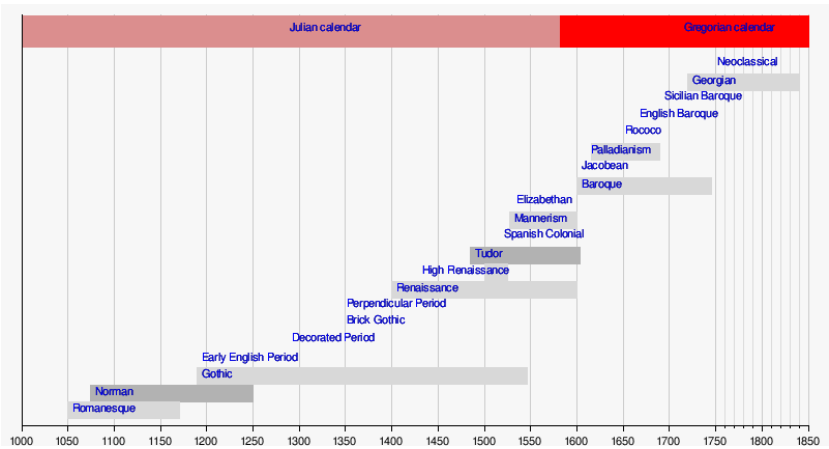
Source: NHCP-HPD photo collection.

Sattelite map



Source: Google Earth.

Architect/ builder	Fr. Antonio Estavillo (Agustinians)
Construction period	1704–1710
Architectural Style	Philippine Baroque; Earthquake Baroque



Architectural timeline from 1000 AD to 1750 AD

Photo source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_architectural_styles_1750%E2%80%931900.

Church configuration	Church–bell tower–convento–atrium complex	
Measurements	Overall length	±114 meters end to end
	Clear length of nave	70.00 meters
	Church height	±22.00 meters
	Overall width	±35.67 meters
	Clear width of nave	±20.00 meters
	Typical wall thickness	2.50 meters
	Facade wall thickness	4.00 meters
	Bell tower at base structure	10.50 X 10.50 meters
	Bell tower height (ground to top of dome)	±35.00 meters
Features	Single nave plan; separate bell tower and convent; 22 robust squat side buttresses and 2 stepped side buttresses; 6 facade pilasters with pointed finials; 2 back wall buttresses; 2 rows of 7 timber nave posts; steel-laced pulpit; Baroque-styled altars with wooden santos and gold gilding	
Materials, Construction	Church and bell tower: coraline (<i>de capaza</i>) and masonry (brick and lime mortar) for walls supporting the roof frame structure; walls are supported by 26 robust buttresses; 14 molave nave posts are added supports for the roof structure at mid-span over the nave area; timber roof frames support the galvanized iron roof cover; floors are covered with cement tiles	

Significance

1. National Historical Landmark: Presidential Decree 260, 1 August 1973:

National Landmarks – places or objects that are associated with an event, achievement, characteristic, or modification that makes a turning point or stage in Philippine history.

2. National Cultural Treasure, PD 260, 1 August 1973: A National Cultural Treasure is a unique object found locally, possessing outstanding historical, cultural, artistic and/or scientific value which is significant and important to this country and nation. (PD 374)

3. World Heritage Site, UNESCO–WHS Committee, 1993 Paoay Church is one of the four Baroque Churches of the Philippines listed as World Heritage Site for their outstanding universal value: This group of churches established a style of building and design that was adapted to the physical conditions in the Philippines and had an important influence on later church architecture in the region. The four churches are outstanding examples of the Philippine interpretation of the Baroque style, and represent the fusion of European church design and construction with local materials and decorative motifs to form a new church-building tradition.

To quote the report of the mission carried out by ICOMOS expert Jorge Gazaneo (1992), “No Philippine church is a complete example of one art period, but a living document of how time and context have left traces on the early founding intentions of the original designer builder ... at the crossroads of different cultures, Malay, Chinese, European, American. The architecture and art of the Philippines should be valued on standards different from those developed by European scholars.”