

Newsletter XXVd (2014-2018)

The Nusantara collection



In 2013, Museum Nusantara in Delft closed its doors and was therefore in search of a new destination for its collection: approximately 18.000 objects that many regard as the shared heritage of Indonesia and the Netherlands. Initially a training facility in the 19th century, Museum Nusantara started collecting from Dutch civil servants returning home with souvenirs and gifts from Indonesia. It would later become an ethnographic museum based on those objects collected during the Dutch colonial period. Museum Prinsenhof Delft, in cooperation with the Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen (NMVW),

worked together with the Dutch Rijksdienst voor Cultureel Erfgoed (RCE) to ensure that the valuation of the collection and the guidelines for deaccessioning museum objects were applied in this process. The deaccessioning of such a large collection is unique within the cultural heritage field and can provide important learning opportunities for the museum sector. The process, which took several years, came to an end in 2018. At that time, the entire collection had been assigned to a number of new owners in the Netherlands – among which the Puppetry Museum/Poppenspe(e)lmuseum with 1.400 wayang artefacts – elsewhere in Europe and in Asia. A considerable number of objects found its way back to Indonesia, where they will be conserved at the Museum Nasional in Jakarta.

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