



NEWSLETTER

June 2011

THE ORIENTAL CERAMIC SOCIETY
OF THE PHILIPPINES

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The Wonders of Shell Middens

By Newsletter Staff ERV

The OCSP was fortunate to have Dr. Ame Garong and Dr. Kazuhiko Tenaka as speakers for its May Regular Membership Meeting at the lovely home of Anna Pamplona in Makati.

Dr. Garong and Dr. Tenaka have worked extensively in the shell midden sites of Cagayan Province in Northern Philippines.

In her talk, Garong gave the OCSP members a brief introduction to the nature of middens -- a better sounding word for garbage dumps - and how the study of shells can help piece together our prehistoric past.

Garong's findings are based on research conducted on a burial site within the shell middens of La-lo. In this site, Garong unearthed skeletal remains of a homo sapien underneath layers of shells from different time periods, signifying the existence of a burial site prior to the establishment of the shell midden.

Understanding the Peopling of Southeast Asia thru Pottery

By Newsletter Staff ERV

Our Filipino Heritage is a multifaceted one.

While we may think of heritage as those particular objects that carry big historical importance, we should always keep in mind that everything that comes to us from the past is part of our historical inheritance.

The legacy of the past is all around us today.

We see it in our language, food, clothing, building and technology, social and political structures.

In short, this legacy is found in every aspect of our daily lives.

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On the shells found in the different shell layers, Garong found not just fresh water shells but marine species as well, beads, pottery, shell ornaments and tools. Analysis of these materials indicate the area was used as a habitation site at various times in the past by different groups of people.

For the second talk, Tenaka focused on the pottery found in the different shell layers of four shell midden sites around the Cagayan River.

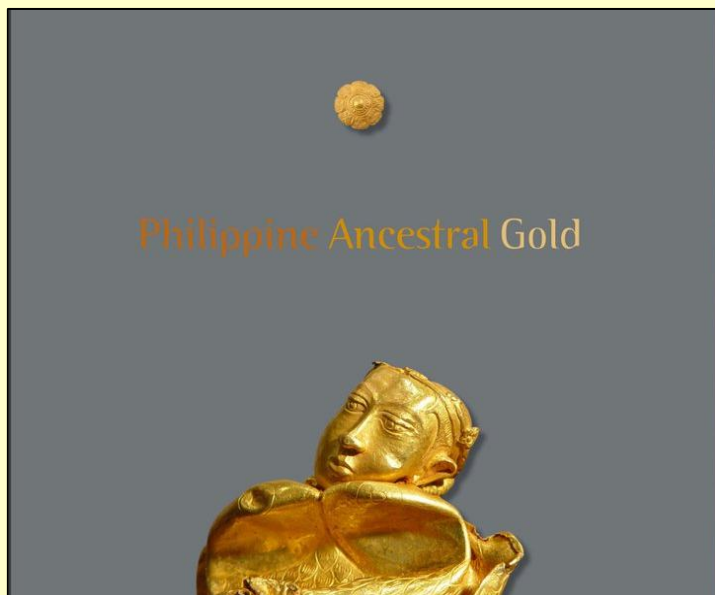
Please see *The Wonders ...* on page 4

For members of the OCSP, understanding the past through pottery is most germane. The widespread manufacture of ceramic through time and space and their abundance found in the archaeological record has made pottery a popular tool in understanding the past.

Charles Redman in his foreword to Carla Sinopoli's (1991:V) *Approaches to Archaeological Ceramics* pointed out that ceramics offers the most "abundant and potentially enlightening source of information on the past."

Please see *Understanding...* on page 5

Book Review: Philippine Ancestral Gold By Newsletter Staff ERV



THE BOOK COVER OF PHILIPPINE ANCESTRAL GOLD

The book *Philippine Ancestral Gold* is a beautiful catalogue of the Ayala Museum's Gold Collection. The book edited and written in parts by Dr. Nina Baker was launched earlier this year at the Ayala Museum.

The collection consists of over 1,000 gold artifacts collected over 3 decades by Cecilia Y. Locsin. The collection was purchased by the Ayala museum and has since been on display at the museum.

The book is a descriptive analysis of the collection on the basis of form, function, and decoration. Despite the controversy surrounding the provenience of the artifacts in collection, the inference derived from the amount and the quality of Southeast Asian gold art present cannot be ignored.

Where Are the Pots? Some Locations of the Tradeware Collected in RP

By Rhayan Melendres

The Collection of oriental tradeware ceramic started even before the birth of Philippine archaeology. It began when pioneer antiquarians or foreigners visiting the Philippines started collecting artifacts during their travels around the archipelago. It seems like most of the earliest archaeologists came from industrialized Western societies whose economic and political dominance were believed to convey an automatic right to investigate wherever they wished. In the Philippines, investigations were initially artifact-collecting expeditions.

In 1881, Alfred Marche traveled and explored various parts of Luzon, Catanduanes and Marinduque (Evangelista 1971). Some of the ceramics he found were earthenware and stoneware burial jars from Boac; burial jars and urns from Islet Tres Reyes; yellowish glazed stoneware burial jar from an undisclosed place in Marinduque; small jars and dishes from the Bathala Cave; porcelain and stoneware ceramics and burial urns from Pamintaan Cave; and dragon jars from Gasan (Beyer 1947). Marche brought back to France the artifacts he recovered from all these places he visited. They are now housed at the *Musee de l'Homme* in Paris, France.

Carl E. Guthe was a trained archaeologist, based at the University of Michigan, who carried out explorations in the Visayan Islands (Evangelista

1969). The range of artifacts he collected included trade ceramics (dating from the 10th to the early 20th centuries), Philippine earthenware, various iron implements, shell, bracelets, glass, semi-precious stone beads and gold ornaments. These artifacts as well as his meticulously kept journals now form part of the Asian Collection at the Museum of Anthropology at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.

Perhaps, the most prominent name among these pioneers in Philippine archaeology is that of Henry Otley Beyer. Beyer conducted archaeological surveys, investigations and collecting tours in Luzon, Palawan, Mindanao and the Visayan Islands and these were reported in his seminal work "Outline Review of Philippine Archaeology by Islands and Provinces (1947).

Beyer's collection was divided in several portions; some are in the National Museum of the Philippines and at the Anthropology Museum of the University of the Philippines. A large amount of the collection including his books, pictures, ethnographic materials and others were bought by the National Library of Australia in 1972. And a part of the collection became part of the Roberto Villanueva Collection which is presently Please see *Where are the Pots?* ... on page 4

OCSP Community Bulletin Board

Many thanks to **Anna Pamplona** for hosting the OCSP's Member's Meeting last April! And to all the co-hosts, Maraming Salamat!

The OCSP Mobile Phone Group now has a dedicated mobile phone number **09276535910**. Please save this number in your mobile and stay tuned for OCSP reminders and updates. The OCSP Mobile Phone group has begun updating member's contact numbers. Please update your contact details if you haven't done so already. You can business card your contact numbers to the OCSP Mobile phone group number printed above.

Call for Articles. The OCSP Newsletter Committee is inviting all OCSP members to submit articles for the OCSP Newsletter. Please send your articles to OCSP Newsletter Editor Eliza Romualdez-Valtos at elizarv@yahoo.com or if you have any inquiries or comments regarding the newsletter. Deadline for the August issue is **August 2, 2011**. Please take note there will be no honorarium for articles published.

OCSP Special Events Announcement

August 2011

Date:

August 9, 2011

Time:

Cocktails at 6:00 p.m.
Lecture will begin promptly at 7:00 p.m.

Place:

To Be Announced

Speaker:

Menno Fitski
East Asian Art Curator at
Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam

Topic:

The Trade and Collecting of
Kakiemon Porcelain

OCSP Regular Members' Meeting Announcement

August 2011

Date:

August 30, 2011

Time:

OCSP Meeting at 6:00 p.m.
Lecture will begin at 7:00 p.m.

Place:

Eliza Romualdez-Valtos' House
8 Tangile Road
North Forbes, Makati

Speaker:

To Be Announced

Topic:

Cataloguing Personal Collections
and Related Legal Matters

The Wonders of Shell Middens from page 1

Tenaka's research documented the presence of various types of pottery in the shell midden sites. After a careful analysis of the pottery found and each layers' corresponding dates, Tanaka was able to illustrate a transition from the use of plain red-slipped pottery to black pottery in the midden sites under study.

Tenaka argued the change from red-slipped to black pottery reflected the change in the people who made and used the pots. He inferred that the red pottery was used by Austronesian speaking people and was later replaced by people using black pottery. Tenaka pointed out even today black pottery is still being produced in some northern provinces in the Philippines.



DR. AME GARONG AND DR. KAZUHIKO TENAKA

Where are the Pots? from page 2

exhibited at the Ayala Museum (Diem 2002).

Early collectors of tradeware ceramics in the Philippines were Americans. One of which is Evett D. Hester (Evangelista 1969). Between 1930 and 1940, Hester made a large collection of trade ceramics recovered mostly from the Visayas, Palawan and Sulu. The collection comprised mostly of Sung, Yuan, early Ming and Thai ceramics. Roughly half of the Hester collection was donated to the Chicago (now Field) Museum of Natural History and the remainder was in part donated and in part sold to the University of Michigan Museum of Anthropology. A few pieces of exceptional artistic merit were placed on loan at the Speed Museum of Art at Louisville, Kentucky.

A considerable amount of oriental tradeware ceramics came from the burial sites in the Calatagan Peninsula, Batangas Province. These excavations were conducted by Olov Janse in 1930 (Janse 1941) and Robert B. Fox in 1958 (Fox 1959). The material obtained by Robert Fox is partly in the collections of the Zobel de Ayala Family, the Lopez Memorial Museum and Library and in the National Museum of the Philippines. A percentage of the ceramics of the Janse

expedition were in the Peabody Museum in Harvard University (Aga-Oglu 1961).

With the development of archaeology in the Philippines, increasing number of sites associated with tradeware ceramics have been discovered. These assemblages have evolved into something more than just pieces of art or curiosity pieces in museums and other like institutions. They have now become a platform for understanding and explaining the ancient lifeways and culture of the Filipinos in the past.

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Understanding from page 1

Pottery can also tell us about 1) prehistoric human interaction (Deetz 1965; Longacre 1970), 2) interchange and adoption of ideas and technology between intrusive populations and indigenous occupants (Weissner 1983, 1984; Wobst 1977), 3) can explain stability and directional change in stylistic traits as a result of mechanisms of selection and selective advantage (Braun 1995; Hill 1985), and 4) can emphasize material role in the creation and manipulations of social power (Hodder 1982; Shanks and Tilley 1987).

In other words, the technology of making and decorating pottery is carried by people who inhabited and moved around Mainland and island Southeast Asia in the past. We can trace these movements by observing how technology evolved through the stylistic changes and similarities of the pots recovered from the archeological record.

Dating of these pots and noting the pottery styles present have already given us a glimpse of a past filled with complex political and social structures and intricate trade networks that are far removed from the “primitive” images prevalent not only in old western literature on the region but in the very books children study in Philippine schools today.

Fortunately, given the speed in which the advancement of technology in ceramic analysis has superseded its ability to transport and apply itself in countries like the Philippines, there is no doubt we are destined to learn more about our past through pottery in the near future.

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Errata

The newsletter Committee would like to correct the following mistakes published in the OCSP Newsletter June 2011 Edition

1. The photo and caption below should have accompanied Cynthia Ongpin-Valdes' article *Dusun Jars 101*.



Dusun Jar found in Belitung Wreck

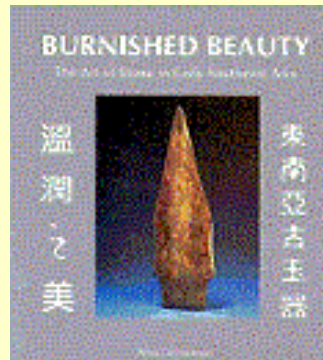
2. **Regular Meeting** should have been used instead of **Annual General Meeting** which is held only once a year.

From The Oriental Ceramic Society of HK
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SUMMER SALE OCS PUBLICATIONS



Art & Imitation in China
(2006 Exhibition)
HK\$500 **HK\$350**



Burnished Beauty:
The Art of Stone in Early S. E. Asia
(2001 Exhibition)
HK\$450 **HK\$150**



Passion of Collecting
(1999-2000 Exhibition)
HK\$300 **HK\$150**



Philippine Austrian Cultural Society

requests the pleasure of your company on the occasion
of the presentation of the book

**"Blumentritt and Rizal
The Austrian Friend behind the Philippine National Hero"**

Special Introduction and Welcome Note by
H.E. Austrian Ambassador Mag. Wilhelm Donko

Tuesday, June 21st, 2011 at 6:30pm
Yuchengco Museum, RCBC Plaza, Ayala corner Sen. Gil Puyat Avenues, Makati City

RSVP: 02 519 3345 or events@austromedia.net

Attire: smart casual



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