A collection of storage jars in the Princessehof Museum, the Netherlands

WITH MORE THAN 120 storage jars, the collection at the Princessehof Museum, Leeuwarden, is one of the most important and varied worldwide. Most of the jars were found in Indonesia during the first half of the 20th century, when Indonesia was a Dutch colony. Nanne Ottema (1874-1955), a notary from Leeuwarden and founding director of the Princessehof Museum, collected Chinese ceramics and built up a very important collection, particularly of Ming export wares. But it was his friend and partner, Anne Tjibbes van der Meulen (1862-1934), who acquired these jars. Even after the death of Ottema, jars continued to be added to the collection, collected mostly by the Ottema-Kingma Foundation. From 1977-1987, Barbara Harrissorn (1922-2015) served as the director of the Princessehof Museum. Her pioneering work on jars, Pusaka. Heirloom Jars on Borneo, was published in 1986.

The oldest jars in the collection date from the Tang dynasty (618-907), these were made in kilns in southern China. Later, groups of jars include those from the Song (960-1279), Yuan (1279-1364) and Ming (1368-1644) dynasties. The Princessehof collection also includes jars from Cambodia from the 13th century, a number of jars made in kilns in Thailand and Vietnam, and mortisen made in the kilns of Burma, now Myanmar. This traditional term for storage jars refers to the old harbour of Martaban, Myanmar, from where many of these jars, used on ships, were exported.

A group of around 20 jars from the Princessehof collection dates from the 8th-10th century, the late Tang dynasty. Many of these jars were excavated in Central Java near Borobudur, an important Buddhist centre, and acquired there by van der Meulen. They are thickly potted and decorated with a very important Manichaean script, read from right to left, identified as possibly Manichean. The letter ghamal features prominently, overshadowing a smaller unidentified letter. Manichaean script, read from right to left, was devised in the 3rd century and was used exclusively by the followers of Manichaeism, a Persian religion, up to the 10th century. The other jars, of about 40 cm high, have a whitish glaze. It contains an inscription that has yet to be deciphered. The inscriptions on the Princessehof jars are not the only ones in known existence. Hundreds of jars of the olive brown glazed type were recovered from the Belitung shipwreck and two of those also have inscriptions. How do we relate the epigraphical information on the Princessehof and other jars found on the Maritime Silk Road to the historical context of Tang international trade in the 9th to 10th century?

A Thousand Years of Jars – The Collection of Stoneware Jars in the Princessehof Museum. After the lecture there will be an opportunity to see and discuss the jars.

Saturday 5 March 2016, 2 pm
Atelier of the Keramiekmuseum Princessehof
Grote Kerkstraat 11
Leeuwarden
Netherlands

The entrance to the lecture is free, but registration is required at: m.van.der.minne@ias.nl

IIAS Outreach Lecture

Dr. Eva Stroeber will give a lecture on the collection of jars: A Thousand Years of Jars – The Collection of Stoneware Jars in the Princessehof Museum. After the lecture there will be an opportunity to see and discuss the jars.

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The powerful and the powerless

13th Annual Conference of the European Association of Taiwan Studies (EATS)
Prague, Czech Republic, 30 March-1 April 2016

POWERS RELATIONSHIPS, broadly understood, pervade society on many levels, including families, communities, states, and international. They may be explicit or implicit, acknowledged or hidden, based on outright coercion or, instead, on more subtle forms of coercion, manipulation, and indoctrination. They can involve individuals as well as collectives. In different contexts such as faith, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexual orientation, they can render people susceptible to the effects of power in different ways.

Power and powerlessness are two of the most significant concepts in contemporary political and social theory. The conference participants will engage with the phenomenon of power in the United States and Taiwan, as well as other regions. They will discuss power in their respective area of research, be it social sciences or in the humanities, and focus on the relationship between those who wield power on the one hand and those who are affected by the decisions of the powerful on the other. By investigating the strategies, conventions, and tensions underlying the interactions between the two sides, we hope the papers of this conference will offer novel insights into such issues as persistence and change in power relationships over time; the shifting positions and multiple roles individuals as well as groups can assume in different contexts and vis-à-vis different counterparts; the significance of symbolic representations of power; historical, moral, religious, and political justifications of inequality; strategies employed in contesting existing power relationships; formal and informal structures established with

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the purpose to create, enforce or perpetuate hierarchical relationships; the scope of individual and collective agency in the face of the limiting effects of power. In this way, we hope to expand our knowledge of powerful and powerless in Taiwan and to enrich the discipline of Taiwan Studies.

For further information about the EATS Conference and EATS, please check the website: http://eats-taiwan.eu