

ARTICLE

Ceramics make strange bedfellows: The contributions of the Oriental Ceramics Society of the Philippines to Philippine archaeology

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ABSTRACT

The Oriental Ceramics Society of the Philippines (OCSP) is an organization composed of private collectors and ceramic enthusiasts interested in the study of foreign ceramics recovered in the Philippines. At present, OCSP has published seven books on ceramics and holds regular monthly talks, not just on ceramics, but also on Philippine history and culture. Generally, archaeologists have not really considered OCSP's significance and its role in providing information on Philippine history through foreign ceramics. This research paper seeks to examine OCSP's contributions to Philippine archaeology through their publications. The OCSP books, which deal with the aesthetics and origins of ceramics, are regularly consulted by archaeologists and students to identify foreign ceramics recovered from archaeological sites. Despite the perceived differences in the acquisition of artifacts between OCSP members and archaeology practitioners, I propose that OCSP has provided academics and non-academics with valuable information on ceramic technology and ceramic trade that can be utilized by archaeologists to better interpret the past.

KEYWORDS

Oriental ceramics, private collection, Philippines, heritage, collectors, antiquities

Introduction

The Oriental Ceramics Society of the Philippines (OCSP) was formed in 1980 by collectors and ceramic enthusiasts in order to formalize the study of and disseminate information on oriental ceramics found in the Philippines (Pascal 1991, 12). Prior to their first publication in 1989, OCSP organized the First Asian Oriental Ceramic Conference and Exhibit in 1983, where international

experts participated (Valdes 1989, 11–13; Pascal 1991, 12). Since then, the society has been involved in exhibits and public lectures which have continued to the present. OCSP members are mostly women from an elite socio-economic status and most of its early members' interests were antiquarian in nature (Brown 1989a, 6; OCSP, n.d.). Over the years, the society has increasingly engaged with archaeologists, historians, ceramic specialists, and other scholars through OCSP-sponsored lectures, exhibits, and publications, which gradually transformed OCSP's orientation.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Robert Fox, an anthropologist and one of the leading scholars of prehispanic Philippines, extensively excavated fifteenth century burial grounds in Calatagan, Batangas. This resulted into a looting frenzy that financially benefited agents, looters, and middlemen while feeding the psychological need of elites to elevate their status (Barretto-Tesoro 2013, 263–296; Paz 1992, 35). Token shares of Chinese and Southeast Asian ceramics excavated from Calatagan were, eventually, given to excavation sponsors such as the Ayalas and the Lopezes, constituting the Ayala Museum's and the Lopez Memorial Museum and Library's initial archaeological collections (Barretto-Tesoro 2013, 263–296).

From the 1960s to the 1970s, looting of archaeological sites became rampant in the Philippines (Valdes 1991, 33). Antique stores selling illegally acquired ceramics mushroomed in Manila and were patronized largely by individuals who were not properly informed of what they were buying. In some instances, sellers would directly contact buyers and meet clandestinely (E.R. Bautista 2003, 47; Treñas 2003, 58). Buyers' and collectors' thirst for more knowledge on the purchased ceramics was acquired through informal meetings in fora and exhibits. Eventually, OCSP was formed to satisfy the curiosity of would-be members. From the beginning, to expand their knowledge on ceramic pieces they had acquired, the OCSP met with ceramic specialists, visited museums, attended lectures, and visited antique dealer shops (Pascal 1991, 12).

When I started my graduate studies at the University of the Philippines-Archaeological Studies Program (UP-ASP) in the mid-1990s, I observed that there was almost no sympathy towards OCSP as its members were perceived to fuel local illicit trade of antiquities, nevertheless, its members up until the present are often consulted to identify pieces that have been excavated and are frequently requested to provide financial assistance to archaeologists for research projects or conferences. In my early years as a graduate student, I often hear the distinction between OCSP members and archaeologists. The former were often regarded as unscientific in their method or lacked training, and yet, members of the Philippine archaeology community relied on the OCSP members' knowledge and thus validated OCSP members' expertise by consulting them in identifying pieces and using their publications as references. OCSP members' knowledge regarding ceramics obtained through the years of handling intact pieces and interacting

with ceramic specialists is integral to Philippine archaeology and history. The important role of the OCSP and antique collectors in general, however, was only realized in 2009 by Victor Paz, in his *A Periodization for a History of Archaeology in the Philippines*, where he noted that the purchase of antiquities was a form of heritage protection as items were kept in the Philippines.

At present, antique collectors and archaeologists are mutually exclusive groups, even with a dichotomy of motivations, intents, and even membership. While OCSP is a private organization composed generally of older women from the upper crust of Philippine society who are interested in the aesthetics and history of oriental ceramics, archaeologists are from a diverse background who engage with the public and was once dominated by men who investigated not just foreign ceramics but also earthenware vessels for scholarly purposes. Even as OCSP originated with non-professional antiquarians, I would like to assert that the OCSP, through its publications, has made significant contributions to ceramic studies in Philippine archaeology.

To date, only Paz has acknowledged the contributions of collectors to Philippine archaeology, particularly in connection to heritage preservation and protection (2009). In this regard, I would like to bring to the attention of archaeologists and scholars in related disciplines the valuable material on ceramics through the OCSP publications. Archaeologists should learn to maximize the available information provided by OCSP in their publications to generate new interpretations for Philippine archaeology and history. Moreover, this paper also seeks to highlight the impact of OCSP on ceramic studies in the Philippines. In this regard, OCSP's seven publications from 1989 to 2007 will be reviewed to determine how the papers in the publications have augmented our knowledge of the past. These publications are on Guangdong ceramics (Brown 1989a, 87–127); Chinese and Southeast Asian greenware (Valdes and Diem 1991, 17–86); stoneware jars (Valdes 1992, 15); Chinese and Southeast Asian white ware (OCSP 1993, v); Chinese and Vietnamese blue-and-white wares (Gotuaco 1997a, 3); earthenware vessels (McGee 2003, 7); and Zhangzhou wares (Tan 2007c, 19–31).

Each publication is usually based on an exhibit of a specific type of ceramic or ceramics recovered from archaeological sites such as Butuan (Valdes 1989, 11–13) or shipwreck sites (Dizon and Orillaneda 2007, 180). New ceramic discoveries would prompt OCSP members to compare pieces from their collections with the new archaeological finds and their findings are then published. Some of OCSP's publications are catalogues that accompanied exhibits (Gotuaco 1997b, Preface; McGee 2003, 7; OCSP 1993, 55–123; Tan 2007b, 42–177; Valdes & Diem 1991, 43–62, 79–86). Aside from photographs of archaeological ceramics, photographs of intact private pieces are also included. The publications are largely printed, with dimensions measuring on the average 10.37 x 8.21 inches, and hard bound books ranging from 88 to 259 pages containing colored photographs,

which also serve as catalogues. In assessing the books, I will consider the authors' backgrounds, the specialists consulted, photographers, publishers, methods of study of the ceramics, and textual information in order to show that the OCSP, which began as an organization for ceramic enthusiasts, has become a valuable organization in terms of the knowledge it contributes to archaeology, history, and art history through their publications.

The OCSP publications

1. Brown, Roxanna M., ed. 1989. *Guangdong ceramics from Butuan and other Philippine sites: An exhibition catalogue presented by the Oriental Ceramic Society of the Philippines jointly with the National Museum October 3–19, 1988*. Makati: Oriental Ceramics Society of the Philippines, Inc.

This book was inspired by the high quantity of Guangdong ware excavated in Butuan, southern Philippines that were produced in Southern China and Southern Thailand dating from the tenth to the fourteenth centuries. Butuan, in the northern portion of Mindanao, is an important archaeological site because of the *balangays* (boats) discovered there, which could have been used in trade around Southeast Asia. They have been radiocarbon dated to CE 320, CE 990, and CE 1250 (Dimacali 2013; Salcedo 1998, 207). Recent results of AMS-C14 analysis of Butuan boat samples, however, resulted into calibrated dates of late eighth century to early tenth century CE (Lacsina 2015, 129). Two more artifacts from Butuan indicate its economic significance: the Butuan Ivory Seal and the Butuan Silver Paleograph. Both artifacts imply Butuan's role as an important trading port as early as the tenth century CE (Hontiveros 2013, 102–103; Santos 1996). Another artifact links Tondo, Manila with Butuan through Jayadewa who was known as the Commander of Tondo and supposedly was from Butuan (Salazar 2013, 447). This artifact is known as the Laguna Copperplate Inscription, which is dated to be around CE 900, and recovered from southern Luzon.

The *Guangdong Ceramics* reflects OCSP's evolving perceptions on oriental ceramics, which initially was an appreciation of its aesthetics, to becoming a production technique, and eventually, as an item of trade. Guangdong Ceramics is a collaboration among OCSP members, international ceramicists, and the National Museum of the Philippines' archaeologists. The exhibit also included other southern Chinese wares outside Guangdong that were also found in Butuan. Crucial to ceramic studies is identifying the kilns where they were produced (Lam 1989, 47–56; Tan 1989, 31). James Watt was able to identify locations of kilns where the Guangdong ceramics were fired, these kilns' construction, and each of its products (1989). Khmer-like Guangdong ceramics found in Butuan is also proof that the knowledge of production and firing techniques of Guangdong ceramics spread to Vietnam and Cambodia (Brown 1989b, 84).

2. Valdes, Cynthia O. and Allison I. Diem, eds. 1991. *Chinese and Southeast Asian greenware found in the Philippines*. Makati: The Oriental Ceramic Society of the Philippines.

Published by OCSP in cooperation with the National Museum of the Philippines and Ayala Museum, the articles in this book were written by OCSP members. Greenware refers to green porcelain and the book traces greenware manufactured in the Zhejiang region from the Tang Dynasty (CE 618–906) to the Ming Dynasty (CE 1368–1644) (Tan 1991, 17). The book contains descriptions of form, surface treatment, color, and glaze (Tan 1991, 18–22; Valdes 1991, 37–40). While oftentimes referred to as celadons, not all celadons are green (Diem 1991a, 65). Greenware that have been produced in China, Vietnam, and Thailand have also been found in the Philippines (Diem 1991a, 65; Diem 1991b, 67; Diem 1991c, 69; Stephen 1991, 73).

3. Valdes, Cynthia O., Kerry Nguyen Long, and Artemio C. Barbosa. 1992. *A Thousand Years of Stoneware Jars in the Philippines*. Makati: Jar Collectors (Philippines) with the support of Eugenio Lopez Foundation, Inc. and in cooperation with the National Museum and the Oriental Ceramic Society of the Philippines.

The authors of this book travelled to different parts of Mainland and Island Southeast Asia to study stoneware jars. Field areas included East Malaysia, West Kalimantan, Java, Vietnam, and Thailand. In the Philippines, they visited the Mountain Province, Palawan, and Zamboanga with the objective to document the production, distribution, and use of stoneware jars around Southeast Asia. The book includes Philippine and Southeast Asian maps to show trade routes and locations of Philippine sites where stoneware jars were found. The authors focused on technology and discussed historical and ethnohistorical accounts on stoneware jars. Stoneware jars dating from tenth to twelfth centuries and from twelfth to fourteenth centuries originated from Guangdong province and Fujian province, respectively. The authors note the utilitarian and ritual functions of stoneware jars as basically storage containers. In ships, these were used to store water, food, and small items such as beads and metal bracelets that were traded around Southeast Asia. As ritual items, stoneware jars were also used as heirloom pieces, burial receptacles, containers for rice wine drunk in various rituals, status symbols, as well as prestige and wealth items in many Philippine ethnolinguistic groups (Barbosa 1992, 70). Nguyen Long notes the dragon and phoenix motifs on Chinese jars and their association with indigenous symbols, although she does not provide a sufficient explanation for these motifs (1992a, 25). In later publications, Filipino scholars put forth that Chinese jars with these symbols were significant to local cultures (Barretto-Tesoro 2008a, 74–102; Reyes 2010, 12–20; Salazar 2004, 97–179; 2005, 96–126).

Nguyen Long also presented a typology of stoneware jars. She categorized them according to their places of origin, shapes, features, clays, glazes, construction, and kiln marks (1992b, 185–199). An analysis for each classification, referring to Philippine terrestrial and underwater sites where specimens, sherds or whole were found, their dates of production, and the kiln where they were fired based on decorations is also included. She displays extensive knowledge on the technical aspects of production, time period of motifs and decorations, distribution of jars, and their production dates.

4. Oriental Ceramic Society of the Philippines, ed. 1993. *Chinese and South-East Asian white ware found in the Philippines*. Singapore and New York: Oxford University Press.

The white wares included in the book were produced during the Tang Dynasty (CE 618–907) until the Ming Dynasty (CE 1368–1644), however, proto-white ware appeared earlier CE 386–581. White wares were mostly produced in southern China and considered high quality, such that these were often referred to in Chinese poetry. During the Northern Song Period (CE 960–1127), the forms produced were bowls, dishes, pillows, kendis, covered boxes, incense burners, spittoons, vases, and jars. The authors described in detail the production and firing techniques and marks left on ceramic pieces that were used to identify these archaeological pieces. The book also provides information on which Dynasty techniques were first used and when decorations first appeared, which can be used for dating ceramic pieces. For example, Qingbai wares were decorated with fluid carvings and incisions during the second half of the eleventh century CE, while at the end of the eleventh century CE, vessel shapes were inspired by metal forms such as “ewers, with lobed bodies and long curving spouts, dishes, and bowls with thin walls and raised ribs on the interior of the vessel and foliate rims or dish-like mouths” that were copied from metalwork traditions of Central/Western Asia and brought to China through the Silk Road Trade (Tan 1993, 7). Changes to production were made to accommodate the demands of the foreign market, which explains the appearance and disappearance of decorative elements such as iron-spotting in the Yuan Dynasty (CE 1271–1368), that ended in the fourteenth century CE. Beaded relief designs were borrowed from Near Eastern Metalwork during the early Tang Period, which were also common during the Yuan Dynasty. This book explains the origin of designs on Guangdong ceramics and ideally, should be read alongside the 1989 *Guangdong Ceramics* publication (Brown 1989a, 15–127).

Z. Li, a Chinese archaeologist, in his examination of Chinese accounts on what is now the Philippines dating from CE 960–1279, notes the place called Mai in the Philippines, which sent goods to Guangzhou in CE 982 (1993, 15).

Mai was thought to be Mindoro Island, however, recent research shows that it could also be Bai in Laguna (Go 2005, 123). Several kilns were producing ceramics specifically for trade during the Late Northern Song and Southern Song (CE 1127–1279), as well as in the Yuan Dynasty (CE 1271–1368). Dealers supplied the needs of the growing foreign market, that influenced changes in production, such as mass production of simple forms. Earlier pieces were carved or incised by individual artisans, although in later periods, pieces for export were mold-impressed with designs. Trade was integral to the imperial government of the Northern and Southern Song as well as the Yuan Dynasty because profits were used to finance wars against tribal states. Z. Li presented a typology of wares produced during the Song and Yuan dynasties that is useful in identifying and dating ceramics found in Philippine sites. In the production history of white wares, Li noticed that spouts on ewers shortened; ewer and kendi bodies became squatter; and vases' neck longer. He also presented shipping routes from China to all directions where white ware was exported (Li 1993, 24).

R.E. Scott also presents technical descriptions of forms, surface texture, color, decorative lines, motifs, and their locations on the ware (1993, 32). Monochrome white ware was also produced in Vietnam before the tenth century CE (Diem 1993, 39). Vietnam started exporting their products by the late thirteenth century CE until the early fourteenth century CE and ended trade with the Philippines in the late sixteenth century CE. Diem explores Chinese influences on Vietnamese ware such as forms and glaze color (1993, 42). These time-bound artistic elements help archaeologists date sites with white wares. White ware was also produced in Thailand in the fifteenth century CE (Brown 1993, 45).

5. Gotuaco, Larry, Rita C. Tan, and Allison I. Diem, eds. 1997. *Chinese and Vietnamese blue and white wares found in the Philippines*. Makati City: Larry Gotuaco, Rita C. Tan, Allison I. Diem, and Bookmark, Inc.

This book gives an account of how blue and white wares developed. The authors note the patterns of distribution of these wares in the Philippines. Jarlets were mostly found in Luzon, big vessels and dishes in Butuan, Agusan, Surigao, and Cotabato, although the authors do not provide an explanation for their distribution. Similar to other OCSP publications, designs, painting styles, and pigment used on the blue and white wares were meticulously described. The pieces were categorized based on form and function. The early Ming blue and white ware which have different designs compared with those produced during the Late Ming periods, have helped archaeologists identify the dates of production during the Ming Dynasty. Blue and white wares were also produced in Vietnamese kilns that imitated Chinese wares.

6. Valdes, Cynthia O., ed. 2003. *Pang-alay: Ritual pottery in ancient Philippines*. Makati: Ayala Foundation, Inc. and Oriental Ceramic Society of the Philippines, Inc.

Since the heart of OCSP's endeavors lie in oriental ceramics, it is understandable that their only publication on earthenware vessels was published 14 years after their first book was published in 1989 (Brown 1989a, 87–127). It also reflects a relatively late interest in earthenware vessels. Collectors preferred intact foreign ceramics because even without a secure archaeological context they can easily be dated according to designs and forms. Prior to the appearance of Southeast Asian and Chinese ceramics in the Philippines, local earthenware vessels, dating from 500 BCE to CE 500, conventionally referred to as the Metal Age, have distinct body decorations that can also be relatively dated. Later earthenware pots produced from the tenth to the fifteenth centuries CE imitated foreign forms that can, likewise, be given relative dates if there is sufficient knowledge on trade ceramics from which the local vessels were copied from. Generally, local indistinct pots are dated based on associated artifacts that are usually foreign ceramics. *Pang-alay: Ritual Pottery in Ancient Philippines* gives an overview of functions of clay pots in the Philippines, focusing on ritual uses (2003). It contains twelve articles, of which eight were written by academics and archaeologists and four by OCSP members. Among OCSP publications, this book contains the most number of articles written by Filipino archaeologists. Although local archaeologists contributed to earlier OCSP publications, they held senior Museum positions, whereas in the *Pang-alay* book, we see works of junior archaeologists at the time of its publication.

Pang-alay introduces us to a range of pottery forms and types that we do not commonly see in the National Museum of the Philippines' exhibit galleries. The photo catalogue is divided based on these categories: angled, animal, atypical, burial jars, cups and goblets, footed vessels, globular pots, human-like figures, pots with mammary forms, miniature figurines, pots with colored pigments, pots with rope applied faces, ribbed vessels, spouted vessels, and kendi. Only a few of these pieces are in the National Museum of the Philippines, implying that there is still a lot to learn about Philippine earthenware vessels.

7. Tan, Rita C., ed. 2007. *Zhangzhou ware found in the Philippines: "Swatow" export ceramics from Fujian 16th–17th century*. Makati City: Yuchengco Museum and the Oriental Ceramic Society of the Philippines.

Similar to OCSP's first publication on *Guangdong Ceramics* and motivated by excavations in Butuan, OCSP's 2007 publication was inspired by the excavation of the San Diego shipwreck in the 1990s, which contains "very fine quality blue and white ware from the Wanli period (1573–1619)" (Valdes 1989, 11–13; Desroches 1996, 311–359; Tan 2007a, 16). By knowing how blue and white wares

were manufactured, including quality of clay, quality of glaze, glaze color, and brush strokes, ceramics can be traced to the kiln that produced them. Blue and white wares had unglazed body parts due to firing techniques. Tan also focused on the ancestry of designs found on Zhangzhou wares and where these motifs were borrowed. J. Li discusses the spread of technology in making Zhangzhou ware and where these pieces were marketed (2007). The ceramics presented in this book were classified according to a variety of designs on different forms. Captions accompanying the catalogue identified the ceramics' provenance and described individual designs and their locations on the ceramics. An article on ships with Zhangzhou wares, including two shipwrecks found in the Philippines, accompanies the book (Dizon and Orillaneda 2007, 180). The book provides archaeological background of the wares also known as Swatow. Dizon and Orillaneda note how shipwrecks are time capsules that can be used as dating tools and indicators of culture change (2007).

Comments on the OCSP Publications

Prior to OCSP's commitment to research and publication, studies on oriental ceramics were preliminary in nature, simply describing what were found in the Philippines. The OCSP publications demonstrate the expertise of OCSP members in identifying ceramics. They honed these skills through years of experiences and ownership of ceramics through the formation of scholarly and enthusiasts networks in workshops, lectures, conferences, and exchange with specialists and scholars. Many of the OCSP authors were neither academics nor have they received formal training in ceramic studies, but they have done commendable works. Of the OCSP authors, those who had a degree related to ceramics are Rita Tan, who obtained her Master's in Art and Archaeology from the University of London, and Allison Diem, who received her Bachelor of Arts with Honors in Asian Studies from Murdoch University, Australia in 2002. Diem's thesis was on trade ceramics found in precolonial Philippine sites (2002).

The articles in the seven OCSP publications, excluding forewords, were written and edited by a handful of individuals from OCSP whose membership on the average is about 80. The seven publications have 27 authors altogether, of which nine were OCSP members, nine from the National Museum of the Philippines,¹ eight ceramic specialists who were either affiliated with foreign institutions or independent scholars,² and one from the University of the Philippines-Archaeological Studies Program (UP-ASP) (Barretto 2003, 71-74) (See Table 1, Figure 1). Of the OCSP members, the most prolific is Tan who was involved in five publications;³ Cynthia O. Valdes with four⁴ and Allison Diem with three⁵ (See Table 1). Tan, Valdes, and Diem also served as editors of OCSP publications. Of the 44 articles written for the seven publications, 22 were written by OCSP members, and the rest were divided among different institutions (See

Tables 2–3, Figure 2). Authors from the National Museum of the Philippines who wrote articles for the OCSP publications were archaeologists who have undertaken excavations both on terrestrial and underwater sites where ceramics were recovered. These are Angel P. Bautista, Margarita R. Cembrano, Nida T. Cuevas, Amalia A. De La Torre, Eusebio Z. Dizon, Alfredo E. Evangelista, Bobby C. Orillaneda, Wilfredo P. Ronquillo, and Artemio C. Barbosa, who is the only anthropologist. The low contribution of articles from UP-ASP including those from UP-ASP alumni currently working for the National Museum of the Philippines, is perhaps due to two factors, the publication year and the number of archaeologists doing research on ceramics, which are both tradeware pieces and local pottery vessels. Although the UP-ASP was established in 1995, its first year of operation began in the academic year of 1996–1997. Therefore, there was no archaeologist available yet to contribute to the 1997 publication (Gotuaco 1997b, Preface). The bulk of contributions from the National Museum of the Philippines also came only after the creation of the UP-ASP as seen in the *Pangalay* publication (Valdes 2003d, 141–142) (See Table 2). Students who specialized in ceramics either entered UP-ASP or finished their theses after the publication of OCSP’s book on Zhangzhou wares (Tan 2007a, 12–17).

Table 1. List of authors and the number of times they contributed to OCSP’s seven publications

Authors and their affiliations	Publication years						
	1989	1991	1992	1993	1997	2003	2007
<i>Oriental Ceramics Society of the Philippines</i>							
1. Bautista, Edwin R		1				1	
2. Diem, Allison		3		1	1		
3. Gotuaco, Larry					1		
4. Manahan, Josefina P.		1					
5. Nguyen-Long, Kerry			2				
6. Stephen, Mary G.		1					
7. Tan, Rita	1	1		1	1		1
8. Treñas, Jose Maria Perez R.						1	
9. Valdes, Cynthia O.		1	1			2	
<i>National Museum of the Philippines</i>							
1. Barbosa, Artemio C.			1				
2. Bautista, Angel P.						1	
3. Cembrano, Margarita	1						
4. Cuevas, Nida*						1	
5. De La Torre, Amalia A.*						2	
6. Dizon, Eusebio**						1	1
7. Evangelista, Alfredo E.	1						
8. Orillaneda, Bobby*							1
9. Ronquillo, Wilfredo P.**	1					1	
<i>University of the Philippines – Archaeological Studies Program</i>							
1. Barretto, Grace						1	
<i>Foreign institutions/Independent scholar</i>							
1. Brown, Roxanna	1			1			
2. Gatabonton, Esperanza Bunag						1	
3. Lam, Peter Y.K.	1						
4. Li Jian An							1
5. Li Zhi-yan				1			
6. Scott, Rosemary E.				1			
7. Tang Ba Hoanh					1		
8. Watt, James C.Y.	1						

*UP-ASP Alumni; ** Also taught at the UP-ASP

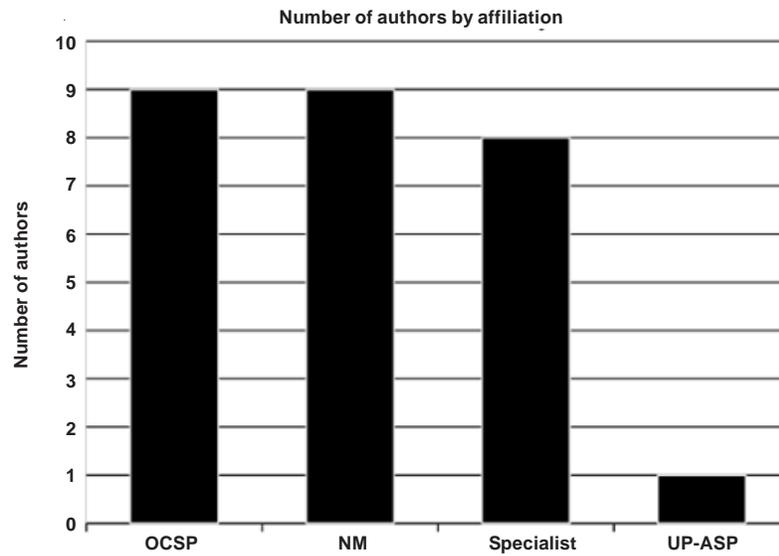


Figure 1. Number of authors in the OCSF publications and their affiliations

Table 2: Summary of authors and their affiliations by publication

Affiliation	1989	1991	1992	1993	1997	2003	2007
OCSF	1	8	3	2	3	4	1
NM	3	-	1	-	-	6	2
UP-ASP	-	-	-	-	-	1	
Foreign institution/ Independent scholar	3	-	-	3	1	1	1
Total articles	7	8	4	5	4	12	4

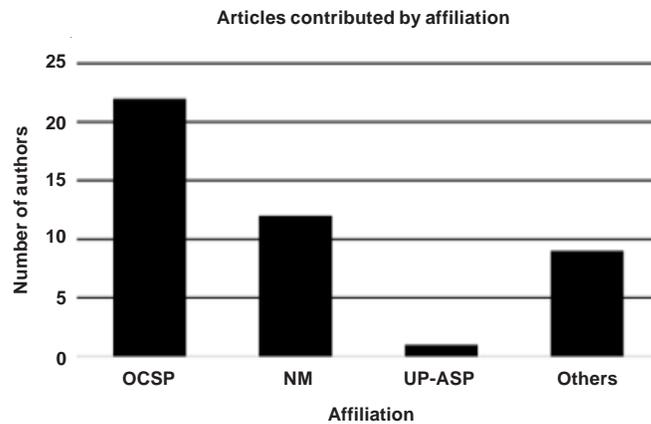


Figure 2. Summary of authors' affiliations and their number of article contributions in all seven OCSF publications

Table 3: Summary of authors' affiliations and number of times they contributed an article to OCSP's publications

Affiliation	No. of individual authors	Total number of articles contributed to OCSP's publications by affiliation
OCSP	9	22
National Museum of the Philippines	9	12
University of the Philippines-Archaeological Studies Program	1	1
Foreign institution/Independent scholar	8	9
Total	27	44

The publications indicate that OCSP members frequently consulted and collaborated with foreign scholars, art historians, museum curators, archaeologists, and ceramicists. Foreign institutions consulted include Christie's, Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, Asian Civilization Museum, Art Museum of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, University Museum and Art Gallery of the University of Hong Kong, Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, London, Tianminlou Foundation, Fung Ping Shan Library, Hong Kong, Nanjing Museum, and Hai Hung Provincial Museum in Vietnam (Gotuaco, Tan, and Diem 1997, Acknowledgments). OCSP editors and authors deliberately sought Chinese and Vietnamese ceramic experts to contribute articles that will provide the historical context of ceramics production and design. J. Li who wrote on Zhangzhou ware was director of the Archaeology Institute of the Fujian Provincial Museum and was himself part of the excavation at Zhangzhou kilns (2007, 33–41). Z. Li was an archaeologist and expert in Tang and Song Dynasty porcelain pottery and ancient kiln sites (1993, 15–29). He was also a Senior Research Fellow at the National Museum of China and former Vice-President of the Association of Chinese Ancient Ceramics and examined Chinese historical accounts (Li 1993, 15). Watt and Lam are both ceramic specialists.

OCSP has also partnered with prestigious Philippine and foreign institutions such as the National Museum of the Philippines, Ayala Foundation, Inc., Yuchengco Museum, Bookmark Incorporated, Eugenio Lopez Foundation, Inc., and Oxford University Press to co-publish. By involving private institutions such as the Ayala Foundation, Yuchengco Museum, and Lopez Foundation, which are owned by influential families, OCSP was able to expand its network and increase its membership to include expatriates, who are/were Presidents or CEOs of multinational companies, and their spouses. Notably, OCSP, through exhibits and publications had also made available to the public their members' collections, which were previously restricted for personal use (Barretto-Tesoro 2013, 263–296). These exhibits and publications are a significant undertaking by the OCSP to fulfill the organization's aim to disseminate information on ceramics found in

the Philippines. Although exhibits were open to the public and the publications are available, public access was still rather limited, especially since the books are not generally well-circulated, being available only from high-end and specialty bookstores (Barretto-Tesoro 2013, 263–296). Exhibits were held in fairly exclusive places and book prices are expensive because of printing costs due to the substance of paper used, colored photographs, book size, and binding, so that only few academics working on the subject and the socio-economic elite could afford to purchase them (Barretto-Tesoro 2013, 263–296).

Renowned professional photographers such as Jaime Unson, Ken Cheong, Patrick de Koenigswarter, and Neal Oshima have also photographed the pieces used for both exhibits and publications and have added media mileage for OCSP among patrons of the arts and even beyond the usual museum goers, ceramic enthusiasts, archaeologists, and academics (Valdes and Diem 1991, 4; Tan 2007b, 191; Valdes, Nguyen Long, and Barbosa 1992, 10; Gotuaco, Tan, and Diem, Acknowledgements). Cheong was a Singapore-based curator of the Singapore History Museum Photograph Collection from 1994 to 2000. Oshima was involved in an earlier publication on Philippine ancestral houses (Zialcita and Tinio 1980, 262). Indeed, these names are a far cry from the early photographer in OCSP's first publication who was a National Museum of the Philippines resident photographer (Brown 1989a, 4).

Discussion

OCSP generally employed the following methods in their investigations: comparison of study collections by physically visiting museum collections, private museums, and antique shops in Manila, China, and Southeast Asia; consultation with dealers and collectors, museum curators, experts, scholars, archaeologists, academics, and ceramicists in China and Southeast Asia; observation of the roles of ceramics in Philippine societies using ethnographic and ethnohistoric examples; and examination of systematically excavated ceramics from Philippine sites.

For those interested in Southeast Asian and Chinese ceramics either systematically recovered or not, in the Philippines, the OCSP publications serve as the most comprehensive literature on the subject. The regional approach used in investigating the wares makes the books useful to those conducting research on oriental ceramics from Southeast Asia and even beyond the region. Each book is dedicated to a ceramic type: stoneware jars, Guangdong ceramics, Zhangzhou wares, blue and white wares, white wares, greenware, and earthenware. The books also contain Philippine, Southeast Asian, and Asian maps to show locations of sites and kilns in reference to ceramic finds, which provide information on trade routes during particular time periods or dynasties relevant to the production of specific wares and the kiln locations where the pieces were

fired. Most of the articles discuss the technology of production and firing; the social milieu of production; and the historical and ethnographic accounts of kilns and ceramics (Tan 1989, 29–33; Watt 1989, 35–45).

The publications focus altogether on craftsmanship and production of ceramics starting with kiln locations and dates of production. Examining the kilns help identify ceramics, hence, research on provenance are later developments following kiln excavations. The articles also describe the clay used, techniques of manufacture and decoration such as surface treatment, glaze colors and kiln marks, as well as typical shapes and specific types of ceramics found in Philippine sites (Bautista 1991, 29–32; Lam 1989, 47–56; Valdes 1991, 36–40). Decorations are fully described from the method of application on the ceramics, patterns, locations of patterns on the ceramics, and the number of patterns and applied parts (i.e., number of lugs and lug direction) (Nguyen Long 1992, 185–198). Since these publications also serve as catalogues for exhibits, the bulk of the pages display photographs of ceramics.

Foreign ceramic photos are also arranged according to their origin (China and Southeast Asia) and dates of production (Valdes and Diem 1991, 43–62, 79–86; Valdes, Nguyen Long, and Barbosa 1992, 95–183). Earthenware photos are classified according to form (Valdes 2003d, 80–138). Photos, however, are not accompanied with a scale, which archaeologists commonly include when photographing specimens. The captions, however, indicate the basic dimensions of ceramic pieces such as height and diameter. Also included are detailed descriptions of form, decorations, color, glaze, and production date. Archaeologists in general use these books as manuals to identify and date foreign ceramics recovered from excavations. Rhayan G. Melendres, for instance, utilized the OCSB books to develop a system in identifying foreign ceramics excavated from Philippine sites and Melendres further proposed that a proper identification of ceramics can be used to correctly date archaeological sites in lieu of radiocarbon dating (2008, 2012, 2014). Since the 1960s, however, archaeologists for the National Museum of the Philippines were already using this method of relative dating on archaeological sites based on the identification of ceramics.

The presence of large quantities of oriental ceramics in the Philippines prior to European contact in the 1500s indicate the Philippine's role in the maritime trade networks of Southeast Asia. The authors investigated the development of techniques, form, and designs not just in China but also in Vietnam and Thailand to determine the origins of the ceramics. They also traced the kilns where the ceramics were manufactured. Ceramics brought to the Philippines were produced in different kilns and particular wares dominated certain periods of our trading history with China. Trading history and trading relations between China and Philippine polities were also examined including the rise and fall of trading relations and lifecycles of Philippine trade centers, which might explain the presence and absence of certain types of ceramics in Philippine sites.

The studies in general used a top-down approach in the treatment of ceramics, showing how political events under particular reigning emperors of Chinese dynasties have shaped ceramic production, modified trade networks, and influenced port operations, aspects of ceramic production and trade which are all central to the arguments in the books (Tan 2007a, 13–15; Valdes 1991, 35–36). The books focus on the ceramic production process and the trade routes used that brought the ceramics to the Philippines from Mainland Asia. However, the Philippines was treated as a passive recipient of these trade goods. Thus, the books are producer- and distributor-oriented; and the authors miss out on the nuances of consumers' acceptance and use of the ceramics. The closest the OCSP books dwelt on how these ceramics were used in the past was their notes on the ethnographic uses of stoneware jars in rituals among various Philippine ethnic groups, the meanings of burial jars, and the use of earthenware vessels as grave goods. Representations of gender and identity are found in the *A Thousand Years of Stoneware Jars in the Philippines* and *Pang-alay Ritual Pottery in Ancient Philippines*.

A bottom-up approach, in this regard, would be a more significant approach to the understanding of ceramic use in the Philippines. Focus on acquisition motivations and trading strategies of recipient countries such as the Philippines and what these ceramics meant to past Philippine societies may also be undertaken. The OCSP publications have provided the foundation of ceramic studies in the country and archaeologists can explore the ideas such as whether Philippine polities preferred specific types of ceramics or does kiln existence influenced the market; reasons for distribution of ceramics with particular forms and designs and the meanings of motifs in different archaeological contexts; significance of ceramics to early inhabitants of the islands; and how these ceramics were valued and integrated with local cultures alongside local earthenware vessels. To date, several studies have explored the different roles of foreign ceramics in the Philippines. These include investigating the transformation of foreign ceramics from commodities to ritual objects, the use of foreign ceramics as wealth objects, status items, and political gifts, as well as heirloom pieces (Barretto-Tesoro 2008b, 148; Junker 1999, 183–220; Barbosa 1992, 70–92; Scott 1994, 66). Clearly, jars as heirloom pieces is not unique to the Philippines, as Chinese and Southeast Asian jars have been documented in Borneo as heirloom jars locally known as *pusaka* (Harrison 1986, 1).

What is noteworthy to me is that the works published by OCSP, more than fulfilling the organization's objective of disseminating information about oriental ceramics found in the Philippines, reflect a "sense of patriotism" during and after the publication process (Gotuaco 1997b, Preface). This is gleaned from the discussion, albeit briefly, on heritage and patriotism in the context of ceramic collection as the highpoint of the OCSP as an organization. This is indicated in the second OCSP publication on greenware and clearly articulated in the fifth OCSP publication on blue and white wares and later, its publication on local

earthenware vessels (Manahan 1991, 25–27; Gotuaco 1997b, Preface; McGee 2003, 7). OCSF also “serves to nurture interest in preserving the rich cultural heritage of the past for future generations” (McGee 2003, 7) through exhibits and publications. The 2003 *Pang-alay* publication shows that foreign ceramics were not the only objects looted but also earthenware vessels, particularly those with atypical forms that mostly belonged to the Metal Age (circa 500 BCE to CE 500) (E.R. Bautista 2003, 48–52; Treñas 2003, 59–61; Valdes 2003d, 80–138). In this sense, the 2003 *Pang-alay* book becomes more relevant because OCSF, an organization initially dedicated to the study of oriental ceramics, also recognizes the heritage value of local pottery (McGee 2003, 7). Purchasing and collecting antiques can therefore be viewed as a tactic to keep artifacts in the Philippines (Paz 2009, 9; Tan 1989, 32). Indeed, OCSF “has made a relevant contribution to the Philippine cultural scene” as readers and scholars are made aware of what foreign ceramics had been brought to the Philippines and the range of local pottery produced (Pascal 1991, 12). From this information, we can augment past narratives on the Philippines from the tenth to the sixteenth centuries CE, or the 500-year period before Spanish colonization.

As this paper seeks to show that collectors and archaeologists can work together towards understanding the past, albeit in different ways, conflict remains between collectors in general and the state as represented by the National Museum over the issue of private ownership of rare and unique pieces. The National Museum through Presidential Decree No. 374 has the authority to declare cultural pieces to be National Cultural Treasures or “...unique object[s] found locally, possessing outstanding historical, cultural, artistic, and/or scientific value which is significant and important to this country and nation” (Bautista 2013, 22). Some foreign ceramics have been declared National Cultural Treasures such as the Butuan white-glazed ewer with phoenix head, Pandanan fourteenth century blue and white porcelain bowl, Lena Shoal blue and white dish with flying elephant, Puerto Galera blue and white jar, Marinduque celadon jar, and the Yuan Dynasty vase (Brown 1989a, 94; Dizon 1998, 151; Goddio, Crick, Lam, Pierson, and Scott 2002, 125; Gotuaco, Tan, and Diem 1997, 52; National Museum 2010, 1). There seems to be a misconception that privately-owned pieces are confiscated by the National Museum when in fact, privately owned pieces designated as National Cultural Treasures remain to be in the possession of the owners as Section 7 of the Presidential Decree 374 states. The National Museum shall only photograph the piece and “keep a record containing such information as: name of article, owner, period, source, location, condition, description, photograph, identifying marks, approximate value and other pertinent data” (Bautista 2013, 25). Hence, it is not impossible to think that collectors and archaeologists can work together because the National Museum respects the rights of the collector to own such pieces.

The OCSP publications negate the sentiment I observed during my early years in archaeology, for the books prove that collectors, archaeologists, and anthropologists can collaborate, and their collaborations were already underway even before UP-ASP was established in 1995.⁶ The catalogues mostly showcase intact jars from private collections, which are compared with specimens found in archaeological sites. Since information on the exact provenance of wares in private collections is missing, the archaeological specimens, regardless of sherd size, serve as evidence that samples of specimens in private collections reached the Philippines, thus validating the authenticity of the collectors' ceramics. According to Paz, collecting ceramics, exhibiting them, and writing about them were perceived by OCSP members and collectors in general as critical to heritage protection, their way to assist the underfunded and undermanned National Museum of the Philippines (2009; Valdes 1989, 13). Manahan adds that if the National Museum of the Philippines has sufficient funds and government support, it could accomplish scientific research and protect archaeological sites at the same time (1991, 27). Therefore, collaborations between private collectors, including the OCSP, and archaeologists from the National Museum of the Philippines and/or academe are essential because their collaboration yields mutual benefits. In addition, Valdes also recognizes that collaboration between academics will contribute to a better appreciation of our close cultural ties in the region (1991, 41).

The OCSP books are clear indications of how collectors and archaeologists can work together productively. In most of the books, the OCSP have included article contributions from archaeologists, anthropologists, and ceramic experts.⁷ It is a symbiotic relationship: archaeologists learn from OCSP and OCSP also learns from archaeologists. Archaeologists are invited by OCSP to give lectures in their monthly talks; and OCSP members sometimes join excavations, give lectures, and conduct short workshops or seminars on ceramic identification. In the OCSP books, the OCSP members write on ceramic production and design, while the archaeologists provide the archaeological background and cultural meanings of the ceramics vessels.⁸

Implications of the OCSP publications

Ceramics can be used to investigate production and techniques in Mainland Southeast Asia and how these techniques evolved. Brown demonstrates how ceramic production in Vietnam and Cambodia was brought from China by using Khmer-like Guangdong ceramics from Butuan as a case study (1989b, 81). Evolution of forms and production techniques stressed interactions between China and the Middle East as ceramic forms in the former were copied from metalwares produced in the latter. In this regard, ceramic production was dynamic

as it equally changes within China through different emperors' reigns and modified by the market outside China.

Conventional knowledge on ceramics nevertheless, may be substantiated through the information in the publications. The books have defined terms that can widen our understanding of foreign wares, specifically, for example, not all celadons are green and that not all blue-and-white porcelains were Chinese. The *Pang-alay* book demonstrated that there is more to learn when it comes to local pottery. Atypical forms found in private collections emphasize the creative genius of early potters. It would be interesting to find out the contexts of how these forms were produced and why. Were the forms or designs or both significant to past Philippine communities? In what way? Gotuaco notes contrasting distributions of jarlets, big vessels, and dishes (1997a, 5). Jarlets were common in Luzon, the main Philippine island, while large vessels and dishes were documented mostly in northern Mindanao, an island in the southern portion of the Philippines. According to Kintanar, arabesque scrolls and cloud collars, commonly associated with Islam, which she refers to as Islamicate motifs, are present in blue and white ceramics found in Philippine sites (2015). Following a criteria Kintanar devised, an inspection of blue and white vessels in *Chinese and Vietnamese blue and white wares found in the Philippines* shows Islamicate motifs (Gotuaco, Tan, and Diem 1997, 109–179, 223–258). Further study of these motifs may explain why these types of ceramics were desired in the Philippines. Clearly, OCSP has provided essential information on ceramic production techniques and their historical and social contexts of production and distribution. It should be noted, however, that the information presented in the OCSP books are from the producers' and merchants' viewpoints. To deepen our understanding of foreign ceramics, the consumers' perspectives should be examined, too. Archaeologists should explore why ceramics were acquired in the Philippines and what their appeal was to early Philippine societies.

Lastly, the OCSP's contributions to Philippine archaeology and history are invaluable. Its first publication in 1989 and its most recent in 2007, illustrate the initiative of the OCSP to share to the public photos and information on private pieces that at one point was exclusive to members (Brown 1989a, 15–127; Tan 2007b, 43–177). I believe that making the ceramics from private collections available to the public was a critical moment in OCSP's history, marking a shift from the mere possession of and private appreciation of antique pieces, for whatever personal purpose, to the pursuit of knowledge. The early publications indicate that members were more interested in aesthetics and monetary value of ceramics (Valdes 1989, 13). The shift of value perception from monetary to historical, scientific, and educational is best expressed in the omission of the word “antique” in later publications and in the OCSP's official website. ‘Antique’

was used in their first two publications (Valdes 1989, 13; 1991, 33). The 1989 publication on Guangdong ceramics even referred to the two million-peso value of studied ceramics (Valdes 1989, 13). Collaborations with archaeologists, art historians, anthropologists, and ceramic experts indicate that OCSP identified their limitations and were willing to work with scholars to address aspects of ceramics beyond identification and production. Concurrently, archaeologists should appreciate the OCSP's members' knowledge and skills.

Conclusion

The OCSP books display the skills of OCSP members in identifying oriental ceramics in the Philippines. They also provide contexts for the existence of ceramics both in Mainland Southeast Asia and in the Philippines. These books can be used as springboard to advance academic research on foreign ceramics' significance and the role they played in early Philippine societies by means of contemporary methods of scientific analysis. Thus, new knowledge is created and disseminated.

Reviewing these books enlightened my perspective on the OCSP. Facts presented in the books make readers realize the research efforts OCSP members undertook to publish these works. It is also worth noting that they collaborated with local and foreign academics, hired professional photographers, arranged the photos, and inspired private individuals to share their collection for the benefit of ceramicists, enthusiasts, and scholars. The OCSP publications clearly crossed the realms of archaeology, anthropology, history, and art history research. Shifting our attitudes towards collectors and seeing them as allies in heritage management as Paz explained creates effective and dynamic avenues for ceramic research beneficial to both archaeologists and oriental ceramics collectors (2009).

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Notes

1. Barbosa 1992, 70–92; A.P. Bautista 2003, 54–57; Cembrano 1989, 71–79; Cuevas 2003, 63–69; De La Torre 2003a, 26–28; 2003b, 29–33; Dizon 2003, 39–42; Dizon and Orillaneda 2007, 179, 182; Evangelista 1989, 15–27; Ronquillo 1989, 61–69; 2003, 16.
2. Brown 1989b, 81–85; 1993, 45–51; Gatbonton 2003, 75–77; Lam 1989, 47–59; J. Li 2007, 33–41; Z. Li 1993, 15–29; R.E. Scott 1993, 30–37; Tang 1997, 209–219; Watt 1989, 35–46.
3. Tan 1989, 29–33; 1991, 17–24; 1993, 1–14; 1997, 79–108; 2007a, 12–17; 2007c, 19–31.
4. Valdes 1991, 33–42; 2003a, 13–15; 2003b, 34–38; 2003c, 43–46; 1992, 15–24; Valdes and Diem 1991, 15–88.
5. Diem 1991a, 65–66; 1991b, 67–69; 1991c, 69; 1993, 39–43; 1997, 183–207.
6. Barbosa 1992, 70; Brown 1989a, 81–85; Brown 1993, 45; Cembrano 1989, 71; Evangelista 1989, 15; Z. Li 1993, 15; Ronquillo 1989, 61.
7. Barbosa 1992, 70; Brown 1989b, 81; 1993, 45; Cembrano 1989, 71; Dizon & Orillaneda 2007, 179; Evangelista 1989, 15; Gatbonton 2003, 75; Lam 1989, 47; Z. Li 1993, 15; Ronquillo 1989, 61; R.E. Scott 1993, 30; Watt 1989, 35; Tang 1997, 209.
8. Barbosa 1992, 70–92; Barretto 2003, 70–74; E.R. Bautista 2003, 49–51; Cembrano 1989, 71–73; Cuevas 2003, 68; De La Torre 2003a, 26; 2003b, 31; Dizon 2003, 39; Dizon and Orillaneda 2007, 183; Evangelista 1989, 15–27; Ronquillo, 1989, 61; 2003, 24.
9. In the Philippines, the word “antique” is usually associated with a monetary price because collectors and/or agents buy and price such items based on the ceramics’ mint condition, age, source, and history, overlooking their impact on a broader cultural and scientific scale.

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