



# The Oriental Ceramic Society of the Philippines

P.O. Box 80, Dasmariñas Village, Manila City, Metro Manila

## Newsletter July – August 2009

Regular Meeting & Lecture

### RELICS OF ANCIENT CEBU

#### The Plaza Independencia Archaeological Finds



Figure 1 Nida Cuevas

Time

Tuesday, August 25, 2009.

Meeting begins at 5:30 p.m.

Speaker

Nida T. Cuevas, Museum Researcher II,  
Archaeology Division, National Museum of the  
Philippines

Venue

Mary Garlicki's Residence  
62 Real, Urdaneta Village,  
Makati City

#### Abstract by Nida Cuevas

The Plaza Independencia in Cebu City is known for its historical significance and rich sources of archaeological information. The data that have been generated from the 1985 archaeological excavations established the role of Plaza Independencia as a centre for long distance trading in the 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. The 2000, 2006 and 2008 archaeological excavations further attest the use of Plaza Independencia as burial ground prior to the coming of the Spaniards in the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century. However, a plan for infrastructure development in the area forewarned archaeologists to re-examine the archaeological potential of the site. The construction of Segment 3B-2 of the Cebu South Coastal Road Project that traverses Plaza Independencia site involves massive earth-moving activity. This type of development is detrimental in the preservation of the archaeological resources as well as the scientific research in understanding the prehistory of Cebu.

Admission is free for OCSP members, but PHP300 for non-members, and PHP100 for students. The lecture will start at around 6:30 p.m.

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The conduct of rescue archaeology on the remaining unexcavated areas of the tunnel section resulted to the recovery of ten primary burials and grave goods. The presence of grave goods to some burials distinctly suggests status and power. However, further analysis of these archaeological materials is necessary in understanding the prehispanic chiefly society and the burial traditions of ancient Cebu.

The National Museum of the Philippines, Cebu Branch has transferred to its new place from the Fort San Pedro to the Museo Sugbo last August 6, 2009. The Museo Sugbo is managed by the Office of the Cebu Provincial Governor that housed not only the National Museum artefacts but also include the collections of the National Historical Institute and the Cebu Library.

The exhibition of the National Museum is entitled Treasures Unearthed: Archaeological Evidences from the Plaza Independencia Site. This exhibition specifically shows the archaeological finds recovered from the monitoring activity conducted during the construction of the tunnel section of the Cebu South Coastal Road Project of the Department of Public Works and Highways in October 2008. The archaeological materials include the gold death masks, pair of gold earrings, trade ware ceramics from China and Southeast Asia; skull with evidence of artificial cranial deformation and metal implements. Also, some of the materials from the San Diego shipwreck and diorama of the San Diego galleon were also exhibited to portray the boat-building skills of early Cebuanos. The San Diego galleon was built in Cebu in the 1600.

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## OCSF Committee Reports & Announcements

### General Meetings

To allow more time for informal meetings and discussions, the time of general meetings is now set at 5:30 pm, with lectures starting at 6:30. Members are invited to bring items for informal discussions.

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### Program Review – June 2009

#### Grace Barretto-Tesoro: New Data from Batangas

Grace Barretto Tesoro

Dr Grace Barretto-Tesoro, of the Archaeological Studies Programme at the University of the Philippines, has been surveying in the south-eastern part of Batangas to look for new sites in order to add knowledge on the status, identity, and belief system in early Tagalog culture.

Prior to the survey conducted by Barretto-Tesoro, archaeological research had mainly been done on the western side of the Batangas Province. The most famous of these researches are those of Robert B. Fox in Calatagan from 1958-1961 and the excavation in Lemery headed by Maria Isabel Ongpin, Socorro Paterno, and Cecilia Locsin in the early 1970s.

The objective of the survey was to identify potential sites for future excavations. The goals of the project include comparing the archaeological materials found in the southwest and southeast regions of Batangas and assessing the nature of sites and artefacts in the latter.

The three-week 2008 survey resulted in the discovery of twenty new sites with ages ranging from 500AD to late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Some sites yielded materials similar to Calatagan. Some sites indicate that they have been, unfortunately, looted. Apart from rescue excavations, there is an urgent need to educate local people about the significance of these sites and artefacts.



Figure 2: Dr Grace Barretto Tesoro. By Archie Tesoro



Figure 3: General Meeting under sampaguita garlands. By Archie Tesoro

The June general meeting was hosted by member Eliza Romualdez-Valtos at her residence, where her warm welcome was further enhanced by traditional garlands of the fragrant sampaguita flowers. The decor and atmosphere made this an enchanting evening enjoyed by all.

The Society wishes to thank Eliza for this beautiful evening, and the co-hosts for the culinary delights which followed the lecture.

Brigitte MacDonald

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## Upcoming Program

Topic: Archaeology of Bahrain and recent excavations in Alexandria, Egypt  
Speaker: Dr. Wilfredo P Ronquillo of the National Museum  
Date: 27 October 2009 (to be confirmed)  
Venue: to be announced

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## Newsletter

The OCSP Newsletter is bi-monthly. The September - October issue of the OCSP newsletter will be sent in the first half of October.

The editorial team welcomes your reactions and contributions. We invite members to send correspondence to the Newsletter Editor at the OCSP email address [ocsphil@yahoo.com](mailto:ocsphil@yahoo.com)

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## Ceramics between heaven and earth

Brigitte MacDonald

Holiday wanderings in Scotland and France allowed me to re-visit the extensive Chinese art collection of the late Sir William Burrell, now housed in a magnificent building in the Pollok country estate. An heir to a shipping firm which had long been trading with China, and grandnephew of the first British Governor of Hong Kong, he meticulously built a superb art collection, and donated it in 1944 to his native city of Glasgow. Chinese art is well represented, with a vast number of finest ceramics of Zhou, Han, Tang, Ming and Qing dynasties, as well as jades and bronzes. After recently admiring fine guardian roof-tiles in Kyoto, I was intrigued by this fierce-looking guardian tile of Ming dynasty age. This was described as a possible representation of the evil Prince Min Wang of the state of Qi, who had a horrific death in 283 BC. For fear of being haunted by him, many houses, palaces and temples carry an effigy of Min on the roof. Often accompanied by a hen, this effigy is said to keep away his own evil spirit and all others, thus protecting the building and its inhabitants.

Back home in France after a few days, I was amused by the permanence of this human quest for symbolic heavenly protection on roof-top. There, in South Cantal and North Aveyron, the little ceramic protectors are kinder. Perched on finials, they cut out on the blue skies reassuring images such as globes and spheres, birds and small crosses, twigs and ears of wheat.



Figure 4: Min Wang guardian tile; by Burrell Collection, Glasgow Museums

They evoke prosperity, fertility, comfort, and of course protection with the Christian crosses. Their role is to keep crops, animals, and humans free from epidemics, diseases, lightning and other disasters.



Figure 5: "epis de faitage" Conques, La Vinzelle, by Brigitte MacDonald

They are often seen on old houses with stone roofs made of the locally found schist. The French name is "epi de faitage", literally meaning ear (of wheat or other cereal) for the roof. This cereal shape however is either very symbolized or gone and replaced by birds, hens or crosses. According to roof specialists and architects, this practice is very ancient and its origin lost in the mists of time.

An attractive tradition and a beautiful symbol, such finials are still being manufactured. Our local "Poterie du Don", creates them with globe, cross or bird. The clay is fired at 1,320 degrees Celsius to resist from the present scorching heat to the harshest winter weather. [www.poteriedudon.com](http://www.poteriedudon.com)

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## Letters from Members & Friends

After the announcement by the Seattle Times on July 7, 2009

"U.S. pays \$880,000 in death of detained antiquities expert",

The following letter from Dr Justin McDaniel was forwarded to us by several members and friends

"Please see below a message I received from Dr. Roxanna Brown's sister today. Thank you,  
Justin

Dr. Justin McDaniel  
Associate Professor  
223 Claudia Cohen Hall  
249 S. 36th Street  
University of Pennsylvania  
Philadelphia, PA 19104  
1-215-898-5846  
[jmcdan@sas.upenn.edu](mailto:jmcdan@sas.upenn.edu)

Hello Justin,

The Wrongful Death Lawsuit against Roxanna is settled now and also the one count of wire fraud against her was also dropped. Her son Jaime received 100% of the mediated amount that was negotiated between our lawyers and the federal attorneys.

This will enable him to finish up his Masters Program and also to have the backing for his career. Roxanna's main wish was always to know that if anything did happen to her that Jaime would be taken care of. Ironically that is what



Figure 6: Dr Roxanna Brown. Museum Volunteers, Bangkok

happened but in the worst possible scenario.

This did spare us the experience of having to hear again the horrendous details of her prolonged and agonizing death. Our lawyers will be provided with the Mortality records of the Federal Detention Centres to ascertain how many times there are needless deaths occurring due to lack of even basic care.

The judge pointed out that if there was no settlement, this case would go on for years as all the issues in the case would be complicated and involve depositions from all over the world. Our family simply does not have the resources to fund that type of ongoing legal action.

There is no "closure" for us, as we all mourn for her every day. She loved learning and discovery and delighted in teaching, writing and sharing her wit and wisdom with friends, family and colleagues.

Our family has benefited so much from the contacts your group has generated for us. It meant so much to know that your thoughts and prayers and concern for Jaime were there with us. Her mother is doing well in Chicago, but says she still can't believe her daughter has died.

Roxanna had so many on-going projects that she would talk about needing just a little more time to bring to fruition. Unfortunately she did not get that "little more time" that we think will be there when we need it.

All of us live a differently now after losing her, not taking life for granted and making the most out of each and every life experience.

Again our heartfelt thanks to your group for keeping everyone informed and abreast of what was happening during that time of confusion and loss.

Sincerely,  
Karen Lindner"

And from Cynthia O. Valdes

Thanks very much for forwarding this news about the resolution of Roxanna Brown's case. Although it will not bring her back to life (she was a great person), her expertise in ceramics (especially in the field of Southeast Asian trade ceramics) cannot be easily replaced, and at least her son Jamie will be able to receive some monetary compensation. [...] Roxanna helped me very much during the time I was Pres. of the OCSF in 1989. I could not have done the Guangdong exhibition without her guidance.

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A discussion between Vito Hernandez and Cynthia O. Valdes

Vito Hernandez

Hi Mrs. Valdez,

Please educate me briefly on this matter as I am quite ignorant with Chinese ceramic chronology.

What is Tzechow ware and how old is it? Am I right to say that it is about the Sung Dynasty. I would like to situate it in Pampanga archaeology. Can you please shed light on these questions of mine?

Cynthia O. Valdes

Hi Vito,

Tz'u Chou (Wade Giles spelling); Cizhou wares (Pinyin spelling).

Most of Cizhou (pronounced "tsi-joe") and Cizhou-type wares were produced at the Henan kilns and other neighbouring kilns in the vicinity in North China. Look at a map of Song period China to locate Henan and the neighbouring provinces of Shaanxi, Shanxi, Shandong, and Hebei.

(Northern Song Dynasty is from 960-1126 A.D.; Southern Song Dynasty is from 1127-1279 A.D.)

Sheila J. Vainker (Chinese Pottery and Porcelain) thought (in 1991) that Cizhou-type wares were also made in Fujian (Pinyin spelling; Fookien in Wade-Giles) province sometime in the 12th - 13th c).

Robert D. Mowry (Harvard University) and his colleagues produced a comprehensive catalogue on Chinese Brown and Black Glazed Ceramics (400-1400) in 1996. Title: "Hare's Fur, Tortoiseshell, and Partridge Feathers". Mowry wrote (p. 31) that several kilns producing Cizhou wares covered several hundred miles in northern China, active from late Tang (618-907 A.D.) through the end of the Yuan (1280-1368) and even into the Ming period (1368-1644). Mowry identified 6 categories of technically-related but visually different dark glazed ceramics (p.31).

Archaeological excavations as well as literary sources (of the 10th c) suggest that a type of black-glazed tea bowl was made at the Jian kilns in Fujian province sometime during this period. This ware was quite popular because the black-glazed bowls enhanced the appearance of the white tea. As Fujianese tea-drinking habits spread during the Northern Song period, the classic tea bowls of Jian were prized at court as well as all over China. From the initial black glaze, by the 11th century, Cizhou potters had started to decorate their bowls with flecks and splashes as well as underglaze designs painted in black slip on a white slip ground.

#### Note to Vito

For me, this is a fascinating topic. I have always believed that a certain type of Cizhou jar (p.43 and 44) dated to the 13th C was produced in some of the aforementioned kilns in north China. During the course of our project "A Thousand Years of Stoneware Jars in the Phil.), we encountered several jars of this type from the Escudero hacienda in Laguna to Cebu.

Although when British experts Rosemary Scott and Rose Kerr visited here as guests of the OCSFs and we brought them around the Phil. collections, they couldn't accept the possibility that the Cizhou jars we encountered may have been produced in north China.

I believe that Cizhou jars found in the Phil. left China through the port of Yangzhou in Jiangsu province sometime in the 14th c.

I hope this has been helpful. If you have encountered some Cizhou type wares in Pampanga, that would really be interesting!

Best regards,  
Cynthia

#### Note to the Editor

I had an article on Fujian wares for the Green ware catalogue. Read the "end notes". Info about most ceramics coming from the South [...]

That was really some time ago that Rosemary Scott and Rose Kerr were here. Knowledge is always something that evolves. The important thing, I think, is that in one way or another, our studies are able to make a significant contribution [...]

The ceramics would still be there because the Escuderos are maintaining a museum from finds in the area (mostly around their family's property). That place is rich in archaeological and research potential.

Cynthia

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## Book Forum

A discussion between John Forbes and David Rehfuss

John Forbes

Hi, David,

In Saigon I picked up the following books

- Ceramics on Five Shipwrecks off the Coast of Vietnam, by Nguyen Dinh Chien and Pham Quoc Quan, published in Hanoi in 2008. Lots of photo plates, text in Vietnamese and English.
- Vietnamese Brown Patterned Ceramics, by the same authors as above, published in Hanoi in 2005
- Appreciating the Custom-made Patterned Porcelains during the Nguyen Dynasty, by Tran Dinh Son, published in 2009 in Ho Chi Minh City.

David Rehfuss

Regarding the three books, all three are useful. I already have "Vietnamese Brown Patterned Ceramics" which is must-have for anyone interested in Vietnamese wares. The other two are also good. The "Ceramics on Five Shipwrecks off the Coast of Vietnam" covers well-ploughed ground, but offers images of Chinese and Vietnamese ceramics not seen in the sales catalogues of the shipwreck cargoes. Both works are large and heavy. Perhaps the most interesting, because it offers ceramics made for Vietnamese consumers by French manufacturers and the Chinese rarely or not seen at all, is "Appreciating the Custom-made Patterned Porcelains during the Nguyen Dynasty".

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From Dr. Quintin Fortich Oropilla, M.D.

Dear Dr. Dizon,

I am Dr. Quintin Fortich Oropilla, M.D., author and publisher of the coffee-table book (9" x 12") [Deciphered Secrets: Calatagan Pot \(Phil. National Treasure\) Ancient Inscriptions.](#)

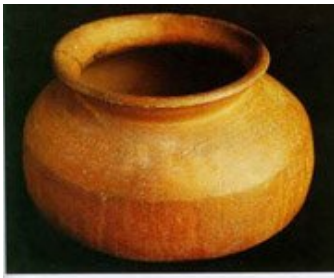


Figure 7: The Calatagan Pot

May I invite you to open [my website: decipheredcalataganpotscripts.com](http://decipheredcalataganpotscripts.com), for the details of the book? Your library and the memberships of the Oriental Ceramic Society of the Philippines might be interested to buy this book on the decipherment of the national treasure. The book was launched October 1, 2008 at the U.P. Faculty Center in Diliman where I was one of the speakers.

For your information, the Philippine National Library has bought 50 copies of this book to be distributed to their different libraries, underlining the importance of this book.

My best regards. Hope to hear from you soon.

Very respectfully yours,  
Quint F. Oropilla, M.D

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From Asian Rare Books. July 25, 2009

Info [<mailto:info@asianrarebooks.net>].

We have some out-of-print books on Asian ceramics and several others related to Sinological topics.

Subject: Rare CHINESE CERAMICS publication, Tokyo 1946

Jiro Aoyama: SHINA TOKI ZUFU (Illustrated catalogue of Chinese Ceramics)

Tokyo, 1946. 36 pp. Japanese text booklet, 74 plates (many color), 36x27 cm. Plates loose as issued in 10 envelopes in two crumbling cardboard folders; outer envelopes with some tears. Internally plates are clean with a small stain on 2 plates; apparently issued in only 200 sets.

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Visit us by appointment

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From David Rehfuss, the Freer and Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

[Internet access to the June 2009 webinar](#)

Dear all,

Many of you participated in the webinar hosted by Louise Cort on Tuesday evening. For those who did not, we are pleased to announce that the event was an unequivocal success. Ceramics enthusiasts and scholars from around the world (including Cambodia, Thailand, LACMA and the Met, Japan, Australia, and the UK) logged in to learn about "Ceramics in Mainland Southeast Asia." If you did not have a chance to participate, you can listen to the archived webinar, located on the "Taking Shape" and "Ceramics in Mainland Southeast Asia" webinar page. Thanks to everyone for helping to make this event a great success and a special thanks to Phyllis Hecht and Joe Newcomer of the John Hopkins Museum Studies Program.

To view the webinar please click on the following URL: <http://connect.johnshopkins.edu/p35445714/>

[Introduction to the Ceramic Sherds Catalogue](#)

Ceramic Sherds from Southeast Asia—the Freer Study Collection and its Donors  
David P. Rehfuss

**Introduction**

The ceramic material related to Southeast Asia in the Freer Gallery of Art is divided among two collections. The Permanent Collection consists of the objects that can be displayed in the museum's galleries, while the Study Collection contains potsherds, kiln wasters, and complete pieces of lesser quality. As the largest single component of the Study Collection, the ceramics associated with Southeast Asia include over 3300 potsherds from Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam, as well as from China and the Middle East, recovered in Southeast Asia from kilns sites, ancient entrepôts and harbors, graves, and consumer sites.

John Pope, director of the Freer Gallery from 1962 to 1971, made a concerted effort to assemble sherds, wasters, and kiln tools for use in study and technical analysis by the museum's Department of Conservation and Scientific Research and by other scholars. Dr. Pope was one of some three dozen donors to the Study Collection. The bulk of the material was donated by interested amateurs, business executives, and U.S. Foreign Service employees who lived and collected in Asia.

One interesting discovery of this review of the Study Collection's ceramics found in Southeast Asia is the relatively limited quantity of Chinese material (approximately 250 examples, about 7.5 percent.) This low percentage seems somewhat surprising. From at least the ninth century, Chinese ceramics were popular trade goods for Southeast Asian consumers, who used and collected these pots and often buried them to accompany the deceased on their next voyage. Chinese celadons and porcelains inspired and stimulated potters in the region.

Their limited numbers notwithstanding, donated Chinese ceramic fragments were found mixed with local wasters and potsherds at kiln sites and in fields and habitation sites throughout Southeast Asia. Victor Hauge (see below) picked up Chinese Ming dynasty porcelain potsherds that were intermingled with contemporaneous Northern Thai (Lan Na) sherds at various Lan Na kiln sites. John Pope found thirteenth-century Longquan celadon and qingbai fragments mixed with Khmer sherds at the royal palace site in Angkor Thom.

The maritime trade that crisscrossed Southeast Asia from the first millennium grew tremendously beginning in the twelfth century. Arab, Persian, Chinese, and Southeast Asian traders bartered ceramics, silk, and iron goods for spices and forest products. The demand was vast. The Southeast Asian trading ship that foundered off Hoi An, Central Vietnam, in the late fifteenth century carried some 750,000 Vietnamese ceramics bound for insular Southeast Asia. Almost all of the ceramic materials in the Study Collection acquired in the Philippines and Indonesia were originally trade goods. On the other hand, much of the Angkorian and Northern Thai material gathered by Victor Hauge was made for domestic consumption and was rarely found far from its place of production.

There is still much to be understood about historical ceramics in Southeast Asia and the traders who bartered them, but students and scholars of Asian art will be nearer to the answers because of the wealth of material here. This material has come to the Freer Gallery since the 1950s. This listing introduces those who collected it and what they donated.

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