EurAsian Matters

China, Europe, and the Transcultural Object, 1600–1800

Anna Grasskamp · Monica Juneja *Editors*

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Anna Grasskamp
Monica Juneja

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Introduction

EurAsian Matters: An Introduction

Monica Juneja and Anna Grasskamp

Art History, Materiality, and the Transcultural Object

"Art historians today tend to be divided between those who study what objects mean and those who study how objects are made."[1] Joseph Koerner's succinct formulation directs us towards the different kinds of fragmentation that cut through the field of art history—the institutional divide between universities and museums but more fundamentally, the systems of value built into the discipline since its inception, which classify its objects as "fine" or "decorative art," ethnological object, craft, curiosity, or articles of mass consumption. Following from these taxonomies—which are also hierarchies—the objects of art historical investigation are relegated to different sites of display and storage and are organized according to the often not very consistent logic of genres and regional labels. Is chinaware made in Delft, art or an object of everyday use? Does a Fatimid rock crystal, mounted and transformed into a Venetian reliquary, qualify as Islamic or Christian art? Why is a painting by Cézanne a more privileged subject of analysis, one that is considered to possess a greater iconological and semantic complexity, than an ivory box? At the heart of Koerner's observation lies an opposition between matter and meaning that pervades the practice of art history, since the discipline remains caught within the contrary pulls of intransigent materiality and the plasticity of meaning: while the latter is fixed in specific times

[1] Joseph L. Koerner, "Factura," *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 36 (1999): 5.

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and places and used as a lens through which to define culture, technical analyses, on the other hand, which master materiality, frequently stop short of asking why materials matter culturally.

This collection of articles addresses the often uneasy relationship that art historians read as existing between the matter of and the meaning within objects, while the very things that they investigate form the nodes where the two intersect. The studies argue that things can be both material and meaningful, and that matter and meaning are mutually constitutive and constraining. A further dimension introduced by the volume is that of mobility, which is investigated as a catalyst for the processes of transculturation. Transformations that unfold as a result of object encounters across cultural and geographical distance raise a number of questions that challenge some of the key concepts of art history. Foremost among these is the category of style that is anchored in a self-contained geographical location and prevents an engagement with the endless metamorphoses of objects and forms. No less important as an underlying principle of the discipline is the notion of canonical value that often artificially separates individual objects and organizes them into genres and hierarchies; or, further, the construct of linear temporality that applies evolutionary patterns to the study of culture. Finally, the institutions that house and display these objects are confronted with the challenge of how to translate the transcultural lives of things into a curatorial and pedagogical practice that allows a polyphonous object to narrate its many stories, and how to find ways of naming and locating that avoid freezing an object's identity within a myth of origins.

The fascination with the liveliness of things, the ways in which they are related to us or whether they have independent lives, has evoked much scholarly curiosity in recent years. The urge to investigate these questions has come from several disciplinary quarters; it has transcended the divide between the humanities and the social sciences and, more recently, even the natural sciences,[2] resulting in the rapid growth of an interdisciplinary, interstitial, somewhat amorphous, field of material culture studies that is marked by a diversity of methodological approaches. Material culture, as we understand it today, draws on many genealogical strands that go back to the traditions of collecting and shifting modes of ordering retraceable to early modern times and to the nineteenth century, when these modes were imbricated with colonial expansion, industrialization, and the birth of consumerism.[3] Objects of interest—accessible today—to the art historian, make up the collections, both museological and private, that form a bridge between worlds known and unknown, past and

[2]Lorraine Daston, ed., *Things that Talk: Object Lessons from Art and Science* (New York: Zone Books, 2004).

[3]For a succinct overview, Victor Buchli, ed., *The Material Culture Reader* (Oxford: Berg, 2007), 1–22; A critical perspective for the art historian is proffered by Michael Yonan, "Towards a Fusion of Art History and Material Culture Studies," *West 86th* 18, no. 2 (2011): 232–48; Jules D. Prown, *Art as Evidence: Writings on Art and Material Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001); Steven Lubar and David Kingery, ed., *History from Things: Essays on Material Culture* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993); Ian Woodward, *Understanding Material Culture* (London: Sage, 2007); Daniel Miller, ed., *Materiality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

present. The mediating function of the object and its materiality, therefore, lies at the heart of the prolific critical engagement across disciplines that strives to make often forgotten, lost, or silenced worlds of human interaction discursively legible. The expansive—and at the same time fragmented—nature of the field, which continues to grow like the proverbial hydra, makes it inevitably diffuse, and has triggered as many debates about the ways in which things come to matter and about the terms of reconfiguring materiality, as there are disciplines and scholars engaged in them. A survey of these debates goes beyond the scope of this volume, however, where the focus will be defined by specific art historical and regional concerns and is therefore, by its very nature, selective about the questions it summarily sketches.

One train of thought in material culture studies concedes to objects a "life," and multiple careers, entangled in cultural webs, which reaffirm a culture's ability to translate things into signs. Writings, primarily by cultural anthropologists and historians, for example on gifts, exchange, and consumption, examine how things become sacred or profane, and which objects are considered rarities or alienable in different cultural contexts.[4] Historians have found this framework to be useful in fleshing out accounts of global connectivity where the object serves as a lens through which to write multi-scalar accounts of encounter, resistance, memory, or intellectual and sensual pursuits.[5] Although the specific material qualities of the objects

[4]Igor Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 64–91; Richard H. Davis, *Lives of Indian Images* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Nicholas Thomas, *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture and Colonialism in the Pacific* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991); Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998); Annette B. Weiner, *Inalienable Possessions: The Paradox of Keeping-While-Giving* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1992).

[5]To name only a few in a rapidly growing field, Paula Findlen, ed., *Early Modern Things: Objects and their Histories* (London: Routledge, 2013); Daniel Roche, *A History of Everyday Things: The Birth of Consumption in France 1600–1800*, trans. Brian Pearce (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello, ed., *The Global Lives of Things: The Material Culture of Connections in the Early Modern World* (London: Routledge, 2015). On collecting: Daniela Bleichmar and Peter C. Mancall, ed., *Collecting across Cultures: Material Exchanges in the Early Modern Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011). From an art historical perspective: Claire Farago, "On the Peripatetic Lives of Objects in the Era of Globalization," in *Cultural Contact and the Making of European Art since the Age of Exploration*, ed. Mary D. Sheriff (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 17–41; Neil MacGregor, *A History of the World in 100 Objects: From the Handaxe to the Credit Card* (New York: Viking, 2010); Eva R. Hoffmann, "Pathways of Portability: Islamic and Christian Interchange from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century," in *Late Antique and Medieval Art of the Mediterranean World*, ed. Eva R. Hoffmann (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 317–49; Finbarr Barry Flood, *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and "Hindu-Muslim" Encounter* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); Catarina Schmidt-Arcangeli and Gerhard Wolf, ed., *Islamic Artefacts in the Mediterranean World: Trade, Gift Exchange and Transfer* (Venice: Marsilio, 2010); Christy Anderson, Anne Dunlop, and Pamela Smith, ed., *The Matter of Art: Materials, Practices, Cultural Logics, c. 1250–1750* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015); Gerhard Wolf and Kathrin Müller, ed., *Bild, Ding, Kunst* (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2015).

studied figure—often prominently—in these accounts, the emphasis is on their cultural signification as well as the multiple meanings and possibilities of reception and interpretation.

A challenge to this position has come from radical materialism's critique of the post-Cartesian descriptions of materiality and nature in modernity as inert: the philosopher Jane Bennett describes a "vibrant matter" that operates beyond and within human beings, whereas the cultural anthropologist Christopher Pinney envisages materiality as a zone of "affective intensity" where new identities are forged.[6] More prominently, Bruno Latour's move to dissolve the human/non-human distinction in favor of the notion of the "actant," defined as an entity whose "competence is deduced from [its] performance" rather than posited in advance of the action, has provided vital impulses for the disciplines studying objects.[7] Indeed, Latour's contestation of the view that postulates subjects as ontologically distinct from the objects they create, use, and circulate has generated a debate about the terminologies employed in the study of material culture. In an attempt to eschew the subject/object dichotomy, Bill Brown has proposed defining "things" in contrast to "objects."[8] Drawing upon Heidegger's heuristic use of "thing" and "thingness" to articulate the intransigent power of things, Brown argues for the "semantic irreducibility" of things to objects: humans recognize the "thingness" of objects only through their disruptive power "when they stop working for us." Things are, he continues, "what is excessive in objects, as what exceeds their mere materialization as objects or their mere utilization as objects—their force as a sensuous presence or as a metaphysical presence . . ."[9] Yet a substantial amount of writing in the humanities has bypassed this controversial discussion to place a study of what objects perform and what they are, on a common matrix. Does the force inherent in them—which gives them agency—remain an unchanging entity irrespective of spatial and temporal contexts? The articles of this volume bring the materiality of the objects/things/matter they investigate in conjunction with the force that they gain by virtue of their relationality with human subjects and socio-cultural contexts, viewing these as dynamic and reciprocally constitutive processes. This does not entirely exclude the affective power of things as underlined by Christopher Pinney, a quality that often gets articulated in the anthropomorphic language we use to describe them—such as the neck of a vase, or the legs of a table, or the lip of a bowl. Do we then see ourselves mirrored in things? The reference to "things that talk" (Daston) raises further questions: what makes certain objects more "eloquent" than others? Who makes things talk, and how? What are the stories that we make them narrate? What remains

[6]Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010); Christopher Pinney, "Things Happen: Or from Which Moment Does that Object Come," in *Materiality*, ed. Daniel Miller (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 266. Pinney goes so far as to designate materiality as a "figural excess" that resists assimilation in linguistic discourse.

[7]Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993), 88–9.

[8]Bill Brown, "Thing Theory," *Critical Inquiry* 28, no. 1 (2001): 1–22.

[9]Brown, "Thing Theory," 5.

obdurately silent? And finally, what role does language—the expressive modes of the consumer, the scholar or the curator—play in encoding things with meaning that re-inscribe their matter through words?[10]

The studies brought together in this collection employ a variety of approaches, and yet they all accompany their chosen objects/things as they move between places and continents, that is, between Europe and Asia; such things on the move are imbricated in new narratives, take root in new places, and undergo transformations as much as they introduce fresh significations in their new settings, either through their being appropriated or simply by their very presence in different surroundings. A particularly exciting dimension of the objects studied in this book, then, is the question of their location and, as a logical further step, their dislocation from their original settings, as well as their mobile trajectories and realignment in new contexts, and the changed relational categories that ensue. Latour's concept of the network as "the Ariadne's thread of interwoven stories"[11] is a useful analytical tool with which to study migrant objects, for it shifts the focus from the site of origin of an object—the place where traditional art history situates and interprets its objects—to more interactive zones and spaces of contact in order to look at the dynamic relationships between a number of sites. The metaphor of migration is a useful one here: on one level, it directs our attention to the potential of things to connect, to innovate, to transform lives and create networks of affinity, to bring to light hidden tracks, and to make us rethink our understandings of culture as an attribute of the human societies formed by transcultural relationships. Further, the analogy of migration brings with it a set of suggestive impulses: it urges us to address the alterity of the object, to raise questions about its acceptance or refusal, to reflect on "displacement" and "integration"—the conditions under which and the degree to which the latter takes place. Objects can arouse both sympathy and antipathy, and they can have admirers as well as detractors. When examining things as they come to be re-contextualized within new frames of reference, a transcultural approach eschews a narrative of epistemic violence that reads material interventions such as dismantling, cutting apart, reframing, remounting, or any other transformation of the earlier form, function, or meaning of an artifact as an erosion of its originality and authenticity. Instead, the act of conferring fresh layers of both matter and meaning can be more fruitfully read as a new set of relationships between actors, institutions, and epistemic frameworks within which an object acquires a new identity, a fresh *anima*, to invoke Avinoam Shalem's poetic ascription.[12] The question is that of finding a precise language to describe the range of possibilities built into a process of reinscription—

[10]See Gerhard Wolf, "Image, Object, Art: Talking to a Chinese Jar on Two Human Feet," *Representations* 133 (2016): 152–9.

[11]Latour, *We Have Never been Modern*, 3.

[12]Avinoam Shalem, "Multivalent Paradigms of Interpretation and the Aura or Anima of the Object," in *Islamic Art and the Museum: Approaches to Art and Archaeology of the Muslim World in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Benoit Junot, Georges Khalil, Stefan Weber, and Gerhard Wolf (London: Saqi Books, 2012), 101–15.

domestication, multiplication, reproduction, recasting, conversion, adaptation, partial assimilation, and a host of others, as the studies in this book reveal.

To what extent is hybridity an appropriate term to describe transcultural material interactions? Recent writings on transculturation have expressed reservations about the explanatory power of this term, in view not only of the dilution it has suffered from inflationary usage, but also owing to the presupposition, implicit in the term's indelible biologistic overtones, of "pure" cultures, which then somehow blend or merge into a "hybrid" that is treated as a state beyond enunciation or articulation.[13] The term thus often ends up as a theoretical straightjacket into which the experiences of global relationships can be accommodated without further investigation of the processes and agents involved—and thus at the cost of the precision necessary to grasp their specificity and dynamics. And yet, the domain of material culture that is frequently populated by artifacts might be a place where the term is still useful in pointing to the physical juxtapositions within the body of an object that in art history would be ascribed to distinct visual systems and whose cohabitation might be considered intrusive or "out-of-place."[14] Here Mikhail Bakhtin's distinction between "intentional" and "organic" hybridity might provide a useful way to study the transcultural object. "Intentional" hybridity, according to Bakhtin, juxtaposes two distinct idioms ("speech manners") by placing them in dialogue.[15] Intentional hybridity makes space for agency through the simultaneous staging and disavowal of difference that animates so many of the transcultural objects that we encounter in this volume.

To continue with the issue of terms: the term "export art" (Stacey Pierson cautions against conflating "made for export" with "exported"), which is used to designate particular objects—such as porcelain, chintz or miniature paintings—produced in China or South India for a Western market, turns out to be misleading, as many of these "entangled objects"[16] acquire a popularity and prestige among elites across the Asia-Europe divide, pointing to the reciprocal nature of imitation-for-prestige.[17] Production for unknown recipients indeed turns out to be an interesting field of

[13]Monica Juneja, "Global Art History and the 'Burden of Representation'," in *Global Studies: Mapping Contemporary Art and Culture*, ed. Hans Belting et al. (Stuttgart: Hatje Cantz, 2011), 285.

[14]Terry Allen, *Five Essays in Islamic Art* (Sebastopol, Calif.: Solipsist Press, 1988), 108. Sabine du Crest has coined the term "objet-frontière" to describe these juxtapositions; see, Sabine Du Crest, *L'Art de vivre ensemble: Objets frontière de la Renaissance au XXIe siècle* (Rome: Gangemi editore, 2017).

[15]Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988), cited in Finbarr Barry Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 202.

[16]The first term is borrowed from Thomas, *Entangled Objects*.

[17]The findings of the research group "Global Jingdezhen: Local Manufactures and Early Modern Global Connections" (University of Warwick) published in the theme issue of the *Journal of World History* 23, no. 1 (2012) highlight the ways in which Chinese porcelain that was produced for foreign markets at the same time catered to imperial desires for the same objects, "connecting the imperial court and export audiences in a way that has never been done before." See Anne Gerritsen and Stephen McDowall, "Global China: Material Culture and Connections in World History," *Journal of World History* 23, no. 1 (2012): 6; in the same issue Ellen C. Huang, "From the Imperial

transcultural experimentation. To endow an object with the characteristics associated with an "alien" context required a form of immersion into that context in order to domesticate it: makers of ivory boxes in seventeenth-century Ceylon (which were intended for collectors of rarities among European princely families) painstakingly carved scenes from Christian narratives that they had encountered on engravings brought by the Jesuits, or from a print of Dürer's bagpiper that had found its way to the Ceylonese court as a diplomatic gift.[18] The act of engaging with these alien iconographies and forms in order to translate them from a two-dimensional print into the hard substance of ivory involved slow and painstaking mental and bodily exercise, the materiality of which served as a channel to connect two distant worlds existing mainly as fantasy realms in the imaginations of actors on both sides of the cultural divide. Such encounters between worlds far apart took place through the medium of matter. While Asia was present in European courts and the homes of its elites through luxury items such as lacquer screens, porcelain, textiles, miniatures, or ivory cases, the terminology used to name its places sounds strangely inaccurate to modern ears: at the eighteenth-century Habsburg court of Vienna, for instance, the terms *indianisch, japanisch,* or *chinesisch* remained easily interchangeable and were used to tag any object that evoked a distant place in the imagination of the owner/beholder rather than as an indication of actual provenance.[19] Imagination enters through the medium of an object's materiality to occupy the vacuum created by unfamiliarity, while possession, consumption, use, admiration, and the projection of desires and expectations onto an object's surface as well as into its matter are ways of connecting across distance.

The objects investigated by the authors of this book all belonged to a category that was linked to the formation of taste, quotidian habits of consumption, and aspirations to status. Some were collectors' items, while many others were articles of everyday use.[20] That they were all associated with elites is without doubt—the prestige and status they enjoyed accounts for their survival and their availability to museum visitors and scholars today. Yet for many years they have been relegated by art history to the domain of the "decorative" or "minor" arts, using a classificatory

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Court to the International Art Market: Jingdezhen Porcelain Production as Global Visual Culture," *Journal of World History* 23, no. 1 (2012): 115–45.

[18]Annemarie Jordan Gschwend and Johannes Beltz, ed., *Elfenbeine aus Ceylon: Luxusgüter für Katharina von Habsburg (1507–1578)*, exhibition catalogue (Zurich: Museum Rietberg Zurich, 2010), 64–7.

[19]Michael Yonan, "Veneers of Authority: Chinese Lacquers in Maria Theresa's Vienna," *Eighteenth Century Studies* 37, no. 4 (2004): 657.

[20]The literature produced by historians of culture on the uses and significance of items imported from afar is prolific. For the European context, see Maxine Berg and Helen Cliffords, ed., *Consumers and Luxury: Consumer Culture in Europe 1650–1850* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999); David Porter, *The Chinese Taste in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). Similarly, for China, Craig Clunas has argued that consumption and collecting had by the late sixteenth century become an established path to elite status, see Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things: Material Culture and Social Status in Early Modern China* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).

device that is intended to distinguish certain objects from the traditionally exalted genres of painting, sculpture, and architecture. Implicit in this division is a persistent norm that distinguishes between "art" appreciated for purely aesthetic and visual qualities, and "objects" which, though they may not be without aesthetic appeal, are believed to carry a more mundane and functional significance. This tenacious normative framework notwithstanding, recent years have seen significant efforts to transcend the discipline's internal boundaries. One impulse has come from contemporary art which, by incorporating process into the meaning of an artwork, often makes an engagement with materiality its starting point. Historians of pre-modern art have also shown a greater openness to the study of objects that fall outside of the conventional definitions of "art"; from another position, scholars working on genres outside of the canon of "high art" have sought to "retheorize craft as a component of artistic knowledge."[21] Furthermore, art historical research on societies beyond the North Atlantic West has frequently and persistently questioned or bypassed Western taxonomic systems by placing the material at the center of the aesthetic, thereby providing the stimulus for museums with rich collections from across the globe to ask critical questions about existing modes of curating, display, and labelling.[22] And yet the dominant tendency in mainstream art history has been to separate matter from meaning; to fix the identity of a work/object at its moment of origin and to canonize the characteristics it acquired at the time of creation as "authentic" so as to produce a notion of style that inheres in essence, form, and geographical fixture, rather than in agency, circulation, and use. Back in 1967, George Kubler, today better known for his book *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things* (1963), diagnosed in an article (that revised some of the positions articulated in his book) this tendency as follows: "Everything about a work of art is contrived to force us to perceive it as a unique object occupying one place . . . Our habit of meeting it in a museum or on a stage or in a concert hall, where it bids for our attention with the illusion that it is a single point in space, time, and feeling further masks the historical reality of every work of art . . . [a work of art] is a bundle of components of different ages, intricately related to many other works of art, both old and new, by a network of incoming and outgoing influences."[23] While a reflexive art history today finds the notion of "influence" inadequate, the provisional, non-stable conceptions of time and space proposed by Kubler can serve as a useful tool for investigating the palimpsestic identities of transcultural objects. The idea of temporality, articulated in art-historical periodizations of style, is scrambled once we unpack the production process of an object. Consider for instance technology as a factor in production: Italian tin-glazed earthenware or *maiolica*, to use an example discussed by Marta Ajmar, once

[21]Yonan, "Towards a Fusion," 235; Glenn Adamson, *Thinking through Craft* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2007).

[22]See for instance "V&A podcast: Salon III—Europe through non-European Eyes," Victoria and Albert Museum, accessed July 19, 2016, http://www.vam.ac.uk/blog/creating-new-europe-1600-1800-galleries/va-podcast-salon-iii-europe-through-non-european-eyes.

[23]George Kubler, "Style and Representation of Historical Time," *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 138, no. 2 (1967): 849–50.

dissected from the point of view of its technology of production, reveals several temporal layers that include not only the introduction of Chinese methods of clay-mixing, but techniques of tin-glazing that go back to the Islamic Middle East of the ninth century and were prolific during the Middle Ages, thereby revealing a stratified rather than linear temporality.[24] The instability introduced by the transcultural object within the ordered world of museum labels, which sought to allow a visitor, for instance, to read a "culture" from a thing in a glass case, has already begun to suggest pathways for scholarship and curating that may be more fit to tackle the question of how matter shapes aesthetics and culture.

The transcultural objects that form the subject of this book may still appear to be marginal phenomena within the dominant art historical canon, yet the accounts presented here work to unsettle many narratives of style, origin, and civilizational uniqueness. While they never lose sight of the matter of things, the narratives are both embedded in social transactions and can exist in disjunction from or be disruptive of the stories told by other sources. Each of the stories recounted by things on the move may be seen as a miniscule mirror, which gives us a glimpse from an unknown angle into a larger story and in the process, suggests new ways of thinking about space, cultural geographies, and the complex and often contradictory association of power and culture.

Sino-European Objectscapes

This collection of studies conceptualizes EurAsian artifacts as "entangled" in many senses: they were produced and exchanged within "Eurasian spaces,"[25] their material components were both Asian and European, as were the artistic identities of which they were a product and which they in turn constituted. On a cultural level, perceptions of material objects and the construction of civilizational typologies such as "Chineseness" appear to be mutually generating. Yet their forms of appropriation and use in new settings have brought forth prolific modes of understanding, signifying, and reconfiguring that caution against a homogenizing global narrative, pointing rather to distinct ways of negotiating cultural difference through the channels of material culture—indeed, the study of materiality as a connecting force can deepen and help nuance existing accounts of early modern globalization.

Previous scholarship has mapped Sino-European objectscapes by analyzing artifacts as belonging to the categories of chinoiserie, export, or company art[26] as

[24]Marta Ajmar, "The Renaissance in Material Culture: Material Mimesis as a Force and Evidence of Globalization," in *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization*, ed. Tamar Hodos (London; New York: Routledge 2017), 681–2.

[25]Geoffrey C. Gunn, "Mapping Eurasia," in *First Globalization: The Eurasian Exchange, 1500–1800*, ed. Geoffrey C. Gunn (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 113–44.

[26]A recent example is Jan van Campen and E. Hartkamp-Jonxis, *Asian Splendour: Company Art in the Rijksmuseum* (Zutphen: Walburg, 2011). For a reassessment of the term chinoiserie, see Stacey

well as the phenomena of Euroiserie, Européenerie, or Chinese Occidenterie,[27] thereby flagging the politics of taste as bound to certain "cultures" and spaces. Examining these as well as other previously over-looked objects through a transcultural lens, as this volume seeks to do, means to refrain from qualifying EurAsian artifacts according to geographic origin as essentially "European" or "Asian," or in terms of historical attributes that could be read as characteristics of particular styles or speaking for individual "cultures." Taking a cue from Christopher Pinney, they could be characterized as "caught up in recursive trajectories of repetition and pastiche whose dense complexity makes them resistant to any particular moment."[28] With a view to highlighting this "complexity" the following paragraphs discuss a particular group of artifacts with a focus on matter, material exchange, and display.

Let us take the letter written in 1747 by the Jesuit Florian Bahr (1706–1771), stationed in Beijing, to Maria Theresia, Countess of Fugger-Wellenburg (1690–1762), as our entry point into a discussion of the concerns that animated the material exchanges between Europe and China in early modern times. Bahr wrote: "Along with all kinds of painted things, the Berchtesgaden works, made out of ivory and enframed in glass spheres, if well and finely crafted, are highly appreciated here."[29] By 1745, "four Berchtesgaden pieces artfully made of bone with glass balls as a rarity"[30] were sent to Jesuit Ignaz Kögler (1680–1746) in Beijing, followed by some more "boxes from Berchtesgaden"[31] and "Berchtesgaden

Sloboda, "Introduction: Reassessing Chinoiserie," in *Chinoiserie: Commerce and Critical Ornament in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. Stacey Sloboda (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), 1–17.

[27]Européenerie is a term that has been used since the 1950s, while Jonathan Hay introduced "Euroiserie" as an alternative during the 1990s and Kristina Kleutghen suggested "Chinese Occidenterie" in an article of 2014, see Petra ten-Doesschate Chu and Ding Ning, "Introduction," in *Qing Encounters: Artistic Exchanges between China and the West*, ed. Petra ten-Doesschate Chu and Ding Ning (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2015), 6, footnote 4, and Kristina Kleutghen, "Chinese Occidenterie: The Diversity of 'Western' Objects in Eighteenth-Century China," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 47, no. 2 (2014): 117–35.

[28]Christopher Pinney, "Things Happen," 266.

[29]Orig. "Ubrigens nebst sonst gemelten Sachen werden alhier hochgeschätzet die Bättlesgader Arbeiten, so aus Elfenbein in runden Glässen eingeschlossen verfasset sein, wan sie sonst gutt undt fein gearbeitet sein." Florian Bahr to Maria Theresia, Beijing, 15.11.1747, transcribed in Ronnie Po-chia Hsia, ed., *Noble Patronage and Jesuit Missions: Maria Theresia von Fugger-Wellenburg (1600–1762) and Jesuit Missionaries in China and Vietnam* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2006), 144–6, 145. Unless otherwise stated, all translations in this section are by Anna Grasskamp.

[30]Orig. "4 künstlich aus Bein gemachte Berchtolsgadner Stückhlen mit gläsernen Kuglen, als eine rariteit." List of objects that were sent to Ignaz Kögler in Beijing, 1745, Munich, Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Jesuitica, Sign. 579/16. Reproduced as an illustration in Claudia von Collani, "Die Förderung der Jesuitenmission in China durch die bayerischen Herzöge und Kurfürsten," in *Die Wittelsbacher und das Reich der Mitte: 400 Jahre China und Bayern*, exhibition catalogue, ed. Renate Eikelmann (Munich: Hirmer, 2009), 101.

[31]Maria Theresia to Simon de La Tour, 2.5.1754, summarized in Hsia, *Noble Patronage*, 259.

things"[32] in 1754. Such artifacts were defined through their provenance in Berchtesgaden in the Bavarian Alps, a municipality in Southern Germany. This feature made them comparable to other goods specified by their place of origin, such as "Nuremberg ware,"[33] which in 1707 was a highly desirable good employed by the Jesuits in their material exchanges with the Chinese Emperor and "one or two among the royal people, who commonly accept all that one offers to them."[34]

The attraction of Berchtesgaden pieces, described as a remarkable rarity in the eyes of European and Chinese collectors alike, lay not merely in the finely carved and turned ivory or bone elements but in the repeatedly remarked upon "glass balls" in which they were mounted (Fig. 1). These collectibles, made in Germany, framed mythological scenes, as for example in the "glass ball" featuring Orpheus among the animals (Fig. 2).[35] Similarly, the "glass balls" of the Berchtesgaden pieces enclosed miniature representations, including scenes from the life of Christ or other biblical figures (Fig. 3). While these compositions may at first glance appear to be considerably less complex (Fig. 4), they possessed a special feature: an intricate mechanism operated by a crank handle positioned in the object's lower body that, once turned, caused the flower arrangement in the glass ball to rotate around the instrument's central vertical axis, thereby offering an all-round view of the miniature flowers underneath the glass cover.

Alongside the Berchtesgaden pieces, several objects in glass cases were exported to China. The written evidence suggests that these objects included a Christian monstrance and relics for Jesuit churches as well as a crystal clock or timepiece covered by a translucent cloche similar to the sixteenth-century example illustrated above (Fig. 5).[36] What made such objects sought after by the Chinese elite?

[32]Orig. "Bertolsgader sachlen." Maria Theresia to Johannes Koffler in Cochinchina, 2.5.1754, transcribed in Hsia, *Noble Patronage*, 259–61, 260.

[33]Orig. "Ach! wann ich etwas von so genannter Nuernberger=Waar aus Europa erhalten solte, wie wohl solten mir dergleichen Taendeleyen zu statten kommen!" Hieronymus Franchi to Johanes P. Studena, Beijing, 20.10.1707, Joseph Stöcklein et al., ed., *Der Neue Welt-Bott mit allerhand nachrichten deren Missionarien Soc. Iesu: allerhand so lehr- als geist-reiche Briefschriften und Reis-Beschreibungen welche von denen Missionariis der Gesellschaft Jesu aus beijden Indien ... in Europa angelangt seynd*, vol. 5, nr. 105 (Augsburg: Veith, 1726), 51, also cited by von Collani, "Förderung der Jesuitenmission," 102.

[34]Orig. "einem oder dem andern aus den königlichen Personen, welche alles, was man ihnen offeriret pflegen anzunehmen." Florian Bahr to Maria Theresia, Beijing, 26.11.1751, transcribed in Hsia, *Noble Patronage*, 191–6, 192.

[35]The illustrated example from the Dresden collections is complemented by another one from the collections of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, first published in Hilda Lietzmann, *Valentin Drausch und Herzog Wilhelm V. von Bayern*: *Ein Edelsteinschneider der Spätrenaissance und sein Auftraggeber* (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1998), 40.

[36]The crystal clock appears in a list of items sent to Cochinchina attached to a letter by Maria Theresia to Johannes Koffler in Cochinchina, 2.5.1754, summarized in Hsia, *Noble Patronage*, 260. On the order of a monstrance to be sent from Augsburg to China, see letter by Maria Theresia to Florian Bahr, Munich, 15.2.1761, transcribed in Hsia, *Noble Patronage*, 330–2, 331. A gift of "pretty relics encased in glass" ("schönen Reliquien in Glass eingefasset") to a Jesuit bishop in China is mentioned in a letter by Florian Bahr to Maria Theresia, Beijing, 26.11.1751, transcribed in Hsia, *Noble Patronage*, 191–7, 192.

Fig. 1 *Adoration of the Magi in a Glass Ball*. Berchtesgaden, ca. 1750–1800, bone, partly colored, glass. H 21 cm, W 8 cm, D ca. 7 cm. Berchtesgaden, Heimatmuseum Schloss Adelsheim, inv. no. AS 175

Fig. 2 Georg Bernhart, *Glass Ball with Orpheus and clockwork*. Augsburg, 1575–1576, glass, rock crystal, gold, enamel, diamonds, rubies, turquoise, iron. H 21.3 cm. Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Grünes Gewölbe, inv. no. VI 19

Evidently, the transparent containers of the artifacts enabled a particular kind of physical interaction and a "way of seeing" that is comparable to today's creation of a "museum effect"[37] through the use of display cases. While glass was highly developed and fully implemented in German practices of display and artifact production

[37]Svetlana Alpers, "The Museum as a Way of Seeing," in *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, ed. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine (Washington DC: Smithsonian Books, 1991), 25–32.

Fig. 3 *The Passion of Christ*. Berchtesgaden, ca. 1750–1800, bone, wood, color, textile, paper, glass. H 31 cm, W 13 cm, D 9.3 cm. Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. 34/2308, Foto Nr. D48000. © Bayerisches Nationalmuseum München; photo: Walter Haberland

Fig. 4 *Flower Arrangement*. Berchtesgaden, ca. 1750–1800, bone, glass. H 21.5 cm, W 8 cm, D 8 cm. Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. L R 4784, Foto Nr. D31056. © Bayerisches Nationalmuseum München; photo: Karl-Michael Vetters. On loan from Orban-Sammlung, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

around 1600,[38] in Beijing the serial employment of glass planes and glass covers in artifact exhibits was an innovation of the eighteenth century.[39] The existence of "subtle glasses" of German artifacts that could potentially reach China "without any damage" clearly resonates in the "vitreous views"[40] of eighteenth-century China. This resonance is materialized in three ways: First, with regard to the "surfacescapes"[41] and formal resemblances, such objects, as is most evident in the case of the illustrated clock underneath a knobbed transparent cloche (Fig. 5), were quite similar to the glass covers of the illustrated Buddhist treasures (Figs. 6, 7, 8); second, this transcultural resonance is apparent in relation to matter, since first the material of translucent and fragile glass and later its production technologies were introduced to China from Europe;[42] third, the resonance can also be seen in the object appropriation through display, where glass covers serve as frames that make different individual artifacts' outer surfaces "the same" by equally enclosing a Buddhist and a Christian relic, a clockwork and a figurative miniature, and a crafted as well as a natural object. All three aspects—resemblances in design, questions of material and technology, as well as the redefinition of objecthood through the frames of display—are crucial to the essays that this volume collects in service of a better understanding of EurAsian matters.

The example of glass, one among the many EurAsian matters discussed in this book, points to aspects of materiality and making and their role in generating the ideas of value that are ascribed to an object. Glass can evoke wonder through its production process, which comprises several stages of material transformation from sand to liquid to a brittle, hard, smooth, colorless substance; in turn, the material attributes of the final product stand in opposition to the optical illusion of airy lightness that its transparency generates. The essence of a glass object was thus inseparable from the careful work and artisanal skills its fragility demanded—from the precise craftsmanship to the extreme care required by all handling it—while

[38]Already in the collections of the Augsburg-based merchant Octavian Fugger in 1600–1601 we encounter three coral fragments "enclosed in glass cases," one of them staged in a "rectangular glass box, made for a coral sprig." In this case, fragments of nature were re-staged underneath special shells of glass, which were meant to protect them while simultaneously drawing the beholder's gaze towards pieces singled out as worthy of aesthetic appreciation. *Inventory of the Collections by Augsburg Merchant Octavian Fugger*, provided with an extensive commentary by Norbert Lieb, transcribed and published as "Nachlaßinventar des Octavian Secundus Fugger (1549–1600), 1600–1601," in *Octavian Secundus Fugger (1549–1600) und die Kunst*, ed. Norbert Lieb (Tübingen: Mohr, 1980), 232–310, 256, 285, 296, item 571, item 1441.

[39]Liu Lihong, "Vitreous Views: Materiality and Mediality of Glass in Qing China through a Transcultural Prism," *Getty Research Journal* 8 (2016): 17–38.

[40]Liu, "Vitreous Views."

[41]Jonathan Hay, *Sensuous Surfaces: The Decorative Object in Early Modern China* (London: Reaktion Books, 2010).

[42]Emily Byrne Curtis, *Glass Exchange between Europe and China, 1550–1800* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009). Yang Boda, "A Brief Account of Qing Dynasty Glass," in *The Robert H. Clague Collection: Chinese Glass of the Qing Dynasty, 1644–1911*, exhibition catalogue, ed. Claudia Brown and Donald Rabiner (Phoenix: Phoenix Art Museum, 1987), 71–86.

Fig. 5 Jobst Bürgi, *Crystal Clock*. Prague, 1622–1627, clock with mechanical globe, gilded brass, silver, rock crystal. 18.3 cm × 5.6 cm × 10.8 cm × 10.5 cm. Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, Kunstkammer, inv. no. KK_1116

making, packing, transporting, and displaying. As a material whose creation in China was made possible by the introduction of foreign knowledge, glass here functions as a prime example of transcultural matter. Similar to the frequently told story of porcelain or of lacquer, the mysterious secrets of manufacturing possessed by a distant culture could become a sign of one's own inadequacy, as evidenced by

Fig. 6 *One of the Eight Auspicious Treasures* (金纍絲八吉祥供具). Yongzheng reign period (1722–1735), glass, gems, pearls, and other materials. H 15.7 cm. The Collection of National Palace Museum Taipei, inv. no. K1D006708N000000000PAB

Fig. 7 *One of the Eight Auspicious Treasures* (金纍絲八吉祥供具). Yongzheng reign period (1722–1735), glass, enamel, gems and other materials. H 19.8 cm. The Collection of National Palace Museum Taipei, inv. no. K1D006709N000000000PAB

the rivalry generated over knowledge and possession of material objects.[43] Another such transcultural matter, Chinese porcelain as collected and "re-created" in Northern Europe, is discussed in this volume from the perspective of its materiality, surface qualities, cultural reception, and display contexts by Cinta Krahe, Eva Ströber, and Dawn Odell. Despite the ubiquity of porcelain, about which much has already been written, each of the three articles examines the multiple ways in

[43] Anne Gerritsen and Stephen McDowall, "Material Culture and the Other: European Encounters with Chinese Porcelain," *Journal of World History* 23, no. 1 (2012): 87–113.

Fig. 8 *One of the Eight Auspicious Treasures* (金纍絲八吉祥供具). Yongzheng reign period (1722–1735), glass, coral, enamel, and other materials. H 5.7 cm. The Collection of National Palace Museum Taipei, inv. no. K1D006711N000000000PAF

which this material was appropriated and incorporated within new contexts and reconfigured, either in combination with other materials or through design, arrangement and use. Porcelain here is described as moving between different functions—both as an object of use (tableware), yet also pattern and form. Although it was considered a "domestic" object, its "foreign" origin was indispensable to its identity and made it a source of prestige, wealth, cosmopolitan reach, and connoisseurship. Dawn Odell identifies the production of delftware as equivalent "in spirit" to china from China. She disentangles the crafted matters and painted surfaces of "works that

signal 'Dutchness,' Dutch craft, rather than 'Chineseness'"[44] to examine materials and images in "celebration of [Dutch] national history,"[45] with a special focus on painted Dutch ceramic tiles as panels that are both material *and* image. Adding to the more widely known narratives that surrounded "china and China" and the related "(dis)connection between materiality and cultural connotation"[46] Odell uses the delftware that reached North American consumption contexts to show how yet another set of symbolic meanings was created and transported through the ceramic objects that traveled westwards. As a contribution to the growing field of study on "the lives of Chinese objects,"[47] Eva Ströber traces the "cultural biographies"[48] as well as the "global lives"[49] of one particular type of ceramic by following animal-shaped ewers made in Southern China through different contexts of consumption and collection in China, Japan, Indonesia, Southern and Northern Europe. Writing from the perspective of the curator in an attempt to make the objects in the depot "speak," Ströber collects the narratives that are projected onto and created by the migrant object. In one instance, she encounters the eating of ceramics, an example in which porcelain subverts and transcends not only cultural boundaries but also subject-object divisions, a "vibrant matter"[50] entering the human body and eventually (by being digested) becoming human. Cinta Krahe's contribution introduces the subject of receptive frameworks to the discussion. Her focus on Spain not only sheds light on a region rarely studied in connection with porcelain, it also directs our attention to a different local pattern of appropriation and consumption. Krahe draws on Spanish texts to demonstrate a different attitude to Asian ceramics—one that registers a lack of appreciation toward the foreign matter and frequently categorizes it as a cheap product for children and women. All three contributions on ceramics made in China and aspects of their global reception sensitize us to the need for more nuanced readings of the localized practices of appropriation that call into question overly simplified linear narratives.[51]

Let us for a moment return to the Berchtesgaden glass balls, an example that is relevant to a discussion on the transcultural object for displaying the proverbial "chicken and egg" situation: did Chinese collectors (including the emperor) first encounter a glass cover made in Germany and then develop an appreciation of glass-covered objects, creating a key moment that subsequently led to fulminant changes

[44]See the essay by Dawn Odell in the present volume.

[45]Ibid.

[46]Vimalin Rujivacharakul, "China and china: An Introduction to Materiality and a History of Collecting," in *Collecting China: The World, China, and a History of Collecting*, ed. Vimalin Rujivacharakul (Newark: University of Delaware, 2011), 16.

[47]Louise Tythacott, *The Lives of Chinese Objects: Buddhism, Imperialism and Display* (New York; Oxford: Berghahn, 2011).

[48]Kopytoff, "Cultural Biography of Things."

[49]Gerritsen and Riello, *Global Lives of Things*.

[50]Bennett, *Vibrant Matter*.

[51]Stacey Pierson, "The Movement of Chinese Ceramics: Appropriation in Global History," *Journal of World History* 23, no. 1 (2012): 9–39.

in locally produced materialities and the aesthetics of display? Or did they first develop a desire for alternative modes of exhibiting, which was subsequently met by newly arriving foreign objects, among them our Berchtesgaden pieces? In most, if not all, EurAsian objects the question of which came first—the desire for something new and alternative and foreign or the arrival of the new, alternative, and foreign object—provides an irresolvable challenge. And indeed, the question might not be centrally relevant, for EurAsian objects entangle the transcultural authorships of their different makers —makers of matter as well as makers of craft, makers of trade connections and makers of taste—and thereby unite concurrent as well as preceding and subsequent agencies. Furthermore, they provide the material evidence for the connection between the body of the European artisan and that of the Chinese artist across geographic boundaries. Examples include the fingers of a European potter who produces chinaware modelled on Jingdezhen pieces, the material presence of which he sees and feels before him, or a Guangzhou-based enamel painter's hands that draw lines following and modifying the outlines of the Dutch print motifs he physically possesses and beholds.[52] In fact, the sensual encounter between human body and artifact is crucial for a better understanding of transcultural objects. While glass encased artifacts artfully engage the "touch" of the beholder's gaze even as they restrain his or her hands from the haptic encounter, the printed surfaces of illustrated books make space for a different kind of transcultural "bodily experience," as argued by Chen Kaijun in this volume. Transcultural objects may proliferate, yet some are inevitably more studied than others. Surprisingly, one type of object that is in immediate and frequent contact with the human body, furniture of daily use, has been understudied in regard to the reception of European models in China. This is a lacuna filled by Kyoungjin Bae's contribution. In their investigations of different kinds of human-made objects—a specific type of table and a particular illustrated treatise on lenses—Bae and Chen showcase transcultural objects' potential to modify and subvert hierarchies: those of seating arrangements and implied social symbolisms in Bae's example and the hierarchies of visual conventions and knowledge systems in Chen's case study. Both authors stress the physical encounter between beholder and artifact and the ways in which a transcultural object as physical implement or stimulus to the eye transmutes material desires and visual conventions, habits of the body, and attitudes of the mind. In addition to the bodies of the user or collector of an object, the mechanically extended body of the artisan is implicit to the contribution by Ching-fei Shih, which highlights the importance of technological exchanges, in this case through a complex mechanical device that serves the manipulation of ivory surfaces at the imperial court in Beijing. This example goes far beyond previous conceptualizations of EurAsian objects in that it introduces the machine and complex tools as new agents to the scenario. This material agent is as important to the production and shaping of EurAsian matter as

[52]For an in-depth discussion of a number of examples, see Anna Grasskamp, "EurAsian Layers: Netherlandish Surfaces and Early Modern Chinese Artefacts," *Rijksmuseum Bulletin* 63, no. 4 (2015): 363–98.

is the craftsman as manipulator of matter, the emperor as collector, or the Jesuit and the merchant as social mediators or cultural brokers.

EurAsian collecting not only took place in the spaces of the mind, which collects knowledge of foreign practices and technologies, or the spaces of the human body, which collects sensory experiences related to human-made and natural objects, but also in the spaces of nature itself, where foreign plants and migrating animal species mingle, merge, and reproduce with local specimens. In China, the active hubs of vegetal and beastly interaction included Guangzhou and the gardens of the emperor in Beijing[53] as well as the Jesuit gardens, which are discussed in this volume by Wang Lianming, and the visual spaces of books and painting albums, including *The Album of Beasts*, which is analyzed here by Yu-chih Lai. As miniature panoramas of transcultural natures that are hidden behind fences or between book covers, gardens and treatises on flora and fauna present important EurAsian sites of fusion. In all cases, the wild and the foreign as well as the elements of nature (for example water in a fountain) appear domesticated, and transcultural flowerbeds and beastly creatures form references to the potential of nature and the potential of the gardener, as well as the visual artist, to create, re-create, and hybridize matter and form.

While garden spaces present us with manipulated and fragmented displays of "nature" many artifacts, including some of the illustrated examples, embody miniatures and are thus suitable symbols of the microcosm of collecting itself.[54] Reproducing and modifying fragments of "nature" by miniaturizing a mountain or a flower arrangement, these collectibles are collections in themselves—that is, they are collections of transcultural matters as well as collections of materialized ideas.

Connected Art Histories

The essays in this volume set out to examine the intersection of material objects or images and their interactive moments, and to investigate and characterize the processes of inscription, accommodation, reframing, or refusal. In doing so, they clearly understand art-making as an activity that integrates body, matter, and environment. Indeed, the study of art, defined to include all forms of human manufacture, might help us to better understand the integral relationship between self, space, and cultural difference in ways that are less ethnocentric than nationally framed art histories—both European and Asian—have done. Objects—previously understudied because they

[53]Che-bing Chiu, "Vegetal Travel: Western European Plants in the Garden of the Emperor of China," in *Qing Encounters: Artistic Exchanges between China and the West*, ed. Petra ten-Doesschate Chu and Ding Ning (Los Angeles: Getty Research Insitute, 2015), 95–110; and Yuen Lai Winnie Chang, "Nineteenth-Century Canton Gardens and the East-West Plant Trade," in *Qing Encounters: Artistic Exchanges between China and the West*, ed. Petra ten-Doesschate Chu and Ding Ning (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2015), 111–23.

[54]Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984).

were "decorative arts" or "artifacts" or "prints" turn out to be key players in a globally connected art history: an engagement with their materialities and histories leads us quickly beyond the discipline's perennial desire to continue forming canons. Like the glass spheres of Berchtesgaden, art history too functions as a frame that mediates our relationship to the objects it studies, determining our encounters with them. What does this mean for an art history of China that focuses centrally on Sino-European interactions? How has the field responded to the challenges of the "global turn"?[55]

The beginnings of the engagement with major EurAsian moments in the making of Chinese art history go back to controversial discussions in the 1930s over the place of the Italian-Chinese Jesuit painter Giuseppe Castiglione (1688–1766), Lang Shining 郎世寧—the most prominent figure in artistic exchanges between China and Europe—in the historiography of Chinese art. This unfolded during preparations for the International Exhibition of Chinese Art held in London in 1935, which was jointly curated by Chinese and English scholars. The debate about whether paintings by Castiglione could be included in this canon-shaping show polarized the organizing teams—the Chinese committee argued against the inclusions of his works, which were insisted upon by the British organizers.[56] And yet, as Guo Hui further points out, "Chinese art historical writings in the 1920s and 1930s praised Castiglione highly for his artistic achievement. A number of Chinese scholars and artists believed that the future of Chinese painting lay in the direction of a synthesis of Chinese and Western painting styles and techniques. Castiglione was held up as an example of this synthesis. In the illustrations for his publication *Outline of Chinese Art History* (1931), Li Puyuan chose one work by Castiglione from a wide array of Qing paintings available, as the sole example of Chinese art in the Qing dynasty."[57] The early importance attributed to Castiglione/Lang and its employment in the politicized debates on European and Chinese exchanges in art and culture stands at the beginning of the canonization of and the huge body of research on the visual and material works of the Jesuits in China. On the one hand, this research focused on objects designed and made by the Jesuits (and their important collaborators in the imperial workshops) collected in the two Palace Museums of Beijing and Taipei, and on the other hand, scholarship chose to investigate globally distributed, illustrated and printed treatises as well as Jesuit letters and other written testimonies that discuss

[55]A question recently posed by Wang Cheng-hua in an article surveying the field: Cheng-hua Wang, "Whither Art History? A Global Perspective on Eighteenth-Century Chinese Art and Visual Culture," *The Art Bulletin* 96, no. 4 (2014): 379–94.

[56]Guo Hui, "Writing Chinese Art History in Early Twentieth-Century China" (PhD diss., Leiden University, 2010), 165f, based on Na Zhiliang 那志良 and Shang Yan 庄严, "Zao guonan yu zhan guobao—1935 nian Lundun yizhan qinli 遭国难与展国宝—1935 年伦敦艺展親历 (Encountering National Calamity and Exhibiting National Treasures—Personal Experiences of the 1935 London Exhibition)," *Zijincheng* 146, no. 3 (2007): 32–52.

[57]Guo, "Writing Chinese Art History," 165f.

the roles of material and visual culture.[58] A more recent development in the field is an investigation of the role of European cultural brokers, mainly employees of the British and the Dutch East India Companies, in the shaping of Sino-European artistic encounters.[59]

While the engagement with cultural braidedness in art historical developments of early modern and modern China has overwhelmingly focused on painting,[60] some landmark works that have looked at the role of material culture also deserves a mention. An important historiographical breakthrough came with the publication in 1991 of Craig Clunas' *Superfluous Things,*[61] which studies texts on manufactured objects in order to shed light on their functions in shaping the taste, status, ritual, and cultural practices of the elites in Ming China. In this and his subsequent work, *Empire of Brightness*,[62] Clunas positions his research squarely within the field of Chinese art history; however, he also opens the field for new questions premised on China's connections to worlds beyond its territorial and cultural frontiers. More importantly his writings—in which materiality, closely imbricated with visuality, is accorded a constitutive function within culture—articulate a criticality that forms an

[58]Secondary literature on Sino-European objects focuses on specific types or groups of objects. In addition to the previously cited work on glass, collectible scientific objects, including mechanical clocks and astronomical instruments, have been researched extensively Chu Ping-yi 祝平一, Benjamin Elman, Noël Golvers, Nicole Halsberghe, Han Qi 韓琦, Catherine Jami, Joseph Needham, Catherine Pagani, Joanna Waley-Cohen, Zhang Baichun 張柏春, Zhang Pu 張普 together with Guo Fuxiang 郭福祥 and others. Jesuit influences on enamel glaze and enamelware production in China have been studied by Rose Kerr and Ching-fei Shih 施靜菲 among others. Ching-fei Shih has published extensively on carved ivory works in China from a transcultural perspective. Studies on Sino-European designs on ceramics form an immense body of literature, mainly focusing on Chinese ceramics collected in Europe, for example *kraak* porcelain. Yet Sino-European wares made for the emperor of China, have received recent scholarly attention as well, see Yu Pei-chin 余佩瑾, "Lang Shining yu ciqi 郎世寧與瓷器 (Giuseppe Castiglione and Porcelains)," *Gugong xueshu jikan* 32, no. 2 (2014): 1–37. The body of art historical literature on printed imagery produced in collaboration between Jesuits and Chinese agents is vast. A general overview is presented by Marcia Reed and Paola Demattè, *China on Paper: European and Chinese Works from the Late Sixteenth to the Early Nineteenth Century* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2007). A recent but not comprehensive overview of secondary literature that specifically addresses Flemish Jesuits or prints designed or printed in Belgium and the Netherlands appears in Grasskamp, "EurAsian Layers," 394, endnote 16. Seminal studies on Sino-European print culture have also been compiled by scholars outside of the field of art history, specialists in Jesuit studies (most importantly Nicholas Standaert) as well as historians of science (most recently Tian Miao 田淼 and Zhang Baichun 張柏春).

[59]See, for example, Michael North and Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, ed., *Mediating Netherlandish Art and Material Culture in Asia* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2014).

[60]For extensive bibliographic references to writings in this field, see Wang, "Whither Art History." For the most recent English language monograph on Italian painters at the Qing court, also see Marco Musillo, *The Shining Inheritance: Italian Painters and the Qing Court, 1699–1812* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2016).

[61]Clunas, *Superfluous Things*.

[62]Craig Clunas, *Empire of Great Brightness: Visual and Material Cultures of Ming China, 1368–1644* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007).

important plank of the global turn in art history during the early twenty-first century; that is, they form an uncompromising questioning of the Eurocentric—Kantian—assumptions and values transported by the discipline as it strives to become globally inclusive. From another thematic perspective, Lothar Ledderose's study of porcelain production in the kilns of Jingdezhen suggests that Chinese models of modular production may have even led to the adoption of similar production systems in the West at several points in history, especially in connection with the introduction of silk-weaving and porcelain-making.[63] Ledderose's refusal to accept the traditional connoisseurial divide between "high" art and crafts enables his study to encompass an entire range of Chinese material culture and to bring this to the center-stage of art historical investigation. More recent scholarship has appeared frequently in the format of edited collections of individual studies, which bring to light the ongoing work of researchers of different generations, national backgrounds, and professional profiles and draw together the museum and the academy.[64] And finally, in an attempt to form a bridge between academic scholarship and public audiences, a number of exhibitions have significantly contributed to our perceptions of Sino-European objectscapes.[65] They form a *pars pro toto* in the growing tendency toward displays and exhibitions that highlight exchanges (and comparisons) between East Asia and Europe.[66]

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[63]Lothar Ledderose, *Ten Thousand Things: Module and Mass Production in Chinese Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[64]Michael North, ed., *Artistic and Cultural Exchanges between Europe and Asia, 1400–1900* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010); Rui Oliveira Lopes, ed., *Face to Face: The Transcendence of the Arts in China and Beyond* (Lisbon: University of Lisbon, 2014); ten-Doesschate Chu and Ding Ning, *Qing Encounters*.

[65]Henrik Budde et al., ed., *Europa und die Kaiser von China, 1240–1816*, exhibition catalogue, Martin-Gropius-Bau (Frankfurt a.M.: Insel-Verlag, 1985); Anna Jackson and Amin Jaffer, ed., *Encounters: The Meeting of Asia and Europe 1500–1800* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2004), in particular the contribution by Ming Wilson, "Chinese Fantasies of Europe," in *Encounters: The Meeting of Asia and Europe 1500–1800*, ed. Anna Jackson and Amin Jaffer (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2004), 338–47; Ole Villumsen Krog and Christiansborg Palace, ed., *Treasures from Imperial China: The Forbidden City and the Royal Danish Court* (*Skatte fra kejserens Kina: den Forbudte By og det danske kongehus*), exhibition catalogue (Copenhagen: Royal Silver Vault, 2006); Michael Kraus and Hans Ottomeyer, ed., *NOVOS MUNDOS—NEUE WELTEN: Portugal und das Zeitalter der Entdeckungen*, exhibition catalogue (Berlin; Dresden: Sandstein, 2007); Cordula Bischoff and Anne Hennings, ed., *Goldener Drache—Weißer Adler: Kunst im Dienste der Macht am Kaiserhof von China und am sächsisch-polnischen Hof (1644–1795),* exhibition catalogue (Munich: Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, 2008); Renate Eikelmann, ed., *Die Wittelsbacher und das Reich der Mitte: 400 Jahre China und Bayern*, exhibition catalogue, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum (Munich: Hirmer, 2009); Karina H. Corrigan and Jan van Campen, ed., *Asia in Amsterdam: The Culture of Luxury in the Golden Age*, exhibition catalogue (Salem, Mass.: Peabody Essex Museum, 2015).

[66]The past decade has brought forth exhibitions that, though not exclusively dedicated to Sino-European or inner-Asian exchanges in art, have incorporated transcultural displays; prominent among these are the British Museum's *China: The Three Emperors, 1662–1795* from 2005–2006, and *Ming: 50 Years that changed China* from 2014–2015. Transcultural object displays feature in the permanent collections of museums such as the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford and the Palace

While the globality of exchange, consumption, and object-use since early modernity are no longer a novel proposition, there still exists a considerable babel of voices and positions about how to conceptualize the "global" in art history.[67] The study of connected material cultures across Europe and Asia neither ascribes a paradigmatic status to "European expansion," nor seeks to locate a practice as more authentically "Asian." The dynamism of EurAsian objects lies in their willingness and ability to come to terms with the alterities of geography manufacture, desire, status, and use. Rather than allowing themselves to be tagged according to geographic origin or viewed as surfaces off which individual "cultures" can be read, these objects in many ways "provincialize" our compulsive need for unambiguous readings and clear distinctions between subject and object, matter and shape. Taking a cue from Claire Farago, this volume makes a case for the productivity of asking (and answering) shared historical questions even as we negotiate the divide between commensurability and the lack thereof.[68] Finally, this collection does not advocate a "return to the object," which implies a polarity between a "theory-based" approach and one based on objects—such an opposition indeed makes little sense. A transcultural incorporation of object-matters within art history is in itself a theoretical position.

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Museum in Taipei. Innumerable museums of "applied art" (angewandte Kunst) such as the Museum für angewandte Kunst Vienna or the Museum Angewandte Kunst in Frankfurt am Main, to mention only two examples, offer a rich body of materials for scholarship on transcultural object histories.

[67]John Onians, ed., *Atlas of World Art* (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2004); Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, *Toward a Geography of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); James Elkins, ed., *Is Art History Global?* (London: Routledge, 2007); Wilfried van Damme and Kitty Zijlmans, ed., *World Art Studies: Exploring Concepts and Approaches* (Amsterdam: Valiz 2008); Monica Juneja, "Kunstgeschichte und kulturelle Differenz: Eine Einleitung," *Kritische Berichte* 2 (2012): 6–12. See also, Monica Juneja, "'A very civil idea'... : Art History and World-Making—with and beyond the Nation," in *Engaging Transculturality: Concepts, Key Terms and Case Studies*, ed. Laila Abu-er-Rub et al., (London: Routledge 2018 forthcoming); Juneja, "Global Art History," and Monica Juneja, *Can Art History be made Global? A Discipline in Transition* (forthcoming).

[68]Claire Farago, "Understanding Visuality," in *Seeing across Cultures in the Early Modern World*, ed. Dana Leibsohn and Jeanette F. Peterson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 244.

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Part II
Objects Easily Forgotten

Around the Globe: The Material Culture of Cantonese Round Tables in High-Qing China

Kyoungjin Bae

Abstract This chapter examines the transcultural movement and adaptation of European round tables in Chinese material culture during the Qing dynasty (1644–1911). Introduced by European mariners to Canton in the eighteenth century, two types of round tables—the tilt-top and gate leg tables—entered the sphere of everyday life in Guangdong Province and beyond in ways that eluded other types of furniture. Adapted to frequent mobility and space economization, foreign round tables were popular for their pragmatic character rather than their appealing aesthetics. At the same time, they were also uniquely compatible with a new trend then emerging within domestic material culture: the use of round dining tables derived from earlier forms of Chinese furniture. In their convergence, both domestic and foreign round tables partook in the formation of a new social dining practice that emphasized casualness and intimacy. In conjunction with contemporary literary practices, moreover, they aroused a new sociopolitical consciousness of equality.

Meandering through the scenes in the gallery, "Exhibition on Guangdong's History and Culture," at Guangdong Provincial Museum in Guangzhou, one encounters a well-staged traditional banquet room (Fig. 1). On a circular table made of sturdy redwood, a cornucopia of food is displayed in a typical Cantonese manner. Although Guangdong is better known for its lighthearted *yum cha*, or tea with dim sum, this configuration of dishes constitutes a ceremonial repast called *jiudagui* 九大簋, which has been offered during vernacular rituals since the Qing dynasty (1644–1911).[1] On the wall hanging behind the table, flanked by a soaring phoenix and dragon, the character *xi* 囍—meaning double happiness—is embroidered in

[1] *Gui* 簋 is a bowl-shaped ancient bronze vessel. In early modern and modern Guangdong, however, the word could denote any type of large serving dish used for formal purposes.

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Fig. 1 A wedding banquet table, wood. Guangdong Provincial Museum, Guangzhou. Copyright: Kyoungjin Bae

lustrous gold on red silk. These symbols represent wishes for a blissful conjugal union—the sumptuous setting is a wedding banquet.

While there is nothing unusual about the scene at first glance, a closer look at the table that serves as the material setting for this conviviality raises a series of interesting questions. In premodern China, the tables used for formal banquets and casual dining were only in angular forms. At formal banquets, hosts and guests sat at

separate rectangular tables, all facing the center of the room where performances took place. During more casual gatherings, square tables nicknamed the Eight Immortals (*baxianzhuo* 八仙桌) were set up to offer various kinds of refreshments.[2] Round tables, in contrast, were virtually nonexistent as dining surfaces until the late Ming dynasty (1368–1644). Compared with the angular tables whose history goes back to ancient times, round tables began to pervade Chinese material culture only by the Qing dynasty. How, then, did a round table come to be used as a dining table in China, and what implications did this have for the dynamics of interpersonal relations while dining?

A more in-depth look at the table's morphology provides a useful way to begin addressing these questions. It is not difficult to recognize that the form of the table does not conform to that of conventional Chinese furniture. The ridged and turned legs and their structure bear a striking resemblance to that of an English gate leg table. How did this Chinese table come to take a European form? And what does it suggest that such a nonconventional table is deployed in the representation of "History and Culture" in a local museum, where the symbols of hereditary culture are crystalized in its visual and material display? Staged silently in one corner of the gallery, the banquet scene embodies a tacit assumption about the naturalization of this object in the vernacular culture of Canton, while not offering any explicit explanation for this.

This paper historicizes the use of round tables in Canton during the Qing dynasty with a particular emphasis on global connections through the international trade. It examines the popular culture surrounding the object's use and its significance in relation to changing sociocultural ideas and practices in mid-Qing society. The European round table's unique entrance to Canton and its circulation in China coincided with the emergence of indigenous round dining tables. Promoting a new mode of dining practice, the two types of tables were imbricated with a new popular interest in utility and new voices for social equality. By situating a mundane object in the complex web of its contemporary, transnational material culture, therefore, this case study brings a new perspective to the study of cross-cultural objects in the early modern world.

[2]The illustrations from the late Ming novel, *The Plum in the Golden Vase*, provides good examples for both the formal and informal uses of angular tables. For detailed studies on Chinese square tables and on the material culture of Chinese banquets, see "A Square Table Where the Immortals Dine," in Sarah Handler, *Austere Luminosity of Chinese Classical Furniture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 180–202; Joanna Waley-Cohen, "The Quest for Perfect Balance: Taste and Gastronomy in Imperial China," in *Food: The History of Taste*, ed. Paul H. Freedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 99–134.

A Border-Crossing Object: Round Tables from British Ships to Cantonese Houses

In late seventeenth-century England, a new type of furniture came into being as tea drinking became popular among the upper and middle social strata. Called the tea table, this object was adapted to the needs of the emergent material culture. As contemporary conversation pieces attest, this material culture brought a few closely bonded friends or family members socializing in an ambient space over tea, which was often served in Chinese blue-and-white porcelain. As early as 1682, for instance, John Evelyn (1620–1706) owned a complete set of tea equipage, which comprised "tea table, [a] tea pot, [a] sugar cup and cover, tea cups, [and] six silver spoons in a case."[3] Noticeably smaller in size than a dining table, tea tables were designed to suit the intimate atmosphere of tea drinking and were constructed so that they could be folded up and stored away when teatime was over.

The English thirst for Chinese tea and porcelain created skyrocketing profits for the English East India Company's China trade. After Canton became the entrepôt for the Sino-European trade in the early eighteenth century, the trade of the East India Company gradually centered on porcelain, silk, and tea—the three most lucrative items from the Far East.[4] Although it was eclipsed by such mass products, a significant amount of furniture was also imported from China to England from the late seventeenth century. Porcelain as novelty was characterized by its exotic appearance; however, most pieces of export Chinese furniture were produced in European design. The complexity of the furniture trade stemmed from the object's twofold nature as both necessity and commodity. During the trading season, European merchants stayed at lodgings-cum-warehouses called factories, which were set up by the bank of the Pearl River near the harbor of Canton. The factories, which gradually took on a European appearance over the course of the eighteenth century, were rented from the Hong merchants and furnished with the furniture brought from home or locally procured.[5] In 1769, for instance, the English lawyer William Hickey noticed during his visit that the English factory was arranged in such

[3] *Evelyn Papers*, vol. CCXXXVII, "Inventories of goods, at Sayes Court, Wotton, and the Evelyn's London lodgings, 1663–1709," British Library, Add MS 78404, 6.

[4] Although Canton was instated by the Qing government as the official trading port only in 1757, its trade system had been developed since the late seventeenth century, and it became the de-facto central port for Western traders in the beginning of the eighteenth century.

[5] Paul van Dyke, "Rooms for Rent: Inn Keepers and the *Foreignization* of the Canton Factories 1760–1822" (paper presented at the International Conference on Private Merchants of the China Trade, 1700–1842, Guangzhou, China, November 15–17, 2013). For more information on the source of furniture in the English factory, see Kyoungjin Bae, "Joints of Utility, Crafts of Knowledge: The Material Culture of the Sino-British Furniture Trade during the Long Eighteenth Century" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2016).

a way that the merchants enjoyed tea and coffee breaks and played cards and billiards in a typical English manner.[6]

In addition to satisfying the household needs of merchants in a foreign land, European-style furniture made in Canton could also be commoditized for the home market. The records of the East India Company sales in London for a few years around 1700 offer a glimpse of the approximate scale and character of furniture importation at a relatively early stage. Between 1696 and 1697, for instance, more than 300 pieces of lacquered and solid-wood furniture from China were sold at auction.[7] They comprised a variety of types including, but not limited to, screens, tables, cabinets, chests, and trunks, and one of the most popular types of furniture was undoubtedly the tea table. In 1696, ninety-seven tea tables of various sizes were brought from China on Sarah and Dorothy, two company ships, and were sold at the December auction.[8] In the following year, 118 pieces were sold from the cargo of Fleet Friget.[9] In 1700, Macclesfield brought from China 300 nests of tea tables all inlaid with mother of pearl.[10] In 1701, the number almost tripled, with 432 pieces sold between December and April. Among them, 382 pieces were brought by Wentworth alone.[11] In 1702, 135 tea tables were sold between March 23 and 24. The entire lots sold at this auction were again brought from China by a single vessel named Dashwood.[12] It is thus obvious that around 1700 the EIC ships dispatched to China returned with loads of tables that were readily useable in tea service, that is a set of tea ware used during the tea ceremony.

A typical English tea table in the eighteenth century was a circular or square tabletop on a single pedestal. The pedestal, almost invariably sitting on a curvilinear tripod base, was joined to the top by a spring-loaded metal lock that slanted the tabletop when unlocked. This folding mechanism allowed the tables to take up minimal space while kept in storage. By virtue of their space economization, therefore, such tilt-top tables were not only used in English homes but were also carried by merchants and mariners on ships to China. Thomas Newte, a crew member of the Valentine dispatched to Canton in 1768, for instance, brought with him "a lacquer'd tea table in one case."[13]

In addition to the tilt-top table, another type of folding round table was introduced to Canton by British merchant-seafarers. Termed gate leg tables, they had become prevalent in England in the seventeenth century. A gate leg table consists of two

[6]William Hickey, *Memoirs of William Hickey*, vol. 1, ed. Alfred Spencer (London: Hurst & Blackett ltd, 1919), 207.

[7]India Office Records, British Library, IOR/B/41, 127–458.

[8]IOR/B/41, 266–321.

[9]IOR/B/41, 490, 525.

[10]Hosea Ballou Morse, *Chronicles of the East India Company: Trading to China 1635–1834*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926), 97.

[11]IOR/B/43, 643–653.

[12]IOR/B/44, 90.

[13]IOR/H/18, 178.

folding side leaves that can be propped up by two supplementary legs that swing from the sides of a gate-shaped leg frame. These legs were usually turned in a spiral or ridged shape after the Dutch fashion and the table, when unfolded, became a large round or square table mostly suitable for dining. Both tilt-top tables and gate leg tables were lighter than stationary dining tables and took relatively less space when folded up; because of this they were favored by merchant-seafarers traveling on the sea, whose living space on the long, agonizing journey was confined to a small cabin. Thus, together with other space-maximizing objects, tilt-top and gate leg tables were adapted to the cabin life and became the forerunners of the so-called campaign furniture.[14]

Upon arriving at Canton, this cabin furniture was moved to the European factories and it furnished their homelike interiors. An inventory of the Dutch factory made in 1729, for instance, contained "a large dining table with a [separable] top."[15] Folding round tables such as tilt-top tables and gate leg tables continued to be used by European merchants in Canton even when their original designs became outmoded in Europe. Sources also show that they were used not only in the European factories but also in the Cantonese boats by which Europeans traveled on the local sea. William Hunter (1812–1891), purser of Russell & Co., mentions in his memoir a "fast-boat" he took in 1830 from Canton to Macao:

> The boats in which foreigners travelled to and from Macao (except occasionally if a large party, when they took chop-boats) acquired the name of inside fast boats. They were large and commodious, with cabins in which one could stand up, board raised seats on two sides, covered with clean matting, on which one slept. They were furnished with green venetian blinds. In the centre of the cabin stood the dining-table, and over it a lamp was suspended.[16]

What kind of dining table might this have been? William Prinsep (1792–1874), an English merchant who sojourned in Canton in the 1830s, left a sketch of the interior of a fast-boat he took sometime in 1838 (Fig. 2). The spacious room is fitted with Cantonese lattice panel doors on one side and half-open and half-shuttered windows on the other. In one corner of the room one can see placed a thin mattress and some bedclothes on which Prinsep himself is lying, and above it is a rolled-up mosquito net. There is but a minimal array of furniture in the cabin, comprised of a folding chair, two small boxes, a pot, and, most importantly, a gate leg table on the sunken floor in the center. The drawing roughly corresponds with Hunter's description, especially in the presence of a thin mattress, window blinds, "raised seats," and the "dining-table" in the center of the room. Such verbal and pictorial depictions of the generic cabin interior suggest a continuous use of gate leg tables for dining in the cross-cultural context of Canton during the nineteenth century.

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[14]For the development of the British campaign furniture, see Nicholas A. Brawer, *British Campaign Furniture: Elegance Under Canvas, 1740–-1914* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2011).

[15]Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie 4374, Nationaal Archief, Dagregister 1729/11/16-1730/1/2.

[16]William Hunter, *The 'Fan Kwae' at Canton Before Treaty Days, 1825–1844* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1882), 86–7.

Fig. 2 William Prinsep, *Taking Leave of Canton with Linsey in a Fast Boat*. Pencil, pen, ink, and watercolor. 1838. Copyright: Martin Gregory

Over the course of the long eighteenth century, the continuous presence and reproduction of Western round tables in the singular material culture of the trading port facilitated the objects' cross-border movement. Evidence shows that European round tables appeared in the local environment as early as the 1740s. On the exterior of an export porcelain tea caddy are portrayed a pair of interesting images in which a European merchant and his servant are bargaining with a Chinese tea merchant attired in an official's garment (Fig. 3). The illustration of a Cantonese teashop on the export tea caddy wraps the object in a rich narrative of its origin. The scene is filled with numerous objects that provide a concrete, if not realistic, context for the narrative. The objects in the shop—such as notebooks, stationeries, a scale, a porcelain vase, and a *yixing* teapot—allude to the refined yet commercial character of the space. In the center of the room, which is furnished predominantly in Chinese taste, stands a gate leg table that serves as the stage for social and business activities. In an ensuing image, in which both parties are entertained with wine, refreshments, and smoking, the round table plays a pivotal role in generating a congenial spatiality. The juxtaposition of a gate leg table and Chinese objects in a Cantonese teashop points to the porosity of the cultural boundaries explored by the merchants who were engaged in foreign businesses. The use of such Western folding tables in Chinese shops not only allowed an efficient management of space but also left a more amiable impression on the foreigners who formed the main clientele for these businesses.

Fig. 3 Export tea caddy. Porcelain and metal. China. c. 1740. H. 12cm. Copyright: Sotheby's

Although the image on the export tea caddy is, of course, the product of an artisan's fancy, the presence of the round table alongside other commonplace objects does suggest that round tables became entrenched in the daily rote of Cantonese shopkeepers by the early nineteenth century. The American merchant Osmond Tiffany (1823–1895) recollects his visit to an acquaintance's shop on New China Street one morning where he witnessed the shop owners dining around a "circular table":

> We pause in front of Chongshing's variety store, and observe that the shop-doors are put to, indicating that business must yield to the pleasure of eating, and that the inmates have not the

> slightest idea of being disturbed at their meals. But for once, we will violate the rules of etiquette and go in. Chongshing and his sons are about sitting down to a circular table, and do not seem disposed to pay us much attention. We hear a sound of something hissing, and presently a servant from the back room brings in half a dozen or more bowls filled with hot boiled rice, or fish prepared in some simple way, or vegetables; tea is served in little cups; the chopsticks are pulled from their cases; and the battle begins.[17]

Tiffany's portrayal suggests that the locals were using round tables as practical objects. The hint at a rushed meal during busy business hours, the unassuming presentation of simple dishes, and most of all, the analogy between eating and "battle" all reveal the pragmatic connotations of the "circular table" in the everyday material culture of Canton.

Western round tables not only permeated the commercial district but also eventually penetrated the vernacular lifestyle. A mid-nineteenth century photograph currently kept at the Royal Society of Asian Affairs and taken by Scottish photographer John Thomson (1837–1921) during his trip to China in the late 1860s captures a gate leg table used as a game table by the Buddhist monks at the Temple of the Five Hundred Gods (*hualinsi* 華林寺) in Canton. In the town's oldest temple, a group of monks are shown sitting around a round table playing "Go" in the terrace outside a pavilion. The distinctively turned legs as well as their hexagonal disposition speak to the prototype of this object. Although this is from a slightly later period, the photo attests to the fact that European tables were firmly anchored in the nitty-gritty of daily activities by the mid-nineteenth century.

From the perspective of the broader cross-cultural movement of objects from Europe to China, the round table's frictionless settlement in Cantonese daily life proves extraordinary. Although Cantonese people, apart from the Qing court, welcomed in general Western curios and technology with alacrity, such a tendency was largely limited to formerly unknown objects such as magnifying lenses, watches, or alarm clocks. On the other hand, most types of European furniture, despite their long-term presence in Canton's trading port, did not cross the cultural boundary to enter domestic society until after the Opium War. The adaptation of European tilt-top and gate leg tables in high Qing Cantonese society was thus anything but natural.

The Material Culture of Round Dining Tables in Qing China

The story of Cantonese round tables is much more complex than a narrative in which an introduced object finds a niche market or replaces an outmoded antecedent. Its popularity in the region was not just connected to foreign trade but also interwoven with broader changes in the material culture of eighteenth-century China. When the European tables arrived at Canton, Chinese people were already increasingly

[17]Osmond Tiffany, *The Canton Chinese; or The American's Sojourn in the Celestial Empire* (Boston: J. Munroe & Co, 1849), 66.

adapting to dining at round tables. Although records show that tables of a circular shape were used as kitchen appliances and by street peddlers selling wares as early as the Song dynasty, the use of round tables in ways comparable with that of angular ones—especially for purposes of leisure and consumption—appeared only in the early Qing dynasty.[18] Although it is difficult to know exactly when round tables came to be used for dining in the Qing dynasty, their visual representation was already perceptible by the early eighteenth century.

Based on their morphology, the Qing round tables can be divided into two forms. One of them originated from the traditional furniture while the other was introduced from overseas. The major difference between indigenous and foreign round tables can be found in the base structure. If tilt-top tables had one pedestal and gate leg tables relied on a sliding-door mechanism, the indigenous round tables were characterized by plural supporting legs. Moreover, the bottom structure of the former was ostensibly curved or turned, while that of the latter had a straight form. Indigenous tables, in their basic composition, had a round tabletop supported by six to eight legs, which were sometimes rejoined by way of a stretcher at the bottom (Fig. 4).[19] Although this was a novel form as a table, it had some historical prototypes in the preceding Ming dynasty. One of them can be found in the furniture glossary of the fifteenth-century carpentry manual, *Lu Ban jing* 魯班經 (*The Classic of Lu Ban*). The fifteenth type (*shi* 式) of the glossary is titled "round table (*yuanzhuo* 圓桌)," yet it in effect describes a pair of semicircular tables that, when combined, formed a round shape.[20] Dubbed in Chinese a crescent table (*yueyazhuo* 月牙桌), such semi-round tables were used individually as side tables, and were often placed against the wall to hold flower vases or other decorative objects. A crescent table usually had four to six thin straight legs. Some early Qing round tables directly inherited such features, the only difference being that they were now made in a complete circular form. Thus, it is likely that Qing round tables emerged as the descendants of Ming precedents around the dynastic transition in the late seventeenth to early eighteenth century.[21]

Evidence for the construction of such tables can be found as early as 1730 in the palace. On the seventeenth day of the second month, for instance, the Yongzheng emperor (r. 1722–1735) ordered the imperial furniture workshops to make "a round table in *zitan* wood (purple sandalwood), of which the diameter should be two *chi*

[18]A peddler's portable circular table, for instance, appears on the famous Song dynasty painting, "Along the River during the Qingming Festival (*Qingming shang he tu*)."

[19]Based on this basic form, the specific designs vary, ranging from straight to curved legs, waisted to recessed leg-structures, and from simple to complex stretcher joining.

[20]For details, see Wang Shixiang's 王世襄 annotation on the round table of *Lu Ban jing*. Wang Shixiang 王世襄, *Mingshi jiaju yanjiu* 明式家具研究 (*A Study of Ming Style Furniture*), vol. 1 (Hong Kong: Shanglian shudian youxian gongsi, 1989), 207.

[21]The other important prototype for the Qing round tables was the Ming incense stand. In early modern China, incense burners were often elevated individually on a high stand made of a round top, high waist, cabriole legs, and a base stretcher or stand. If such was used as a side stand until the Ming dynasty, the same form developed to be a regular-size table in the Qing dynasty.

Fig. 4 A semicircular or crescent table, wood. Guangdong Folk Art Museum, Guangzhou. Copyright: Kyoungjin Bae

and six *cun*, and the height nine *cun*." He then added an instruction to "Make the legs straight."[22] Although the specific design of this table does not survive, the

[22]Orig. "二月十七日据圓明園來帖內稱,郎中海望奉旨, 照做紫檀木圓桌一張, 經二尺五寸, 高九寸, 腿子做直的." Zhu Jiajin 朱家溍, ed., *Yangxindian zaobanchu shiliao jilan* 养心殿造办处史料辑览 (*Compiled Sources from the Imperial Palace Workshops*) (Beijing: Zijin cheng chubanshe, 2003), 201.

instruction regarding the legs implies that the object would have been a round table in the shape of two combined crescent tables. Some early to mid-eighteenth-century woodblock prints produced in the town of Yangliu in Hubei province for the Chinese New Year provide the details of such round tables with straight legs.[23]

When European round tables were introduced to China in the early eighteenth century, therefore, they were new but not novel: new in their space-economizing design and their use for eating, but not novel, since the Chinese were becoming familiar with the newly developed forms of round tables. It was serendipitous for the newcomers that the cultural authority of the domestic round tables was still under construction. By the eighteenth century, as will be shown, reconfiguring and re-hierarchizing the material and social orders was already under way through the use of the round tables, and it was easy for European round tables to cross the cultural border and partake in the formation of the object's identity. Throughout their dissemination, therefore, the foreign round tables maintained a symbiotic relationship with their domestic counterparts. They promoted the utility of the table and this in turn produced a new practice and cultural metonymy surrounding the material culture of the round table. Like their Ming precedents, the early round tables were primarily used for displaying decorative objects. In the second half of the eighteenth century, however, this exhibitory function was gradually superseded by the more practical activity of dining. In the famous mid-eighteenth-century novel *Hong lou meng* 紅樓夢 (*Dream of the Red Chamber*), for instance, there are several scenes in which round tables are discussed in relation to the recreational activities accompanied by food and wine. In Chapter 38, after the sumptuous crabmeat party in the garden with Grandmother Jia, the protagonist Jia Baoyu proposes that his cousins and friends gather around a round table to drink, eat, and compose poems:

> When [Xiangyun and Baochai] were back again, they ordered servants to clear the seats and arrange a new table. Baoyu, however, said, "No, don't set a new table. We are about to get on with poems. Set out the large round-reunion table (*datuanyuan zhuozi* 大團圓桌子) in the center [of the pavilion] and place all the food and wine on it. We don't have to assign seats; instead, we can help ourselves while sitting wherever we like. Would it be much more suitable?" "That is right," Baochai replied. [...] After a while, they called for another lot of hot crabmeats and ate them around the large round-reunion table.[24]

Perhaps the oldest historical evidence available today regarding the use of a round dining table in China, this passage in *Dream of the Red Chamber* is significant on several grounds. First, it provides a physical context in which a round table was used: in the garden. Indeed, round tables were used as much outdoors as indoors. They

[23]For more information on the Yangliu prints, see Wang Shucun 王树村, ed., *Yangliu qingnian hua ziliao ji* 杨柳青年画资料集 (*Source Book of the Yangliu New Year Painting*) (Beijing: Renmin meishu chubanshe, 1959).

[24]Orig. "二人忙應著, 送出園外,仍舊回來,命將殘席收拾了另擺。寶玉道 "也不用擺,偺們且做詩,把那大團圓桌子放在當中,酒菜都放著,也不必拘定坐位,有愛喫的去喫,大家散坐,豈不便宜?" 寶釵道 "這話極是." [...] 因又命令擺一桌,揀了熱螃蟹來[...]一處共坐." Cao Xueqin 曹雪芹, *Hong lou meng* 紅楼夢 (*Dream of the Red Chamber*), vol. 1 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1982), 520–1.

were set up whenever it was necessary to provide seats and refreshments in the garden or at a picnic, and then dismantled, carried back, and stored away when the outing was done. Round tables were considered particularly appropriate for outdoor activities during holidays such as the Lantern Festival and the Mid-Autumn Festival when the full moon was worshipped. Round tables used for this purpose were seldom fancy; they were made of secondary woods and designed in such a way that they could be easily put together and broken down. In this regard, round tables served the purpose of provisionality much more efficiently than square tables.

Second, the spatiality created by the round table produced a sense of equality among those who gathered. This was the most notable difference between round and angular tables. At an angular table, as custom demanded, the main guests or senior family members should be seated in the center facing the south, and the rest of the seats were assigned in accordance with the individual's social, familial, and gender relation to the person of honor. A circular table, in contrast, allowed a much more flexible seating, as Baoyu's casualness expressed in his comments: "sitting wherever we like."

By the time this new type of table became widespread in the late eighteenth century, the tension between the old and new premises that underpinned different modes of social relations at dining even attracted some literati interest. In his poem titled "Round Table (*Yuanzhuo*)," Qian Daxin 錢大昕 (1728–1804), who served as the commissioner of education in Guangdong province, favorably valorized the new object:

I still remember the Eight Immortals gathered at the Jade Terrace.
Yet, who transmitted the ambiguous new shape [of this object]?
Trimming the lantern with sincere joy, we reunite and chat.
Offering seats, either left or right is fine—in rotation.
Moving [the table] to the courtyard, heaven is like a bamboo hat.
When halved, the table resembles the crescent moon.
The gourd-like cottage rather suits your humbleness.
Aosou (聱叟), from now on, do not harbor hatred for the round.[25]

The poem depicts a scene in which people are gathered around a round table perhaps to prepare lanterns for the Lantern Festival. The poet describes the round table as a new object whose "ambiguous shape" has been "transmitted" from somewhere unknown, suggesting its novelty by his time. The round table is characterized as an object suitable for a festive reunion and for a reciprocal, non-hierarchic relationship. It is also adapted to mobility, and unlike the square tables, or "the Eight Immortals," it is an unassuming object of modesty. This notion is reinforced by the

[25]Orig. "曾記瑤臺聚八仙/ 模棱新樣阿誰傳/ 翦鐙真快團圞話/ 讓坐無妨左右旋/ 移到中庭天似笠/ 分張半面月初弦/ 瓜廬與爾差相稱/ 聱叟從今莫惡圓." Qian Daxin 錢大昕, *Qianyan tang ji* 潛研堂集 (*Collected Writings at the Hall of Secret Studies*) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2010), 592.

reference to Aosou, the style name of the famous Tang dynasty scholar-official Yuan Jie 元結 (723–772). According to *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 (*The New Book of Tang*), after moving to Fanshang, Yuan mingled with fishermen neighbors and gamed with the old and the young, who called him by the sobriquet of Aosou.[26] Connecting Yuan's egalitarian life with the figure of the round, therefore, Qian projects a strong political connotation onto this new material form and the practices associated with it.

A round table was thus associated with the ideas of reciprocity, intimacy, mobility, and the moon, as well as reunion. Such discrete ideas were concatenated in the composite entity of *tuanyuan* 團圓, a concept that was deeply rooted in the material culture of premodern China. *Tuanyuan*—a word whose etymology goes back to the Tang dynasty (618–907)—can be translated into a wide range of English words including round, reunion, completion, and repleteness. For instance, a felicitous denouement of a story was called *datuanyuan* 大團圓—literally, the grand finale.[27] Family gatherings during the major holidays such as the Spring Festival and the Mid-Autumn Festival were also called *tuanyuan*, which denoted not only the act of reunion but also its materiality—the special culinary, ritual, and recreational activities associated with the festivity. Simultaneously, *tuanyuan* stood for roundness in relation to, but not confined to, the shape of the moon.[28] These seemingly unrelated meanings converged on the semantic token of the round to create a complex set of cultural metonymies.[29]

During the Qing dynasty, round tables came to materially epitomize the multifaceted notion of *tuanyuan*. Hence, Baoyu referred to it as a large *tuanyuan* table—rather than just a round (*yuan* 圓) table—which suggests that the round and reunion are almost synonymous. Moreover, this set of imbricated meanings was also linked to a specific temporal and seasonal concern. In the writing of Kong Shangren 孔尚任 (1748–1718), a dramatist and poet who preceded Cao by half a century, round tables function as literary tropes related to the Mid-Autumn moon. In his *Jiexu tongfeng lu* 節序同風錄 (*Records of the Same Customs through Seasons*), Kong outlines the

[26]Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 (*The New Book of Tang*), Yingyin wenyuange Siku quanshu edition (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1983), *juan* 143, 8b.

[27]Wei Lei 危磊, "'Datuanyuan' shenmei xin li chengyin xintan "大团圆"审美心理成因新探 (Revisiting the Psychological Causes for the Aesthetics of Denouement)," *Wenxue pinglun* 3 (2002): 153–9.

[28]Meng Zhaoshui 孟昭水 has elaborated cultural associations of round in relation to Chinese holidays, see: Meng Zhaoshui 孟昭水, "Zhongguo chuantong jieri minsu zhong de fangyuan zhuti 中国传统节日民俗中的方圆主题 (On the Subject of Square and Round in Chinese Traditional Holiday Customs)," *Heilongjiang shehui kexue* 3 (2006): 106–8.

[29]For a detailed discussion of the cultural connotation of the round in premodern China, see: Ye Jingsong 叶劲松, "Lun Zhongguo gudai fangyuan zaowu guan 论中国古代方圆造物观 (A Discussion of the Cosmology of Square and Round in Ancient China)," *Hubei jingji xueyuan xuebao* 5 (May 2008): 27–8.

Fig. 5 Gao Yinzhang (1835–1907), *Offerings to the Full Moon*. Yangliu New Year's Print. Ink and watercolor. Tianjin Museum, Tianjin. Copyright: Tianjin Museum

Mid-Autumn moon offering, saying, "Set up a round table (*yuanji* 圓几) in the courtyard. On top of the table, arrange mooncakes, grapes, pomegranates, persimmons, chestnuts, lotus roots, taros, and oranges. Make an offering to the moon and pray for longevity. [. . .] When I sit on the *tuanyuan* table, the center of the table is inlaid with an image of the moon palace."[30]

A similar example is found in another episode in *Dream of the Red Chamber*, where the Jia family gathers in the Prospect Hall to make offerings to the moon on the Mid-Autumn night. The offerings consist of moonlike melons and mooncakes. After burning incenses and paying rituals, the family, at the request of Grandmother Jia, climbs the hill to appreciate the full moon. When they arrive at the top, the servants have "arranged [two] tables and chairs in the terrace of a pavilion. [. . .] All the tables and chairs were prepared round in order to achieve the meaning of *tuanyuan*."[31] Here, *tuanyuan* is a twofold token that stands for both family reunion and the postharvest celebration represented by the full moon. The round ritual objects—fruit, mooncakes, round tables and chairs—constitute the materiality of *tuanyuan* alongside the bodies, which are themselves aligned in a circular form.

A parallel idea is embodied in a Yangliu print made by the late Qing artist Gao Yinzhang 高蔭章 (1835–1907). The image shows a specific moment of the moon offering during the Mid-Autumn night (Fig. 5). In a private courtyard under the full moon, two boys are learning about the offering rituals from an adult woman. In front

[30]Orig. "設圓几於中庭陳月餅葡萄石榴瓜柿栗藕芋橙橘對月[…]坐團圓桌臺桌心嵌月宮圖." Kong Shangren 孔尚任, "Jiexu tongfeng lu 節序同風錄 (Records of the Same Customs through Seasons)," *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu: shi bu* 165 (1997): 847.

[31]Cao, *Hong lou meng*, vol. 2, 1075–6.

of them is placed a tilt-top tripod table inlaid with a white stone; on the table are mooncakes, dumplings, and fruits, together with candles and an incense burner. Next to the moon is an inscription titled *Offering to the Full Moon*, of which the first stanza reads: "At the age of fifteen I learn about the moon offering, and on the night of the fifteenth I make a moon offering. My mind naturally cherishes the round moon; how could I ever wish to marry early?"[32] Such images demonstrate that over the century following its introduction, the foreign round table was woven into the matrix of cultural semiotics in premodern China. In addition to becoming ingrained in everyday life, round tables became tethered to enduring sets of cultural practices associated with tradition.

It is within these broad synchronic and diachronic contexts of domestic material culture that the prevalence of European round tables should be understood. When European round tables made their way into the everyday life of the Chinese, therefore, their form and function were readily congenial to the metaphor of *tuanyuan*. The exceptional case of the early adaptation of this object was, however, not a harbinger of a yet-to-come modern, Westernized lifestyle in China. Rather, it is best understood in terms of the foreign round table's timely arrival when emergent forms of indigenous round tables were still taking shape and finding a niche in the Qing cultural environment. Since they shared not only the form but also the same mechanical attributes, the two types of round tables were used to incubate the same social and cultural aspirations. Regardless of their provenances, the two groups of round tables shared some functional advantages over conventional tables. As the tabletop could be removed or the whole piece could be halved, the indigenous round tables could be made lighter and smaller, which made them easier to maneuver. Such space-economization was an important characteristic of the premodern round table, for it was fundamentally an occasional table mobilized for the temporary purposes of dining and entertaining—one that never reached the status of the angular tables that were stationed with formality in parlors.[33]

The European round tables, as mentioned above, possessed similar attributes. Originally functioning as cabin furniture, they were designed to be space-saving and readily portable. The tilt-top and gate leg tables found in historic houses in the Guangdong region are exhibited and stored in a similar manner as their domestic counterparts, either folded against the wall or laid in dining rooms. They are also made of inferior materials such as secondary redwood (called locally *suanzhi* 酸枝) or other miscellaneous woods whose moderate value justified the objects' extensive wear from continuous exposure to external weather and kitchen humidity. Seen from the perspective of utility, the tilt-top and gate leg tables had a different character from such popular European novelties as magnifying glasses or chime clocks. Round

[32]Orig. "十五學拜月, 拜月十五夜, 心自重月圓, 何嘗願早嫁."

[33]In the Republican period (1912–1949), however, Cantonese people began to furnish their reception halls with exquisitely carved and inlaid round tables. Yet this happened after, or during, the major transformation in household material culture that took place in modernizing Canton around the turn of the twentieth century.

tables were favored by the Chinese primarily by virtue of their pragmatic properties and their conformity to the existing material syntax. It was thus not an interest in foreign novelty but the pursuit of utilitarian comfort that facilitated the early accommodation of European round tables in the vernacular material culture.

Despite their preeminence in visual representations and material environments, tilt-top and gate leg tables went largely unnoticed in contemporary textual sources. As in the case of *Dream of the Red Chamber*, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century stories and essays refer only to the general appellation, "the round table," when necessary: in other words, insofar as these objects partake in the human actions that need to be described. This pragmatic attitude toward furniture was already present in the famous playwright Li Yu's 李漁 (1610–1680) account of furniture in his *Xianqing ouji* 闲情偶寄 (*Sketches of Idle Pleasures*). Although his interest is largely limited to classical studio furniture, Li is more concerned with practicality than presentability. Concerning the tables (*ji'an* 几案), for instance, he emphasizes such elements as drawers for space organization, a separate board as a protective accessory, and wooden pegs for leveling the table. Li views the additional board as particularly useful in the winter when one cannot do without a brazier under the seat: "If the heat from the brazier reaches the tabletop above it, its wooden panel will eventually crack. Thus, one must prevent this in advance. When the weather is not yet cold, prepare a separate board that can be easily installed and dismantled. One can line it underneath the tabletop or hang it with strings or hooks. Otherwise, one can have clamps (*jigou* 機彀) preinstalled at the time of manufacture and use them instead [of strings or hooks]. Use the board to absorb the heat and change it when it gets scorched. This method is inexpensive."[34] Li's pragmatic perspective was drastically different from the connoisseurial approach that prevailed in the preceding literary discourses on furniture, which are exemplified by Wen Zhengheng's 文震亨 (1585–1645) *Zhangwu zhi* 長物志 (*Treatises on Superfluous Things*).

The round tables of the Qing dynasty were subject to similar pragmatic diagnoses rather than aesthetic evaluation—particularly because of their permeation into the lives of a broad spectrum of social bodies—and thus they received little attention as a subject of appreciation.

Since they were first and foremost governed by a utilitarian interest, it was less significant after all whether they had four or eight legs, or if they were made in conventional or unfamiliar designs. Such a utilitarian attitude enabled a seamless settling of European tables in Cantonese, and further Chinese, material culture. Moreover, this de-aestheticized view toward furniture ironically allowed such objects to preserve their original form and resist morphological adaptation throughout their extensive dissemination in a broad array of Chinese regions. Indeed, the depictions of tilt-top and gate leg tables found in the export paintings made in Canton, in Yangliu prints from near Tianjin, and even in the late nineteenth-century photographs taken in Shanghai all share the same traits of their original design: the

[34]Li Yu 李漁, *Xianqing ouji* 閑情偶寄 (*Sketches of Idle Pleasures*) (Beijing: Zhonghua shudian, 2007), 92.

uniquely turned legs or the cariole tripod carved into scroll forms. As a result of such a de-aestheticized and utilitarian attitude, therefore, the tilt-top and gate leg tables became rather unique examples of the transcultural movement of objects, in which the object became successfully adapted to the local soil without going through the process of localization. From this perspective, the round table, keeping its originality and receiving equal hospitality throughout its global travel, was truly an EurAsian object.

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Unknown Transcultural Objects: Turned Ivory Works by the European Rose Engine Lathe in the Eighteenth-Century Qing Court

Ching-fei Shih

Abstract This paper analyzes a group of rose engine lathe-turned ivory works from the original Qing court collection, which were previously unknown to museum curators and scholars. The transcultural messages carried by the lathe-turned ivory works and the role that lathe turning machinery in the Qing court played in artistic exchanges and in disseminating technical knowledge between eighteenth-century Europe and China are significant. The recent publication of the Imperial Household archives has made this research possible, and it has been the author's privilege to work with the National Palace Museum's digital archive of the collection and with colleagues in the Palace Museum, Beijing, to identify similar works in storage. The turned ivory works by European rose engine lathe in the eighteenth-century Qing court is an interesting and solid case study for the discussion of communication between the East and the West. This paper evaluates imperial archive documents, ivory art works made by European rose engine lathes in the imperial workshops, and the relevant practical techniques brought to the Qing court, to discuss the exchange of art and craftsmanship techniques between the East and the West during the period.

Since the sixteenth century, when a new sea route from Europe to Asia was navigated by Europeans, exotic goods flowed into China via ship cargoes: natural materials such as fragrances, minerals, and coral; artificial products including clocks and watches, glassware, enamelware; and scientific instruments such as telescopes. However, tools such as the lathe machine, which is the focus of this article, have attracted very little attention in previous studies of the material world during the early modern period. I have discussed elsewhere the transmission of the Western lathe and associated technology to the Qing court in the form of a few broader

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observations and suggestions for future research.[1] Yet, having crossed the ocean, the rose engine lathe, which has played an unnoticed role in the cultural exchanges between Europe and China, reveals an important transcultural dialogue in the eighteenth-century Qing court. The main focus of this paper is to consider how this tool and the relevant techniques and scientific knowledge it brought to the Qing court supported the imperial workshop's new presentation of ivory artwork with turning patterns. What role did the transcultural messages brought by the innovative rose engine lathe-turned ivory works and the lathe-turning machinery play in the Qing court? How did the introduction of Western lathes and related scientific knowledge and technology support creative production by replacing traditional carving with lathe-turning for making forms and patterns? In attempting to answer these questions, this essay will offer insights into the role of the emperors, the imperial household officials, the Jesuit missionaries, the lathe-turning manuals, and the craftsmen within the larger dynamics of art and technological exchange between East and West. In addition, what can this specific, short-lived (and unexpected) case of cultural exchange tell us about creativity in the ivory arts and the about the influence of related scientific knowledge, technology, and tools on the development of art production?[2]

The Exotic Works of Art from the West to the Qing court

European turned-ivory objects made by lathe did not appear in the late seventeenth-century Qing court before their import from Europe; however, such techniques had been very popular in Europe since the Renaissance, when the aristocrats of the Holy Roman Empire regarded lathe-turning as part of a princely education and an appropriate leisure time activity.[3] Indeed, fabulous ivory-turning works can be seen in most sixteenth- to seventeenth-century European princely collections. This is not to say that no lathe-turned works were made in China before this time. In fact, the lathe was used as a tool for furniture and for woodworking in general in many civilizations before this time. The case here highlights a powerful lathe machine (the

[1] Shih Ching-fei 施靜菲, "Ye shi bolaipin: Qinggong zhong de huashi xuanchuang 也是舶來品: 清宮中的花式鏇床 (Another Item from Over the Sea: Rose Engine Lathes at the Qing Court)," *Taida Journal of Art History* 32 (2012): 171–238. Gathering all available evidence and contextual data, the essay investigates the role that the Western lathe played in the Qing court and the evidence that it and related works of art supply for our understanding of artistic and technological exchange between East and West in the eighteenth century.

[2] The long history of Chinese ivory artworks can be traced back to the Neolithic period. While ivory is not a mainstream material in early Chinese art history, it was not until the seventeenth to early twentieth centuries that ivory artworks reached its high peak. One of the reasons for this may have been that the elephant tusks were greatly valued as diplomatic presents and imported via marine trade.

[3] Klaus Maurice, "The Princely Art of Turning on the Aesthetic Significance of the Natural Sciences and Technology," in *Gedrehte Kostbarkeiten: Turned Treasuries*, edited by Georg Laue, Klaus Maurice and Christiane Zeiller (Munich: Kunstkammer, 2004), 16–23.

rose engine) that appeared in the Holy Roman Empire during late sixteenth century. The rose engine is a specific kind of lathe that produced complicated patterns and forms on turned objects, and thus became a milestone of Renaissance technological and artistic achievement.[4]

Surprisingly, some precious European rose engine lathe turned objects are included in collections of the Qing court, now in the Palace Museum in Beijing and in the collection of the National Palace Museum in Taipei,[5] but they have never been fully explored. Among these lathe-turned works, is a pair of objects that especially attracted my attention because of their particular profile and patterns (Fig. 1). They are composed of several separate parts and jointed by screwing; the upper part has a tulip-like floral decoration that is jointed underneath by a sphere with six opening holes; inside the sphere, there is a Plato cube/hexahedron with an opening hole on each side containing a die that is nestled further inside. The middle and lower parts form one cylindrical openwork box and one roundel openwork box with various trumpet-form flowers on top. On its base, it is decorated with a delicate Spirograph openwork pattern and a rosette pattern. The style of these turned objects, which is similar to extant Southern German examples in the Kunstindustrimuseum, Copenhagen, and some private collections,[6] tells us that the objects were made in seventeenth-century Southern Germany in the Holy Roman Empire. An ivory object of very similar design containing the coat of arms of Duke Leopold of Lorraine (c. 1700) is mentioned by Klaus Maurice.[7] Other comparable double boxes were in the cabinet of the French turner and collector Nicolas Grollier Compte de Servière (1593–1686), who acquired an extensive group of turned objects that were later illustrated in a 1719 publication of copper engravings of his inventory.[8]

As mentioned above, there are two such pieces (seen as a pair) which, according to the records, were originally housed in one of the side halls attached to the

[4]For a brief history of lathe development, please refer to Klaus Maurice, *Sovereigns as Turners* (Zurich: Verlag Ineichen, 1985), 131–8.

[5]They were recently revealed by the author and my colleagues in the Palace Museum, Beijing. See the special issue of *Forbidden City Monthly* on ivory-turning at the Qing court. Liu Yue 劉岳, "Cong yi jian Qinggong yiliu de xiangya qiwu shuo qi 從一件清宮遺留的象牙器物說起 (Speaking about a Qing court ivory crafted object)," *The Forbidden City Monthly* 203 (12/2011): 40–56; Shih Ching-fei 施靜菲, "Ni suo bu zhidao de Guangdong xiangyaqiu 你所不知道的廣東象牙球 (Concentric Ivory Spheres from Canton)," *The Forbidden City Monthly* 203 (12/2011): 20–36.

[6]I would like to thank Dr. Jutta Kappel of the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden for the information through email communication. For private collections, see Georg Laue, Klaus Maurice and Christiane Zeiller, ed., *Gedrehte Kostbarkeiten: Turned Treasuries* (Munich: Kunstkammer, 2004), 28–9 and Sotheby's auction 2011, accessed December 12, 2015, http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2011/property-from-the-collections-of-lily-edmond-j-safra-n08822/lot.773.html

[7]Maurice, *Sovereigns as Turners*, 85.

[8]See Maurice, *Sovereigns as Turners*, nos. 115 and 117.

Fig. 1 Ivory box in the Forbidden city. Seventeenth century. The Palace Museum, Beijing

Yangxindian 養心殿 (Palace of Mental Cultivation) in the Forbidden City.[9] Most of these imported, turned objects were displayed in important imperial palaces as part of interior decorations. Recent building restoration projects in the Palace Museum, Beijing, allow us to imagine the possible original settings for such objects in the eighteenth-century Forbidden City. Objects of this kind were likely kept in wood-framed cases with glass covers, along with other decorative objects, where they could be admired and could ornament the palaces.[10]

In addition, with the accretion of understanding about the European lathe-turned tradition, we can now evaluate the provenance and technology of these turned objects and suggest that European objects of this sort were very likely brought as diplomatic gifts or local tributes to the Qing court during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Archival sources from the Qing court and other available documents provide evidence of further potential avenues of transport for these turned objects into the court, and shed light on their likely functions there.[11]

Collection and Manufacture of Turned Objects in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe

As mentioned above, in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe, lathe-turning was seen as part of a princely education and became popular as a suitable leisure activity for aristocratic men in the Holy Roman Empire, since the lathe was regarded as a kind of machine, the handling of which required knowledge of science and technology. Lathe-turning was thought to provide respite from busy governmental affairs and was seen as helpful in nurturing the virtue of patience.[12]

Ivory carving had a long history in Europe since the Middle Ages, when it served mainly religious purposes, for example in making shrine figurines and ritual vessels for churches.[13] Since the sixteenth century, lathes employed for ivory and wood turning became necessary equipment in the court of the Holy Roman Empire where

[9]The old inventory number of these two boxes is *Lu* 呂 no.3370, indicating that their original location is Tishun tang ji ge xianfang denchu 體順堂及各廂房等處 (Hall of Manifesting Obedience and other side chambers). See Committee for the Disposition of Qing's Imperial Possessions, ed., *Gugong wupin diancha baogao* 故宮物品點查報告 (*Palace Items Auditing Report*) (Beijing: Xianzhuang shuju, 2004).

[10]Wang Yi 萬依, Wang Shuqin 王樹卿, and Lu Yenzhen 陸燕貞, ed., *Gugong jingdian: Qinggong shenghuo tudian* 故宮经典:清宮生活图典 (Life in the Forbidden City of Qing dynasty) (Beijing: Zijin cheng chubanshe, 2007), 143, pl. 214.

[11]See the case study of wooden goblets in the Qing court. Ching-fei Shih, "The Wooden Hundred-layered Goblet from the Western Ocean," *Orientations* 48, no. 4 (2015): 60–4.

[12]Laue, "Turned Treasuries," 18–23.

[13]For general accounts on European ivory works, see Peter E. Lasko, ed., *Ivory: A History and Collection Guide* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987). Richard H. Randall Jr., *Masterpieces of Ivory: from the Walters Art Gallery* (New York: Hudson Hills Press and Walters Art Gallery, 1985).

their popularity was underpinned by their role in demonstrating imperial intelligence.[14] Emperor Rudolph II (1552–1612), for instance, set up a turning workshop in Prague and one of his works is now housed in the National Museum of Denmark.[15] The philosophical understanding of lathe-turning was that it was an imitation of the creation of the cosmos, incorporating knowledge of mathematics, geometry, perspective, and advanced craftsmanship techniques. A master of lathe-turning was also, of course, emulating God, the first "turner" who created the world and turned the globe.[16] By extension, those who could control/work on the turning machine/lathe were also demonstrating its and hence, their own, ability to control the cosmos.[17]

Princely lathe-turning later spread into other regions in Europe outside the Holy Roman Empire, including France, Denmark, and Russia: the French king, Louis XV, is said to have been a good turner.[18] Many master turners were also employed in courts all over Europe, for instance, the famous turner Jakob Zeller (1581–1620) who worked at the court of Rudolph II in Prague was also invited to work at the Saxon court at Dresden and produced many extraordinary ivory pieces that perfectly combined carving and turning.[19] In addition to achievements of aesthetic value, the main focus of lathe-turning was to demonstrate a high degree of technical prowess and to produce curiosities, as has been pointed out by Arthur MacGregor.[20] Thus, elaborate lathe-turning enjoyed a period of long-term development, the pinnacle of which was reached when the technique shifted toward turned (machine-made art) as opposed to manually carved (hand-made art) objects.

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[14]Sato Nayoki 佐藤直樹, and Tanabe Mikinosuke 田辺幹之助, ed., ドレスデン国立美術館展-世界の鏡 (*Dresden: Spiegel der Welt: Die Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Dresden in Japan*) (Tokyo: Nikkei Inc., 2005), 35–6; Arthur MacGregor, *Curiosity and Enlightenment: Collectors and Collections from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth centuries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 214.

[15]Rudolph II was Holy Roman Emperor (1576–1612), King of Hungary and Croatia (as Rudolf I, 1572–1608), King of Bohemia (1575–1608/1611), and Archduke of Austria (1576–1608). One of his lathe-turned works was kept in the *Kunstkammer* housed in the National Museum of Demark. Accessed November 7, 2011, http://www.kunstkammer.dk/AndetGB/genstande_andetGB.asp?ID=77.

[16]Horst Bredekamp, *The Lure of Antiquity and the Cult of the Machine: The Kunstkammer and the Evolution of Nature, Art and Technology*, trans. Allison Brown (Princeton: Markus Weiner Publishers, 1995), 37–45; Maurice, *Sovereigns as Turners*, 15–22.

[17]Wang Ching-ling 王靜靈, "Yuzhou he shijie de zhuzai: Tan Delesideng suocang Sakesen wanghou de duomianti xiangyataoqiu zhizuo 宇宙和世界的主宰-談德勒斯登所藏薩克森王侯的多面體象牙套球製作 (The Ruler of the Universe and World: The Ivory-crafted Geometrical Balls Produced and Collected by Saxon Kings and Princes in Dresden)," *The Forbidden City Monthly* 203 (12/2011): 57–67.

[18]MacGregor, *Curiosity and Enlightenment*, 215.

[19]For an example of such work, see Sato and Tanabe, ドレスデン国立美術館展-世界の鏡, 36.

[20]Arthur MacGregor, *Tradescant's Rarities: Essays on the Foundations of the Ashmolean Museum, 1683, with a catalogue of the surviving early collections* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 289–90.

Advanced lathes for turning objects appeared in the courts, and by the second half of the sixteenth century rose engine lathe-turning gained in prominence. The rose engine was a particular type of machine that was used at the courts of Munich and Dresden from at least the end of the sixteenth century. According to Klaus Maurice, a rose engine lathe must have the following elements: "first, a continuous drive, second, mechanical setting and adjustment of the cutting tool, third, programme control, and fourth, like all the mobile and fixed parts of the lathe, the latter had to be metal."[21]

It makes use of a variety of special accessories in order to achieve the complicated Spirograph patterns (Fig. 2).[22] Accurate design in advance is usually required to set up the necessary mechanical parts, and the spindle, the headstock, and the carriage must be made of metal to ensure the precision of the work. In practice, the parts and the cutting tool rotate independently to turn the patterns as designed according to a pre-set program. For example, the lathe can produce complicated twisted rope patterns turned onto the flat surface of a round plate (Fig. 2). The principle is similar to that of the kaleidoscope ruler, with which extremely complicated patterns can be made through a pre-set design. The complicated products of the rose engine lathe fully exhibited the mature technique and great ability of the turner, which encouraged courts all over Europe to compete in making high quality turned works. Among these is a portrait lathe of a special kind, the lathe can have a pattern or portrait in relief turned as designed using the pre-set tools and program (Fig. 3). The most common example of this is the format of a box or a medal with medallion turned on the top, such as the portrait medallion of St. Petersburg, which shows Catherine the Great (1729–1796) as the Roman goddess Minerva on a medal (Fig. 4). It has also been suggested that ivory medallions turned on the lathe were sought-after *Kunstkammer* objects as it was incomprehensive that relief of such refined quality could have been crafted by a machine on such a fragile substance as ivory."[23] Indeed, the practice of using a portrait lathe is crucial to this discussion, as it was probably the main type of lathe employed at the eighteenth-century Qing court.

In late seventeenth- to eighteenth-century Europe, many handbooks/treaties on lathe-turning were published, for example, *L'art de tourner, ou de faire en perfection toutes sortes d'ouvrages au tour* by Charles Plumier (1646–1704) came out in the year of 1701, and *Manuel du Tourneur*, by L. E. Bergeron (1737–1805), was published first in 1792 and in a second edition in 1796. The treaties by Plumier are included in the book list in the library of the Beitang 北堂 (Northern church), a book collection that is based on the French Jesuit missionary library established from

[21]Maurice, *Sovereigns as Turners*, 134.

[22]Stuart King, "History of the Lathe: part two—continuous rotation," blog entry, posted March 22, 2008, accessed August 31, 2011, http://www.stuartking.co.uk/index.php/history-of-the-lathe-part-two-continuous-rotation/

[23]Laue, Maurice and Zeiller, *Gedrehte Kostbarkeiten: Turned Treasuries*, 77–8.

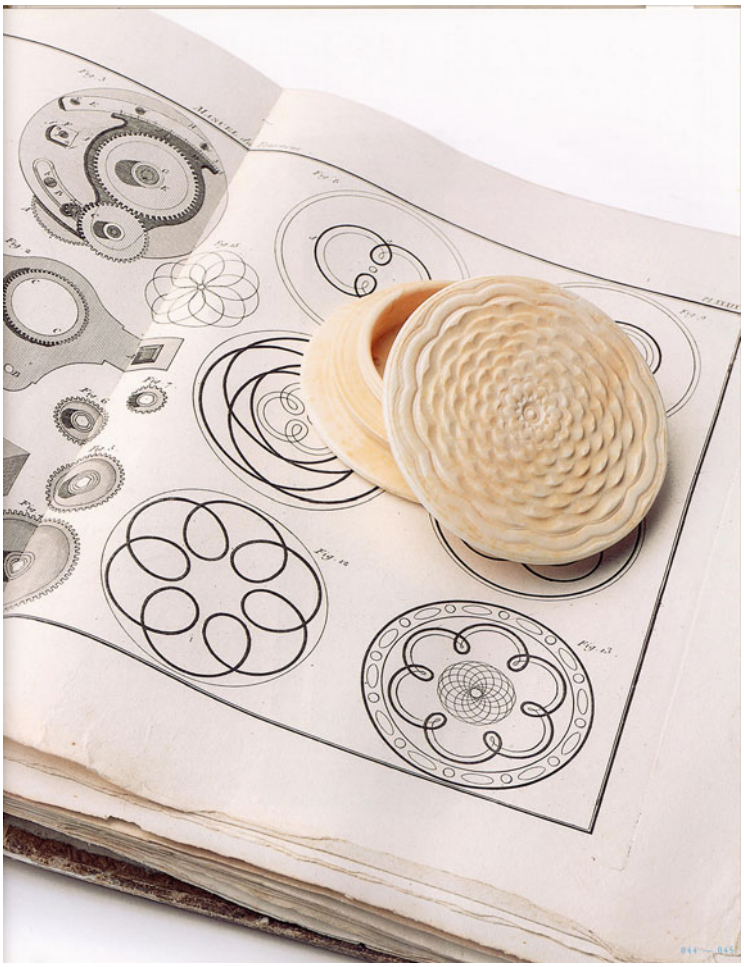
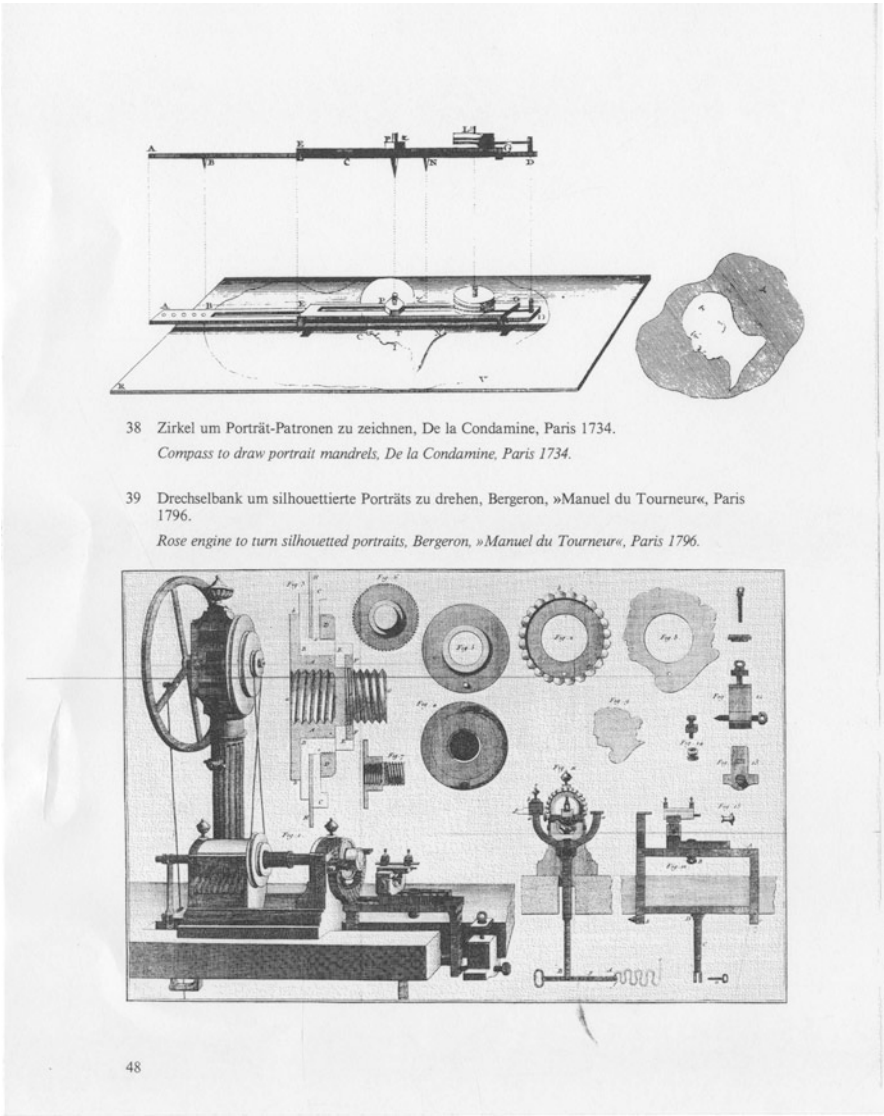


Fig. 2 The manual for the rose engine turning and the turned object. After Georg Laue, Klaus Maurice et al., *Turned Treasuries*, 45

the late seventeenth century onwards.[24] Copies of Plumier's books on lathe-turning found in China were likely consulted by the turner at the Qing court. According to the analysis by Maurice, "in the texts the machine always remains a luxury of the

[24]Lazarist Mission Press, *Catalogue of the Pei-T'ang Library* (Beijing: Guojia tushuguang chubanshe, 2008), 155, no. 578. Charles Plumier, *L'art de tourner, ou de faire en perfection toutes sortes d'ouvrages au tour* (Paris: Jean Jombert, 1701). For the history of *Beitang* Library, see Mao Ruifang 毛瑞芳, "'Beitang shumu': jilu xixue dongjian de zhongyao lishi wenxian《北堂書目》: 記錄西學東漸的重要歷史文獻 (The Importance of 'Beitang Shumu' for the History of Western Cultural Input into the East)," *Journal of Historiography* 4 (2007): 112–8.



38 Zirkel um Porträt-Patronen zu zeichnen, De la Condamine, Paris 1734.
Compass to draw portrait mandrels, De la Condamine, Paris 1734.

39 Drechselbank um silhouettierte Porträts zu drehen, Bergeron, »Manuel du Tourneur«, Paris 1796.
Rose engine to turn silhouetted portraits, Bergeron, »Manuel du Tourneur«, Paris 1796.

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Fig. 3 The Portrait Lathe in Bergeron, *Manuel of Tourneur,* Paris 1796. After Klaus Maurice, *Sovereigns as Turners*, Fig. 39

nobility which is never associated with a common handicraft," since the machine is described as an artificial instrument or a piece of equipment that outwits nature by making *objects d'art* more easily.[25]

[25]Maurice, *Sovereigns as Turners*, 103.

Fig. 4 Portrait medallion of St. Petersburg showing Empress Catherine the Great (1729–1796) as the Roman goddess Minerva on a medal. 1766. After Georg Laue, Klaus Maurice et al., *Turned Treasuries*, pl. 24

Transcultural Objects by the European Rose Engine Lathe in the Qing Court

The collection of lathe-turned ivory objects and European rose engine lathes in the Qing court, reveal the international communication that existed between the Qing court and Europe through Western diplomats and missionaries; it also suggests that in contrast to the imperial court of the previous dynasty, during the heyday of the Qing dynasty the Qing court encouraged relatively open and positive attitudes toward the introduction of Western objects and techniques.[26] The question of whether a turned object was made on an ordinary lathe or on a rose engine lathe, requires that we first examine a handful of extant round/cylindrical/oval ivory objects from the Qing court collection.

Some extant objects that were turned by rose engine lathes have been discovered in both the collections of the National Palace Museum in Taipei and the Palace Museum in Beijing.[27] For example, an ivory box housed in the Palace Museum, Beijing displays a plum blossom motif turned in relief on the top, outwardly turned rosette patterns on the bottom, and the petal pattern on the side of the box (Fig. 5), all of which are closely related to European objects turned on the rose engine.

This begs the question of how the Qing court imperial lathe-turning workshop appropriated the European rose engine into its production processes and transformed conventional designs into new looks. Let us first consider the objects that are most similar to European-style artifacts: The representation of the lid and the bottom of the

[26]This was different from attitudes during the preceding Ming dynasty, when, for instance, Emperor Wanli 萬曆 rejected an audience with the Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci. See Chen Hui-Hung 陳慧宏, "Yesuhui jiaoshi Li Madou shidai de shijue wuxiang ji chuanbo wangluo 耶穌會教士利瑪竇時代的視覺物像及傳播網絡 (Visual Objects and Personal Interactions: Their Contexts as Described by the Jesuit Matteo Ricci (1552–1610))," *New History Journal* 21, no. 3 (2010): 55–123.

[27]Shih, "Ye shi bolaipin: Qinggong zhong de haushi xuanchuang," 171–238; Liu, "Cong yi jian Qinggong yiliu de xiangya qiwu shuo qi," 40–56.

bamboo-like tubular box in ivory is very close to objects turned by the European rose engine lathe; however, the choice of the bamboo pattern follows a traditional theme while the geometrical arc shape is fully consistent with the spiral-graphic style (Fig. 6).[28] This object can be regarded as one example of a successful integration of European style with traditional themes. But when we look more closely at the object, the uneven width of the bamboo joint pattern on the body and that of the spiral-graphic pattern on the base suggests that the turning execution might not have been perfect in this case.

Let us now consider the objects resulting from a more adventurous experimentation, which used the rose engine lathe to imitate traditional pictorial themes in turned relief. There is no doubt that the portrait engine was the most frequently used lathe for pictorial motifs. Indeed, the traces of lathe-turning in the pattern on the surface of the box are obvious to the eye (Fig. 5). However, successful works of boxes decorated with pictorial motifs were very rare, for it was still difficult to use the rose engine lathe to turn pictorial themes. The most successful ones in terms of technical mastery include the box with a motif of a dog on top and the box with a landscape on top and a poem on its bottom.[29] This group of turned pieces required a high level of technical skill in order to render complicated pictorial themes in relief, including a mountain, river and boat, and even the representation of Chinese characters. The contours of the scenery and figure, in addition to the poetry on the base, are turned onto the surface of the box and were perhaps followed by crisp polishing in low relief. The same features can be found on the portrait medallion in St. Petersburg (Fig. 4), mentioned above, which also shows the traces of turning in relief on the flat surface of the medal. Based on the layout of these ivory turned pieces containing painting-like decorative motifs, we can conclude that a specific portrait rose engine was definitely used (Fig. 2).

The third group is more heterogeneous since it is clear that during production rose engine turning was mixed with hand-carving or the addition of glued on hand-carved patterns. The ivory box here looks like an attempt to correct a failed experiment with rose engine turned ivory box production. One can see in the surface figure pattern that the low reliefs were carved manually (not mechanically) onto the flat surface of the box. By comparison, the low relief also looks as if it was glued to the surface (and not carved out of it).

The turned, round boxes exhibit the elegant southern Chinese tradition of bamboo and horn low-relief carving effects, which were popular in the seventeenth- to eighteenth-century Jiangnan area, while simultaneously displaying traces of rose engine lathe-turning. In most cases, the bottoms of the boxes are decorated with Western spiral-graphic rosette patterns while the surfaces and the interiors of the boxes are decorated with traditional auspicious patterns in low-relief turning. They combine traditional motifs and foreign decorative patterns, conventional materials and new mechanical techniques, exhibit Chinese and "Western Ocean" production

[28]Shih, "Ye shi bolaipin: Qinggong zhong de huashi xuanchuang," pl. 26B.

[29]Shih, "Ye shi bolaipin: Qinggong zhong de huashi xuanchuang," pl. 20 and 25.

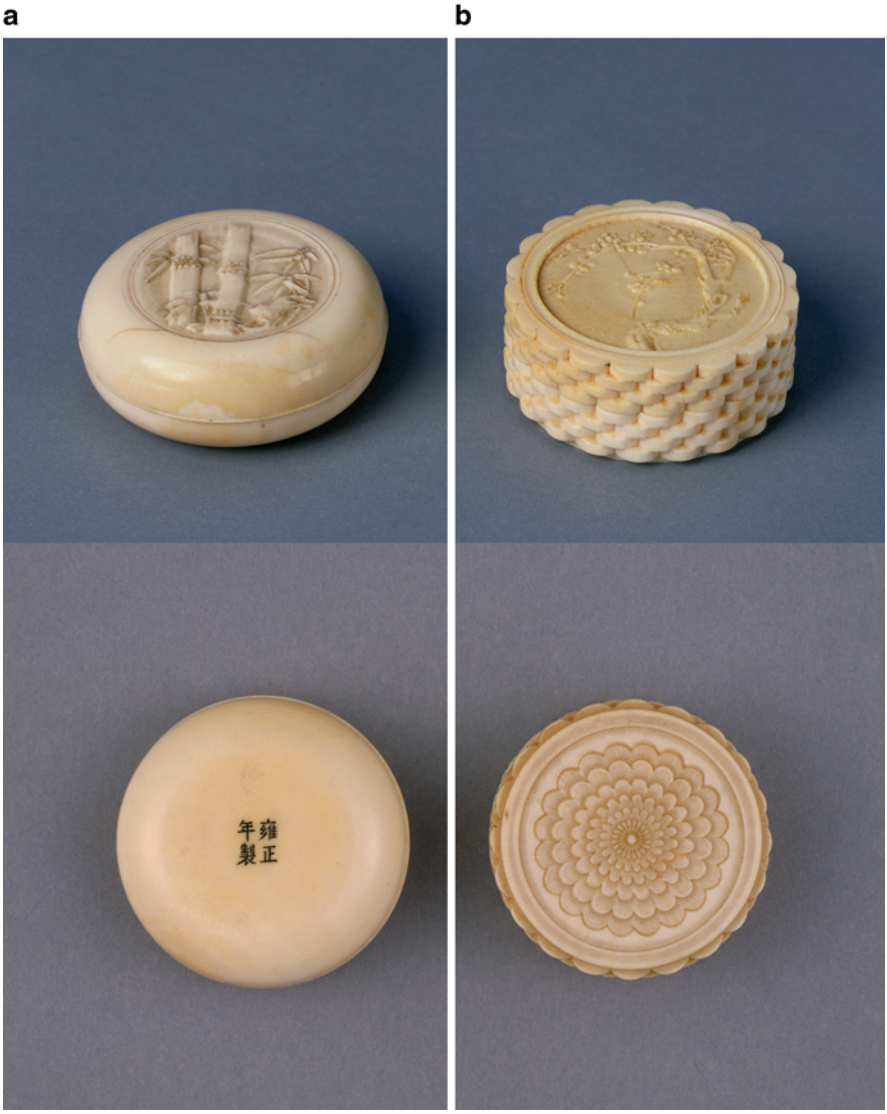

Fig. 5 Ivory box with plum blossom pattern. Eighteenth century. The Palace Museum, Beijing

practices and aesthetics, and are obvious transcultural objects in this sense. Yet, despite the attempts at technical development based on use of the rose engine lathe, no stable technical development was attained in the imperial workshops. There were not many successful works resulting from a merging of lathe-turning with traditional bamboo and horn carving. On the contrary, if one were to search more methodically

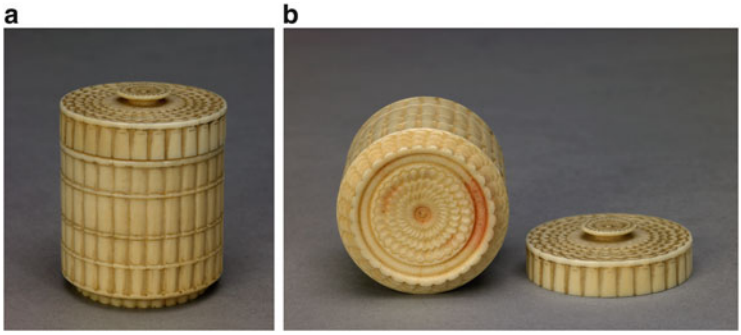

Fig. 6 Ivory box with bamboo joint design. Eighteenth century. The Palace Museum, Beijing

for the working traces of lathes, many more failed works would no doubt be revealed.[30]

Use of the European Rose Engine in the Qing Imperial Workshop

Due to the lack of evidence, we know very little about how the imperial artisans acquired the skill and techniques needed to operate the rose engine lathes in Yongzheng's 雍正 (r.1723–1736) court. What we do know is that there was an established turning workshop in the Imperial Household, and according to the documents, the turned objects in the Qing court were mainly produced in this Xuan zuo 鏇作 (lathe-turning workshop). In addition, it is reasonable to suggest that some of the objects that were similar to the imported turned pieces from the West were designed either as decorative objects for display and works of art, or as containers for daily use. For instance, the archive reveals that Emperor Yongzheng ordered the imperial workshops to make turned ivory box containers for balsam (*baersamu xiang* 巴爾薩木香), and the record of lathe-turning workshop for the third month of the seventh year of Yongzheng's reign in the Qing Imperial Household Archives, states: "make ten pieces of small ivory boxes for containing heat-avoiding balsam."[31]

[30]For instance, Liu, "Cong yijian Qinggong yiliu de xiangya qiwu shuo qi," 49. A similar ivory box is found in a private collection. Jia Yang 江揚, and Yang Xuejun 楊學軍, ed., *Shangyi shanfang cang Zhongguo xiangya diaoke* 尚藝山房藏中國象牙雕刻 (Chinese Ivory Carvings from the Appreciating Art Mountain Retreat Collection) (Suzhou: Guwu xuan chubanshe, 2011), 110.

[31]Orig."做避暑巴爾薩木香小象牙盒十件." "Xuan zuo 鏇作 (lathe-turning workshops), the third month of the seventh year of Yongzheng's reign," in *Qinggong neiwufu zaobanchu dangan zonghui* 清宮造務府造辦處檔案總匯 (*The compilation of the Qing Imperial Household Archives*), ed. Chinese University of Hong Kong, Art Museum (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2005), vol. 3, 769. Balsam is one kind of ointment or essence, which was employed for placebo effect.

The heavy and large-sized material features of the rose engine lathe as a tool makes its movement across the ocean from Europe to China quite unexpected. Nonetheless, it is not just the objects turned by the rose engine lathe, but also the rose engine lathes themselves that were found in the Qing court, according to relevant archival records. As has been argued elsewhere, the rose engine lathes in the Qing court were most probably brought in as local officials' tributes from Guangdong or as gifts from Western missionaries.[32] The lathes were not mere collectibles or objects for display, they were practical tools for use in the imperial workshop. Indeed, there are many archival records from the Yongzheng period that record the use of lathes from the "Western Oceans" in making ivory artworks for the court, and there were specific people who were placed in charge of the management and working of the lathes. For instance, the record of Xuan zuo, the fifth month of the tenth year of Yongzheng's reign, in the Qing Imperial Household Archives, states:

> the order came from the Yuan Ming Yuan on the seventh day of this month, *siku* 司庫 (the treasurer) Changbao 常保 and Shuoling 首領 (the director) Samuha 薩木哈, passed the words and *taijian* 太監 (the eunuch) Changzhou 滄州 passed on the emperor's decree that "make some ivory boxes with good designs by employing the western lathe machines. That's all." Today *taijian* 太監 (the eunuch) Yang Wenjie 楊文杰 replied, *Yuanwailang* 員外郎 (the vice director) Manpi 滿毗 set up a plan to make ten pairs of ivory boxes in various styles.[33]

In addition, the existing related objects in the original collection of the Qing court and the description of lathes in textual sources suggest that the Western lathe in the Qing court was almost certainly the rose engine lathe, which required a complex of knowledge and techniques as well as a pre-set program in order to produce the specific patterns described above. The mechanical level of the rose engine lathe was higher than that of the ordinary lathe, and its introduction into the Qing court obviously provided a new stimulus and introduced new ideas to the practice of ivory working in the period, which was so different from previous ivory working based mainly on hand carving. The key advantages of the European rose engine lathe, which were its predictable working process and unpredictable result, according to Jutta Kappel,[34] influenced its handling in the Qing court.

The knowledge of geometry required for lathe-turning, for instance, is believed to have been brought to China in the middle of the seventeenth century. Examples of this include the translation of Euclid's *Elements of Geometry* in the *Da ce* 大測

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[32]Shih, "Ye shi bolaipin: Qinggong zhong de huashi xuanchuang," 185–6.

[33]Orig. "圓明園來帖稱本月初七日司庫常保首領薩木哈來說，太監滄州傳旨:著用西洋鏇床將好款式花紋象牙盒鏇做些。欽此。本日太監楊文杰回明， 員外郎滿毗擬試做各式象牙盒十對。記此." "Xuan zuo 鏇作 (lathe-turning workshops), the fifth month of the tenth year of Yongzheng's reign," in *Qinggong neiwufu zaobanchu dangan zonghui* 清宮內務府造辦處檔案總匯 (*The compilation of the Qing Imperial Household Archives*), ed. Chinese University of Hong Kong, Art Museum (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2005), vol. 5, 394.

[34]Jutta Kappel, "Turned Ivory Works," in *Princely Splendor: The Dresden Court 1580–1620*, ed. Dirk Syndram and Antje Scherner (Milan: Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden and Mondadori Eleca S.p.A., 2004), 176–97.

(Grand Measure) by Deng Yuhan 鄧玉函 (Johann Schreck, 1576–1630) (was included into the *Chongzhen lishu* 崇禎曆書, accomplished in 1629), which mentions the area of the surface of the spheroid, as well as the *Yu zhi shuli jingyun* 御製數理精蘊 (Imperial Key Concepts of Mathematics), which includes the Platonic solids and other relevant knowledge.[35] *Yu zhi shuli jingyun* 御製數理精蘊 (Imperial Key Concepts of Mathematics) was edited in 1713 after an edict by Emperor Kangxi 康熙 (r. 1662–1722) and was published in 1722. It collected the most important Western achievements in mathematics that had been brought to China. Emperor Kangxi started to embrace and study Western science after the debate on the standard national calendar, which gained fame as the "Chinese rite controversy" (*Liyi zhi zheng* 禮儀之爭). The missionary Nan Huiren 南懷仁 (Ferdinand Verbiest, 1623–1688), An Duo 安多 (Antoine Thomas, 1644–1709), Zhang Cheng 張誠 (Jean Francois Gerbeillon, 1654–1707), and Bai Jin 白晉 (Joachim Bouvet, 1656–1730) taught Emperor Kangxi about mathematics. The present Qing court collection still contains some relevant textbooks and teaching models from these lessons, including Kangxi's portable logarithm table in the collection of the National Palace Museum in Taipei,[36] and the wooden polyhedral model for geometry made for Kangxi in the Palace Museum in Beijing, which is very similar to the wooden polyhedral model used by Louis XV.[37] Although we do not have evidence to explore further whether Emperor Kangxi used his geometry knowledge to work on the rose engine lathe in the Qing court, it would not be surprising if he did engage in the same leisure activity as his European counterparts. According to archival records, which are dated to around the fifth to tenth years of Emperor Yongzheng's reign, lathe-turning reached its pinnacle in the Qing imperial workshops between 1727 and 1733; many ivory boxes were turned by one or several rose engines in Imperial Household workshops during this period.

As mentioned above, Emperor Yongzheng frequently ordered ivory boxes with Western-style patterns to be made on the Western lathes, and detailed descriptions of the making were included in these records. Relatively fewer orders from Emperor Qianlong's 乾隆 reign (r.1736–1796) have been discovered, however; and therefore, it is reasonable to believe that Emperor Yongzheng was particularly interested in the turned pattern that required the turning of the lathes from the "Western Oceans" in the Imperial Workshops and was perhaps curious about the geometry knowledge contained in the turned works. Nonetheless, the previously described emphasis on

[35]See Du Shiran 杜石然, and Han Qi 韓琦, "Shiqi, shiba shiji Faguo Yesuhuishi dui Zhongguo kexue de gongxian 十七、十八世紀法國耶穌會士對中國科學的貢獻 (The contribution to Chinese science of French Jesuit missionaries in the 17th and 18th centuries)," *Impact of Science on Society* 167 (1993): 55–64. For the history and various compilation of Chongzhen lishu, see Chu Ping-yi 祝平一, "Chongzhen lishu kao 〈《崇禎曆書》考〉 (The Chongzhen Almanc Test)," *Mingdai yanjiu* 11 (2008): 133–61.

[36]National Palace Museum, ed., *Kangxi dadi yu taiyang wang Luyi shisi tezhan* 康熙大帝與太陽王路易十四特展 (*Emperor Kangxi and the Sun King Louis XIV*) (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 2011), 78, pl. IB-26.

[37]Shih, "Ye shi bolaipin: Qinggong zhong de huashi xuanchuang," 191, pl. 28.

the nature of machines, which was to extend the reach of the physical ability of human beings in Renaissance and Enlightenment Europe, still seems to have been a distant concern for the Qing court products. Due to the lack of references, we are not in a position to judge whether the Qing emperors received information on the symbolic meanings encoded by European princes in the activity of lathe-turning and whether other aspects of the nature of the machine were understood or not at this stage. We do, however, know that the tools/machines, the human resources for turning, and the manuals from the West must have been imported into the Qing court, the heart of civilization in China, and inspired the set-up of the workshop for turning, which actually made turned pieces for the court. According to the archival records, continuous tributes of turned ivory works by embassies and Jesuit missionaries might have interested Emperor Qianlong in turned patterns. But when we compare Qianlong's curiosity to the strong interest in lathe-turning ivory during the Yongzheng period, it seems as though the rose engine lathe served more as a display object than a tool in the Qianlong period.[38] We know that when Emperor Qianlong asked the Western missionaries and the court turners of the Western lathe (*Xiyang xuanchuang zhi ren* 西洋鏇床之人) to check whether the Western rose engine lathes were still in working order and could turn patterns, he discovered that since the lathes had not been used for a long time some parts or accessories were missing, and he was advised to have the patterns hand-carved instead.[39] Thereafter, the short burst of glory enjoyed by rose engine lathe-turning reached an end, and during the eighteenth century relevant records were simply no longer available at the Qing court. In addition, the records suggest that the Qing court ivory carving technique had been developed to imitate the effects produced by the Western rose engine lathe, though no object has yet been found to further support this.

Conclusion

According to the materials we have seen thus far, we still do not know how and why the European rose engine lathes were brought into the Qing court. What we do know is that the desire for the lathes must have been great in order to bring such heavy, sizable machines overland and across the ocean from Europe to China during the late

[38]"Xuan zuo 鏇作 (lathe-turning workshop), the sixth month of the first year of Qianlong's reign," in *Qinggong neiwufu zaobanchu dangan zonghui* 清宮內務府造辦處檔案總匯 (*The compilation of the Qing Imperial Household Archives*), ed. by Chinese University of Hong Kong, Art Museum (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2005).

[39]"Guangmu zuo 廣木作 (Canton wood workshops), the twelfth month of the forty-first year of Qianlong's reign," in *Qinggong neiwufu zaobanchu dangan zonghui* 清宮內務府造辦處檔案總匯 (*The compilation of the Qing Imperial Household Archives*), ed. Chinese University of Hong Kong, Art Museum (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2005), vol. 39, 708.

seventeenth to eighteenth centuries. The advanced machine became an object in motion or an object with mobility, and it was succeeded by a series of transcultural dialogues between the Qing court and European courts, producing extraordinary transcultural results in a particular group of EurAsian objects—namely, rose engine lathe turned ivory works (Figs. 5 and 6). Although not many of the works made with these imported rose engine lathes can be truly deemed successful, the few examples that we do have reveal a transcultural exchange in terms of technology as well as aesthetics that was occurring during the heyday of the Qing empire's contact with the world. The extant records from the Kangxi period are unfortunately too scant to fully explain the situation. It is clear, however, that Emperor Yongzheng and Emperor Qianlong had an understanding of the basic structure of the Western rose engine lathe and the process of making a pre-set program to have patterns turned, for they actually ordered the court workshop to make turned ivory works or to make carved ivory works that imitated the turning patterns.

In addition, the use and the transformation of the Western rose engine lathe in the Qing imperial workshop are noteworthy for the adventurous experimentation in the use of the rose engine lathe, and for the fact that pre-designed pictorial patterns were turned during the Yongzheng period. While the patterns on most of the works are vague, there were also some successful works of integration that were carved with elaborate reliefs after turning, exhibiting the Qing imperial workshop's mastery of the rose engine lathe-turning technique. In the Qianlong period, the turned works made by the rose engine lathes almost disappeared, showing that there were problems with the handling of the lathe during that period. As noted in the archival records, the old Western rose engine lathes had not been used for a long time, and they were therefore no longer in working condition. Consequently, the previously turned patterns were carved by hand instead and the geometry and mechanics knowledge underlying the rose engine lathe was no longer used.

Ivory is an ideal material to work with because it is hard and strong but easy to cut. Among the varieties of ivory from different regions and eras, African ivory is of higher quality than Asian ivory, woolly mammoth, or other sources such as walrus or hippopotamus. This is still true today.[40] Although the long history of Chinese ivory artworks can be traced back to the Neolithic period, ivory was not a mainstream material in early Chinese art history, and it was not until the period between the seventeenth and early twentieth century that ivory artworks reached their peak. One reason for this late trajectory in the production of ivory works may be that elephant tusks were taken as diplomatic presents and were imported via marine trade.[41] Questions remain about the provenience of the ivory used in China at the time

[40]Guangdong ivory workshops and European ornamental turners' studios preferred African ivory.

[41]For instance, see the analysis of Dutch and Portuguese embassies to China in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. John Wills, *Embassies and Illusions: Dutch and Portuguese Envoys to K'ang-hsi* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 1984).

when the rose engine lathe was introduced. Did the import of African ivory (in addition to Asian ivory, which had long been used in China) begin from the seventeenth century and correlate with the introduction of the European rose engine machine? Does this question of material relate to technology? These are important questions that still need to be asked and answered, though there is currently a lack of satisfactory supporting references to clarify this issue.[42]

From the perspective of art history and material culture studies, innovation corresponded with the artisan, the patron, and the development of ideas, and it supported the techniques and tools for artworks. This paper has chosen to highlight the mobility of tool/European lathe machinery instead of the flow of luxury objects in the eighteenth-century maritime trade or the Jesuit missionary activities. This case study of unknown transcultural ivory objects in the eighteenth-century Qing court must open our eyes to the intensive exchange of art and techniques between the East and the West in the eighteenth century. In addition, this paper is part of a larger research project that aims to establish a contextual account of cultural exchange by shedding new light on the history of Chinese handicrafts made with new working tools from the West.

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[42]I would like to thank one of the reviewers and Prof. Monica Juneja for raising questions about the sources of material and the relation to technology.

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Transcultural Lenses: Wrapping the Foreignness for Sale in the *History of Lenses*

Kaijun Chen

Abstract This chapter investigates the advertising rhetoric used in the *History of Lenses*, a booklet describing eleven kinds of foreign optical devices. The descriptions reveal several characteristics of the way that Western artifacts were perceived and transformed in Chinese popular culture. I explain why the devices' illustrations do not represent the tools but instead depict a series of stereotypical artifacts inscribed with marginally relevant commentary about the function of these lenses. First, I explain that illustrated artifacts such as perforated rocks, bronze mirrors, letter papers, and handscrolls are used as visual tropes to assimilate the optical devices into Chinese conventional discourses on artifacts and body. Second, I analyze the rhetoric of ethos, which refers to religious efficacy and moral authority for commercial promotion. Third, I show that the illustrations evoke particular sensory experiences by mobilizing the established cultural tropes linked to specific cultural practices. In summary, although the compiler Sun Yunqiu (1650–after 1681) praises some of the devices' Western origins, I show that the display of indigenous tropes is used to reduce the foreignness of certain artifacts and to assimilate them into the cultural inventory. This booklet on transcultural lenses exemplifies the formation of a genre of illustrated pamphlets in the context of transcultural encounter, which was facilitated by trade and missionary activity in the early modern world.

This chapter results from a surprising encounter with a highly specific material, *History of Lenses* (*Jingshi* 鏡史), an illustrated woodblock booklet about eleven kinds of lenses.[1] Written by a Chinese lens maker, Sun Yunqiu 孫雲球

[1]Historians of Science, including Joseph Needham and Sun Chengsheng, first noticed this booklet and studied it as a technological treatise. See Sun Chengshen, "The Diffusion and Impact of Western Optics in Ming and Qing China," *Studies in the History of Natural Sciences* 3 (2007): 363–76. Sophie Volpp, a Chinese literary scholar, first brought the *History of Lenses* to my attention. One more thorough study of the booklet was published after my completion of the current

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(c. 1629–1662), in the mid-seventeenth century, the booklet includes eleven categories of lenses purportedly introduced by Jesuits missionaries after the 1580s.[2] The title of each category is followed by a short essay, then accompanied by an illustration. The theoretically provocative surprise is twofold. To a lesser extent, it is due to the fast pace at which the optic devices were commercialized and the crafting technique transformed and assimilated into the local repertoire of technology. But more puzzling is the presentation of the material itself, which provides little depiction of and information about the natural historical use of such optic devices. Instead, the lens maker elaborates profusely on their other efficacy.

The booklet and the illustrated optic devices stage a transcultural event, which took place during the whole process of the introduction, mutation, and popularization of the crafting technique and visual experience. Over the past two decades, there has been a major update in the scholarship analyzing the artistic interaction among regions and among the constructed borders of cultures, especially between Asia and Europe.[3] How can we push forward the insights with which the study of Eurasian cultural encounter has challenged the a priori cultural entities and fixed cultural borders? How do we narrate the process by which cultural entities articulate themselves or emerge rather than the other way around—that is, the process of interacting with clearly defined identities?

Following the recent efforts in the investigation of transcultural relationships, this chapter aims to unpack the commercial strategies used in the presentation of transcultural lenses.[4] Central to this method, I will consider the wandering artworks as the incarnation of sensual experience, opening time and space for the transcultural construction of values and significance. By analyzing the illustrated booklet on lenses as a whole, I wish to beam-split the relation of a transcultural interaction—for instance, the Sino-Jesuits encounter—into a spectrum of continuous cultural

chapter and the peer review of this anthology and therefore we are unfortunately unable to extensively refer to the article. Yet for the excellent translation and analysis, especially the use of Chinese literati's cultural tropes in the booklet, see S.E. Kile and Kristina Kleutghen, "Seeing through Pictures and Poetry: A History of Lenses (1681)," *Late Imperial China* 38, no. 1 (June 2017): 47–112. The current chapter is instead primarily concerned with the marketing strategy in the Eurasian encounter. As an intriguing phenomenon among the popular response to foreign lenses, some sections from the booklet made their way into a short story written by a literary entrepreneur. See Patrick Hanan, *A Tower for the Summer Heat* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1998).

[2]I use the Chinese woodblock edition prefaced in 1681 and housed in the Shanghai Library. *The History of Lenses* have not yet been entirely translated into English.

[3]It suffices to mention only a few of the most recent summaries and theoretical interventions for the field related to China. Cheng-hua Wang, "Whither art history? A Global Perspective on Eighteenth-Century Chinese Art and Visual Culture," *The Art Bulletin* 96, no. 4 (2014): 379–94. Petra ten-Doesschate Chu and Ning Ding, ed., *Qing Encounters: Artistic Exchanges between China and the West*, Issue & Debates (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2015). Jonathan Hay, "Toward a Theory of the Intercultural," *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 35 (1999): 5–9.

[4]Monica Juneja, "Circulation and Beyond: The Trajectories of Vision in Early Modern Eurasia," in *Circulations in the Global History of Art*, ed. Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann (London: Ashgate, 2015), 59–78.

differences, which were marked in a negotiation process among players with particular agendas in the marketplace.[5]

Landing this theorization on the very material in front of me, the parade of representations of Chinese bronze, screen, and garden in a book about lenses defies my expectation of telescope, microscope, or even kaleidoscope. Why do the illustrations not depict the actual devices at all? What are these representations doing here? To put it succinctly, I argue that the booklet mobilizes familiar cultural tropes to advertise the efficacy of the lenses for sale. In other words, the marketing strategy may explain a significant part of the composition and execution of the imageries vis-à-vis its relation to the accompanying text, which would never have been understood had we chased the scientific merit in such presentation. Instead of wondering at its stupefying irrelevance to science and the conspicuous absence of technological details, an analysis of the visual and textual rhetoric of early modern advertisement may serve to enrich our understanding of the transcultural making of lenses.[6]

The lenses did not simply move from Europe to be replicated and used in China. The materiality of lenses, contingent upon local primary source and craft traditions, was intrinsically entangled with the bodily efficacy they were purported to enhance. The transcultural lenses open a view of multiple agents, such as lens makers, business competitors, potential client, and missionaries, who each had their own sensual experience to negotiate; thus, each side leaves a mark of their own cultural expectation on the moving artifact. Without either defining or denying foreignness in a retrospective national framework, I seek to explicate how the cultural boundary has been demarcated with visual strategies such as spacing and composition as well as in textual reference. Most crucially, these strategies have been proportionated to the commercial purpose.

[5]One page entitled (literally) "Western Distance Painting" (or translated as "Perspectival Picture of the West") from the booklet is evoked by Wang Chen-Hua to show the presence of Western landscape in Jiangnan region. Wang, "Whither art history," 386. Kristina Kleutghen mentions the *History of Lenses* to point out the popularity of locally made optical devices in urban Chinese cultural landscape. Kristina Kleutghen, "Peepboxes, Society, and Visuality in Early Modern China," *Art History* 38, no. 4 (September 2015): 764. By contextualizing the picture back in the booklet, this chapter intends to show the range of rhetorical strategies of cultural differentiation.

[6]Lin Li-chiang points out some major advertising strategies in her meticulous study of two ink-maker's manuals. First, ink-makers invite famous literati users to contribute laudatory essays to be included in the manuals. Second, ink-makers appealed to ethos, that is, the promotion of ink-maker's integrity and quasi-literati status. See Lin Li-chiang, "The Proliferation of Images: The Ink-stick Designs and the Printing of the Fang-shih mo-p'u and the Ch'eng-shih mo-yuan" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1998). See also Lin Li-chiang, "The Conflict between the Huizhou Ink-makers Cheng Chun-fang and Fang Yu-lu," in *Sinologie Française, Livres et imprimes des gens de Huizhou*, ed. Michela Bussotti and Zhu Wanshu (Paris: Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient, Zhonghua shuju, 2008), 121–97.

The Business of Lenses

Commercialization, especially advertisement, is a conceptual condition under which the transcultural encounter via optical devices took place in the Chinese context. There is actually a large amount of scholarship on the commerce and consumer society in early modern China,[7] and scholars have investigated cultural entrepreneurs, especially in the business of commercial publication.[8] Based on this socio-economic mapping, we are still in need of analytical categories to tease out the impact of commerce on the form of artifacts. Advertisement or promoting strategy is still our blind spot.[9] Some overarching surveys on "mass informing" (*guang gao* 廣告) cover both political propaganda and commercial advertisement. These general survey-textbooks are more interested in categorizing the kinds of media used in broadcasting rather than the intricate rhetoric and strategy that made advertisements effective.[10]

In the context of the court culture, the negotiation of the culturally marked visual experience catalyzed by the introduction and transformation of linear perspective and *chiaroscuro* at the Qing court has attracted strenuous investigation.[11] The dazzling court spectacle tends to foreground imperial decorum as the decisive magnetic field where the multicultural presence configures itself. However, there have been more recent discussions of intercultural encounters in art in the local society of the lower Yangtze delta.[12] Wang Cheng-hua, for instance, has traced the presence of European pictorial technique in Suzhou prints.[13] Yet the dynamic of the commoners' market, which has been a multivalent shaping force of transcultural

[7]For example, see Timothy Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure: Commerce and Culture in Ming China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

[8]Cynthia Brokaw mentions the book selling and distribution in *Commerce in Culture: The Sibao Book Trade in the Qing and Republican Periods* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007), 235–40 and 535–48.

[9]There are quite a few histories of advertisement written in Chinese language, most of which are large chronological surveys. For instance, Yang Haijun 楊海軍, *Zhongguo Gu Dai Shang Ye Guang Gao Shi* 中國古代商業廣告史 (*History of Pre-Modern Commercial Advertisement in China*) (Zhengzhou: Henan Daxue Chubanshe, 2005). They do not provide detailed analysis of specific cases. Wu Jen-shu 巫仁恕 vividly describes the banner advertisements scattered in the urban space in *Youyou fangxiang: Ming Qing Jiangnan chengshi de xiuxian xiaofei yu kongjian bianqian* 優游坊廂:明清江南城市的休閒消費與空間變遷 (*Roaming in the Marketplace: Leisure Consumption and Spatial Transformation in Cities of Jiangnan During Ming and Qing Dynasties*) (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo, 2013), 119–34.

[10]Zhao Chen 趙琛, *Zhongguo guanggao shi* 中國廣告史 (*The History of Chinese Advertisement*) (Beijing: Gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe), 2005.

[11]The latest contribution is Kristina Kleutghen's *Imperial Illusions: Crossing Pictorial Boundaries in the Qing Palaces* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015).

[12]Kristina Kleutghen, "Chinese Occidenterie: The Diversity of 'Western' Objects in Eighteenth-Century China," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 47, no. 2 (January 2014): 128–31.

[13]Cheng-hua Wang, "Prints in Sino-European Artistic Interactions of the Early Modern Period," in *Face to Face: The Transcendence of the Arts in China and Beyond*, ed. Rui Oliveira Lopes (Lisbon:

differentiation, is largely left out of the picture of the highly centralized social structure of the court.

Therefore, in order to set the stage we need to first understand the status quo of making and selling lenses as a business in the late seventeenth to mid-eighteenth century.[14] How were the makers trained after Jesuits missionaries came to China? Who might buy the lenses and for what purpose? What level of technology was employed? Fortunately, the booklet can illuminate us in this respect.[15]

With the information from four elaborate prefaces to the booklet, we are able to trace how the author, Sun Yunqiu, a skillful lens maker, started the business. The prefaces show Sun's financial difficulty and talent in craftsmanship.[16] His career pattern represents that of many educated men who were not able to serve in the government in early modern China. They made a living by developing specialized skills in tutoring, legal service, technology, and art.[17] Some of these frustrated *hommes de lettres* eventually excelled in a field of knowledge other than traditional Confucian learning. Both the content and organization of their knowledge had to be appealing in the commercial market. Sun Yunqiu and his peers mastered these marketable skills. Like many of his contemporaries, Sun Yunqiu took the civil examinations twice but did not succeed. The failed official-want-to-be therefore had to learn to retool his skill in writing and his knowledge in the marketplace, a process that should be understood as the diversification of profession among the male educated elite.[18] In order to support his mother, Sun traded medicine and lived in the Tiger Hill (*Hu Qiu* 虎丘) area in Suzhou, one of most dynamic commercial hubs on the southeast coast of China. His lens making master, Zhu Sheng, was also famous for painting orchids, and was commissioned to make a section in *Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting* (*Jieziyuan Huazhuan* 芥子園畫傳), an influential panting manual, which itself was compiled by the relative of a literati entrepreneur,

University of Lisbon, 2014), 438–42. See also Cheng-hua Wang, "A Global Perspective on Eighteenth Century Art and Visual Culture," *Art Bulletin* 96, no. 4 (2014): 386–90.

[14]The section 'Optics' in Joseph Needham's *Science and Civilisations in China*, IV Physics, [78–124] provides a detailed survey of all kinds of optic devices available in premodern China but it is not a business history of lenses, particularly for early modern China.

[15]For Bo Jue 博朱 (c. 1628–1641), another important lens maker whose product might have been in a military campaign, see Wang Shiping, Liu Hengliang, and Li Zhijun, "Bo Jue and his telescope," *China Historical Materials of Science and Technology* 18, no. 3 (1997): 26–31.

[16]His family lost their property in the social commotion during the upheaval between the dynastic transition between Ming to Qing. After the death of his father, a local magistrate, the family could barely afford a decent burial so Sun Yunqiu "found the place for the grave and built everything on his own." (Orig. "擇地定穴,皆所手造").

[17]Pierre Etienne-Will focuses on training books for specialized knowledge in law and taxation. See Pierre Etienne-Will 魏丕信, "Ming Qing shiqi de guanzhenshu yu Zhongguo xingzheng wenhua 明清時期的官箴書與中國行政文化 (The Administrative Culture in Official Handbooks in Ming and Qing China), trans. Li Bozhong 李伯重," *Qingshi yanjiu* no. 1 (1999): 3–20.

[18]A considerable number of frustrated *hommes de lettres* commercialized their calligraphy and painting. See James Cahill, *The Painter's Practice: How Artists lived and worked in traditional China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

Li Yu 李漁 (1610–1680).[19] In summary, unsuccessful candidates left out of governmental officialdom were particularly active in the market of cultural production. Thus, a person like the author could market his products by using his knowledge of the repertoire of cultural activities for decently educated literati.

The skill of making lenses is very different from the knowledge of literary tropes. How did a man of words learn to make lenses? The author's experience shows us that both learning from books and as an apprentice are indispensable. Talented in mathematics and geometry, Sun was able to acquire the skill for making lenses and overtook most competitors in a short period of time. In 1672, he obtained a copy of Johann Adam Schall von Bell's *Explanation of the Telescope* (*yuanjing shuo* 遠鏡說).[20] And in an itinerary tour to Wulin (now Hangzhou), he learned in person from a few lens makers, including Zhu Sheng 諸昇, Mr. Yu (俞生), Mr. Gao (高生), Mr. Chen (陳生). Most importantly, he calibrated the models supplied by Zhu Sheng with the optical principles in von Bell's treatise and expanded the inventory of products into seventy-two types.[21] He could also customize the glasses for clients with various visions.[22] Later, I will explain how product differentiation was a salient strategy used in the booklet.

Sun's products soon prevailed among all his competitors both because of their superior quality and, I think, because of his interpersonal skills. In fact, Zhu Sheng, one of his masters, betrays his insecurity in front of his disciple by remarking that Sun Yunqiu is "modest and reserved"[23] and "holding back and hiding flamboyance like a good merchant when he interacts with people."[24] Sun is believed to have obtained the favored optical method from Li (Ricci) and Tang (von Bell) in the craft of lens making. After a few years, his products gained considerable publicity and were widely sought after: "People from everywhere heard about them and followed them. They did not hesitate to go cross hundreds of miles to purchase them with a fortune."[25] Hundreds of miles in the radius from Suzhou covers the area of the lower Yangtze delta, the most prosperous region of late imperial China where his potential customers were located. It is clear that these urban lens makers did not dissimulate the merits of the technology introduced by the Jesuit, von Bell. On the contrary, they highlighted the insight of Western experts in order to promote their own products.

[19]Wang Gai, *The Tao of Painting, a Study of the Ritual Disposition of Chinese Painting: with a Translation of the Chieh tzŭ yüan hua chuan, or Mustard seed garden manual of painting, 1679–1701*, trans. Mai-Mai Sze (New York: Pantheon Books, 1956).

[20]Johann Adam Schall von Bell, "Yuanjing shuo 遠鏡說 (On the Telescope), trans. Tang Ruowang 湯若望," *Yi Hai Zhu Chen* 59, no.156. Coll. in Tingyi Tang. Publ. between 1796 and 1820.

[21]The first preface, written by Zhang Ruoxi in *The History of Lenses* (1681), 4.

[22]Zhang, *History of Lenses*, 4.

[23]Orig. "謙抑韜晦."

[24]Orig. "與人相接, 如良賈深居, 務匿瑤彩." The second preface written by master Zhu Sheng in *The History of Lenses* (1681), 2–3.

[25]Orig. "而四方聞聲景從, 不惜數百里重價以相購." Postscript to *The History of Lenses* (*jing shi ba* 鏡史跋), 2.

For this purpose, Sun Yunqiu significantly refashioned von Bell's *Treatise* in one of his entries in the booklet.

The Rhetoric of Efficacy

As a general promoting strategy that shapes the poiesis of the illustration and the textual description in the booklet, technical information is drastically eliminated so that the booklet focuses on the effect that users experience with the optic devices.[26] Rhetoric, the term that Joachim Kurtz uses to comment on such early modern handbooks captures their gist. Instead of transferring knowledge, they are "simplified versions of such treatises circulated in cheap reprints by commercial publishers and instrumental in raising popular interest in and understanding of useful techniques."[27] My analysis will demonstrate the ways in which this knowledge was simplified. More specifically, the populist rhetoric in the booklet on lenses aims to augment the readers' desire to purchase. The illustrations are not representations of the tools but rather a series of stereotypical artifacts and landscapes inscribed with marginally relevant textual commentary on the function of these lenses. I argue that the author mobilizes various cultural tropes from the established repertoire of motifs, which are often used in the woodblock decorations of the day, first to make sense of the effect of these lenses, second to convince the reader about the efficacy of the lenses, and third to persuade them to buy them. Eight out of the eleven illustrations feature inscribed artifacts and often include a poem in the upper left of the composition. Only two illustrations feature landscape paintings with minimum inscription and only one leaf of illustration contains a female figure. The transcultural relationship in the booklet is not merely in the interaction between two cultural entities, but in the strategic cultural configuration of the familiar and the foreign.[28] The author's presentation of the telescope is a particularly revealing example of this, as he ostensibly retains its Western origin not for the sake of technical information but for its marketability. The textual entry introducing the telescope, "Lens for Distance" (*yuan jing* 遠鏡), is the most elaborate in the treatise, as if the author wanted to prepare the reader to view an extraordinary "Western Painting of a Distant View"

[26] As for how different quality and forms of illustration make segmented market niches in the period, see Robert Hegel, "Niche Marketing for Late Imperial Fiction," in *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China*, ed. Cynthia J. Brokaw and Kai-wing Chow (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 235–66.

[27] Joachim Kurtz, "Framing European Technology in Seventeenth-Century China: Rhetorical Strategies in Jesuit Paratexts," in *Cultures of Knowledge: Technology in Chinese History*, ed. Dagmar Schäfer (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 211.

[28] For an analysis of a similar transcultural demarcation in prints, see the inclusion and remediation of biblical illustrations in ink-makers' manuals in Lin Li-chiang's dissertation, "Proliferation of Images," 214–24. The difference is that the imitated Western images are much more identifiable in Lin's case, but the underlying agenda of remediation is more multivalent.

(or Perspectival Picture of the West, *xi yang yuan hua* 西洋遠畫) by adding a textual frame (Fig. 1). Unlike other illustrations in the booklet, this leaf bears no inscription and no seal, which renders the Western landscape print paradoxically frameless. Although the image does not come from von Bell's treatise, it very likely had a European model.[29] Here the author overtly acknowledges von Bell's treatise on telescopes, from which he lifted fragments of exact expressions. Examining the selected textual expressions and the omissions, we find that this rewritten entry is primarily concerned with instructing the readers on how to properly use the telescope by adjusting its length according to the user's vision and on how to clean it. The entry explains only a little of the structure of the device but by no means aims to discuss the optical principles involved. The textual explanation makes no reference to any trope from the familiar Chinese cultural repertoire. This is one of the three entries that explicitly acknowledges the Western origin of the lenses.[30] This entry on the telescope refers readers to von Bell's *On the Telescope* and to the work of a contemporary lens maker, Bo Jue 薄珏, for the technical details.[31]

Unlike the presentation of other lenses in the treatise, the entry and illustration on telescopes makes little effort to tout its efficacy, but instead directly shows what one might see through the device. The avoidance of Chinese cultural tropes should be understood in the context of the popularity of telescopes among the Chinese during this time. The visual experience of space compressing, which was brought by telescopes, was hardly a novelty by the early seventeenth century in China.[32] There is even a short story written to marvel at the visual experience that a telescope provides and how the optic device is turned into an object of cult.[33] Both the length of the entry on telescopes and the cultural transparency suggest a keen and familiar expectance from the readers. Unlike other illustrations, which all bear legible signatures and sometimes seals, this "Western Painting of a Distant View" is completely anonymous. The author or designer of the illustration does not intend to describe this visual experience with indigenous metaphor, nor does he feel the need to justify the experience with moral rhetoric. In this sense, the relatively simple transcultural framing of the telescope may actually suggest a wider cultural

[29]Anna Grasskamp provides a detailed analysis of the reframing of European images in this leaf and identifies a few possible Dutch sources. Anna Grasskamp, "EurAsian Layers: Netherlandish Surfaces and Early Modern Chinese Artefacts," *Rijksmuseum Bulletin* 63, no. 4 (2015): 370–1.

[30]The others are about the camera obscura and reading glasses.

[31]Zheng Cheng, "Bo Jue and his Astronomical Works," *The Chinese Journal for the History of Science and Technology* 36, no. 2 (2015): 142–57; Huang Yinong 黃一農, *Liangtou she: Mingmo Qingchu de diyidai Tianzhu jiaotu* 兩頭蛇：明末清初的第一代天主教徒 (*Two-headed Snakes: The First Generation of Catholic Converts in Late Ming and Early Qing China*) (Xinzhu Shi: Guoli qinghua daxue chubanshe, 2007), 175–228.

[32]Dai Nianzu 戴念祖, "Ming Qing zhi ji wang yuanjing zai Zhongguo de chuanbo ji zhizao 明清之季望遠鏡在中國的傳播及製造 (The Spread and Manufacture of Telescope in China)," *Yenching Journal of Chinese Studies* 9 (2000): 123–50.

[33]Patricia Sieber, "Seeing the World Through 'Xianqing ouji' (1671): Visuality, Performance, and Narratives of Modernity," *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture* 12, no. 2 (Fall 2000): 1–43.

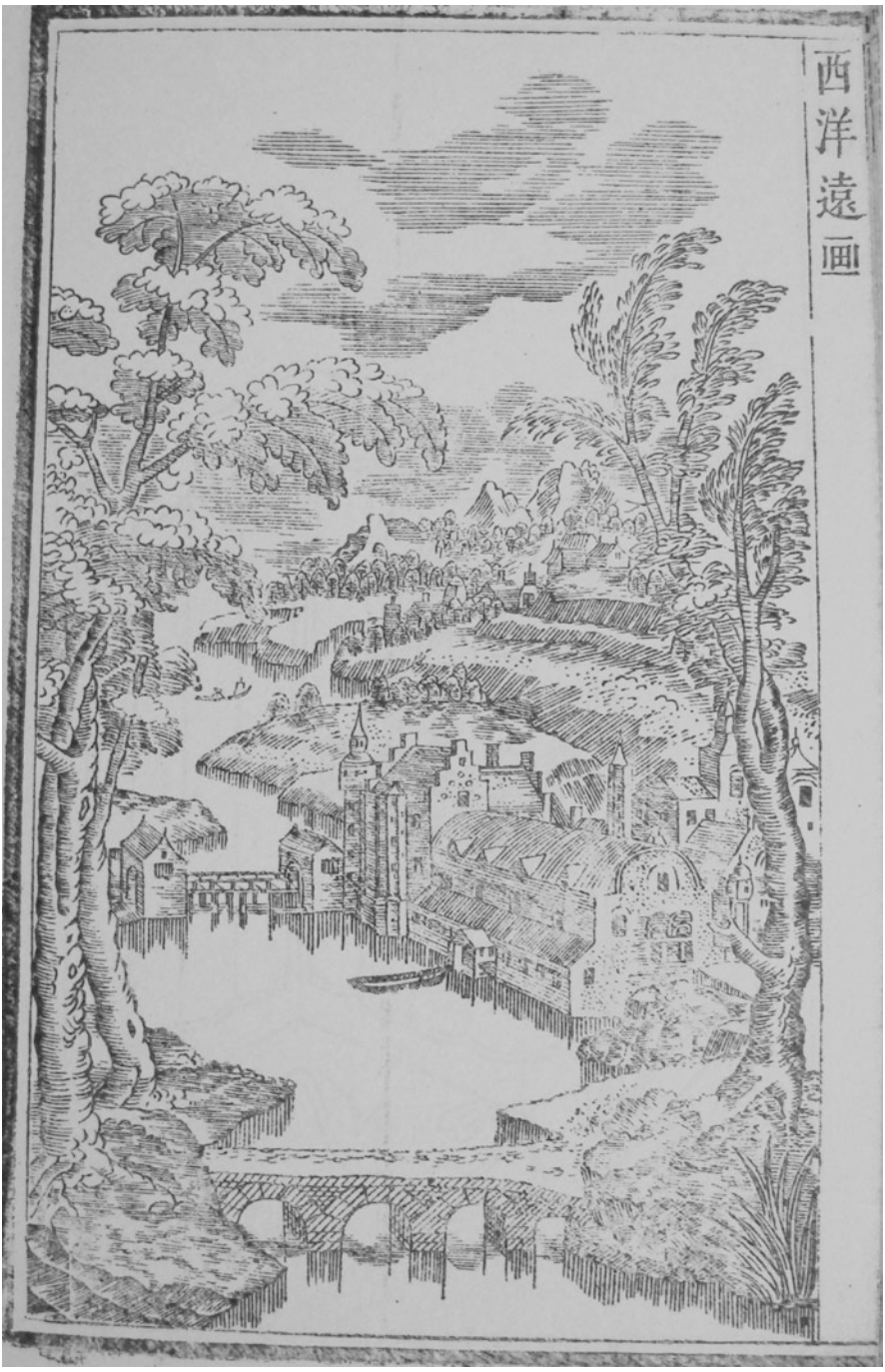

Fig. 1 *Xi yang yuan hua* 西洋遠畫 (*Western Painting of a Distant View* or *Perspectival Picture of the West*), from Sun Yunqiu 孫雲球, *Jingshi* 鏡史 (*History of Lenses*), 1681, main text, 5

acceptance. In comparison, the experience brought by camera obscura and microscope, as I will analyze below, required heavy-handed or even cryptic cultural translation, and the author did not have a chance to expound on their usage. Both anonymous foregrounding or heavy-handed cultural translation, contradictory as they may seem, serve the same purpose, which is to represent the experience that a customer could expect. It is significant that the entry on telescopes does not speak to any targeted customer, while the wording of many other entries clearly pitches to a particular market.

Information and Rhetoric

If information concerning the lenses is underplayed in the booklet, what new visual experience does the author want to convey, and how does he market it? The author was able to make actual lenses but the entries spare no words to explain the raw materials, the making process, tools, or mathematical and optical principles.[34] The author does not seem to believe that empirical and technical explanation alone would convince the readers about the effect of lenses. Instead the illustrations and the texts evoke religious discourse and ancient moral authority as a means of promotion. No matter how outlandish such experience looks to us, and probably also to contemporaneous European users, by organizing the convention of literary and pictorial tropes, Sun Yunqiu tried to forge an equivalence between the desirable bodily experience for potential customers and the experience that they could expect by using these foreign lenses.[35]

The designer of the illustrations maximizes the variety of calligraphic scripts in order to enhance the visual impact of the text in the forms of inscriptions and poems. Thus, the text is not only a carrier of information, the highlighted calligraphic quality of it is intended to affectively impress the reader, and each kind of script evokes the conventionalized genres that are often associated with them in the reader's mind (Fig. 2). For instance, a couplet describing fragrance is rendered as being written on lotus leaf in running script. We can also find a fanciful version of seal script on the

[34] A scholar reported to have seen dated lenses with Sun Yunqiu's inscription in 1930. The telescope is a collapsible three folding monocular, 1.2 m in length and 10 cm in diameter. Wang, Liu, and Li, "Bo Jue and his telescope," 28.

[35] The term, bodily experience or sensorial experience, is established in the cultural studies of senses, pioneered by the Concordia Sensoria Research Team led by David Howes. This community of anthropologists and interdisciplinary scholars is prolific. I only draw on their insight insofar as the cultural and social formation of senses is concerned, that is to say, "sensory experience is permeated with social values." The partition and manipulation of sensual experience with words and images (e.g. advertisement) show how cultural memory is forged into nature. David Howes, ed., *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader* (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 1–17. See also David Howes, "Sensorial Anthropology," in *The Varieties of Sensory Experience: A Sourcebook in the Anthropology of the Senses*, ed. David Howes (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 167–91.

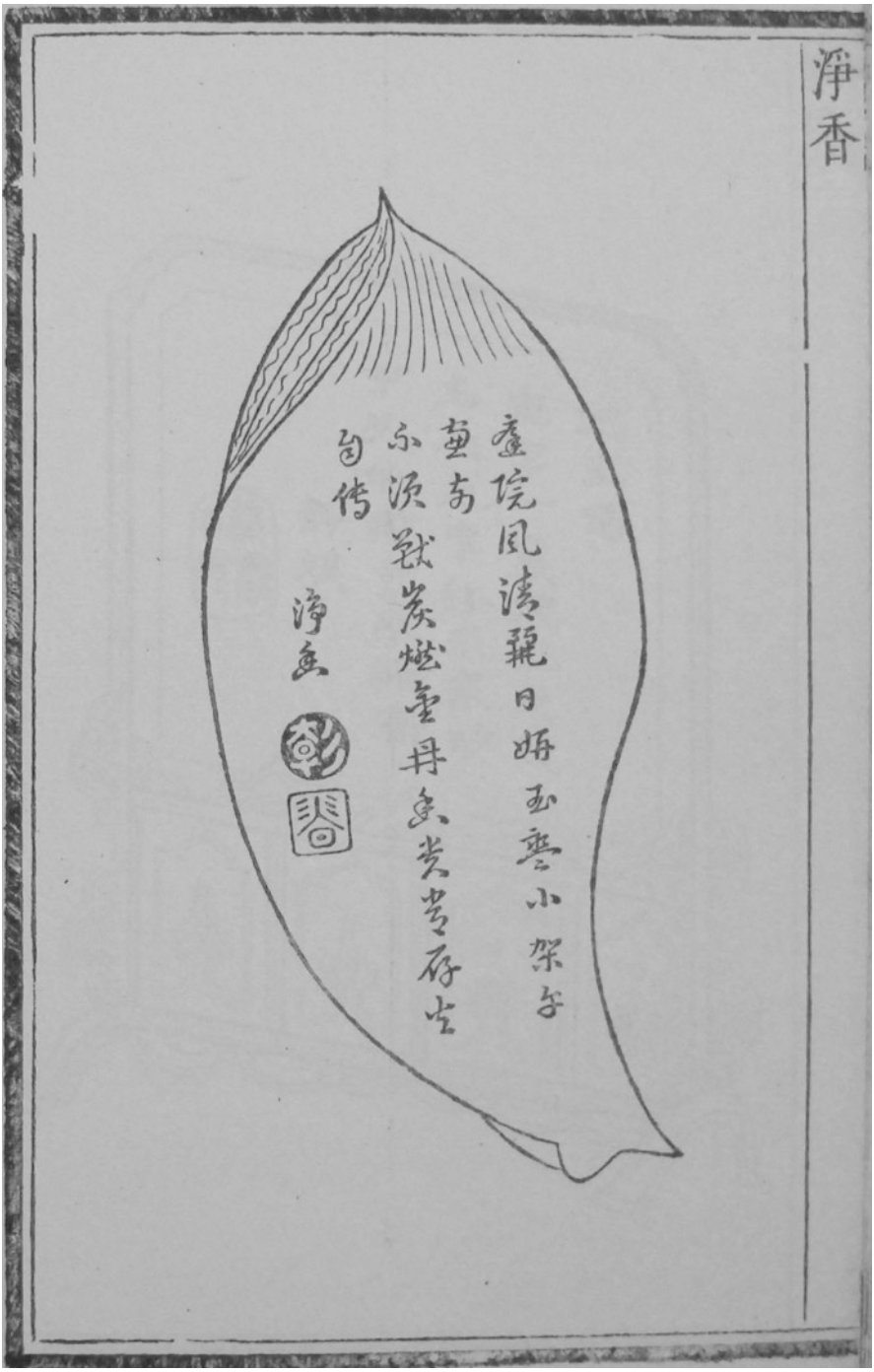

Fig. 2 *Feng xiang jing* 焚香鏡 (*Incense Burning Lens*), from the *History of Lenses*, main text, 8

surface of an intact piece of jade, which illustrates a reading class (*Tong guang jing* 童光鏡) for young examinees.[36] The "Encomium of Self-restraint in Privacy," which illustrates microscopes, is inscribed with a clerical script that is often associated with monuments.[37] On the other hand, the depiction of artifacts, landscape, and the figure attempts to symbolize and to imbue the extraordinary effect of each lens with familiar cultural tropes.

Pictorial Commentary

Instead of representation, the illustrations can be regarded as pictorial commentary for the entries on lenses. Commentary as a flexible genre entails various relations between the main text and the paratext. Commentaries might explain the main texts, but they are usually random associations between any detail in the main text and the commentator's evaluation, moral critique, anecdotes, and so on. The kinds of associations that Sun Yunqiu chose to build between lenses and familiar cultural tropes reveals these rhetorical strategies.

By employing Buddhist and Daoist tropes, some illustrations convey to the reader, or the potential owner, the efficacy of the lenses on the body. The effectiveness of the lenses is therefore transformed into efficacy in the religious context. For the first entry on presbyopic glasses (*hun yan jing* 昏眼鏡), with which elderly people could see more clearly, the illustration features a *chintamani* or *ruyi zhu* (如意珠), a wish-fulfilling pearl, radiating in flames and fixed on a *ruyi* scepter. A four-syllabic verse printed in clerical script laments the inevitable deterioration of vision because of aging, which medicine cannot help. However, the presbyopic glasses offered an "efficacious method" (*ling fa* 靈法) to recover vision: "It is only by means of the efficacious method, my visual spirit is restored."[38] The signature "*zhi fei zi* 知非子" means "elderly people". Composed of verse, artifact, signature, and seal, this illustration looks like a leaf about *chintamani* in a catalogue of collectibles. It does not explicitly refer to the presbyopic glasses. In other words, the illustration functions almost like a riddle, describing familiar bodily experience in a language familiar to educated elites while gesturing to an unknown artifact.[39] It is only by

[36]Sun Yunqiu, *The History of Lenses* (1681), 3.

[37]Sun, *History of Lenses*, 12.

[38]Orig. "惟茲靈法, 還我瞳神," Sun, *History of Lenses*, 2.

[39]The playful representation of an artifact, often literati's stationery, without revealing its true identity is similar to riddle-like odes or essays on things (*Yongwu*) in Chinese literary history. For an early survey, see Richard C. Rudolph, "Notes on the Riddle in China," *California Folklore Quarterly* 1, no. 1 (Jan 1942): 65–82. Riddles, especially poems and essays on artifacts, served a variety of purposes in different social contexts. A classic example is Han Yu's "Biography of Mao Ying," which is a political satire of literati hidden in a synecdoche of brush. See Han Yu 韓愈, *Han changli wenji jiaozhu* 韓昌黎文集校注 (*Annotated Literary Anthology of Han Changli*) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1986), 566–69. The fragments in the *History of Lenses* are distinct for

juxtaposing the illustration and the explanatory entry that the reader understands the artifact and its effect on the body.

Referring to the primordial mythology about the rocks used to repair the heavens, the second illustration fashions a lake rock (*hu shi* 湖石) in flames. Accordingly, the second entry on myopia glasses mentions that the device could make up for deficiency in eyesight: "For those who have defected vision because of congenital lack of sap, the lens fits their nature very well."[40] The metaphorical meaning of the rock obliquely points to the effect of the myopia glasses. Nonetheless, sometimes the symbolic meaning of an artifact in an illustration does not even tangibly relate to the actual use of a particular device.

For the camera obscura and the microscope, the illustrations depict two almost entirely unrelated artifacts while the interpretation reveals what particular cultural conventions may render the lenses desirable to the Chinese audience. The "Light-absorbing Lens" (*she guang jing* 攝光鏡) is camera obscura: "To set the lens in an extremely dark chamber is the so-called observation of the moon in the West. A blank screen faces the lens. All close and distant, up and down, moving and still, large and small kind of things come on the screen. Meticulous and colorful, they look like real."[41] The juxtaposed illustration depicts a screen that is decorated with elaborate and patterned panels. The decorative motif framing the lower part of the screen is a common variation of lotus petals, which often connotes Buddhism. As the Buddhist verse on the screen articulates, owners are welcomed to use the setting for contemplation, which has nothing to do with an effort to make life-like images: "Buddhist Hymn on Reflection: Through a hole in the room, the reflection shines close. The master is settled in the middle. Toward him come the myriad ethereal things. It is good for meditation and enlightenment."[42] The signature succinctly summarizes the purpose of "quiet entertainment" (*jing yu* 靜娛).

Moral Authority as Commercial Rhetoric

Appealing to ethos or moral integrity often functions as a powerful rhetoric. The illustration of the microscope evokes the Confucian moral discourse of self-restraint in privacy. On an unrolled calligraphic scroll, we find the following: "Encomium of Self-restraint in Privacy: Nothing is more visible when it is hidden. Nothing is more magnified when it is minute. A gentleman who restrains himself in privacy should

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their pretension to literati self-cultivation and yet their implicit commercial appeal. Moreover, the alluded lenses in the booklet, unlike the answers to average riddles, were not familiar artifacts.

[40]Orig. "因先天血氣不足, 視象不圓滿者, 用鏡則巧合其習性." Sun, *History of Lenses*.

[41]Orig. "鏡置極暗小室中, 即西洋所謂月觀者是也。素屏對鏡, 室外遠近上下, 動靜大小物類俱入屏中. 細緻體色, 畢現如真." Sun, *History of Lenses*, 9.

[42]Orig. "迴光偈:室中一竅, 迴光近照, 主人處中, 紛來眾緲, 可以坐禪,可以悟道." Sun, *History of Lenses.*

engrave it and carry it."[43] Although the illustration only plays with the idea of magnifying things and tries to link it with a Confucian virtue, the textual entry shows that the author not only knows what a microscope is and what it is used for, but also that he chose to make affective connection with the reader by referring to the long-standing moral authority of ancient rulers. Sun Yunqiu links "Burning Glass" (*huo jing* 火鏡) to sage minister *Si xuan shi* 司烜氏, who was in charge of any ritual related to fire in antiquity: "Minister of Zhou Dynasty, Si xuan shi obtained fire from the sun."[44]Although the author also quotes contemporary empirical reason in his textual interpretation, the illustration only highlights the sage minister.[45] It depicts ancient bamboo strips mounted on an unfolding letter. A few lines of tetrasyllablic verses are inscribed on the strips, which end with the signature "ancient minister of fire" (*gu si zhou shi* 古司烜氏) and the seal of "Minister of Zhou" (*zhou guan* 周官) in intaglio, suggesting that the evaluation of the lens is the sage minister's own words.[46]

In summary, several illustrations reveal their varied, sometimes even arbitrary, relation to the textual entries on lenses. This paratextual relation can be understood through the contemporaneous practice of literary commentary.[47] The illustration as pictorial commentary uses familiar tropes of established rhetoric from religion and moral discourses to convince the reader about the efficacy and merit of the foreign lenses. The pictorial rhetoric of these illustrations resorts less to empirical elucidation than to the force of cultural affect.[48]

[43]Orig. "慎獨銘 莫見乎隱, 莫顯乎微, 慎獨君子, 銘之佩之." Sun, *History of Lenses.*

[44]Orig. "周官司烜氏取明火於日." Sun, *History of Lenses.*

[45]"Master Li Shizhen says, the fire generated from rocks damages vision." Orig. "李時珍先生云, 石中之火, 損人頭目." Sun, *History of Lenses*, 6.

[46]Sun, *History of Lenses*, 7.

[47]David L. Rolston, *How to Read the Chinese Novel* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990), 42–123.

[48]The term "affect" is cited from affect theory, which has been retooled by a few critical theorists including Eve Sedgwick (gender theory) and Brian Massumi (media study) since the 1990s. It is based on Silven Tomkin's psychological study from the 1960s. The affect theory provides a sophisticated perspective from which to analyze the emotion and sentiment encoded in sociopolitical events as well as in artifacts. For a discussion of the theoretical potential, see Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth, ed., *The Affect Theory Reader* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 1–25. For a critical review, see Ruth Leys, "The Turn to Affect: A Critique," *Critical Inquiry* 37, no. 3 (Spring 2011): 434–72. This chapter on transcultural lenses only regards cultural affect as the subtle yet effective force that conventionalized cultural activities exercise upon judgment and consumptive choice.

Cultural Affect

Besides the employment of religious and moralistic tropes, to mobilize cultural affects also means to recall familiar and pleasant multisensory memory or imagination to the reader's mind by displaying pictorial tropes that are firmly associated with cultural practices and from which the sensory experience is conventionally generated.[49] Thus, the force of cultural affect lies not merely in readers' direct visual or haptic engagement with the artwork. The juxtaposition of texts and illustration affects the reader by means of triggering established sensorial association. For instance, "Incense Burning Lens" (*feng xiang jing* 焚香鏡) very likely refers to a convex lens crafted to focus light on a piece of incense cake and therefore to yield an even and subtle fragrance (Fig. 2). In order to vividly recall the olfactory experience of the popular cultural practice of incense burning among literati elites,[50] the illustration displays an enlarged lotus petal, inscribed with running calligraphic script: "There is no need of charcoal in beast shaped vessel to smelt elixir. The fragrant flame lasts and the light transport it. . ."[51] The depiction of the lotus petal and the whole composition of this leaf takes a minimalist approach. The woodblock designer highlights the subtle undulating contour of the petal with a precise image that perfectly echoes the meaning of the signature, "pure incense" (*jing xiang* 淨香).

To recall several sensory experiences coupled with vision in a particular cultural practice, the illustration designer may choose a culturally coded image to invite the reader to re-experience the cultural scenario. For instance, a landscape illustration entitled "Sunset" (*xi yang tu* 夕陽圖) is appropriated to convey the experience of wearing sunglasses (*xi yang jing* 夕陽鏡) (Fig. 3): "Using the lens makes cool air permeate your skin and your hurt in eyes instantly ceases. Even if it is in scorching sunshine, it feels like dusk time in mountains."[52] The landscape painting depicts a site populated with temples and mansions. The presence of many mountains implies that it is not an urban space but rather a suburban area for elite strolling or vocational retreat. Although a black and white woodblock print cannot fully represent the rich color of twilight, the image is culturally legible to the readers and easily calls to mind the haptic, visual, and even acoustic experience of hiking leisurely during sunset hours. This is the experience that the author persuades the readers that they could have if they wear a pair of sunglasses in scorching sunshine.

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[49]Dorinne Kondo's "The Tea Ceremony: A Symbolic Analysis" clarifies in detail how the ritualized sequencing of multisensorial experience encoded and evoked cultural value in the particular cultural scenario of the tea ceremony. Dorinne Kondo, "The Tea Ceremony: A Symbolic Analysis," in *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader*, ed. David Howes (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 192–211.

[50]Incense burning is called "pure offering under the window facing south" (Orig. "南窗清供") in the text.

[51]Orig. "不須獸炭燃金丹, 香炎常存光自傳. . ." Sun, *History of Lenses.*

[52]Orig. "用鏡則涼氣沁膚,目痛立止, 雖炎炎烈日, 一如夕陽在山. . ." Sun, *History of Lenses.*

Fig. 3 *Xi yang tu* 夕陽圖 (*Sunset*), from the *History of Lenses*, main text, 10

Product Differentiation

Both the rhetoric of efficacy and the culturally affective strategy eventually contribute to augmenting the readers' desire to own these foreign but comprehensible lenses. To return to the comparison of illustrative paratexts and textual commentaries, the practice of publishing commentary had flourished since the second half of the Ming dynasty and coincided with a period of phenomenal commercialization. Previous scholarship relates the literati's enthusiasm for commentary to the crafting of civil examination essays. Much less attention has been paid, however, to the commercial rhetoric of many of these commentaries, especially the pictorial commentaries, as seen in the present case. In other words, my analysis of the transcultural configuration in this booklet teases out the implicit advertising rhetoric.

Customization is another prominent strategy employed in the booklet. Eight out of eleven entries include words suggesting the targeted client. For instance, Sun Yunqiu claims to be able to alter the presbyopic glasses and myopia glasses according to the vision of the customer: "He prepares the glasses according to your vision. Each customer obtain[s] what fit him the best."[53] And "He measures the capacity of individual vision and prepare lenses for them without slightest mistake."[54] "Reading glasses" (*tong guang jing* 童光鏡), are declared to be best for young people, mostly male civil examinees who read to prepare for the examinations: "This lens is suitable for youngman."[55] "The Burning Glass" might cater to merchants and officials who travel a lot: "It is easy to carry and therefore indispensable for traveling on boat and carriage."[56] A portable makeup mirror (*duan rong jing* 端容鏡) should be the "extraordinary treasure of [the] boudoir."[57] "Incense Burning Lens" is "indispensible for literati's pure offerings under the window facing south."[58] And "Microscope" enables "natural historians" (*bo wu zhe* 博物者) to "know what they did not used to know and see what they had never seen."[59] It is not a coincidence that the concluding sentences of eight entries are programed to identify the most suitable client. While the textual entries suggest potential customers, the illustrations are all the more suggestive in persuading readers to buy.

Seven out of eleven illustrations feature an artifact that is conventionally presented as a collectible luxury. Although the illustrations do not represent the lenses for sale, the artifacts, such as a fancy rock, a large piece of *bi* jade, rare bamboo strips mounted on an exquisite letter paper, a hardwood screen, and so on, perpetuate the psychological lure of ownership. The illustration for the makeup mirror is a pictorial synecdoche, as it portrays a lavishly dressed young lady,

[53]Orig. "隨目置鏡,各得其宜." Sun, *History of Lenses.*
[54]Orig. "量人目力廣隘, 配鏡不爽毫釐." Sun, *History of Lenses.*
[55]Orig. "此鏡利於少年." Sun, *History of Lenses.*
[56]Orig. "便於攜帶, 舟車途次尤所必需." Sun, *History of Lenses*, 6.
[57]Orig. "香閨異寶." Sun, *History of Lenses*, 7.
[58]Orig. "南窗清供似不可無." Sun, *History of Lenses*, 8.
[59]Orig. "知所未知 and *jian suo wei jian* 見所未見." Sun, *History of Lenses*, 11.

which is often seen on contemporary decorative art, in order to signify the tiny mirror in her hand. Although the treatise also mentions the benefit of a makeup mirror for men "*xu mei bi bei* 須眉畢備," the illustrator prioritizes the female figure because the image of a woman here is the objectified desire and therefore excites the desire for objects. To illustrate the last lens, "kaleidoscope" (*wan hua jing* 萬花鏡), the designer allegedly appropriates a leaf from *The Catalogue of Flowers* (*hua pu* 花譜) and seemingly focuses on the peony (Fig. 4). Yet the composition which foregrounds two peacocks and a fancy perforated rock, puts peonies in the background, suggesting an elegant garden estate. The inscribed poem, signed by the author himself, makes this real estate reference even more explicit: "The imperial beauty embosoms the fragrance as if they are curtain screens made of brocade. The immortal birds spread their wings to rival the flowers in blossom."[60] Apart from stock literary allusions, many of the illustrated luxurious collectibles in the treatise also come from a repertoire of images.

Last but not least, I want to call attention to the similarities between the enumerative approach to representing artifacts in this treatise and Min Qiji's twenty-leaf illustration to *The Romance of the West Chamber*, now in the Museum of East Asian Art in Cologne.[61] This is very close to what Lin Li-chiang calls "an encyclopedic layout."[62] The program of illustrations like the one in the booklet on lenses, including collectibles such as rocks, small bronze vessels, letter paper, hand scroll, is used as a visual semiotic frame to assimilate the illustrated subjects into the indigenous cultural practice of connoisseurship; each artifact seemingly retrieves the association with a particular cultural activity. Depending on the selling point, the cultural program of artifacts in *The History of Lenses* may choose to distract the readers from the foreignness of the lenses. They direct the reader to the familiar cultural practice of the literati in order to minimize the heterogeneous nature of the illustrated topic. Moreover, the illustrations here attempt to translate the efficacy of the foreign lenses and attract the readers to buy. It is likely that the images in illustrations for a particular text may come from a larger pictorial repertoire that the designer also employed for other illustrated books.[63] While we are painstakingly deciphering the tenuous semiotic relationship between the text and the "illustrations," we must also keep in mind the proper logic of images and the way in which they were selected and crafted to fit the "illustrated" texts.

[60]Orig. "國色含香錦作帷, 仙禽展翼鬥芳時." Main text, 12.

[61]The album is fully reproduced in Edith Dittrich, Willibald Veit, and Arthur J. Jordan, ed. and trans., *Hsi-hsiang chi* = [*Das Westzimmer*] = *The Romance of the Western Chamber/Chinesische Farbholzschnitte von Min Ch'i-chi, 1640* (Cologne: Museum für Ostasiat. Kunst d. Stadt Köln, 1977).

[62]Lin, *Proliferation of Images*, 105. Min Qiji's twenty-leaf illustration is also inspiringly scrutinized by Jennifer Purtle, "Scopic Frames: Devices for Seeing China c. 1640," *Art History* 33 (2010): 54–73.

[63]Lin, *Proliferation of Images*, 251–307.

Fig. 4 *Hua pu* 花譜 (The Catalogue of Flowers), from the *History of Lenses*, main text, 12

Conclusion

This chapter attempts a rhetorical analysis of text/image relations in an artwork generated by a transcultural encounter. Instead of reconstructing the interaction of two well-defined cultural poles, I instead trace how the border between the familiar and foreignness is drawn to promote commercial products. By analyzing the advertising rhetoric in *History of Lenses*, I show how the foreignness of certain artifacts is highlighted or glossed over according to the author's agenda and eventually assimilated in the cultural inventory. Drawing insight from the study of senses, and from affect theory, I have developed a few analytical approaches with which we might be able to discover more forms of transcultural border-drawing effected in the presentation of artifacts across cultures, especially when we pay close attention to the underlying intention.

First, I analyze the rhetoric of ethos, which resorts to religious discourses and moral authority in commercial illustrations. Second, I show that the illustrations evoke particular sensory experiences by mobilizing established cultural tropes that are linked to specific cultural practices. This booklet on transcultural lenses exemplifies the formation of a genre of illustrated pamphlets in the condition of transcultural encounter that was facilitated by trade and missionary activity. Like quite a few other inventory-like booklets entitled *History* from this period, *The History of Lenses* provides no chronological information of optic devices. *History of Vases,*[64] *Addendum to the History of Tea*,[65] and *History of Lenses* are not "history" in the literal sense. They are inventories of culturally reframed artifacts coming from familiar and unfamiliar lands.

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[64]Yuan Hongdao 袁宏道, *Ping shi* 瓶史 (*History of Vases*) (1599).

[65]Chen Jiru 陳繼儒, ed., *Cha dong bu* 茶董補 (Addendum to the Correct Way to Drink Tea) (1612).

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Part III
Transcultural Objectifications of Nature

From La Flèche to Beijing: The Transcultural Moment of Jesuit Garden Spaces

Lianming Wang

Abstract In the early modern world, the Jesuit garden arguably became a transcultural phenomenon materializing the transfer of both elite knowledge and ideas. This paper elaborates the transcultural dimension of the Jesuit symbolic garden by focusing on the so-called Beitang garden in eighteenth-century Beijing, built in the European style by French Jesuits. As witnessed by a number of Chinese and Korean travelers, however, the Beitang garden was not the only tangible garden constructed by Jesuit missionaries. Like their counterparts in Europe, garden spaces were essential to the Jesuit residences in Beijing. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries these gardens, in which advanced European knowledge of cultivation, mechanism, as well as water conservancy were applied, were gradually turned into a dynamic space of increasing Jesuit botanic and cosmopolitan learning. Considering their unique social and political functions within sacred spaces, this paper will first synthesize the relevant facts in order to re-contextualize the construction of these garden spaces by examining various forms of their visual representation. Relying on written records by Korean travelers, this paper will elaborate on how concrete spatial arrangements and pattern designs, which were used to convey certain attitudes and ideas, became accessible for the Beijing Jesuits. This paper thus captures a transcultural moment for Jesuit garden spaces by demonstrating the ways in which a Jesuit garden in France was transferred to an eighteenth-century Jesuit space in Beijing.

In the eighteenth century, mobilizing ideas through the agency of various artistic media became a global phenomenon. In addition to portable images and decorative objects, physical spaces created through domesticated nature, although not conventionally considered as "objects," served as crucial vehicles for conveying certain attitudes, ideas, and concepts. In fact, the roots of this exchange, both in form and signification, go back to the early Renaissance, when Europe encountered the

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Muslim empires.[1] Since then, the garden space was—starting with the symbolic gardens in France and Italy—embedded with a dual nature that unifies both religious (heavenly Paradise) and secular (earthly power) metaphors.[2] In this regard, the garden is not just a physical enclosure for display and enjoyment of various forms of nature or merely a conceptual ground for surprise, contemplation, and amusement, but a carrier of meanings.

Among all the intellectual orders, the Jesuits were the most important inheritors of this symbolic view. To their understanding, displays of tamed nature not only provided a symbol of control over the wilderness and the harnessing of nature in an orderly world, but also represented Christian high culture that creates a limited space of unlimited human activities, such as a space for displaying European *exotica* and elite culture.[3] Comparable in some regards to members of many European royal houses who were eager to scientifically explore Asia and America, the Jesuits traveled overseas, passionately described and studied foreign flora and fauna, sent dried seeds back to their home institutions in Europe and, above all, exported the symbolic gardens to extra-European spaces by duplicating them elsewhere.

In early modern Beijing, the European Jesuit occupation with horticulture continued. During a period of Chinoiserie collecting and "Chinese garden" constructions at many European royal courts, the Qianlong Emperor 乾隆 (r. 1736–1795) was equally fascinated by comparable transcultural visions as developed by his European counterparts. In response to this increasing mutual interest, Qianlong even assigned the Jesuit court painters working in his imperial workshops to build fountains and parterres for his private gardens. These fountains and parterres were supposed to imitate those at Versailles, which he had seen in a series of copperplate prints.[4]

As testified by new visual evidence, the construction of Jesuit garden spaces in Beijing appeared considerably earlier than Qianlong's imperial garden project. Besides the emperor's *Xiyang lou* 西洋樓 ("Western Mansions"; built between 1747–1760), which are said to be the first Chinese architectural complex incorporating European garden designs, the Jesuits also created three gardens as part of their residences in Beijing, the Nantang 南堂 (South Church),[5] the Beitang 北堂 (North Church), and the Dongtang 東堂 (East Church). Among them, the Beitang residence, run by the French Jesuits, seemed to have a prominent formal "garden in the French style" (*jardin à la française*).

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[1] As Lisa Golombek has demonstrated, the nature of the European garden seemed to be changed by incorporating the patterns and designs of Timur gardens from Central Asia during the sixteenth century, see Lisa Golombek, "From Timur to Tivoli: Reflections on *Il Giardino all'Italiana*," *Muqarnas* 25 (2008): 243–54.

[2] See also Golombek, "From Timur to Tivoli," 243.

[3] See Peter Davidson, "The Jesuit Garden," in *The Jesuits II: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540–1773*, ed. John W. O'Malley et al. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 86–7.

[4] Cf. Peter Fuhring et al., ed., *A Kingdom of Images: French Prints in the Age of Louis XIV*, 1600–1715 (Los Angeles: Getty, 2015), 96–7.

[5] The Nantang residence was originally called Xitang 西堂 (West Church/Residence) before the Lazarists established their own church in 1723.

Adopting a transcultural perspective, this paper will elaborate on the construction of Jesuit garden spaces and their symbolic dimensions by focusing on the garden of the Beitang residence. Against a background of increasing competition between Jesuits of different nationalities, I argue that the Beitang garden not only presents a common view of the garden as a legitimate microcosmic reformulation of the macrocosm of the natural world, but also functions as a unified sign of both secular and sacred power.

I will first synthesize all extant architectural information on the Beitang garden to illustrate its different stages and then identify elements and patterns that potentially derive from European counterparts. Additionally, an analysis of relevant written sources will demonstrate how concrete ideas and patterns were available to the Jesuits in Beijing. The paper concludes with some considerations on Jesuit garden spaces as transcultural materializations of a specific moment in time, questioning the ways in which ideas and identities were constructed and conveyed through their garden spaces.

The Jesuits and the Origin of the Beitang Garden

New evidence has recently come to light to clarify the various facets of the Beitang garden built in eighteenth-century Beijing. The story starts with a wall-sized affixed hanging (*tieluo*), now kept at the Bibliothèque National de France in Paris, that portrays a solemn procession on the occasion of the Feast of the Sacred Heart taking place in the courtyard of the St. Saviour Church (*l'église du Saint Sauveur*), commonly known as the Beitang (Fig. 1).[6]

Apart from the ritual performed in the front yard, which has hitherto attracted the most scholarly attention, it is worth emphasizing that a roofed veranda, which is divided by gravel pathways into four parterres, walls the courtyard. In technical terms, it is a "quadripartite" or "parterre" garden, built according to European Renaissance style schemes. Such a display of tamed nature clearly differs from the conventional idea of Chinese garden space designs, which prize an imitation of natural forms, aesthetics of irregularity, and the creation of moments of surprise for the beholder or consumer of the garden.[7] As closer observation reveals, each parterre is laid out in a symmetrical pattern planted with differently shaped topiaries. Furthermore, the parterre is surrounded by flowering borders filled with various flowers and herbs of non-Chinese origin, including the Japanese rose, lily, and wall iris—a repertoire of exotic vegetation that can also be found in European botanic gardens.

The unique shapes of the topiaries remind us of their counterparts in Qianlong's "European Mansions," in whose development and design Jesuit court painters like

[6]As for the identification of its iconography, see Lianming Wang, "Church, a Sacred Event and the Visual Perspective of an 'Etic Observer': An Eighteenth-Century Chinese Western-Style Painting held in the Bibliothèque nationale de France," in *Face to Face: The Transcendence of the Arts in China in Beyond*, vol.1, ed. Rui Oliveira Lopes (Lisbon: University of Lisbon, 2014), 182–213.

[7]Cf. Chen Liyao, *Private Gardens* (Vienna: Springer, 1999), 134–6.

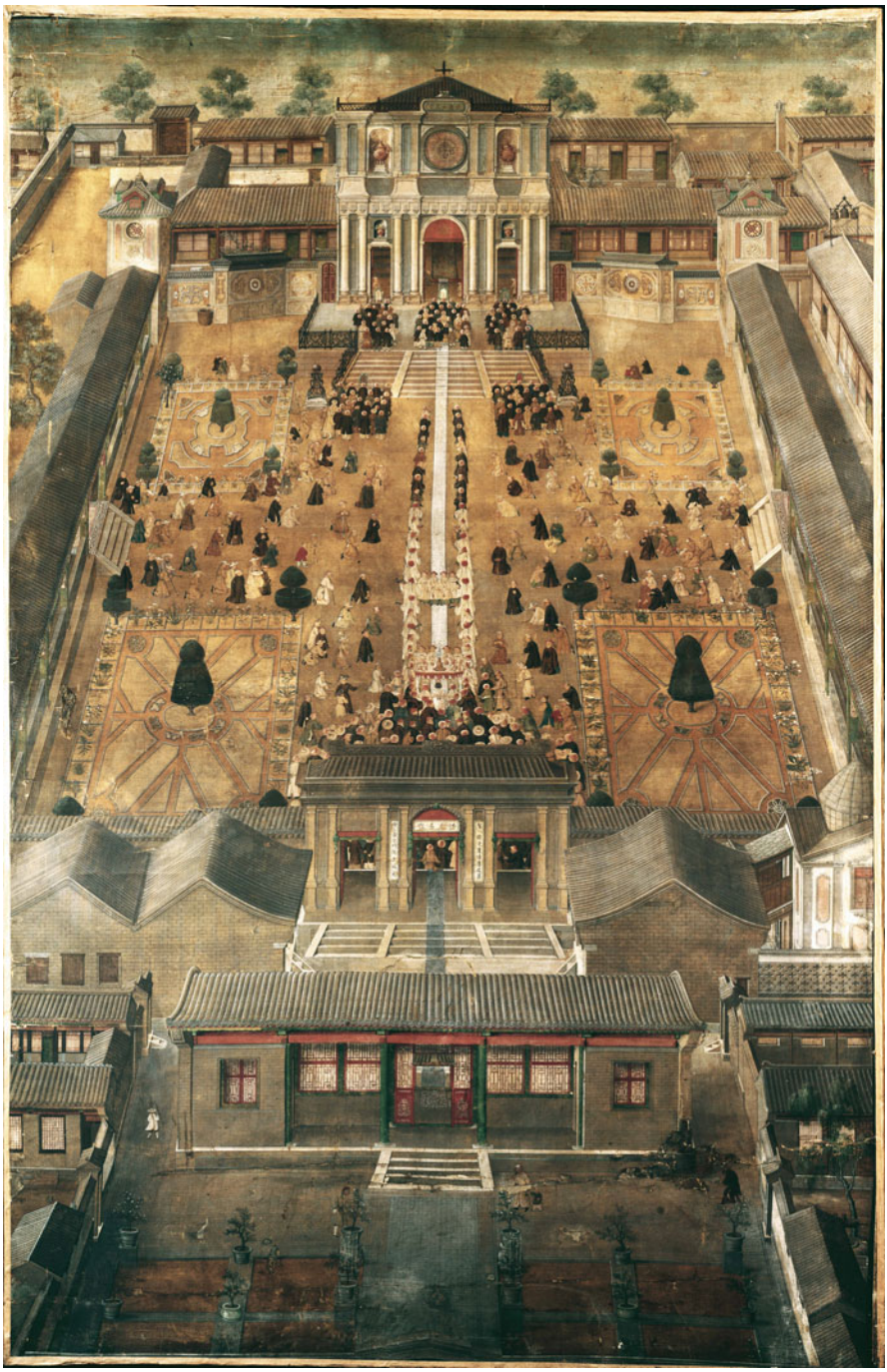

Fig. 1 Anonymous, Chinese painter(s), *The Procession of the Feast of Sacred Heart in front of the Beitang church*. Color on Korean paper. After 1770. 185.7 × 130 cm. Bibliothèque national de France, Paris

Giuseppe Castiglione (Lang Shining 郎世寧, 1688–1766), Jean-Denis Attiret (Wang Zhicheng 王致誠, 1702–1768), and Michel Benoit (Jiang Youren 蔣有仁, 1715–1774) were involved. As in the imperial gardens, a large Chinese juniper trimmed horizontally into two parts stands at the center of each parterre: the upper part in the shape of a cone with slightly rounded corners, and the lower clipped with four trapezoid lateral sides imitating the form of a pyramid. Moreover, each corner of the parterre also contains a tightly clipped juniper that is smaller in size and slightly different in shape. It remains unclear who built this "hidden" Jesuit garden, while its design, as testified by the wall hangings, was clearly affiliated with Qianlong's imperial garden project and its maker was able to access the Jesuit reservoir of garden designs in Beijing.

As the only Jesuit compound located inside the Imperial City, the Beitang residence is only sparsely mentioned in the travelogues by Chinese or Korean visitors during the eighteenth century. The earliest account of the Beitang garden can be attributed to Pierre-Martial Cibot (Han Guoying 韓國英, 1727–1780), a French missionary who was deeply impressed by ancient Chinese garden designs while working at the Beitang.[8]

In a letter dated June 11, 1772, Cibot noted the close connection between Beijing and the Jesuit College located in La Flèche' Loire Valley (Le Collège Royal Henri-le-Grand, 1604–1762; now: Le Prytanée National Militaire) where Cibot, as well as other French Jesuits sent to China, were educated: ". . . in front of our church, there is a courtyard [filled with] parterres surrounded by a corridor; the big courtyard is almost like the one of our boarding school (the Jesuit college) in La Flèche."[9]

Needless to say, although the parterre gardens that Cibot mentioned were not a building complex on a par with Qianlong's imperial gardens, they were essential parts of Jesuit residences, both in Beijing and at La Flèche. This means, that while the Beitang garden layout bore certain aesthetic resemblances to the imperial project, the search for its genesis must start in Beijing where Jesuit settlements were established over 160 years before.

After the first Jesuit missionaries, led by Matteo Ricci (Li Madou 利瑪竇, 1552–1610), reached Beijing in 1601, the construction of ecclesiastical buildings was undertaken by Jesuit missionaries, which included Ricci himself, Johann Adam Schall von Bell (Tang Ruowang 湯若望, 1592–1666), and Thomas Pereira (Xu Risheng 徐日升, 1645–1708). Numerous local Chinese convents financially supported these construction projects to which the Portuguese king, who patronized the China mission, was only the "sponsor" *pro forma.* He did not provide financial support, nor did he send any skilled workers; however, things were different in the case of the Beitang compound.

Throughout the seventeenth century, the Jesuits established two churches under the protection of the Portuguese *Padroado*, namely St. Saviour Church (or Xitang,

[8]See Bianca Maria Rinaldi, *The "Chinese Garden in Good Taste": Jesuits and Europe's Knowledge of Chinese Flora and Art of the Garden in the 17th and 18th Centuries* (Munich: Meidenbauer, 2005), 211–2.

[9]Orig. "...cour du parterre environné d'une galerie couverte qui est devant notre Eglise; la grande cour est à peu près comme celle des Pensionnaires de la Fleche." Letter of Pierre-Martial Cibot to ?, dated June 11, 1772, in *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, *écrites des missions étrangers,* vol. 30 (Paris: Le Clerc, 1773), 94–114.

the West Church; renamed Nantang after 1723) built between 1650 and 1652, and St. Joseph Church (or Dongtang), which was built in 1662 but confiscated and destroyed during the anti-Christian movement let by Yang Guangxian 楊光先 (1597–1669). However, throughout these spaces no garden or European water installation could be found. This situation changed in 1670/71 when Thomas Pereira, a missionary who was gifted and trained in the arts of mechanics, reached Beijing.[10]

The tight control that the Portuguese king exercised over the Far Eastern mission, especially in China, changed dramatically after Philippe Couplet (Bo Yingli 柏應理, 1623–1693), a Belgian Jesuit who was affiliated with the Nantang, was sent back to Europe in 1681 as the procurator of the China Jesuits. Couplet's personal wish that scientifically well-trained Jesuits serving at the Qing court would facilitate the mission work unexpectedly coincided with King Louis XIV's (r. 1643–1715) attempts to extend his influence in the Far East.[11] Soon afterward, in 1686, six well-trained missionaries from the Jesuit College in La Flèche, including Joachim Bouvet (Bai Jin 白晉, 1656–1730), sailed to China.

After 5 years, Bouvet recruited twelve additional "French" Jesuits for work at the Chinese court. They included the sculptor Charles de Belleville (1657–1730) and the Italian lay brother Giovanni Gherardini (Nian Xiushi 年修士, 1655–1723?), who was trained in illusionistic paintings or *trompe l'oeil*. Both were actively involved in the construction of the first church for the French Jesuits in Beijing.

The church dedicated to the Holy Saviour was built between 1699 and 1703 on the west bank of Lake Canchikou 蠶池口 inside the *Xi'an men* 西安門 (Xi'an gate) of the Imperial City. Unlike the other compounds purchased by the missionaries, it was a privileged site bestowed upon them by Kangxi Emperor (r. 1661–1722) to show his gratitude to the French Jesuits for curing his malaria by using quinine from South America in 1693.[12]

Using this circumstance to their advantage, the Beitang residence was often propagated in the reports of French Jesuits as the "royal church" of the Kangxi Emperor. It was a project co-sponsored by Louis XIV, or, to be specific, a French royal church *pro forma*, since a diagram signed by a French Jesuit named P. Moreau[13] records that the French king also donated an iron railing (Fig. 2). As shown in Moreau's layout, which was produced during the Kangxi reign, the church was equipped with an astronomical observatory and, after its consecration on December 9, 1703, also a library situated behind the chancel. Remarkably, Beitang's rectangular courtyard is divided by a marble avenue, contradicting the testimony of

[10]Regarding Pereira's contribution to the Nantang's renovation project, see Lianming Wang, "Propaganda Fidei: Die Nantang-Kirche und die jesuitischen Sakralräume im Peking der Frühen Neuzeit" (PhD diss., University of Heidelberg, 2014), 57–60.

[11]See also Claudia von Collani, "French Jesuits," in *Handbook of Christianity in China*, vol. 1 (635–1800), ed. Nicolas Standaert (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 313–6.

[12]See Louis Pfister, *Notices biographiques et bibliographiques sur les Jésuites de l'anciene mission de Chine, 1552–1773*, Variétés sinologiques 60 (Shanghai: Shanghai Mission Catholique, 1934), 446–9.

[13]Jean-Michel Moreau (1741–1814), active in eighteenth-century Beijing.

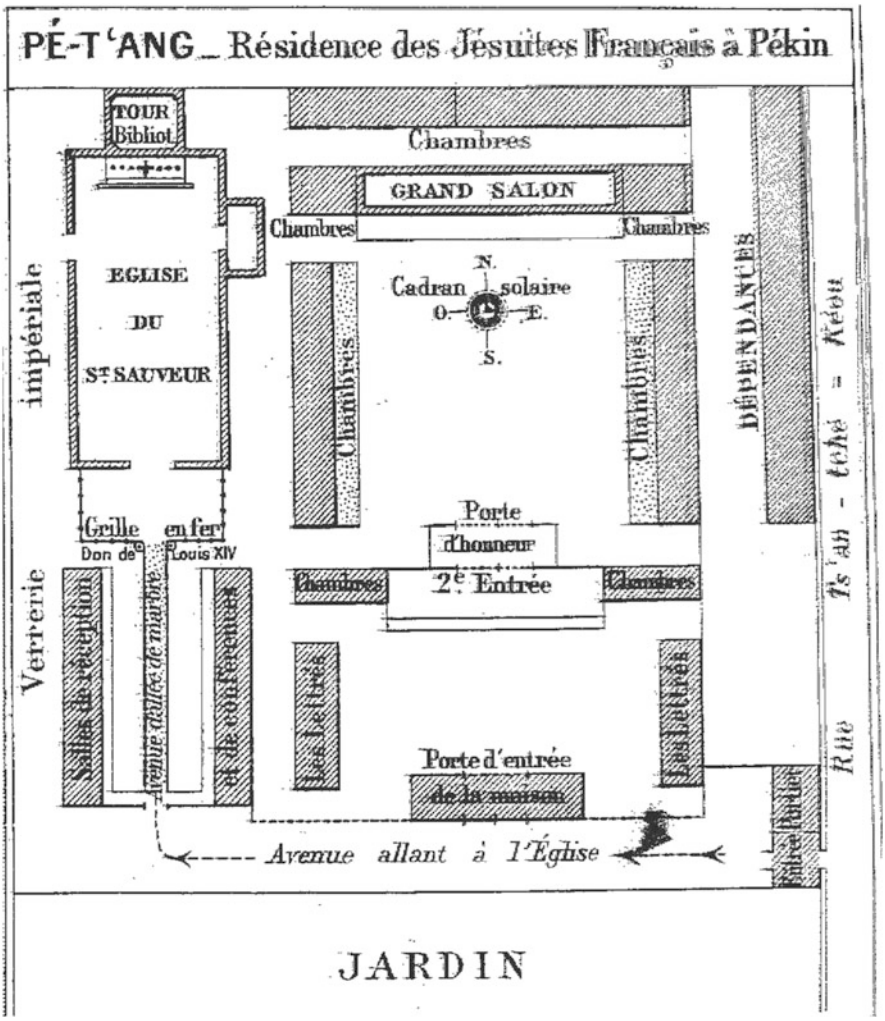

Fig. 2 Signed by J. Moreau, *Diagram of the Beitang Residence around 1710*. Nineteenth century (based on sources from the eighteenth century). Published in: Camille de Rochemonteix, *Joseph Amiot et les derniers survivants de la Mission française à Pékin (1750–1795)* (Paris: Picard et fils, 1915), on the next page of fol. LXIII (introduction)

the "Paris wall hangings" discussed above, which show a yard filled with a distinctive quadripartite garden. It should also be noted that in Moreau's version, the garden appears in the south of the residence, not in the courtyard.

Moreau's plan also fails to match another ground plan of the garden seen in *Qianlong jingcheng quantu* 乾隆京城全圖 (*Complete Maps of Beijing during the Qianlong Reign*), which was produced by the Italian Jesuit court painter Castiglione and his Chinese colleagues in 1750. While the garden is rendered almost invisible in this image (perhaps

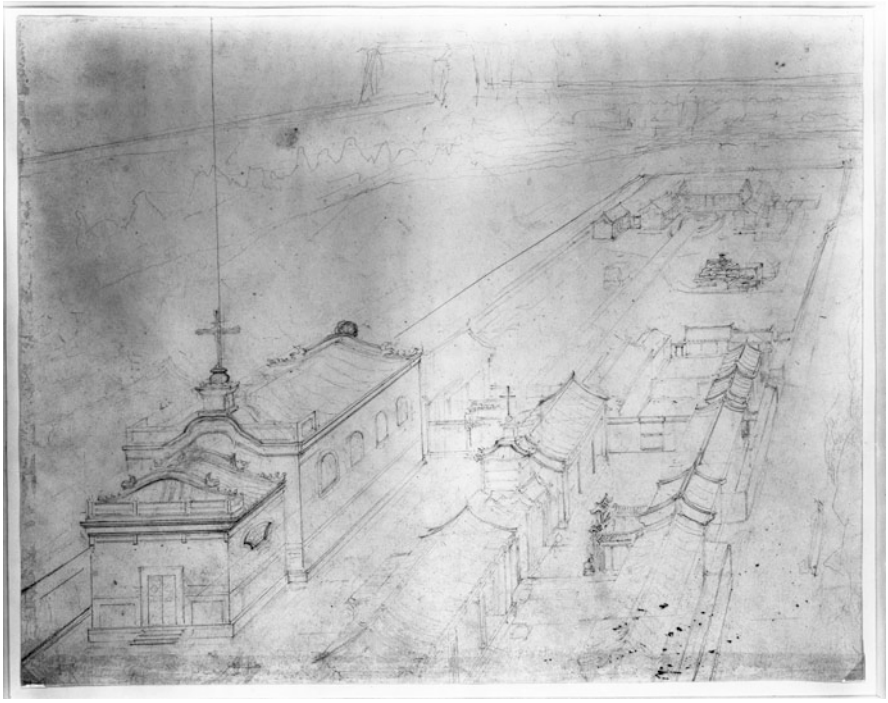

Fig. 3 Bird's-eye view of a church in a walled compound in Beijing, attributed to Beitang in the 1710s. Drawing on sheet. Before 1730. 24.6 × 31.3 cm. DRWG 1—Russian, no. 323, Yuding Collection, Library of Congress, Washington DC

due to technical reasons), this map, which was based on actual surveys, confirms that by the 1750s the Beitang church had a square courtyard walled by a verandah.

What to make of the substantial inconsistencies between the two visual sources? During the period from the two earthquakes (1720 and 1730) to the Lazarists' takeover of the church in 1785, the Beitang residence seems to have received some visible architectural modifications, as did the other Jesuit churches in Beijing. This is evidenced by visual sources in the "Yudin Collection" (Krasnoyarsk, Eastern Siberia), now kept at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C.[14]

The first drawing, displaying the draftsman's skillful use of perspective, indicates that the exterior of the church's chancel is directly connected to an annex building (*Tour d'Astronomie et Bibliothèque*) as in Moreau's diagram (Fig. 3). It also illustrates the outline of the marble avenue that we saw in Moreau's diagram and an entrance hall flanked by lateral annex buildings, which serves as the south doorway to the courtyard. Instead of a French-style garden, a set of artificial rockeries similar to arrangements of

[14]On the history of the "Yuding collection," see Barbara L. Dash, "A Visionary Acquisition: The Yudin Collection at the Library of Congress," *Slavic & East European Information Resources* 9 (2008): 92–114.

Taihu shi 太湖石 (Taihu rocks), that as irregularly shaped holed structures form essential elements of Chinese garden designs, are piled up in the middle of the courtyard. On top of the pile, a tiny European-style fountain is installed.

In the second drawing the front yard is replaced by a European garden representing two lateral towers at the end of the verandah and four parterres, elements that match, for the most part, the depiction in the wall hangings discussed above (Fig. 4). It is noteworthy that the addition of a three door-gateway in Chinese style divides the front yard into two separate parts: the walled yard in the north and the empty space surrounded by low buildings in the south.

Due to the striking dissimilarities between the two Yudin drawings—stylistic features and different levels of the mastery of perspective—and the predications on the Beijing map from the Qianlong documentation project, it is safe to suggest that the Yuding drawings were made in different periods and probably by different hands: The former during Kangxi's reign and prior to the most serious earthquake in 1730, the latter after the church's enlargement in the 1740s when the French-style garden was added. This allows us to date the physical construction of the European garden on Beitang's compound back to the 1740s, prior to the construction of Qianlong's "European Mansion."

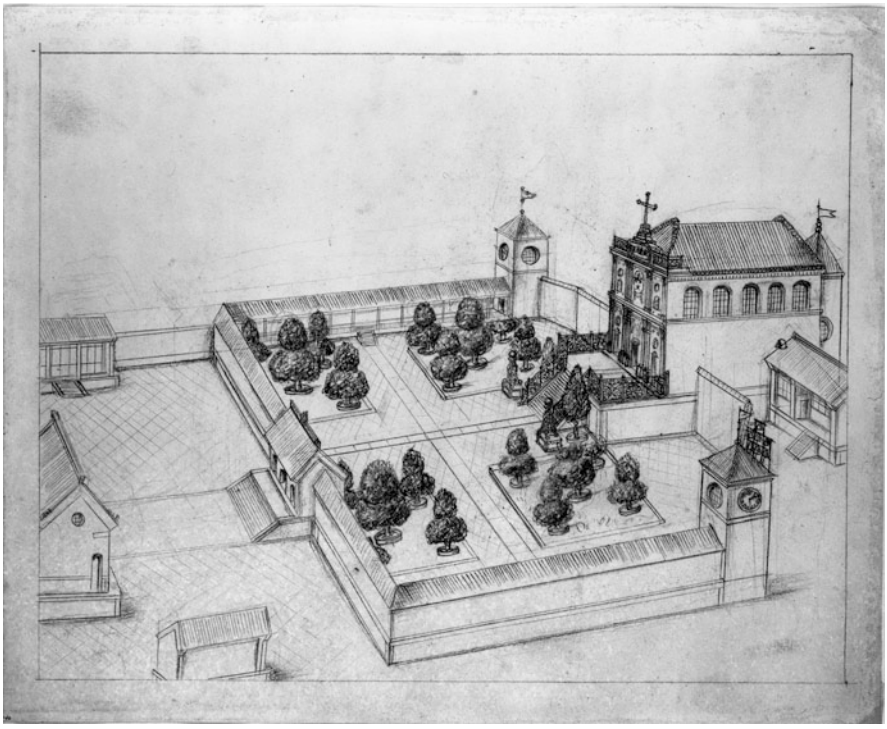

Fig. 4 A Catholic church with walled courtyard garden in Beijing, attributed to Beitang after 1740s. Drawing on sheet. Before 1730. 23.4 × 29 cm. DRWG 1—Russian, no. 140, Yuding Collection, Library of Congress, Washington DC

The Mediators at Beitang: Attiret and d'Incarville

The question of authorship remains. Who was able to erect such a "secret garden"? Judging from the aforementioned visual evidence in combination with the garden's specific dating, the construction of the garden can be seen as an extension project of the damaged Beitang attributed to Jean-Denis Attiret, a French Jesuit who arrived in Beijing in 1737. By around 1740, Attiret was the only person living at Beitang who was trained in European architecture and painting. It is noteworthy that the Jesuit College (Collège de L'Arc) at Dole, where Attiret was educated, also had a walled garden filled with four parterres quite similar to that of Beitang and the Jesuit garden in La Flèche.

As Castiglione's assistant and a skilled painter in his own right who was involved in a number of imperial art and garden projects in Beijing, Attiret paid great attention to Qianlong's Chinese gardens; this is reflected in a famous letter sent from Beijing on November 1, 1743.[15] To European readers, his report on Qianlong's garden is fundamental and, undoubtedly, the most comprehensive description that a Jesuit ever put in writing. It is therefore not far-fetched to assume that it was Attiret who transplanted a version of the European garden familiar to him at Dole in the Middle Kingdom.

As emphasized in Attiret's letter to Paris "the Jesuits (including himself) holding different posts at the court were then the only Europeans who had the opportunity to observe the Chinese gardens."[16] Of course, beholding or consuming garden spaces and bringing a physical garden space into being are two completely different things. Attiret presumably needed the help of a botanist or gardener who was able to raise plants and some kind of guidebook on patterns of parterres as inspirational sources for the Beitang garden.

Unlike Attiret, Pierre Nicolas d'Incarville (Tang Zhizhong 湯執中, 1706–1757), a French Jesuit and amateur botanist had, at the very beginning of his career as a gardener, been denied access to the imperial gardens by Qianlong.[17] As a regular correspondent of the *Jardin des Plantes* in Paris, d'Incarville had passionately dedicated himself to the study and collection of non-European plants since his arrival in Beijing in 1740; further, the transmission of seeds of Chinese plants to Europe and European plants to China was made possible by him.[18] After he became an "imperial gardener," d'Incarville presented two specimens of mimosa (Mimosa pudica L.) to Qianlong in 1753, a lively scene of which is captured in Castiglione's painting entitled *Haixi zhishi cao* 海西知時草 (*Time-telling Plants from the West of the*

[15]Jean-Denis Attiret, *A Particular Account of the Emperor of China's Gardens near Pekin*, trans. Sir Harry Beaumont (London: R. Dodsley and M. Cooper, 1752); see also Craig Clunas, "Nature and Ideology in Western Descriptions of the Chinese Gardens," *Extrême-Orient* 22 (2000): 154–5.

[16]Rinaldi, *Chinese Garden in Good Taste*, 175.

[17]A brief bibliography of d'Incarville is provided by Georges Métailié, "Botany," in *Handbook of Christianity in China*, vol. 1, ed. Nicolas Standaert (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 805.

[18]See Rinaldi, *Chinese Garden in Good Taste*, 153–61.

Sea).[19] These plants were raised in Beijing but their dried seeds were one of the results of d' Incarville's botanical exchanges with his European colleagues.

The fact that the first place where he attempted to collect plants was a small park in the southern part of Beitang confirms the existence of the *Jardin* on Moreau's diagram (Fig. 2). This green space, he claimed, was probably used "to raise foreign or European plants."[20]

In his letter of September 20, 1742, d' Incarville also referred to two other places in Beijing where the Qianlong Emperor had assigned the Jesuits to observe indigenous plants:[21] "I herborize in a park that we have here and at our burial ground; that is where I have collected a few seeds; there are very few special ones, for the most part they are the same species as in Europe."[22] This kind of compound of planting beds was actually not unfamiliar to the other Beijing Jesuits. As discussed in detail below, every Jesuit residence seemed to have assigned professional botanists or gardeners to take care of their planting beds. Against this background, it is thus reasonable to say that d'Incarville, whose principal interest was to research non-European plants and to transmit his knowledge between Europe and China, was probably the one who facilitated Attiret's attempt at a French-style garden.

The Garden Spaces of Portuguese Jesuits

The Beitang was not the only Jesuit residence that possessed an actual garden. In fact, the Jesuit gardens were great attractions for many travelers who sojourned in Beijing. Back in the seventeenth century, when the Jesuits published extensively on the non-European plants and gardens they witnessed, Gabriel de Magalhães (An Wensi 安文思, 1610–1677) indicated in an annual report sent from Beijing in 1675 that Claudio Filippo Grimaldi (Min Woming 閔我明, 1639–1712), an Italian Jesuit, built a "household garden" (*Hausgarten*) on the compound owned by Portuguese missionaries;[23] to be exact, it was located on the north side of the Xitang

[19]See also Rinaldi, *Chinese Garden in Good Taste*, 156–7.

[20]Henri Bernard-Maitre, *Un correspondant de Bernard de Jussieu en Chine: Le Père Le Chéron d'Incarville, missionnaire français de Pékin d'après de nombreux documents inédits* (Paris: J. Peyronnet, 1949), 16; quoted in Rinaldi, *Chinese Garden in Good Taste*, 153.

[21]They are the cemetery of Zhalan 柵欄, the burial place of the Portuguese Jesuits, and the cemetery of Zhengfusi 正福寺 near the Fucheng Gate 阜成門, where the French Jesuits had been buried since 1732, see also Rinaldi, *Chinese Garden in Good Taste*, 153.

[22]Letter of d'Incarville to Jean-Marie-Joseph-Claude Rondeaux de Sétry, September 20, 1742; quoted in Bernard-Maitre, *Un correspondant de Bernard de Jussieu en Chine*, 14; see also Rinaldi, *Chinese Garden in Good Taste*, 153.

[23]See also Claudia von Collani, "'Jingtian': The Kangxi emperor's gift to Ferdinand Verbiest in the Rites Controversy," in *Ferdinand Verbiest (1623–1688): Jesuit Missionary, Scientist, Engineer and Diplomat*, ed. John W. Witek (Nettetal: Steyler, 1994), 353–470.

residence, which was renamed to Nantang after the Lazarists occupied their own church inside the *Xizhi men* 西直門 (Xizhi-Gate) in 1723.[24]

In addition to these European sources, a Chinese traveler also provided a similar account on this actual garden in the seventeenth century. In 1688, Huang Biao 黄表 (fl. 1660–1690), a local governor from Suzhou, expressed his deep admiration for the "borrowing sceneries," a Chinese term that denotes a traditional strategy in gardening in which new vistas are created and framed in picturesque ways, which he encountered in Grimaldi's garden writing:

> Inside [the Xitang residence], there are waterside pavilions and garden ponds, including a Daiguan-hall, a Jijin-Terrace, a Wuzhu-Veranda, and a Wanlan-Pavilion, all made exquisitely in European-style. . .[also] there are crucian carps measuring three *cun* long, jumping above the water ponds for fun.[25]

In this lively description, he mentions the essential architectural elements of a "typical" Chinese private garden, such as a Daiguan hall (Hall for Great Scenery), which the garden's owner used to entertain his visitors, a raised flat platform called Jijin Terrace (Terrace Throughout the Time) used for observing sceneries, a Chamber amid Phoenix Trees and Bamboos, and a waterside pavilion designed for admiring water plays. Furthermore, he also describes the garden as containing an orchard with a great variety of foreign plants and trees, whose changing blossoming and fruit-bearing appearances in the garden are commonly used to illustrate and reflect the changing of the seasons: ". . .inside the garden, there are peach trees planted whose fruits [are] as big as bowls; [one can also find] delicious melons as small as silkworms."[26]

To Huang Biao, the foreign varieties of fruits and plants that vegetated vigorously in the seventeenth-century Xitang garden were a big attraction. This also illustrates that the "Portuguese" Jesuits, such as Grimaldi, presumably started their botanical

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[24]The location of the Xitang garden at the north side of the residence is confirmed by Hong Dae-yong 洪大榮 (1731–83) in 1765, see Huang Shijian 黄时鉴, "Chaoxian Yangxinglu suoji de Beijing tianzhutang 朝鲜燕行录所记的北京天主堂 (Beijing's Catholic Churches in the Descriptions of Korean Notes on Travels to Beijing)," in *Hanguo xue lunwen ji* 韩国学论文集 (*Selected Works on Korean Studies*) (Beijing: Peking University Center for Korean Studies, 1999), 159: ". . .I entered the north gate [of the residence, I saw] another courtyard in which the flowers and trees grew magnificently /. . .由北門入, 又有庭, 花樹蔚然."

[25]Fang Hao 方豪, *Zhongyi jiaotong shi* 中西交通史 (*History of Sino-Western Cultural Exchanges*) (Taipei: Zhonghua wenhua chuban sheye weiyuanhui, 1954), 54; see also Chen Tongbin 陳同濱, "Nantang yuanqi kao 南堂緣起考 (On the Origin of the Nantang Residence)," in *Di san ci Zhongguo jindai jianzhu yanjiu taolunhui lunwen ji* 第三次中國近代建築史研究討論會論文集 (*The Collection of Proceedings of the Third Conference on Chinese Modern Architectural History*), ed. Wang Tan (Beijing: Zhongguo jianzhu gongye chubanshe chuban: Xinhua shudian jingxiao, 1991), 50–1: "太觀堂、及今台、梧竹軒、玩瀾亭. . .內建亭台池水, 式仿西式, 極其共巧. . .巨鯽有翅, 跳躍遊戲, 有三寸大." In 1692, Huang Biao included his descriptions on Xitang garden in the published travel books entitled *Yuanyou lüe* 遠遊略 (*Summaries on Travels to the Distanced Regions*) after returning to his hometown.

[26]Fang, *Zhongyi jiaotong shi*, 54; see also Chen, "Nantang yuanqi kao," 51: "園內中大桃如碗;小瓜如蠶大, 味美. . ."

experimentations in Beijing, initiated by the early Jesuit botanist Michal Boym (Pu Mige 卜彌格, 1612–1659), much earlier than the French Jesuits.[27]

In fact, Grimaldi's garden is not the only one that possesses an orchard. As confirmed by a Korean traveler named Hong Dae-yong in 1765,[28] the Dontang residence even had a vineyard, which was fitted out with a water disposal system that seemed to be operated mechanically, for producing red wine:

> . . .under the observatory (Yuntai), there is a garden measuring more than ten acres in which there are over one hundred posts made of bricks; each brick post is higher than one *zhang*. On its top, one can see a cross-shaped outlet. During spring and summer, there are grape trellis built on the posts; under the posts, there are mounds similar to [the form of] tombs which are actually used for storing the grapes. On the eastern side of the yard, there are several buildings. Among them, there is a well. On its top, a wheel is installed which is closely connected with a wooden wheel gear spinning like a mill. . .people do not need to take care of it but the water is [automatically] running into the irrigation canals as long as the wheel gear is spinning...[29]

To the Jesuit missionaries, the idea of creating a watering system using European mechanical knowledge was nothing new by the eighteenth century. Already in the early seventeenth century the fourth volume of Johannes Schreck's (Deng Yuhan 邓玉函, 1576–1630) *Yuanxi qiqi tushuo* 遠西奇器圖說 (*Illustrated Books on the Wonderful Machines from the Far West*), published 1627 in Beijing, contained an entire chapter with rich illustrations dedicated to the question of how to channel water.[30]

In the same travelogue, Huang Biao further claimed that at both sides of the Wanlan-Pavilion 玩瀾亭 (Pavilion for Playing with Waves), two ponds equipped with waterworks were situated. The left one was supposedly an artificial waterfall, or a European-style fountain, which also appeared in Beitang's rectangular garden

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[27]See Rinaldi, *Chinese Garden in Good Taste*, 117–32.

[28]The descriptions of Hong Dae-yong's visits to the Jesuits residences in Beijing are summarized in Lee Hyung-dae, "Hong Dae-yong's Beijing Travels and His Changing Perception of the West-Focusing on Eulbyeong yeonhaengnok and Uisan mundap," *The Review of Korean Studies* 9 (2006): 45–62.

[29]Hong Dae-yong, *Eulbyeong yeonhaengnok* 湛軒燕記 (*Zhan Xuan's Notes on Travels to Beijing*, 1765), published in Minjok Munhwa Ch'ujinhoe, ed., *Yonhaengnok sonjip* 燕行录选集 (*Selected Works of Korean Notes on Travels to Beijing*), vol. 1 (Soul: Mimmungo, 1989), 315–6; quoted in: Huang, "Chaoxian Yangxinglu suoji de Beijing tianzhutang," 159: "雲台下庭廣十數畝, 築磚為柱, 長丈餘, 上有十字通穴, 遍庭無慮百數。蓋春夏上施竹木務葡萄架, 柱旁往往聚土如墳者, 葡萄之收藏也。庭東有屋數間, 中有井, 井上設軲轆, 旁拖橫尺木牙輪, 平轉如磨. . .机轮一转. . .人不劳而水遍于沟坎. . ."

[30]Johannes Schreck (Deng Yuhan 鄧玉函) and Wang Zheng 王徵, *Yuanxi qiqi tushuo* 遠西奇器圖說 (*Illustrated Books on the Wonderful Machines from the Far West*) (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1936). Besides the mechanical book, Golvers argues that there were probably also two copies of Basilius Besler's *Hortus Eystettensis, sive Diligens et Accurate Omnium Plantarum, Florum, Stirpium. . .*(Nürnberg 1613) available in the Xitang library, which would facilitate the establishment of Grimaldi's Xitang garden, see Noël Golvers, *Libraries of Western Learning for China*, vol. 3 (Leuven: Ferdinand Verbiest Institute, 2015), chapter 5.4.18.

around 1710. The right one was shaped like a fountain with spraying streams. Huang Bing elaborated:

> . . .in the left one, the water rising three or four *chi* over the pond; in the right one, there are four water streams squirting four to five *chi* high; at each side of the pond, [the Jesuit missionaries] also built a small square cellar for installing mechanical devices spraying water all around, for irrigating the trees and bamboo plants.[31]

Creating such water features not only demanded the practical knowledge of someone trained in mechanics. More importantly, a comprehensive guidebook was also required. As Noël Golvers has demonstrated, both water plays that Huang Biao witnessed could be found in Georg Andrea Böckler's (1617–1687) *Architectura Curiosa Nova*, published in 1664 in Nuremberg (vol. 2, fol. 55, 3)—an illustrated guidebook with over 200 copperplates that speak of the construction of water plays, fountains, labyrinths, and the layout designs of garden.[32] Of course, the great variety of water features as introduced in this book had the potential to greatly inspire Pereira and other Jesuit fathers to create a water system in line with the latest European standards.

Besides other treatises on European gardens, this book also seems to have been part of the permanent collection of Jesuit libraries in Beijing.[33] Fifty years later, in 1720, when a Korean traveler named Lee Gi-ji 李器之 (1690–1722) visited the Xitang residence, he described one of these book's copperplate prints as follows:

> . . . one can see rocks among the flowers and trees. The water strands are issuing forth from the top of the artificial rock(s), about two or three *zhang* and scattered like drops and fog in all directions, splashing like the light drizzle on the flowers.[34]

Lee mentioned three additional water features displayed on the copperplate engravings, and he further recorded that they are "tricks from [private] gardens of European noble families . . ."[35] He detailed these three varieties of water features:

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[31]Fang, *Zhongyi jiaotong shi*, 54; see also Chen, "Nantang yuanqi kao," 51: ". . .左池水上高三四尺, 右池水四道, 上噴高四五尺。左右另築有小方窖, 設機竅, 用水四散噴注, 以灌溉竹木."

[32]Georg Andrea Böckler, *Architectura curiosa nova, Das ist: Neue, Ergötzliche, Sinn- und Kunstreiche, auch nützliche Bau- und Wasser-Kunst. . .*, vol. 3 (Nürnberg: Paul Fürstens, 1664); see also Golvers, *Libraries of Western Learning*, chapter 5.4.18.

[33]A detailed list of European treatises on architecture and garden, collected in Jesuit libraries in Beijing, is compiled by Zou Hui, "The jing of a perspective garden," *Studies in the History of Garden & Designed Landscapes: An International Quarterly* 22, no. 4 (2012): 317–20.

[34]Lee Gi-ji, *Iram Yeongi* 一菴燕行日記 (*Yi An's Notes on Travels to Bejing*), in *Hanguo hanwen Yanxing wenxian xuanbian* 韓國漢文燕行文獻選編 (Seleted Works of Korean *Yeon Heng Rok* written in Chinese), vol. 13 (Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 2011), 21–3; quoted in Liu Xiang 劉香, "Chaoxian fujing shichen de xiyang renshi, shiqi zhi shijiu shiji: yi Yanxingluquanji wei zhongxin 朝鮮赴京使臣的西洋認知 (17-19世紀) — 以《燕行錄全集》為中心 (The Cognition of Korean Envoys to the Western World, seventeenth to nineteenth Century: Centered on Complete Works of Yeon Heng Rok)" (Master's thesis, Northeast Normal University, 2013), 21: ". . .花木中有石頭, 假山高數丈, 而上顛湧水二三丈, 四散如珠如霧, 亂散於花卉, 若細雨輕霖".

[35]Lee Gi-ji, *Iram Yeongi*, 23; quoted in Liu Xiang, "Chaoxian fujing shichen de xiyang renshi, shiqi zhi shijiu shiji," 22: "西洋大家花園內戲法."

> [I saw] another building similar to a pagoda which consists of a stone basement (or basin) and over ten layers of flat disk-shaped metal basins ("copper dishes"). At the bottom of the pagoda, there are four [sculpted] dragon heads on the ground. The water [streams] are issuing from the dragon heads reaching several *zhang* high and scattering in the metal basins on the thickest part of the stone basement. [Nevertheless,] there are also water [streams] gushing from the edges of the pagoda's top, discharging in a jet to the sky and then scattering into the ten layers of metal basins [of the pagoda]. The disk-shaped metal basins look like covered with small carriage wheels. [Then I saw] water issuing from the third storey [of a building]. The streams were dropping down along the roof. The four sides [of the building] looked like covered with a curtain of water. [Ultimately, I saw] a bathroom, from its roof beam water [streams] were falling down like a light rain shower's drizzles. Inside, there is someone taking a shower. . .[36]

All the described water installations are various forms of European fountains. Even though Lee Gi-ji, by modern standards, did not express his impressions in precise terms, it is evident that they seem to match at least three images in the third volume of *Architectura Curiosa Nova*, a book that concentrates primarily on various methods and forms of water handling.[37]

Although European water features and the watering system were added to the Xitang garden, its spatial arrangement was still designed in a Chinese manner, which created an array of vistas and a certain separation of different "landscape scenes," as first encountered by Matteo Ricci in the garden of Xu Hongji 徐弘基 (fl. 1590–1640), *Weiguo gong* 魏國公 (Duke of Weiguo), by the end of the sixteenth century.[38]

Taking the Wanlan-Pavilion as an example: the fact that it was specifically designed as a single scene within the garden structure rejects the "Western ideals of exhibiting grandeur of dimension through axes and prospects, or using geometrical elements like avenues and fountains to articulate the various parts of the composition."[39] Nonetheless, Huang Biao's description suggests that Grimaldi's garden was unprecedented in Jesuit garden history. Most probably, it was in its general layout a Chinese garden with a classical space arrangement but incorporating certain European elements and relating to symbolic European understandings of the representation of time through the displayed transience of mechanically manipulated water flows. In other words, it incorporated Eastern and Western elements as well as symbolic meanings.

The Jesuits rejected the total acceptance of Chinese aesthetics and instead created a hybrid garden space. As an innovative solution invented by the seventeenth-century

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[36]Lee Gi-ji, *Iram Yeongi*, 23; quoted in Liu Xiang, "Chaoxian fujing shichen," 22: "又有石坮銅盤數十層, 若塔狀, 其下平地繞塔有四龍頭, 水自龍頭湧起數丈, 落於坮腰銅盤, 而其水卻自塔顛之旁湧出, 射天折而下散落於十層銅盤, 若罩輕轂。又有水自三層顛湧而出, 細布簷端而下, 四面作水簾。又有浴室, 水自屋樑散下, 若細雨, 室中人作浴狀. . ."

[37]In proper order, they are: the fol. 35 (*Ein schöner Bonn/in Gestalt eines Kruges/mit einer Grotta*), fol. 36 (*Ein schöner Bronn mit einer Gaul und Kronen/so Wasser von sich gibt/samt vier spielenden Krugeln*), and fol. 20: (*Ein schöner Bronn mit einer umlaufenden Kaiser-Cron/und etlichen Adlern/so Wasser von sich geben*). Nevertheless, it is still unclear where the last copperplate that Lee mentioned may have come from, which suggests that they were also other European treatises available in the same library.

[38]See also Clunas, "Nature and Ideology," 154.

[39]Rinaldi, *Chinese Garden in Good Taste*, 182.

China-missionaries, this strategy was inherited and practiced by the first generation of French Jesuits at the Beitang. Beside the park/planting beds (*Jardin*) for collecting and studying plants, this later generation of Jesuits also built a single garden in Chinese-style, with a remarkable European fountain added on top of artificial rocks.

The early Jesuit gardens in Beijing, both the Xitang and the Beitang, gradually became a dynamic space, in which the Jesuits' ambivalent attitude toward the aesthetics of Chinese gardens are reflected. The Jesuits of the seventeenth century, as Rinaldi has indicated, presented "a sort of prejudice against the Chinese gardens they entered, considering them modest compared to the grand European gardens they had been accustomed to."[40] Compared to their increasing botanical interests in researching Chinese plants, as initiated by Boym, their desire for Chinese garden aesthetics was, to a certain extent, of minor interest.

As their mission prospered, their attitude also changed fundamentally in the first decade of the eighteenth century, during which the Beitang garden came into being. In line with their deepening understanding of Chinese culture, their initial preconceived notion gave way to a clearer awareness and increasingly also an appreciation for Chinese garden aesthetics. This attitude reached its peak in 1743 when Attiret's report on Qianlong's imperial gardens reached Europe. Against this background, however, it might sound contradictory that Attiret and d'Incarville attempted to install a garden space in a Europeanized taste, as captured in the wall hanging discussed at the very beginning of this essay.

To better understand this apparent contradiction, a brief visit to Jesuit-related places and gardens throughout Europe will help to recapture the historical context of Attiret's transmission of a French-style garden to Beijing.

Gardens as Vehicle: La Flèche and the Tradition of Jesuit Symbolic Gardens

Within the Jesuit agenda, the centrality of representations of "tamed nature" in a garden provided a means of displaying human control over nature's wildness, and by extension represented the civilizing force of Christianity.[41] In this regard, Jesuit educational institutions like the College at La Flèche played a significant role in the transfer of botanical, medical, and pharmaceutical knowledge between Europe and the "rest of the world." As the second most important Jesuit college in France, after the Louis-le-Grand in Paris, La Flèche was established and financed by the French king, Henry IV (r. 1572–1610), in 1604 as the "College Royal Henry-Le-Grand."[42]

[40]Rinaldi, *Chinese Garden in Good Taste*, 176.

[41]An introduction to Jesuit participation in gardens can be found in Davidson, "The Jesuit garden," 86–107.

[42]An introduction to the history of the Jesuit College at La Flèche is provided in Camille de Rochemonteix, *Un collège de Jésuites aux XVII & XVIII siècles: le collège Henri IV de la Flèche*, vol. 3 (Le Mans: Leguicheux, 1889); see also Anne-Gaël Dugua-Blanc, "Le Prytanée national

Functioning as a critical site and intellectual center of cosmopolitan learning, the college not only trained many missionaries who went to the Americas and China but also attracted numerous secular scholars and philosophers. Upon the death of Henry IV, the college went through a number of remarkable expansions and additions including the introduction of a "courtyard or a garden which is conductive to meditation,"[43] which was erected no later than 1612.

As clearly seen in a layout designed by a Jesuit architect named Étienne Martellange (1569–1641) in 1614 (Fig. 5), the college building has three garden spaces in accordance with the design of Château de Bury, an iconic garden of the French Renaissance built between 1511 and 1524. The first is a square garden inside the Father's yard (*cour des pères*, or *Area Collegy*) similar to the Beitang garden after 1740, which is divided into six parterres with a fountain as the central axis. Behind the college, there is a walled garden (*horti Rogy*) that consists of sixteen parterres created in geometric shapes and partially in *broderie*.

In line with the symmetrical design of its prototype, the axis reaches from the entrance of the square garden to the far end of the back garden. The third garden is actually a huge compound of planting beds laid out in *patte d'oie,* which displays a wide variety of trees that are functionally similar to the orchard in the Xitang garden. Although the gardens were built at the same level, this triplet-division (courtyard garden, parterre-garden, planting beds/*hortus*), seems to be related to the idea of a terraced garden, which was adopted from the Villa Medici at Fiesole through the French gardens of the Château de Blois, which itself preceded the Renaissance spaces of Château de Bury, and formed the prototype for La Flèche. The same division between the parterre garden and the planting beds can also be seen in a number of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Jesuit residences. In the example of the widely circulated copperplate of the Jesuit College in Coimbra, where the later Chinese court painter and Jesuit Castiglione had sojourned between 1711 and 1714 before he sailed eastwards, the *hortus* is separated from the building complex and established as an autonomous area. This tradition continued in the Beitang residence of the eighteenth century.

Starting in the second half of the sixteenth century, the ambitions of European royal houses met Jesuit eagerness to discover and convert the non-Christian rest of the world, which in the view of the Jesuit Order was supposed to be a desolate wilderness. At about the same time when the La Flèche garden was built, Pierre Biard (1567–1622), a Jesuit from Grenoble, emphasized that there was no nobler

militaire de la Flèche: du monument historique au site touristique," in *Mémoires de patrimoines*, ed. Jean-Pierre Vallat (Paris: Harmattan, 2008), 53–70; and Allison Gopnik, "Could David Hume Have Known about Buddhism? Charles Francois Dolu, the Royal College of La Flèche, and the Global Jesuit Intellectual Network," *Hume Studies* 35, no. 1&2 (2009): 7–9.

[43]Dugua-Blanc, "Le Prytanée national militaire de la Flèche," 55: "cour ou [un] jardin propices à la méditation. . ."

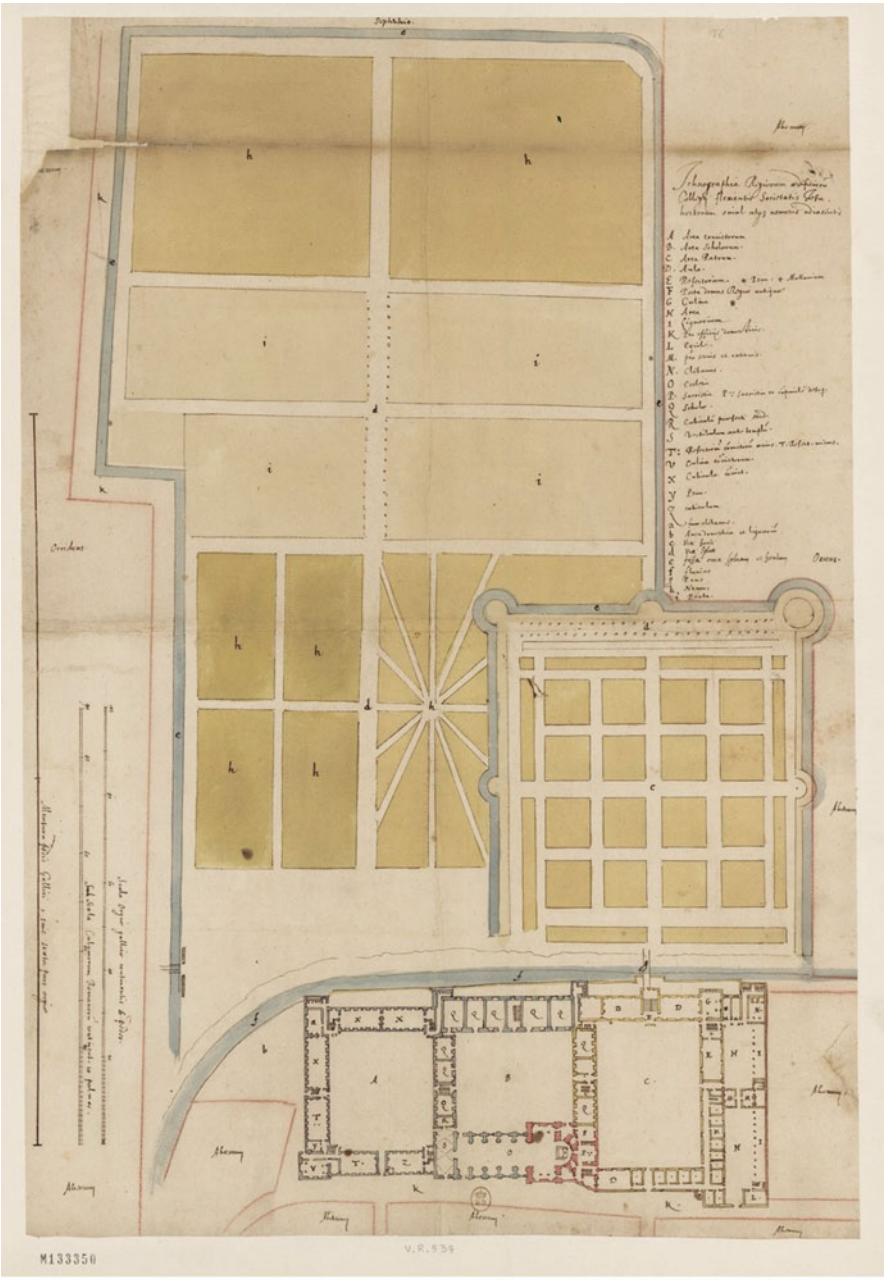

Fig. 5 Étienne Martellange, *Ground plan of Collège Henri IV, La Flèche*. Color and drawing on paper. Dated 1614. Bibliothèque National de France, Paris

Christian task than to "make a Garden out of the wilderness."[44] His proposition can be traced back to the Jesuit understanding of tangible gardens as a presentation of tamed wilderness, where the hostile forces of nature were modified through human labor and re-arranged in to an orderly, even sacred, space.

In the seventeenth century, the Jesuits published extensively on their ways of dealing with horticulture to create an impact on the publications of their contemporaries. Taking the Sant' Andrea al Quirinale, the famous Jesuit Novitiate in Rome as an example, Louis Richeôme (1544–1625), the author of *La peinture spirituelle* (1611), compared the central position of the fountain as displayed on the upper terrace to the earthly paradise of Eden, which could also be seen in the cases of Bury and La Flèche.[45] Two decades later, the perception of the Edenic nature of walled gardens had been theorized and conceived in the "mental garden/memory garden" dedicated to the Virgin Mary and conceptualized by the English Jesuit Henry Hawkins (1577–1646) in his *Parthenia sacra* (1633).[46]

To Jesuit scholars, both publications were fundamental. Stimulated by Richeôme's symbolic interpretations, a Jesuit writer named Giovanni Battista Ferrari (1584–1655) published in 1633 (the same year as Hawkins's publication) an encyclopedic treatise on the flower garden, *De florum cultura*, elaborating on the symbolic meanings of five layout designs for gardens. As for the square garden, he stated: "If it might be a pleasure to someone to design within the bounds of a garden the blessed seat of the Holy City in its eternal stability, laid out in four quarters of celestial beauty, and to acclimatize something heavenly on the earth."[47]

In fact, a pattern like this, in Meridith B. Sayre's words "an aestheticization of power,"[48] was originally developed from sixteenth-century botanic gardens after Europeans had conquered parts of South America. As seen in the botanical garden of Padua (started 1545), the four sections are re-imagined as a microcosm of the plant biota of the world and used to mirror the world's four continents and thus an empire's power to collect and assemble a wide variety of plants from overseas.[49]

This mode soon became a pan-European phenomenon. In the well-known case of Bury's square garden, a royal project led by Florimond II Robertet (1531–1567), French secular power was charged with divine meanings.[50] Obviously, awareness of

[44]Meridith Beck Sayre, "Cultivating Soils and Souls: The Jesuit Garden in the Americas" (Master's thesis, Simon Fraser University, 2007), 1.

[45]See also Davidson, "The Jesuit Garden," 93.

[46]Henry Hawkins, *Parthenia sacra* (Menston: Scolar Press, 1971); see also William E. Engel, "Mnemonic Criticism & Renaissance Literature: A Manifesto," *Connotations* 1, no. 1 (1991): 18.

[47]Giovanni Battista Ferrari, *De florum cultura* (Rome: S. Paulinus, 1633), fol. 25; translation quoted from Davidson, "The Jesuit Garden," 94.

[48]Sayre, "Cultivating Soils and Souls," 17.

[49]Not only in Beijing, but also in South America, the quadripartite garden was very popular among the Jesuit settlements, see Sayre, "Cultivating Soils and Souls," 16.

[50]Florimond was the secretary for both Louis XII (r. 1498–1515) and Francis I (r.1515–1547). The best example for this view is the Grand Parterre at the Château de Fontainebleau, built by André Le Nôtre and Louis Le Vau between 1660 and 1664.

the garden's dual nature as a three-dimensional space and as a highly charged symbol of power had a great impact on contemporary Jesuit architects. It was codified in a number of works designed by Martellange, the creator of the La Flèche garden layout, including the Jesuit colleges in Roanne, Dole, and La Flèche, where Attiret and d' Incarville had probably sojourned.

Starting from the first decade of the eighteenth century, the increasing number of French Jesuits working at the Qing court caused increasing conflicts between the French Jesuits and those Jesuits patronized and sent by the Portuguese king. This development peaked after 1710 when the French mission was separated from the Portuguese Vice Province. As Collani has stated, it was "a conflict of mixed national interests (patronage by the Portuguese king against the French king) as well as a competition in science influence."[51]

After the French Jesuits established their own church, Pereira and Grimaldi attempted to raise funds to renovate their Xitang church, which had already become tumbledown after fifty years. From the Kangxi Emperor, they received loans of 10,000 silver taels (about 25.000 crusades) for eight years, from which at least 8000 taels were used to enlarge their church building.[52] In order to compete with the French "royal church," (*Hofkirche*) which was built with the financial support of both Kangxi and Louis XIV, the Portuguese Jesuits assigned Castiglione, who was already known to them as an excellent Italian painter and had arrived in Beijing in 1715, to decorate their new Xitang church.

It was against this backdrop that the Beitang garden, as captured by the wall hanging discussed above, was Europeanized. The quadripartite garden, in which the French king's absolute power over the four continents is visually presented, established a symbolic, constant royal presence within the Beitang residence. Simultaneously, it functioned as a sacred space and a reference to the territory of the Lord of Heaven (Christ). It manifested the European garden's role as a symbol of both, political power and sacred space, materializing royal omnipresence as well as religious metaphor.

Conclusion: Three Facets of Transcultural Jesuit Garden Spaces

Representing the orderly world and civilization itself only occupies a minor part of the early modern Jesuit symbolic uses and understandings of horticulture. For the early modern Jesuits, their gardens were not simply a legitimate reformulation of the

[51] von Collani, "French Jesuits," 315.

[52] As for the loans to Xitang-Jesuits, see Claudia von Collani, "Thomas and Tournon—Mission and Money," in *The History of the Relations between the Low Countries and China in the Qing Era (1644–1911),* ed. W. F. Vande Walle and Noël Golvers, Louvain Chinese Studies 14 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003), 116–7; see also Wang, "Propaganda Fidei," 64–5 (chapter 2.4).

natural environment but also, as practiced by their colleagues in Beijing, a dynamic space in which vivid exchanges of elite botanic and cosmopolitan knowledge took place. Besides collecting books and establishing libraries, the creation of garden spaces was a global moment in Jesuit intellectual history, one which affected the Chinese view of the natural world.

Through gardens as actual and symbolic spaces, new ideas, concepts and techniques were brought into being. Starting from the late seventeenth century, after the Portuguese Jesuits in Beijing had turned their private garden into a pleasure ground for enjoyment and entertainment, the plant beds and water features represented the latest achievements of European mechanics and gardening practice and were on view in the Xitang garden for Chinese and Korean visitors. In this regard, the Beijing Jesuit gardens functioned as an ideal stage for the display of European elite horticulture since the Renaissance.

Among the Jesuit spaces in China, the Beitang garden was probably the only one that carried such explicit political implications. Following the symbolic view of gardens established by Jesuit intellectuals like Richeôme and Hawkins, Jesuit garden spaces were gradually charged with divine as well as secular meanings that unified the actual ambition and God-given power of European royal houses who were eager to conquer Asia and the Americas; this was visually codified in the quadripartite design of parterres. In the context of competition and conflict between French and Portuguese Jesuits, the demand for absolute power from the French king in the Far Eastern mission provides a reasonable explanation for Attiret's choice to transplant the La Flèche-model in a Beijing Jesuit garden space. The latter not only inherited the long tradition of Jesuit horticulture as well as their symbolically charged conceptions of nature, but also functioned as a powerful vehicle for the transfer of both, religious and secular power.

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Domesticating the Global and Materializing the Unknown: A Study of the *Album of Beasts* at the Qianlong Court

Yu-chih Lai

Abstract In 1750, three projects of image-compilation were embarked upon by the court; namely, *Official Tributes* (*Zhigong tu* 職貢圖), *Album of Birds* (*Niao pu* 鳥譜), and *Album of Beasts* (*Shou pu* 獸譜). All were initiated around the same time (1750) and finished around the same time (1761), and they also share the same format and size. In contrast to the relatively well-studied *Official Tributes* and *Album of Birds*, the *Album of Beasts* (*Shou pu* 獸譜), a six-volume work containing 183 images, preserved in the Beijing Palace Museum, is almost unknown to the field. Significantly, this *Album of Beasts* contains a considerable amount of rewritten styles, elements, and even images from the natural history writings of Renaissance Europe, especially Renaissance Europe's depictions about the New World.

Why were these European images of animals on a global scale incorporated into the *Album of Beasts*? What was the purpose and agenda behind producing this *Album of Beasts*, which took the Court Painting Academy and related imperial workshops a total of eleven years to accomplish? And what are the roles that the European images of animals play in shaping the album? This paper focuses both on how images and knowledge of natural history from Renaissance Europe were appropriated in the *Album of Beasts*, and on analyzing the implementation of new techniques, styles, and even application of colors, to explore how the original woodblock prints of European images were materialized and domesticated alongside other images of Chinese origins. This paper seeks to demonstrate how the material aspects of the global circulation of images helped Emperor Qianlong to construct his vision of the "World" and "Empire," in dialogue with the traditional rhetorics of Chinese politics.

In 1750, three projects of image-compilation were embarked upon by the court during the Qianlong 乾隆 reign (1736–1795); namely, the *Zhigong tu* 職貢圖 (*Official Tributes*), a visual documentation of the peoples the Qing empire ruled

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(both physically and symbolically), the *Niao pu* 鳥譜 (*Album of Birds*), an encyclopedic collection of images on birds, and the *Shou pu* 獸譜 (*Album of Beasts*), featuring zoological depictions of animals in the world. All were initiated around the same time (1750) and completed around the same time (1761); they also shared the same format and size. More importantly, an entire bureaucratic network was mobilized by the *Junji chu* 軍機處 (Grand Council), the center of political power at the time, in order to collect and produce the images, suggesting that these were highly important projects to both the court and the state. As a result, the *Official Tributes* in particular has drawn considerable attention from historians such as Pamela Kyle Crossley and Laura Hostetler.[1] Two previous studies by the present author have also shown that the *Official Tributes* and the *Album of Birds* were both important constituents in the formation and construction of the Qianlong emperor's (1711–1799) imperial image.[2] In contrast to the relatively well-published and researched *Official Tributes* and the *Album of Birds*, the *Album of Beasts* (in the collection of the Palace Museum, Beijing), which contains six volumes and a total of 180 images, has only just begun to attract scholarly attention.[3] Most significantly, this *Album of Beasts* contains a considerable number of reworked styles, pictorial elements, and even entire image compositions from the natural history writings of Renaissance Europe, especially in the depictions of the New World.

Why were European images of animals on a global scale incorporated into the *Album of Beasts*? What was the purpose and agenda of producing the *Album of Beasts*, which took the Painting Academy at court and related imperial workshops a total of 11 years to accomplish? What was the role of European images of animals in shaping this album? This paper will focus on the *Album of Beasts* to demonstrate how images and knowledge about natural history from Renaissance Europe were

[1]Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), especially chapter 5; Laura Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 41–9.

[2]Lai Yu-chih 賴毓芝, "Tuxiang, zhishi yu diguo: Qinggong de shihuoji tuhui 圖像、知識與帝國: 清宮的食火雞圖繪 (Images, Knowledge, and Empire: Depicting Cassowaries in the Qing Court)," *Gugong xueshu jikan* 29, no. 2 (2011): 1–75, and its English version: Yu-chih Lai, "Images, Knowledge and Empire: Depicting Cassowaries in the Qing Court," *Transcultural Studies* no. 1 (2013): 56–63; Lai Yu-chih 賴毓芝, "Tuxiang diguo: Qianlong chao *Zhigong tu* de zhizuo yu didu chengxian 圖像帝國: 乾隆朝《職貢圖》的製作與帝都呈現 (Picturing Empire: Illustrations of "Official Tribute" at the Qianlong Court and the Making of the Imperial Capital)," *Zhongyang yanjiu yuan jindai shi yanjiu suo jikan* 75 (March 2012): 1–76.

[3]A curator at the Palace Museum in Beijing, Li Shi 李湜, is probably one of the first to have paid attention to the *Album of Beasts*. She organized an exhibition on "*Qingdai gongting huapu zhan* 清代宮廷畫譜展 (*The Illustrated Albums from the Qing Court*)," in which she introduced several leaves from the *Album of Beasts*. Later, her colleague Yuan Jie 袁杰 wrote an introductory article on the *Album of Beasts* in 2011. See Yuan Jie, "Gugong bowuyuan cang Qianlong shiqi 'Shou pu' 故宮博物院藏乾隆時期《獸譜》 (The *Album of Beasts* of the Qianlong period in the Palace Museum)," *Wenwu* 7 (2011): 65–70. The complete reproduction of the extant *Album of Beasts* did not come out until 2014; Yuan Jie, ed., *Qinggong Shou pu* 清宮獸譜 (*Catalog of Animals Collected in the Qing Palace*) (Beijing: Gugong bowuyuan, 2014).

appropriated in China, while also analyzing the implementation of new techniques, styles, and even ways of applying colors to explore how woodblock printed images of European origin were materialized and "domesticated" to fit with Chinese tradition. This paper will show how material aspects of the global circulation of images helped the Qianlong emperor construct his vision of "world" and "empire" in dialogue with the traditional rhetoric of Chinese politics.

Producing the *Album of Beasts*

The *Album of Beasts* features six volumes and 180 leaves of various animals rendered in color.[4] Each leaf has an image on the right and a text on the left, which is written in both Manchu and Chinese. The work is not dated, but there is a colophon signed by officials and staff who participated in this project, which states:

> *Album of Beasts* was done in imitation of *Album of Birds*. The names, contents, and forms were based on *Complete Collection of Writings and Illustrations, Past and Present*, and the coloring was rendered by Yu Sheng and Zhang Weibang under imperial decree. We took care of the translation and writing. The month and day for the start and finish were the same as *Album of Birds*. . . .[5]

Therefore, it is clear that the format of the *Album of Beasts* was patterned after the *Album of Birds*. The schedule for its production is also the same: the *Album of Birds* was started in 1750 and finished in the winter of 1761, as is indicated in its colophon.[6] Indeed, details concerning the production can be found in the archives of the Imperial Household's workshops (*Zaoban chu gezuo chengzuo huoji Qing dang* 造辦處各作成作活計清檔), which indicate that the two projects were literally proceeding side by side.[7] Later, we also see early versions of the *Official Tributes*

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[4]The Qing imperial catalogue, *Qinding Shiqu baoji xubian* (欽定石渠寶笈續編), records a total of 183 kinds of animals, but only 180 are mentioned in the colophon and in the extant album. See Wang Jie 王杰, Dong Gao 董誥, and Ruan Yuan 阮元, "Yu Sheng Zhang Weibang he hua *Shoupu* 余省張為邦合畫獸譜 (The *Album of Beasts* painted jointly by Yu Shen and Zhang Weibang)," in *Qinding Shiqu baoji xubian* 欽定石渠寶笈續編, ed. Guoli Gugong bowuyuan (Taipei: Guoli Gugong bowuyuan, 1971), vol. 4, 1894–5.

[5]Orig. "《獸譜》做《鳥譜》為之, 名目形相, 蓋本諸《古今圖書集成》, 而設色則余省、張為邦奉勅摹寫者也。圖左方清漢說文。臣等承旨繕譯, 及始工藏事月日, 並與《鳥譜》同. . . ." Wang, Dong, and Ruan, "Yu Sheng Zhang Weibang he hua *Shoupu*."

[6]For the production of the *Album of Birds*, see Lai, "Tuxiang, zhishi yu diguo," 31–6, or its English version: Lai, "Images, Knowledge and Empire," 56–63.

[7]See, for example, the entry on the 18th day of the tenth lunar month in the 22nd year of the Qianlong reign (1757) for the archives of the *Ruyi guan* (如意館) in *Zaoban chu gezuo chengzuo huoji Qing dang* 造辦處各作成做活計清檔 (*Archives of the Workshops Governed by the Imperial Household Department*) [hereafter abbreviated as Q22 (1757)/10/18, *Ruyi guan*]. See Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'an guan 中國第一歷史檔案館, and Xianggang zhongwen daxue wenwu guan 香港中文大學文物館, ed., *Qinggong neiwu fu zaoban chu dang'an zonghui* 清宮內務府造辦處檔案總匯 (The Assorted archives of the Workshops of the Imperial Household Department) (Beijing:

project joining the day-to-day record of the Imperial Household's workshops.[8] In short, the archive shows that both the *Album of Birds* and the *Album of Beasts* were initiated in the spring of 1750. The project involving the *Official Tributes*, however, did not begin recruiting local images (at first from Sichuan) until the eighth lunar month of 1750, and then on an imperial scale in the intercalary fifth month of the following year.[9] As mentioned, the completion time for both the *Album of Birds* and the *Album of Beasts*, was in the winter of 1761, but the situation for the *Official Tributes* was more complicated. The album version of the *Official Tributes* was basically finished in 1757 but did not yet bear the name *Official Tributes*, instead it was called *Zhifang huilan* 職方會覽 (*Assembled View of Foreign Lands*). The year 1761 is when not only the first scroll version was made, but also when the name *Official Tributes* was given officially to this group of images of tribute from various lands in both its handscroll and album forms, as can be seen in the title *Yuzhi Zhigong tushi* 御製職貢圖詩 (*Imperial Production of Poetry and Illustrations of Official Tributes*), written in the same year and attached to each work.[10] In particular, the album version of the *Official Tributes* is painted on silk and measures thirty-nine by thirty-nine centimeters, which is similar to the size of both the *Album of Birds* and the *Album of Beasts*. There can be no doubt, then, that *Album of Birds*, *Album of Beasts*, and *Official Tributes* all belong to the same joint undertaking at the Qing court.

The only difference in the *Album of Beasts* compared to the other two productions, is one of scale. It contains only 180 images, far fewer than the 361 in the *Album of Birds* or the 301 paired figures depicted in any single set of *Official Tributes*. Moreover, we do not see any recruitment of local first-hand materials for this project, as seen in the *Album of Birds* and the *Official Tributes*. Is it true, then, that the only source for the *Album of Beasts* is the *Complete Collection of Writings and Illustrations, Past and Present* (hereafter referred to as *Complete Collection*), as indicated in the album's colophon?

Renmin chubanshe, 2005), vol. 22, 565; and the entry on Q26(1762)/10/16, *Ruyi guan*, in *Qinggong neiwu fu zaoban chu dang'an zonghui*, vol. 26, 720.

[8]The title *Zhigong tu* 職貢圖 (*Official Tributes*) did not appear until the end of the 26th year of the Qianlong reign (1761). In the early stage of production, it had various titles, including *Zhifang huilan Miao tu* 職方會覽苗圖 (*Assembled View of Miao Tribes*) and *Zhifang huilan tu* 職方會覽圖 (*Assembled View of Foreign Lands*). See the entry on Q26 (1762)/6/14, *Ruyi guan*, in *Qinggong neiwu fu zaoban chu dang'an zonghui*, vol. 26, 708. For details on the transformation of different titles for *Official Tributes*, see Lai, "Tuxiang diguo," footnote 52.

[9]For a reconstruction of the process of its production, see Lai, "Tuxiang diguo," 6–16.

[10]Lai, "Tuxiang diguo," 6–16.

From "Strange Animals" to "Animals of Foreign Lands"

Before we explore the answer to this question, we have to understand the nature of *Complete Collection*. Initially compiled by Chen Menglei 陳夢雷 (1650–1741) in the Kangxi 康熙 (1661–1772) period, completed in 1723 by Jiang Tingxi 蔣廷錫 (1669–1732), and published in 1725 by the court, it consists of 10,000 *juan* 卷 (fascicles) in more than 5,000 bound volumes. In contrast to the previous Ming encyclopedia *Yongle dadian* (永樂大典) undertaken by Emperor Yongle 永樂 (r. 1402–1424) of which only a few volumes have survived, *Complete Collection* is the largest extant Chinese encyclopedia to date. It is divided into six basic categories (*huibian* 匯編): "Celestial Phenomena (*lixiang* 曆象)," "Geography (*fangyu* 方輿)," "Human Relationships (*minglun* 明論)," "Nature (*bowu* 博物)," "Literature (*lixue* 理學)," and "Political Economy (*jingji* 經濟)." The *huibian* categories are divided into sections (*dian* 典). For example, the category of "Nature" includes sections on "Arts and Professions (*yishu* 藝術)," "The Spiritual and the Strange (*shenyi* 神異)," "Fauna (*qinchong* 禽蟲)," and "Flora (*caomu* 草木)." The sections are then further subdivided into parts (*bu* 部). The *Album of Beasts* is basically excerpted from the part on "Walking Animals (*zoushou* 走獸)" in the section of "Fauna" under the category of "Nature," comprising images from the parts on "*Qilin* (麒麟)" to "Strange Animals (*Yishou* 異獸)." The part on "Walking Animals" includes fifty-seven entries, starting with the auspicious *qilin*, a horned mythical creature said to appear with the arrival of a saintly and benevolent ruler, and covering such larger beasts as the lion, elephant, and tiger before moving on to other wild but smaller animals, including the leopard, wolf, fox, rabbit, monkey, and then domesticated ones such as the horse, ox, sheep, and pig before finally ending with "Strange Animals (*yishou* 異獸)," which are seemingly fantastic or imaginary creatures.

The *Complete Collection* was meant to amass and organize everything that was deemed worthy of knowing about the past and the present; it is therefore based on a classification of extant knowledge at the time. For example, the final part on "Strange Animals" is sourced from three major earlier publications: *Shanhai jing* 山海經 (*The Classic of Mountains and Seas*), *Sancai tuhui* 三才圖會 (*Collected Illustrations of the Three Realms*), and *Kunyu tushuo* 坤輿圖說 (*Illustrated Explanations of the Entire World*). The first is a compilation of mythic geography thought to have existed in the fourth century BCE.; the second is one of the most popular illustrated encyclopedias from the late Ming period compiled by Wang Qi 王圻 (1529–1612) and his son, Wang Siyi 王思義; and the third is a booklet accompanying *Kunyu quantu* 坤輿全圖 (*Map of the Whole World*) that was compiled and published in 1674 by Ferdinand Verbiest (1623–1688), a Flemish Jesuit who worked as an astronomer and cartographer at the Kangxi court.

The editors of the *Complete Collection* quoted the contents from these three books and re-organized them into the structure of an encyclopedia. Taking the *Illustrated Explanations of the Entire World* as an example, the editors broke down the original order of the images and re-assigned them into different categories in the *Complete Collection*. Consequently, "African lion (*Liweiya shizi* 利未亞獅子)" was assigned to the "Part on Lions (*shibu* 獅部)"; "South American snake (*Nan yamolijiazhou she* 南亞墨利加州蛇)" to "Part on Snakes (*shebu* 蛇部)"; and so forth. In addition to these identifiable animals in the Chinese context, other animals are distributed throughout the categories of "Strange Birds (*Yiniao* 異鳥)," "Strange

Animals," and "Strange Fish (*Yiyu* 異魚)," which are juxtaposed with imaginary animals from the *Classic of Mountains and Seas* and *Collected Illustrations of the Three Realms*. Since the *Album of Beasts* consists of images from "Walking Animals," we must ask: What is the definition of "walking animals"?

The *Illustrated Explanations of the Entire World* contains descriptions of twenty-four creatures, but only twelve of them are included in the "Walking Animals" section and, therefore, in the *Album of Beasts*. It is interesting to note, for instance, that the alligator, called a "Lajiaduo Fish (*Lajiaduo yu* 喇加多魚)," is deemed a kind of fish and therefore excluded, but the chameleon, under the name of "*Jiamoliang* 加默良," is included, despite the fact that both are reptiles. Understanding this structure involves unpacking the very complicated issue of discrepancy and dialogue between the biological taxonomies of China and Europe, and, moreover, demands a disentanglement of the classifications of unknown species in descriptive text and imagery, which is beyond the scope of the present study.

It is noteworthy, however, that despite the claim that the main source of the *Album of Beasts* is the *Complete Collection*, the colophon to the *Album of Beasts* declares with confidence that its contents are all "verifiable facts (*zhengshi* 徵實)," similar to the other two aforementioned projects,[11] which do indeed engage first-hand materials supplied by the bureaucratic network (unlike the *Album of Beasts*). It even specifies that

> This project goes beyond the hidden peculiarities pursued by *Annotations to Classic of Mountains and Seas* by Guo Pu [276–324] and the exaggerations and fabrications shown in the inventory of animals in Emperor Wudi's Shanglin Garden in the Han dynasty.[12]

Why and how the *Album of Beasts* can assert that its contents are "verifiable facts" despite the adaptation of numerous texts and images from *Classic of Mountains and Seas* (by means of *Complete Collection*), the annotations (by Guo Pu 郭璞) of which were fiercely criticized in its colophon, is a question that remains to be answered. And what does "verifiable facts" mean, exactly? It does not necessarily indicate first-hand investigation, given that most of the images depicted in *Classics of Mountains and Seas* are creatures that do not exist in reality.

Looking into the details of the *Album of Beasts*, some alterations from the contents of *Complete Collection* in terms of structure, style, and items were made. For example, the legendary animal called a "*pi* 羆" is depicted twice in *Complete Collection* (Figs. 1 and 2).[13] One *pi* appears in the part on "Bears and *Pi* (*Xiong pi* 熊羆)," the other in the

[11] Wang, Dong, and Ruan, "Yu Sheng Zhang Weibang he hua *Shoupu*," 1894–5.

[12] Orig. "郭璞《山海經注》務探隱怪，西京上林獸簿之徒誇羅致，所能彷彿哉." See Wang, Dong, and Ruan, "Yu Sheng Zhang Weibang he hua *Shoupu*," 1894–5.

[13] Yuan, *Qinggong Shou pu*, 44–5 and 60–1.

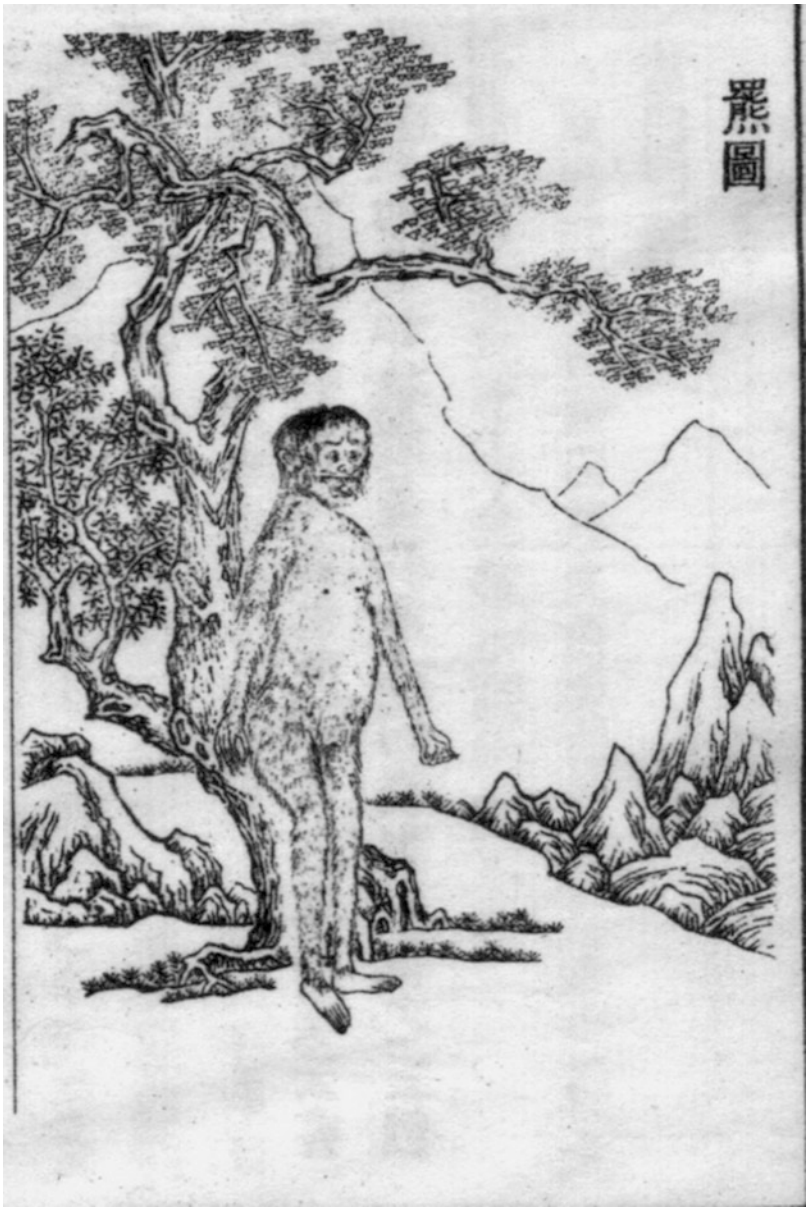

Fig. 1 *Gujin Tushu jicheng* 古今圖書集成, *qin chong dian* 禽蟲典, *xiong pi bu* 熊羆部, *juan* 67, 2b

Fig. 2 *Gujin Tushu jicheng*, *qin chong dian* 禽蟲典, *yi shou bu* 異獸部, *juan* 123, 62a

Fig. 3 Yu Sheng, Zhang Weibang, *Album of Beasts*, 17th leaf, volume one. 1761. Beijing Palace Museum

part on "Strange Animals." In the *Album of Beasts*, however, the latter was deleted and a new addition made to bears and *pi* (Figs. 3 and 4). This new addition was rendered on the basis of a proclamation that the Qianlong emperor had shot and killed a *pi* during his Eastern Tour to Jilin (吉林).[14] Its corresponding text declares "[the *Classic of Mountains and Seas*] states that the *pi* looks like an elk, which led to a mistake in its

[14]For the imperial poem written by the Qianlong emperor, see "*She pi* 射羆 (Shooting a *pi*)," in *Yuzhi shiji erji* 御製詩集二集, *juan* 52, 6b, as in *Jingyin Wenyuange Siku quanshu* 景印文淵閣四庫全書 (*The Wenyuange Edition of the Complete Collection of the Imperial Four Treasuries)* (Taipei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1983–1986), vol. 1304, 96. For the officials' poems rhymed with the imperial poem on this event, see the ones by Wang Youdun 汪由敦 (1692–1758) and Liu Lun 劉綸 (1711–1773), collected in A Gui 阿桂, and Liu Jinzhi 劉謹之, "*Qinding Shengjing tongzhi* 欽定盛京通志 (*Imperial Shengjing Gazetteer*)," *Jingyin Wenyuange Siku quanshu* 503: 489–90. Also see the text on the leaf for a "*Pi*" in volume one, *Album of Beasts*, Palace Museum, Beijing, in Yuan, *Qinggong Shou pu*, 44.

Fig. 4 Yu Sheng, Zhang Weibang, *Album of Beasts*, 18th leaf, volume one. 1761. Beijing Palace Museum

image. What it says is truly supernatural fiction and hard to verify. Therefore, seeing is believing."[15] This statement emphasizes that the new image was rendered from a first-hand account, which not only replaced the old one that looked like an elk and was criticized in the text, but also legitimized its removal from "Strange Animals" and to a placement among bears and *pi*.

In addition to revising the old images based on the emperor's personal experience, *Album of Beasts* also adjusted or rewrote images from *Complete Collection* based on those from the database at the imperial workshops. One of the most notable examples is the imagery for horses. For the leaves on "Fine horse (*liang ma* 良馬)" (Fig. 5) and "Whorl horse (*xuanmao ma* 旋毛馬)" (Fig. 6),[16] the original images in *Complete Collection* (Figs. 7 and 8) are more like diagrams with text denoting certain qualities to teach people how to identify a rare steed by certain characteristics of its appearance,

[15]Orig. "惟經言狀如麋, 圖因之而誤。洵夫志怪難徵, 百聞故不如一見乎." Eighteenth leaf in volume one of *Album of Beasts*, Palace Museum, Beijing, in Yuan, *Qinggong Shou pu*, 44.

[16]See the twenty-ninth leaf of volume two and the first leaf of volume three, respectively, in the *Album of Beasts*, Palace Museum, Beijing, in Yuan, *Qinggong Shou pu*, 148–9 and 154–5.

Fig. 5 Yu Sheng, Zhang Weibang, *Album of Beasts*, 29th leaf, volume two. 1761. Beijing Palace Museum

such as bone structure, hair, body, etc. The new images with color and shading, however, are without text, show no diagrams, and are instead similar to lively horses in the flesh. The two horses, one a piebald and the other pure white, resemble imperial mounts shown in two of Qianlong's *Dayue tu* 大閱圖 (*Grand Review* paintings; collection of the Palace Museum, Beijing) (Figs. 9 and 10) in which Qianlong rides a piebald and white horse, respectively. Unfortunately, it is uncertain whether these two steeds in the *Album of Beasts* indicate specific horses that Qianlong once owned or are just representatives of imperial horse types. It appears, nonetheless, that the composition and style of these two leaves evoke Jean Denis Attiret's (1702–1768) *Shijun tu* 十駿圖 (*Ten Steeds*; Fig. 11), now in the Palace Museum, Beijing. Therefore, the *Album of Beasts* indeed replaced the original images from the *Complete Collection* with contemporary images from the court repertoire. This is in accordance with the text accompanying the leaf on "Fine horse," which emphasizes that good steeds used to come only from the areas of Yunzhong 雲中 (Inner Mongolia) and Daibei 代北 (northern Shanxi province and northwest of Hebei province), but now there are many choices. The text goes on to describe the unprecedented circumstance of having many options to choose from, it being truly the case that "Heavenly steeds

Fig. 6 Yu Sheng, Zhang Weibang, *Album of Beasts*, 1st leaf, volume three. 1761. Beijing Palace Museum

present the talent so as to demonstrate a golden age of benevolent government that draws talent from afar,"[17] of which "not even [the most famous steed connoisseurs] Bole 伯樂 and Jiufang Gao 九方皋 could glimpse."[18] Thus, the new presentation of two courtly steeds in *Album of Beasts* corresponds clearly to what is stated in its colophon: "The bowing of Altishahr to [Qing] sovereignty results in the [presentation of] tribute, so images on heavenly steeds of talent were made."[19] On the one hand, using images of horses at court to replace the images from *Complete Collection* turns court horses into the personifications of "Fine horse" and "Whorl horse," and on the other it lends a more definite sense of reality to the depictions of horses in the *Album of Beasts*.

Therefore, one might say that in replacing or supplementing the images from *Complete Collection* with new ones, the repertoire of images at the court workshops

[17]Orig. "天驥呈材, 所以彰歸德徠遠之盛." Yuan, *Qinggong Shou pu*, 148.
[18]Orig. "又豈陽皋所能窺測哉." Yuan, *Qinggong Shou pu*, 148.
[19]Orig. "回部向化底貢, 而圖天驥之材." Yuan, *Qinggong Shou pu*, 407.

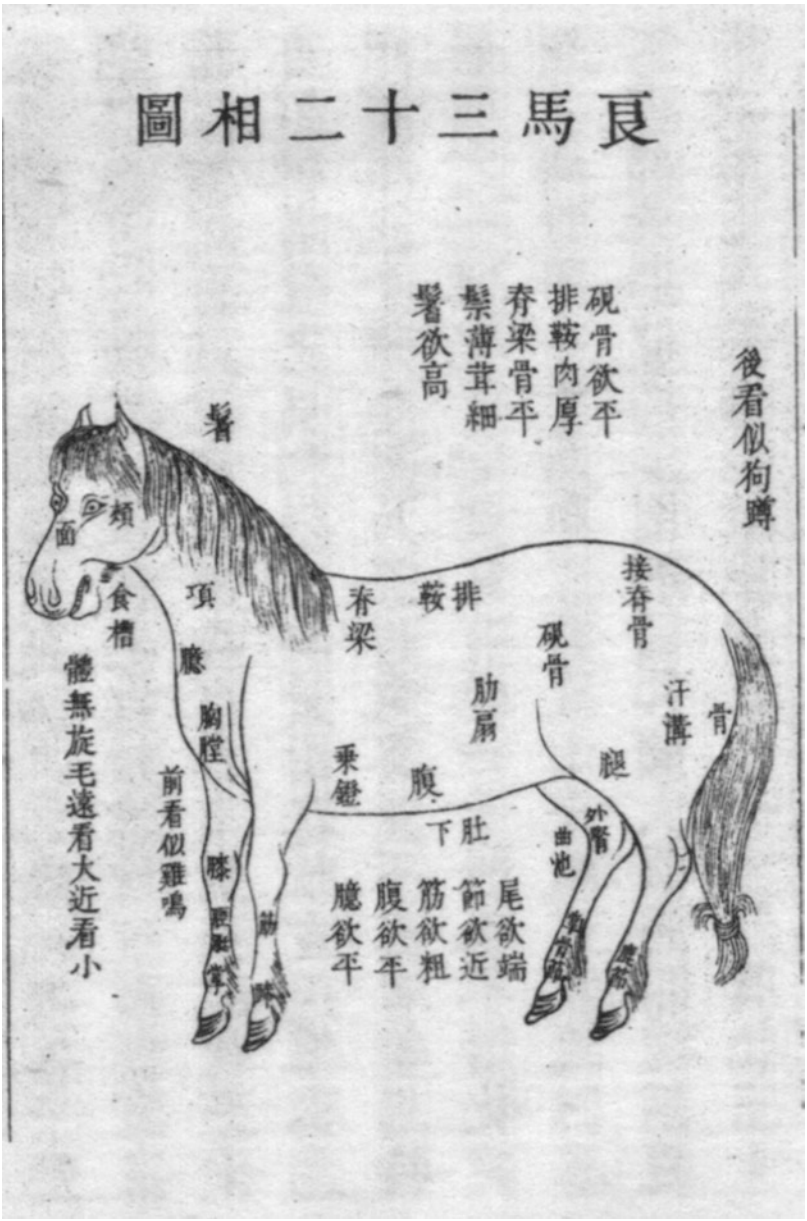

Fig. 7 *Gujin Tushu jicheng* 古今圖書集成, *qin chong dian* 禽蟲典, *ma bu* 馬部, *juan* 91, 21b

Fig. 8 *Gujin Tushu jicheng* 古今圖書集成, *qin chong dian* 禽蟲典, *ma bu* 馬部, *juan* 91, 22b

Fig. 9 Giuseppe Castiglione, *Dayue tu* 大閱圖 (*Grand Review*), Beijing Palace Museum. Nie Chongzheng, ed., *Qing dai gong ting hui hua* (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 1996), 151, Fig. 29

became an effective testimony of "verifiable facts." These cases, however, only account for a very small portion of the 180 images in the *Album of Beasts*. The most significant alteration to images from Europe made at the Qing court can be seen in the final twelve leaves of the sixth volume of the *Album of Beasts.* The images were

Fig. 10 Anonymous, *Dayue tu* 大閱圖 (*Grand Review*), 1758, Beijing Palace Museum. Jean-Paul Desroches, *La Cité interdite au Louvre: Empereurs de Chine et rois de France* (Paris: Somogy éditions d'Art, 2011), 179, Fig. 64

transcribed from the final part on "Strange Animals" in the *Completed Collection* and originated with Ferdinand Verbiest's *Kunyu tushuo* 坤輿圖說 (*Illustrated Explanations of the Entire World*), which was presented to the Kangxi emperor in

Fig. 11 Jean Denis Attiret, *Shijun tu* 十駿圖 (*Ten Steeds*), 7th leaf and 2nd leaf, Beijing Palace Museum. The Palace Museum, ed., *Qing dai gong ting hui hua* 清代宮廷繪畫 (Beijing: Cultural Relics Publishing House, 1999), 149, Fig. 79

1674. This final part, which contains animals from the *Illustrated Explanations of the Entire World,* is the only section in the *Completed Collection* that includes specific places of origin in foreign countries. Taking into consideration that the colophon specifies "the order is from 'Auspicious Animals' to 'Animals of Foreign Lands,'"[20] this part, for the editors of the *Album of Beasts*, is not dedicated to "Strange Animals" but redefined as "Animals from Foreign Lands." Animals adopted from the *Illustrated Explanations of the Entire World*, despite how unimaginable they may appear, are no longer perceived as fictional but are defined instead as something real but from faraway lands.

Since the *Album of Beasts* re-defines the animals in Verbiest's *Illustrated Explanations of the Entire World* as corresponding to reality, one must ask: What kind of animals were they? Where are they from? What are their pictorial origins? And, most importantly, how were they perceived at the Qing court? In order to answer these questions, we must trace not only from the *Complete Collection* to the *Illustrated Explanations of the Entire World*, but also from the *Illustrated Explanations of the Entire World* to their European origins in order to analyze what kind of European images and forms of knowledge were appropriated and transformed in the *Album of Beasts*, what role those images and related texts played in the structure of the *Album of Beasts*, and what was implied in terms of their meaning and purpose.

[20]Orig. "其序自瑞獸至異國獸." Wang, Dong, and Ruan, "Yu Sheng Zhang Weibang he hua *Shoupu*," 1894–5.

Domesticating "Europe" in *Album of Beasts*

The *Illustrated Explanations of the Entire World* was first published in 1674, the same year as the *Kunyu quantu* 坤輿全圖 (*Map of the Whole World*).[21] Apart from images of animals, the booklet also contains views of the sculptures and buildings known in Europe as the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World and is basically a collection of the kinds of texts and images that one might find on the margins of an early modern European world map. And indeed, the *Illustrated Explanations of the Entire World* was deemed a supplementary booklet to the map made by Verbiest. The map and booklet, presented to the Kangxi emperor and brought to China by European missionaries in the seventeenth century, were considered a summary of world knowledge at that time from the European perspective.[22]

It was a German sinologist who first pointed out that the images of the animals are from the famous encyclopedia of zoology, *Historia animalium*, which was compiled by the sixteenth-century Swiss naturalist Conrad Gessner (1516–1565).[23] In fact, we find that Verbiest's sources actually go beyond Gessner to also include Ulisse Aldrovandi's (1522–1605) *Historia animalium,* which was published successively

[21]There are many studies on Verbiest's map. Just to name a few, for example, see Gang Song and Paola Demattè, "Mapping an Acentric World: Ferdinand Verbiest's *Kunyu Quantu*," in *China on Paper: European and Chinese Works from the Late Sixteenth to the Early Nineteenth Century*, ed. Marcia Reed and Paola Demattè (Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute, 2007), 71–87; Wang Qianjin 汪前進, "Nan Huairen *Kunyu quantu* yanjiu 南懷仁坤輿全圖研究 (*The Study on Ferdinand Verbiest's Kunyu quantu*)," in *Zhongguo gudai ditu ji* 中國古代地圖集, ed. Cao Wanru 曹婉如 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1997), 102–7; Tongyang Lin, "Ferdinand Verbiest's Contribution to Chinese Geography and Cartography," in *Ferdinand Verbiest S. J.: Jesuit Missionary, Scientist, Engineer and Diplomat, 1623–1688*, ed. John W. Witek (Nettetal: Steyler Verlag, 1994), 134–64; Hartmut Walravens, "Father Verbiest's Chinese World Map (1674)," *Imago Mundi* 43, no. 1 (1991): 31–47; Christine Vertente, "Nan Huai-jen's Maps of the World," in *Nan Huairen shishi sanbai zhounian guoji xueshu taolun hui lunwenji* 南懷仁逝世三百周年國際學術討論會論文集, ed. Furen daxue 輔仁大學 (Taipei: Furen daxue, 1987), 225–31; Lin Dongyang 林東陽, "Nan Huairen de shijie ditu: *Kunyu quantu* (1674) 南懷仁的世界地圖: 坤輿全圖 (1674) (Ferdinand Verbiest's world map: *Kunyu quantu*)," *Donghai daxue lishi xuebao* 5 (1982): 69–84.

[22]For the relationship between the *Illustrated Explanations of the Entire World* and *Complete Map of the World*, see Ayusawa Shintarō 鮎澤信太郎, "Nan Kaizin no *Konyo zusetsu* to *Konyo geki* ni tsuite: tokuni Edo jidai no seikai chirigaku shijō ni okeru 南懐仁の坤輿圖說と坤輿外記に就いて:特に江戸時代の世界地理學史上に於ける (On Ferdinand Verbiest's Kunyu tushuo and Kunyu waiji, Especially in the Context of the World Geography History in the Edo period)," *Chikyū* 26, no. 6 (1937): 26–33; Ayusawa Shintarō, "Nan Kaizin ga Shina ni shōkai shita seikai chirihon nit suite (first part)(second part) 南懐仁が支那に紹介した世界地理書に就て(一)、(二) (On the World Geography Books Introduced by Ferdinand Verbiest to China)," *Chikyū* 24, no. 5 (1935) and 24, no. 6 (1935): 59–67 and 49–56; Akioka Takejrō 秋岡武次郎, "Nan Kaizin cho no *Konyo zusetsu* ni tsuite (first part) (second part) (third part) (fourth part) 南懐仁著の坤輿圖說に就いて(一)、(二)、(三)、(四) (Ferdinand Verbiest' *Kunyu tushuo*, part 1, 2, 3, 4)," *Chiri kyōiku* 29, no. 1 (1938), 29, no. 2 (1938), 29, no. 3 (1938), and 29, no. 4 (1938): 1–10, 21–30, 32–6, and 20–9.

[23]Hartmut Walravens, "Konrad Gessner in chinesischem Gewand: Darstellungen fremder Tiere im K'un-yu t'u-shuo des P. Verbiest (1623–1688)," *Gesnerus* 30, no. 3-4 (1973): 87–98.

from the end of the sixteenth century to the early seventeenth century, and Johannes Johnstone's *Historiae naturalis*, which was published between 1650 and 1653. There are several versions recorded in *Catalogue of the Pei-T'ang Library*, the catalogue of books owned by the Jesuits in the old collections of Beijing's four churches during the Qing dynasty.[24] They are also the most representative and authoritative books on European natural studies from the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries and were widely read among the European cultural elite.[25]

There are twenty-four kinds of animals recorded in *Illustrated Explanations of the Entire World*; except for four aquatic animals, the twenty land animals are allocated among four continents, each containing five. However, the *lihou* 狸猴, apparently a kind of opossum supposedly living in South America,[26] was mistaken by Viebiest as an animal from Africa. The animals from the Americas, especially South America, occupy the largest portion, and many of them represented crucial findings in European zoological studies after the Age of Discovery. Verbiest was eager to introduce the latest in European natural studies to China. For the *Album of Beasts*, there are only twelve true "beasts," all of which are from Gessner's works, except for the lion, whose origin was not identified. It is important here to analyze in detail each case so as to construct a fuller picture of how and what kind of European knowledge and imagery was framed and appropriated in the *Album of Beasts*. However, given the limitations of the present study, only three cases will be discussed: the *su* 蘇 from South America, the giraffe from Africa, and the Asian rhinoceros.

Before going into these case studies, it is worth noting that the images from Gessner, Verbiest's map and booklet, and the *Complete Collection* are all

[24]For the history and collection of the Beitang library (Pei-T'ang Library), see the Lazarist Mission, Peking, *Catalogue of the Pei-T'ang Library* (Peking: Lazarist Mission Press, 1949; reprint, Peking: National Library of China Publishing House, 2009); Fang Hao 方豪, "Mingji xishu qiqian bu liuru Zhongguo kao 明季西書七千部流入中國考 (The Research on the History of the Inflow of the Seven Thousand Western Books into China)," *Wenshi zazhi* 3, no.1–2 (1944); Fang Hao, *Fang Hao liushi ziding gao* 方豪六十自定稿 (*The Self Edition by Fang Hao at the Age of Sixty*) (Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 1969), vol. 1, 39–54; Fang Hao, "Beitang tushuguan cangshu zhi 北堂圖書館藏書志 (The Note on the Collection of Beitang Library)," in *Fang Hao liushi ziding gao*, ed. by Fang Hao (Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 1969), 1833–47; Tuo Xiaotang 拓曉堂, "Beitang shanben shu gaishu 北堂善本書概述 (The Overview of the Rare Books in the Beitang Library)," *Guojia tushuguan xuekan* 2 (1993): 110–8, 81; Li Guoqing 李國慶, and Sun Liping 孫利平, "Beitang shu ji qi yanjiu liyong: lishi yu xianzhuang 北堂書及其研究利用:歷史與現狀 (The Books in the Beitang Library and its Research and Utilization: History and its Current Situation)," *Weixian* 1 (2003): 214–31 and 256.

[25]Concerning the study of natural history in early European history, see Roger French, *Ancient Natural History* (New York: Routledge, 1994), especially chapter 3; Miguel de Asúa, and Roger French, "Introduction," in *A New World of Animals: Early Modern Europeans on the Creatures of Iberian America*, ed. Miguel de Asúa and Roger French (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), xiii–xvi; Robert Huxley, ed., *The Great Naturalists* (London: The Natural History Museum, 2007), 44–75.

[26]For how Europeans came to know and picture the opossum, see Victoria Dickenson, *Drawn from Life: Science and Art in the Portrayal of the New World* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 40–4; Miguel de Asúa and Roger French, *A New World of Animals: Early Modern Europeans on the Creatures of Iberian America* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 13–4.

Fig. 12 Conrad Gesner, *Icones animalium quadrupedum viviparorum et oviparorum* (Tiguri: Officina Froschoviana, 1560), 127

monochrome prints with very limited copies that were partially water-colored by hand.[27] However, the *Album of Beasts* is not only colored but also painted in a fusion style that combined Chinese and European elements. The court paintings in this particular style usually show the main subject matter (figures, birds, animals, etc.) in the rich renderings of texture and colored shading that were developed at court—mainly by the Italian Jesuit painter Giuseppe Castiglione (1688–1766)—but situated within a traditional Chinese landscape that is embellished with brushstrokes. As seen later, with the help of this new style the *Album of Beasts* makes every effort to render imported images in the Chinese context as visually comprehensible as possible.

For example, the first depiction of the *su* from South America in Gessner's and Verbiest's works looks somewhat supernatural (Figs. 12 and 13) with its strange combination of sunken eyes, a monkey face, devil- or cat-like ears, a goatee, long eyebrows, and sagging abdomen. According to Gessner, he adopted the information and image (Fig. 14)[28] from a publication by André Thévet, a French Franciscan priest, explorer, cosmographer, and writer who traveled to Brazil in 1551. Thévet published two books about the New World on his return from Brazil—*Les singularitez de la*

[27]The version in the National Palace Museum in Taipei, the original court one, is monochrome; see Fung Ming-chu 馮明珠, ed., *Kangxi dadi yu Taiyang wang Luyi shisi tezhan* 康熙大帝與太陽王路易十四特展 (*Emperor Kangxi and the Sun King Louis XIV*) (Taipei: Guoli Gugong bowuyuan, 2011), 110–3.

[28]Conrad Gesner, *Icones animalium quadrupedum viviparorum et oviparorum* (Tiguri: Officina Froschoviana, 1560), 127.

Fig. 13 Nan Huiren, *Kunyu quantu*. 1674. National Palace Museum, Taipei

France Antarctique in 1558 and *La Cosmographie universelle* in 1575. Both mention the animal known as a *su* in Chinese.[29] Most scholars see Thévet's books as full of pretentious writing, mistakes, and outright fiction, and therefore not very reliable sources.[30] In the case of the *su*, for instance, Thévet first claimed in 1558 that it lived in Patagonia, the southernmost part of South America, and then in 1575 changed its place of origin to Florida.[31] No other contemporary writer reported this animal, nor was any specimen ever brought to Europe. In other words, Thévet was the only witness. Given its bizarre and ghostlike appearance, it is highly possible that the *su*'s features belong to a body of invented knowledge in the New World that became canonized once it was accepted in Gessner's mainstream encyclopedia.

In contrast to the surrealistic look that was transmitted all the way from Thévet to Gessner, and finally to Verbiest, the image in *Complete Collection* (Fig. 15), with its tender drooping ears and whiskers that spread out on the sides of its face, transforms the *su* into something akin to a household pet, such as a cat or dog. Most importantly, and differing from Thévet's, Gessner's, and Verbiest's images, in which the animal is standing on a patch of ground against an abstract blank background, the *su* in the

[29]André Thevet, *Les singularitez de la France antarctique: autrement nommee Amerique, & de plusieurs terres & isles decouvertes de nostre temps* (Paris: Heritiers de Maurice de la Porte, 1558), 109, see Dickenson, *Drawn from Life*, 36.

[30]Dickenson, *Drawn from Life*, 35.

[31]André Thevet, *La cosmographie universelle: d'André Thevet, cosmographe du roy: illustrée de diverses figures des choses plus remarquables veues par l'auteur, & incogneues de noz anciens & modernes* (Paris: Guillaume Chandiere, 1575), see Dickenson, *Drawn from Life*, 36.

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les verdes, tellemét qu'en courát, ſans ſe doubter de l'embuſche, la pauure beſte tombe en ceſte foſſe auec ces petis. Et ſe voyant ainſi priſe, elle (comme enragée) mutile & tue ſes petis: & fait ſes cris tant eſpouuentables, qu'elle rend iceux Sauuages fort craintifs & timides. En fin pour tant ils la tuent à coups de fleſches, puis ils l'eſcorchent. Retournons à propos: Ce Capitaine, nommé Fernand de Magellan, homme courageux, eſtant informé de la richeſſe, qui ſe pouuoit retrouuer es iſles des Moluques, comme abondance d'eſpicerie, gingembre, canelle, muſcades, ambre gris, myrobalans, rubarbe, or, perles, & autres richeſſes, ſpecialement en l'iſle de Matel, Mahian, Tidore, & Terrenate, aſſez prochaines l'vne de l'autre, eſtimant par ce detroit, chemin plus court & plus commode, ſe delibera, partant des iſles Fortunées, aux iſles de

Voyage de Fernand de Magellan.

E

Fig. 14 André Thevet, *Les singularitez de la France antarctique: autrement nommee Amerique, & de plusieurs terres & isles decouvertes de nostre temps* (Paris; Antwerp: Heritiers de Maurice de la Porte, 1558), 109

Complete Collection is situated in a landscape. The *su* in the *Album of Beasts* (Fig. 16) adopts this composition and new image. Moreover, it was not only given grey and brownish fur with detailed rendering of the individual hairs, but, quite significantly, this European-inspired style creates a sense of volume and texture with modeling as well as a more reasonable anatomy, which makes it appear an alive and

Fig. 15 *Gujin Tushu jicheng*, *qin chong dian* 禽蟲典, *yishou bu* 異獸部, *juan* 125, 19b

Fig. 16 Yu Sheng, Zhang Weibang, *Album of Beasts*, 32th leaf, volume six. 1761. Beijing Palace Museum

tangible creature. Its wide open mouth is supposed to reflect the text which declares: "The *su* will roar when it becomes desperate."[32] However, its neat white teeth and upward curving mouth give the animal looks so friendly an aspect that we cannot imagine any of the horrifying characteristics described by Thévet, Gessner, and Verbiest. In particular, the other texts indicate that the large tail of the *su* was used, presumably, to protect its babies from danger, but here it has become smaller, thinner and more like a joyful dog wagging its tail. Also, the *su* here is framed by the branches emerging from the rock on the left. The landscape this *su* resides in is not depicted in monochrome woodblock printed lines, but by blue-and-green-style rocks, a curving tree, and lush grass textured by short, curving, hemp-fiber-like calligraphic brushstrokes and stacked dots. In other words, it is a landscape that has nothing to do with the habitat of the *su*, but instead looks more like the traditional

[32]Orig. "急則吼." Yuan, *Qinggong Shou pu*, 404.

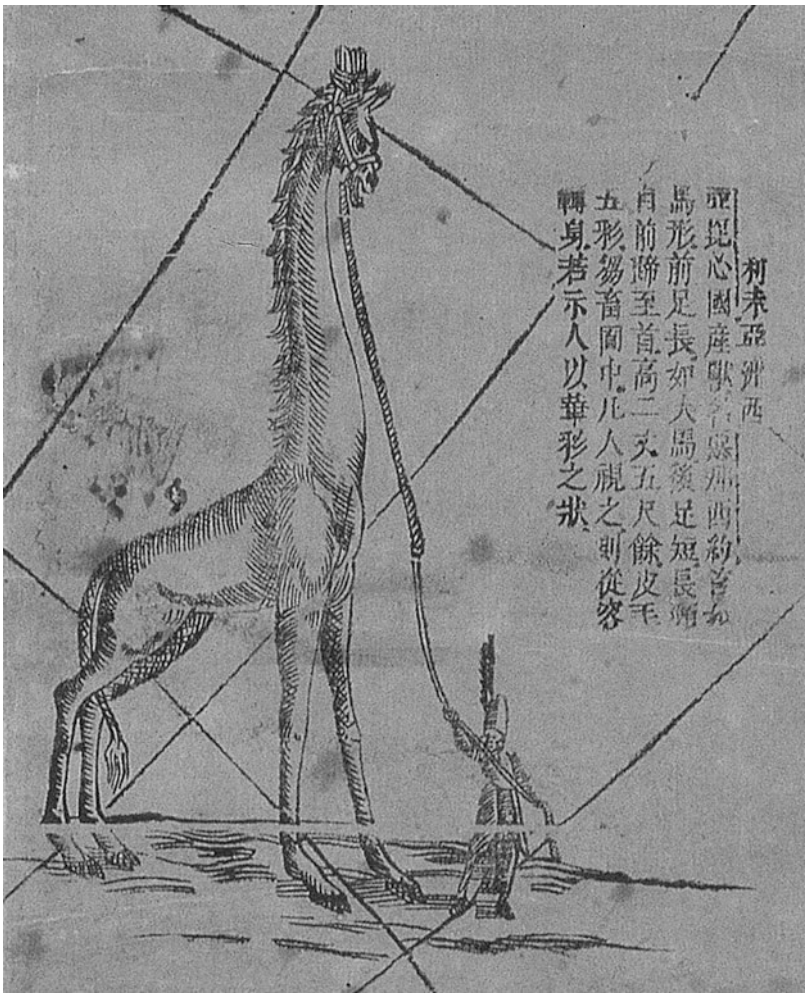

Fig. 17 Nan Huiren, *Kunyu quantu*. 1674. National Palace Museum, Taipei

idealized Chinese setting closely associated with the blue-and-green style of landscape painting. By this time, this invention from the New World had become more akin to a tamed dog, relocated and domesticated on idealized Chinese soil complete with a happily-ever-after smile.

The animals Verbiest selected were not only from the New World, but also from the Old World. For example, the animal called an "*Enaxiyue*" 惡那西約 (Fig. 17) by Verbiest, according to its appearance and place of origin (Africa), as indicated in the text, is almost certainly a giraffe. According to Gessner's 1551 work, the sultan of Babylon had sent the Holy Roman Emperor Friedrich II (1194–1250) an animal

called an "Orasius,"[33] which is probably the phonetic origin of the term for *Enaxiyue*.[34] However, the illustration accompanying Gessner's text is not the one that Verbiest copied; instead he chose a less accurate source from the medieval period. It was not until the publication of the second edition of *Icones animalium quadrupedum viviparorum et oviparorum* in 1560 (Fig. 18) that the new image of the giraffe that we see in Verbiest's version was finally adopted[35] and later incorporated into the second edition of Gessner's *Historia animalium* in 1603.[36] According to Gessner, this new image was acquired from a print published in Nuremburg, which was itself based on a drawing from life of a giraffe sent to the Ottoman emperor Mehmed III Adli (r. 1595–1603) as a diplomatic gift in 1595.[37]

Arabian merchants had started trading giraffes from Africa and sending them to Mediterranean countries, Persia, India, and even China as early as the tenth century.[38] Zheng He 鄭和 (1371–1433) also brought back the famous giraffe given by the king of Bengal in 1414, which was thought by the Chinese recipients to be a legendary *qilin* and deemed an auspicious omen for the reign of Emperor Chengzu 成祖 (Yongle, r. 1402–1424) (Fig. 19).[39] Several paintings of the giraffe circulated, and all used the same composition of a foreign keeper with a turban holding the reins while looking back at it.[40] The Chinese images, Gessner's, and those from Central Asia all seem to share this format of composition. It is unknown exactly how they are related within the very complicated and untraceable network of image-making, but it is evident that when the *Complete Collection* and the *Album of Beasts* adopted Verbiest's phonetic translation of *Enaxiyue* for the giraffe, it was introduced as a

[33]Conrad Gesner, *Historia animalium liber I: De quadrupedibus viviparis*, 2nd ed. (Francoefurti: Bibliopolium Cambierianum, 1603), 162–3. For the digital version in the library of University of Sevilla, see http://fondosdigitales.us.es/fondos/libros/3226 (accessed on April 21, 2013).

[34]"Orasius" is actually a typographical error for "oraflus" (because "f" and "s" look alike in the manuscript), which is derived from "azorafa," a Spanish word deriving from Arabic. The modern word "giraffe" also shares the same origins. See Berthold Laufer, *The Giraffe in History and Art* (Chicago: Field Museum of Natural History, 1928), 72.

[35]Conrad Gesner, *Icones animalium quadrupedum viviparorum et oviparorum, additiones*, 124–5, For the digital book from Bibliothèque nationale de France, see http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b23002468.item.f102.legendes (accessed on April 21, 2013). Gesner died in 1565, so the supplement should have been added by him, not by others later.

[36]Gesner, *Historia animalium liber I*, 149.

[37]Gesner, *Icones animalium quadrupedum*, 124–5; Linda Komaroff, *Gifts of the Sultan: The Arts of Giving at the Islamic Courts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), cat. no. 219, 106–7, 288.

[38]Laufer, *The Giraffe in History and Art*, 31–40.

[39]Chang Renxia 常任俠, "Mingchu Mengjiala guo gong qilin tu 明初孟加拉國貢麒麟圖 (The Painting on Bangladesh sending the Qilin animal as a tribute (to China) in the early Ming Period)," *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 3 (1983): 14–7; Chen Guodong 陳國棟, "Zheng He chuandui xia Xiyang de dongji: sumu, hujiao, yu changjinglu 鄭和船隊下西洋的動機: 蘇木、胡椒與長頸鹿 (The Motives of the Voyages to the Western Oceans by Zheng He's Fleet: Sapan Wood, Pepper, and Giraffes)," *Chuanshi yanjiu* 17 (2002): 121–34.

[40]The two most famous versions are an anonymous Ming dynasty Qilin Painting with Shen Du 沈度's Ode (*Ruiying Qilin song* 瑞應麒麟頌) in the National Palace Museum in Taipei and another version with the same title and composition in the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

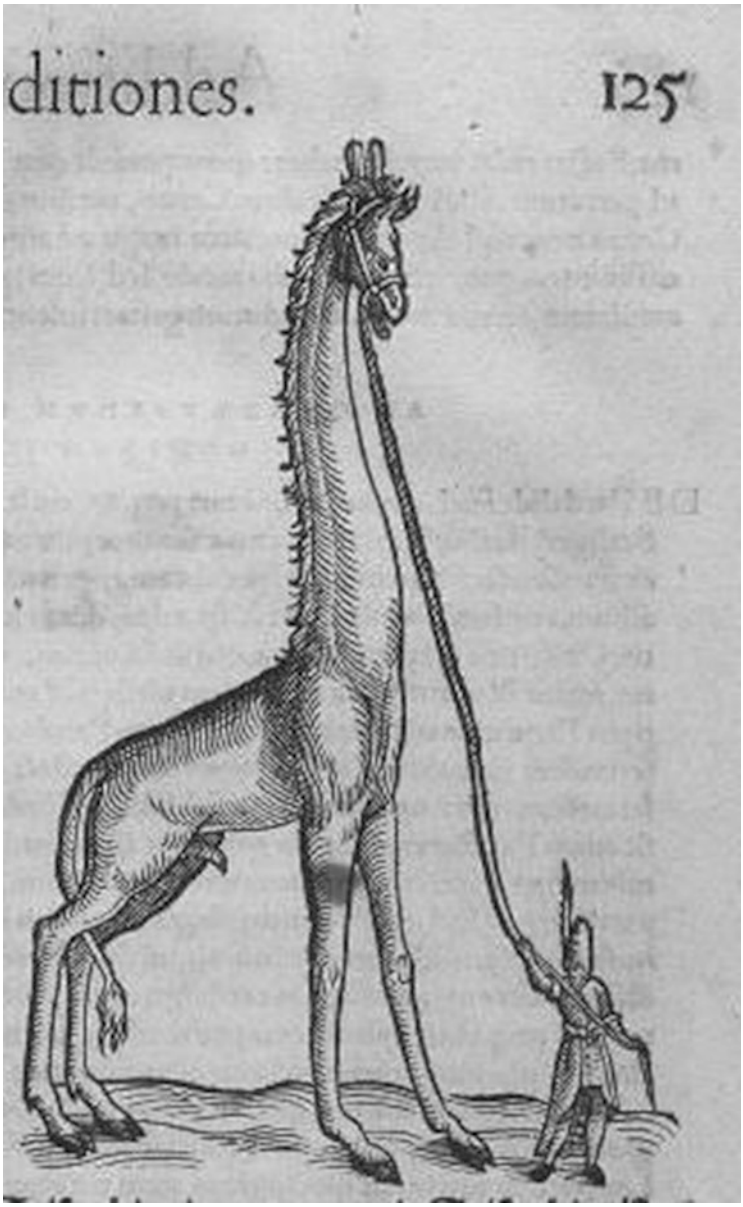

Fig. 18 Conrad Gesner, *Icones animalium quadrupedum viviparorum et oviparorum*, additiones, 125

Fig. 19 Anonymous, *Qilin Shen Du song* 麒麟沈度頌 (*Qilin Painting with Shen Du's Ode*), National Palace Museum, Taipei. National Palace Museum, ed., *Gugong shuhua tulu* 故宮書畫圖錄 (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1989), vol. 9, 346

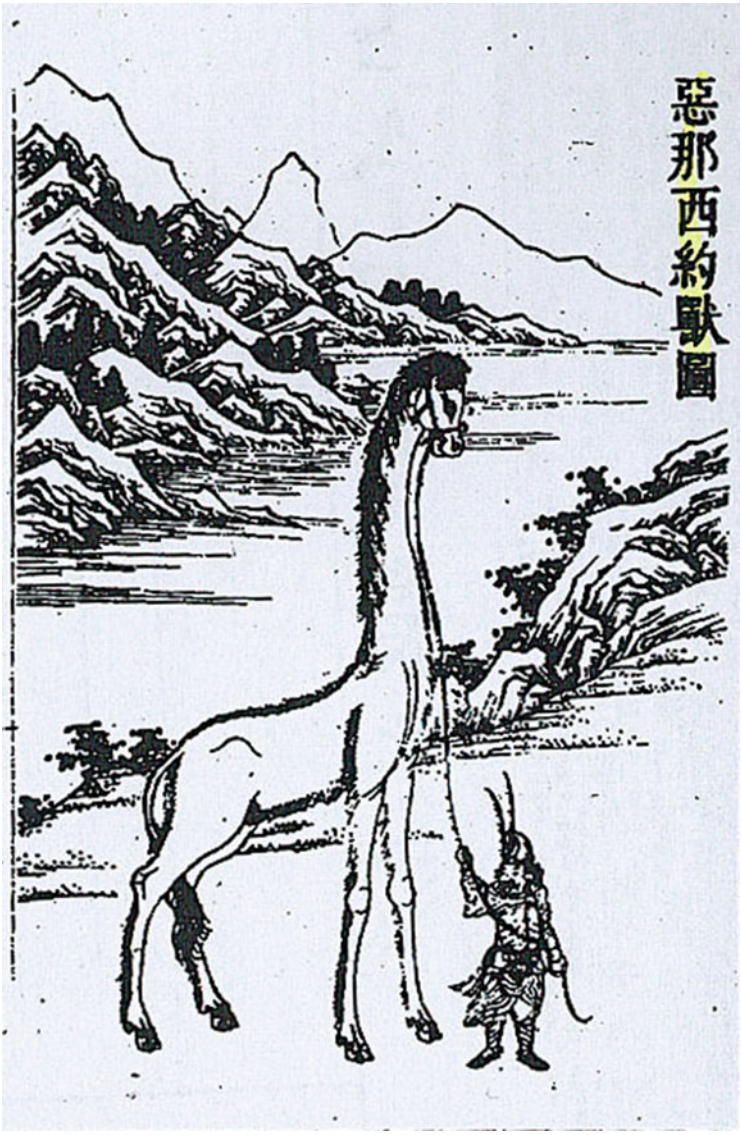

Fig. 20 *Gujin Tushu jicheng*, *qin chong dian* 禽蟲典, *yishou bu* 異獸部, *juan* 125, 18b

brand new beast to China and disconnected from its previous association with traditional Chinese knowledge on the *qilin*.

For the image of the giraffe, as with other cases, Verbiest's versions copy precisely from Gessner's, right down to the details of shading. But in *Complete Collection* (Fig. 20), the giraffe was placed in a Chinese landscape. A more interesting detail is that it replaces the Indian or Persian keeper with a Chinese theatrical figure wearing long plumes on his head. The *Album of Beasts* (Fig. 21) also modifies

Fig. 21 Yu Sheng, Zhang Weibang, *Album of Beasts*, 31th leaf, volume six. 1761. Beijing Palace Museum

the background of the landscape from the *Complete Collection* and removes the figure and reins.[41] The most striking characteristic of the giraffe in the *Album of Beasts* is the almost iridescent colors on its back, which is mentioned in the inscription: "The fur has five colors,"[42] which in the Chinese context commonly implies a special radiance of multi-colored materials, such as foreign minerals.

Different from the woodblock-printed landscape in the *Complete Collection*, in which the mountains are depicted with angular lines to create a stern and edgy style, the landscape surrounding the giraffe in the *Album of Beasts* again borrows from the traditional Chinese blue-and-green style of painting. The giraffe is placed among beautiful autumn foliage rising above a running creek, which is enveloped by blue-and-green style rocks. Its colorful fur and flowing hair almost seems to flow in the breeze against a wisp of mist floating above. The mist, the radiating appearance of the giraffe, and the blue-and-green rocks all evoke the sense of an ideal paradise, possibly even referring to the land of the immortals in the Chinese context. However, upon closer examination, the giraffe is rendered with very subtle coloring and

[41] See the thirty-first leaf in volume six of the *Album of Beasts*.

[42] Orig. "皮備五彩." Yuan, *Qinggong Shou pu*, 402.

shading, bringing an almost tangible texture to its furry hair and soft skin. In contrast to the transparency that traditional Chinese ink-wash painting with light coloring creates, the European-related style used here seems to purposefully add layers of colors to build up opaqueness and convey a sense of actual material existence, which previous Chinese paintings seldom cared about. Through the application of this European fusion style at court, the seemingly auspicious character of the giraffe has become actualized, or materialized, but has also been transformed into another anima with a different name—the *Enanxiyue*.

This mis-representation is not unexpected. Given that the mimetic style of the *Album of Beasts* required information about the coloring and texture of the depicted animals, which the original European print failed to supply, the painters most likely produced details based on texts and their imagination that were unrelated to the actual animals. For example, the new giraffe created in the *Album of Beasts*, though it looks "real," is far removed from any existing animal. A Chinese person who had encountered a real giraffe would probably have neither recognized this image nor connected it with the giraffes recorded in Chinese history.

The giraffe is not the only animal that loses its Chinese connection through this re-encounter. The rhinoceros, or "beast with a nose horn (*bijiao shou* 鼻角獸)," as translated by Verbiest, is another significant case. Verbiest's image of the rhinoceros is from the famous print by Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528), which was transmitted through Gessner's rendering (Figs. 22, 23, and 24). Dürer depicted the first Indian

Fig. 22 Nan Huairen, *Kunyu quantu*. 1674. National Palace Museum, Taipei

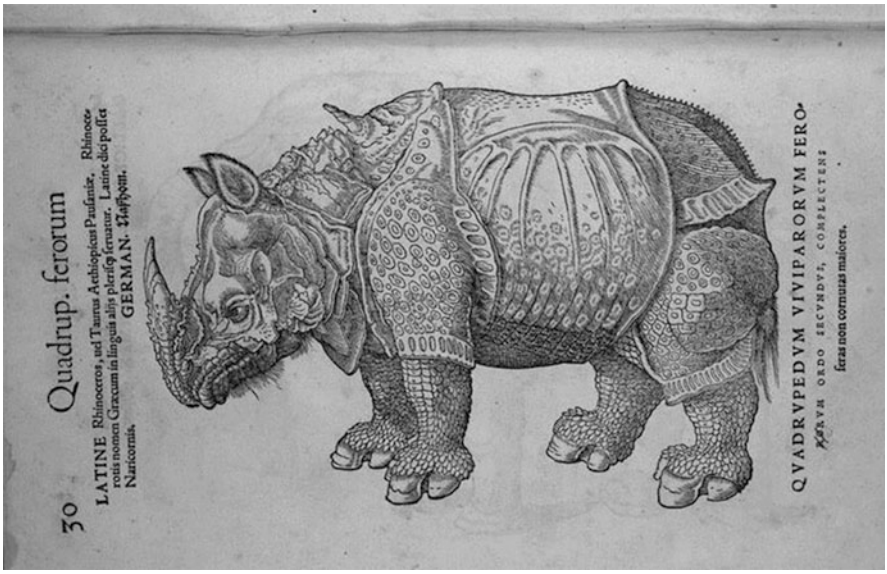

Fig. 23 Conrad Gesner, *Icones animalium quadrupedum viviparorum et oviparorum*, 30

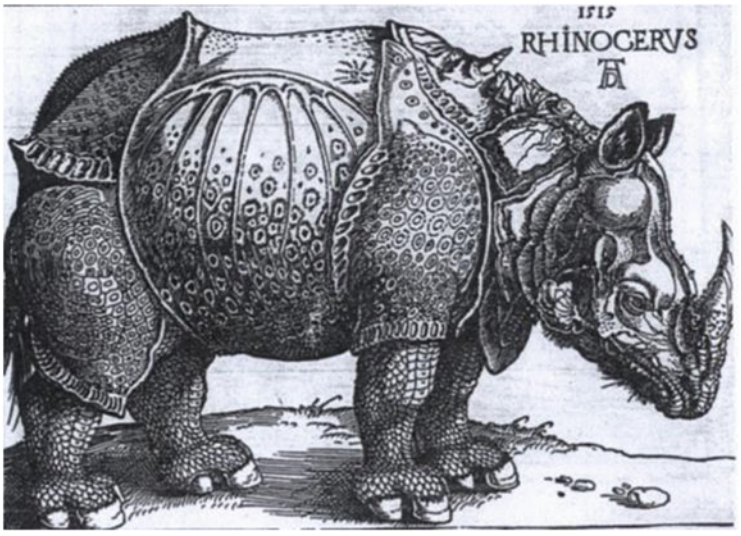

Fig. 24 Albrecht Dürer, *Rhinoceros*. 1515. Donald F. Lach, *Asia in the Making of Europe,* vol. II, book 1, Fig. 119

rhinoceros to be seen in Europe since Roman times, which arrived in Lisbon on May 20, 1515 from Cochin in India and caused a tremendous sensation at the time.[43] Dürer did not actually see the rhinoceros in person nor the specimen made from it; his drawing and print was based on an image sent from Lisbon.[44] However, the history of Dürer's rhinoceros perfectly matches the narrative that is re-told in Verbiest's text. And therefore, the image of the rhinoceros imported into China was framed and perceived mainly within the milieu of the beast that had been brought to Europe.

This is not to say that China was unfamiliar with the rhinoceros throughout its history. Many documents show that tribute from Southeast Asia often included rhinoceros horns and sometimes even live specimens. Various rhinoceros images also appear in Chinese art and culture, from bronze vessels to illustrations in the *bencao* 本草 (*materia medica*) tradition. Generally speaking, images of the rhinoceros from the late Shang period (c. 1600–c. 1046 BCE) of high antiquity to the Tang dynasty (618–907) are more realistic than the illustrations in *materia medica* writings after the Song dynasty (960–1279), which often depict the animal more like an ox or goat with a horn on its forehead (Fig. 25).[45] Scholars, though, have pointed out that the illustrations in *materia medica* books pay more attention to identifying materials for medicinal use. Therefore, in the case of the rhinoceros, its horn is rendered as a known object attached to a fantasized body, or "a real rhinoceros horn on an imagined rhinoceros."[46]

Although Verbiest's image of the rhinoceros is an exact copy from Gessner, the one in the *Complete Collection* (Fig. 26) is highly simplified and a distortion from the original. What is even more confusing is that the rhinoceros in the *Album of Beasts* (Fig. 27) claims to be copied from *Complete Collection*, but it appears to be more similar to Dürer's than to the one in *Complete Collection*. It not only

[43]This rhinoceros immediately became the most treasured beast in the menagerie of Manuel I, the king of Portugal. He even arranged a fight between the rhinoceros and an elephant to verify the saying by naturalists in Roman times that the elephant and rhinoceros were natural enemies. He later offered it to Pope Leo X. Unfortunately, it died in a shipwreck, but its body was made into a specimen and arrived in Rome in February of 1516. For more on the story of this rhinoceros in Europe, see Donald Lach, "Rhinoceros," in *Asia in the Making of Europe*, ed. Donald Lach (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1970), vol. II, book 1, 158–72; Eugenio Menegon, "New Knowledge of Strange Things: Exotic Animals from the West," *Gujin lunheng* 15 (October 2006): 40–8; Walravens, "Konrad Gessner," 87–98.

[44]Lach, "Rhinoceros," 163.

[45]For a more detailed discussion on images of the rhinoceros in China, see Lai Yu-chih 賴毓芝, "Cong Dule dao Qinggong: yi xiniu wei zhongxing de quanqiu shi guancha 從杜勒到清宮:以犀牛為中心的全球史觀察 (From Albrecht Dürer to the Qing Court: the Observations on the Depictions of rhinoceros from a Global Perspective)," *Gugong wenwu yuekan* 344 (2011): 68–81.

[46]See Chen Yuanpeng 陳元朋, "Chuantong bowu zhishi li de 'zhenshi' yu 'xiangxiang': yi xijiao yu xiniu wei zhuti de ge'an yanjiu 傳統博物知識裡的「真實」與「想像」:以犀角與犀牛為主體的個案研究 (Reality and Imagination in the Knowledge of Traditional Natural History: A Study Based upon the Rhinoceros and Rhinoceros Horns)," *Guoli Zhengzhi daxue lishi xuebao* 33 (2010): 1–82.

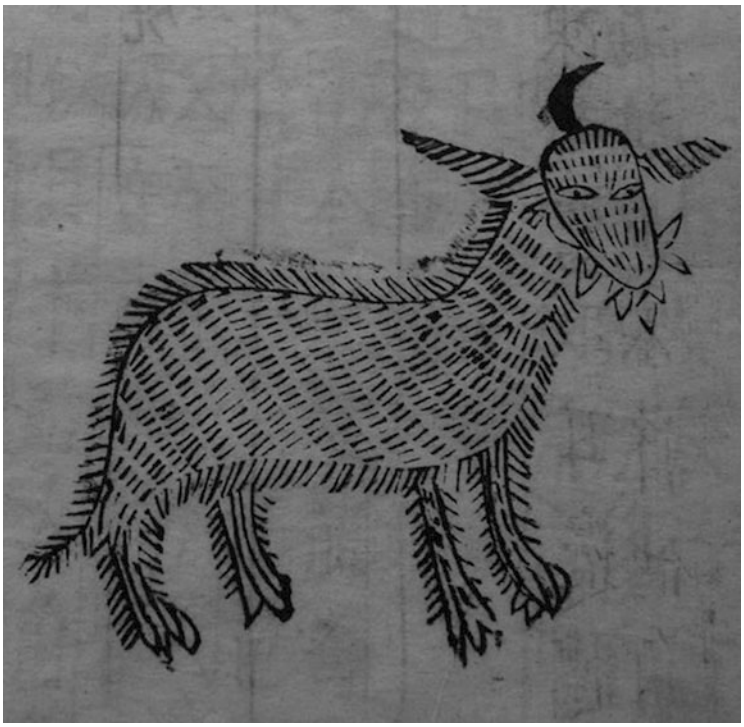

Fig. 25 *Xiniu* 犀牛. Tang Shenwei 唐愼微, ed., *Jingshi zheng lie daiquan* 經史証類大全本草 (1600). Tokyo National Museum. Photo taken by author

reproduces the most eye-catching characteristics of Dürer's design, such as the bulging armor-like body, but also some of the less noticeable details, such as a floral-like pattern on top of the shoulder blade, which is hard to discern in Verbiest's rhinoceros. One must conclude, therefore, that the maker of the *Album of Beasts* must have had Gessner's book on hand for direct reference.

Of further note is that, in the case of the *Album of Beasts* as well as its source in *Complete Collection*, although Dürer's rhinoceros was included and named a beast with a "nose horn," it was actually another rhinoceros from the Chinese tradition that had been blended in—that is, the ox or goat with a horn (Fig. 28). Without the mediation of living animals or their dead bodies, the new European images and knowledge introduced by Verbiest and transformed by the reproductions of the *Complete Collection* and the *Album of Beasts* became something foreign beside the traditional Chinese knowledge of the same subject. In other words, in the cases of both the rhinoceros and giraffe the introduction of European knowledge and the image shown did not have an impact on the history of Chinese science as written by intellectuals. Nevertheless, the use of a traditional Chinese landscape style combined with imaginative, yet materially tangible, renderings of the animals from all over the globe in Western texts formed a European fusion style, through which knowledge and images from Europe were not only "domesticated" but actually re-invented and re-planted on Chinese soil in painting.

Fig. 26 *Gujin Tushu jicheng*, *qin chong dian* 禽蟲典, *yishou bu* 異獸部, *juan* 125, 10b

Fig. 27 Yu Sheng, Zhang Weibang, *Album of Beasts*, 22th leaf, volume six. 1761. Beijing Palace Museum

Materializing the Unknown

Though it did not challenge the Chinese epistemological tradition, does this mean that we must conclude that the *Album of Beasts* is only a follower of the Chinese traditional *leishu* 類書 type of encyclopedia? And if not, what are the differences between the categories? While it is true that much of the content in the *Complete Collection* derives from traditional Chinese encyclopedias, such as *Classic of Mountains and Seas* and *Collected Illustrations of the Three Realms*, on the other hand it also exhibits many differences. The most obvious is that the *Album of Beasts* transforms the printed into the painted image. Different from the transformation of the painted into the printed, which mainly entails a mere reduction or deletion of details, the transformation from the printed to the painted involves addition or embellishment of non-existing details. In the the *Album of Beasts*, the original printed images have literally become embodied by the addition of texture, colors, delicate shading, and three-dimensional volume to form an eclectic European style. The attention to texture created through the opaqueness of color gives the depicted animals a sense of solidity and volume. One might even say that this court style

Fig. 28 Yu Sheng, Zhang Weibang, *Album of Beasts*, 19th leaf, volume one. 1761. Beijing Palace Museum

actualizes what is beyond the imagination, such as the *su* beast, into something imaginable, thereby providing it with a tangible sense of existence in the material world.

This "realistic" style enhanced by European techniques in shading and creating three-dimensional volume not only applies to animals from foreign sources and those familiar in daily life, but also to some specimens that are far removed from reality. In *Classic of Mountains and Seas*, one can see, for example, an animal with multiple heads called an "Enlightened beast (*kaiming shou* 開明獸)," and one with only a single leg called a *kui* 夔 (Figs. 29 and 30). Although the influential philosopher Nelson Goodman argues that realism has nothing to do with resemblance judged by "constant and independent" standards[47] but is "a matter of habit" conditioned by different cultures,[48] scholars have increasingly challenged this purely cultural relativism and become willing to ponder the possibilities that there is still

[47]Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1976), 39.

[48]Goodman, *Languages of Art*, 38.

Fig. 29 Yu Sheng, Zhang Weibang, *Album of Beasts*, 6th leaf, volume six. 1761. Beijing Palace Museum

some objectivity involved in deciding whether some styles or paintings are more realistic than others. For example, Margaret A. Hagen believes that realistic pictures "succeed as representations because they provide structured visual information equivalent to that provided by the real scene represented."[49] In our case, it is almost impossible for us to know the texture of the skin, hair, and even the color of this mythical creature from the original monochrome print, but the painted version in the European fusion style in the *Album of Beasts*, on the other hand, manages to provide us with all the information needed to make this creature appear alive in reality (although by fabrication), including its texture, anatomic volume, animation, or "modality," to use John Hyman's term.[50] And it is not only by Hyman's standard

[49]Margaret A. Hagen, *Varieties of Realism: Geometries of Representational Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 8.

[50]John Hyman, *The Objective Eye: Color, Form, and Reality in the Theory of Art* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), 155–237.

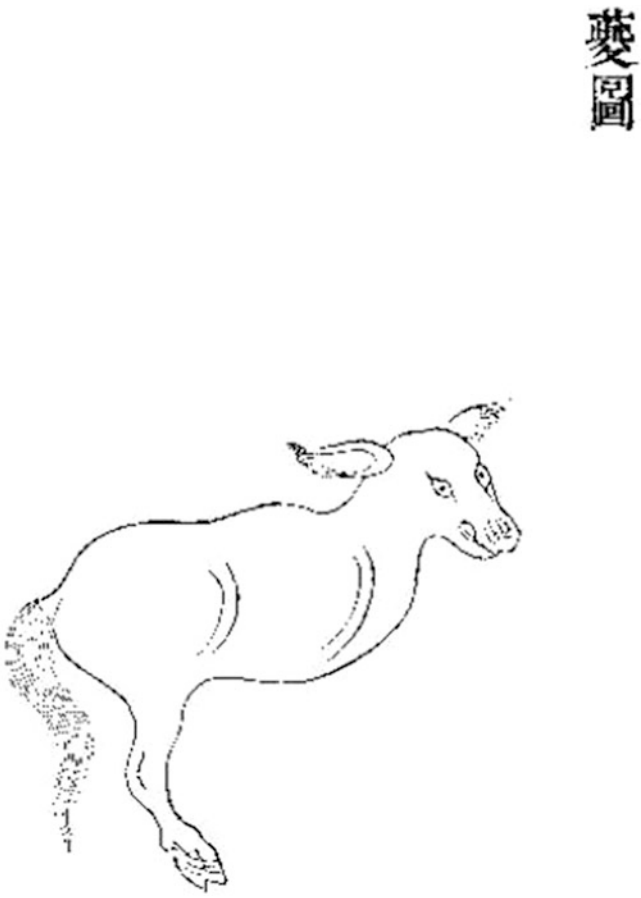

Fig. 30 *Gujin Tushu jicheng*, *qin chong dian* 禽蟲典, *yishou bu* 異獸部, *juan* 124, 42b

that these court paintings which absorb European painting techniques are more realistic than, for example, contemporary Chinese Orthodox school paintings. It is important to note that this eclectic European style was very much seen by Qing emperors, such as Kangxi and Qianlong, their officials, and even painters of the time, a being more mimetic (*si* 似) or real (*zhen* 真) than the Chinese style, as shown in many contemporary writings.

For example, in the famous *Study of Vision* published in the Yongzheng 雍正 period (1722–35), Nian Xiyao 年希堯 (d. 1738), a powerful high official active in the Yongzheng reign, explicitly pointed out that Chinese painting may be appreciated for its "specially managed arrangements" in the genre of landscape paintings; however, one cannot but adopt "the method from the West" when it comes to

depicting architecture and objects with precision.[51] He even challenged the traditional Chinese paradigm of aesthetics and said, "Do not blindly follow the cliché and irresponsibly say [one painting] is full of likeness, but not of excellence (*miao* 妙). How could a painting not look real but achieve the excellence (*miao* 妙)."[52] Nian's opinion was supported by the scholar-official painter Zou Yigui 鄒一桂 who was active in both the Yongzheng and Qianlong reigns. Zou also insisted that "no one can achieve complete spiritual expression without formal likeness (*wei you xing que er shen quan zhe* 未有形缺而神全者)."[53] The Qianlong emperor, furthermore, thought it was important to combine the two. In 1763, when Afghan envoys presented four steeds to the Qianlong emperor, he asked the court painter Jin Tingbiao (d. 1767) to imitate Li Gonglin's 李公麟 (1049–1106) painting of *Wuma tu* 五馬圖 (*Five Horses*) to depict these four steeds. He explicitly instructed Jin to "combine the mimetic quality of Giuseppe Castiglione's works with the 'ge' or 'style' of Li Gonglin's."[54] For him, the Western style specialized in depicting "formal likeness" and was different from the Chinese literati tradition represented by the archetypal scholar-official painter Li Gonglin. Li was a brilliant practitioner of the dictum of Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101), the famous poet, writer, art theorist, and statesman, and also Li's friend, that "anyone who judges painting by form-likeness shows merely the insight of a child."[55] He, therefore, rejected the "realism" practiced by his contemporary artisans and invented a so-called Baimiao style that pursued self-expression through the simple, yet modulated ink outline that captures and

[51]Nian had been the Governor of Guangdong, Supervisor of the Jingdezhen Imperial Kilns, Supervisor-in-chief of the Imperial Household Department, Commissioner of Huai'an Customs The two Chinese phrases here are "意匠經營" and "泰西之法," see Nian Xiyao, *Shixue* 視學 (*The Study of Vision*), in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu* 續修四庫全書 (*The Continuation to the Complete Collection of the Imperial Four Treasuries*), vol. 1067 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1995–2002), 27.

[52]Orig. "毋徒漫語人曰, 真而不妙, 夫不真又安所得妙," see Nian, *Shixue*, 27.

[53]Orig. "未有形缺而神全者." See Zou Yigui 鄒一桂, *Xiaoshang huapu* 小山畫譜 (*The Painting Manual of Xiaoshang),* in *Jingyin Wenyuange Siku quanshu* 景印文淵閣四庫全書 (*The Wenyuange Edition of the Complete Collection of the Imperial Four Treasuries*), vol. 838, 703; Qianlong Emperor 乾隆, *Yuzhi shiji sanji* 御製詩集三集 (Imperial Poems), *juan* 31, 10b–11a, in *Jingyin Wenyuange Siku quanshu* 景印文淵閣四庫全書 (*The Wenyuange Edition of the Complete Collection of the Imperial Four Treasuries*), vol. 1305, 722.

[54]Orig. "以郎[世寧]之似合李[公麟]格." See the Qianlong Emperor, *Yuzhi shiji sanji* 御製詩集三集 (*Qianlong Imperial-Compiled Poem Collection, Collection III*), *juan* 31, 10b–11a, in *Jingyin Wenyuange Siku quanshu* 景印文淵閣四庫全書 (*The Wenyuange Edition of the Complete Collection of the Imperial Four Treasuries*), vol. 1305, 722.

[55]Susan Bush, *The Chinese Literati on Painting: Su Shih (1037–1101) to Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1555–1636)*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Studies 27 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), 26.

reveals the true spirit and essence of his sitters or objects. For Emperor Qianlong, only when these two seemingly contrary traditions were combined, would great art be born.[56]

It is through this style that the *Album of Beasts* reconciles animals of the known with those of the unknown, and animals from daily life with ones from classical texts. Thus, it makes the multi-headed "Enlightened beast" from *Classic of Mountains and Seas* and the Indian rhinoceros equally convincing to viewers without any further knowledge or means to judge them. Despite the fact that, with the help of a very specific style, the editor fashioned the album with distinctive colors of reality, it remains to be asked whether the mythic creatures from, for example, the *Classic of Mountains and Seas*, were actually received as real in any sense by contemporaries. It is probably absurd to imagine that these creatures, like the one-legged *kui*, could have existed in reality. But the question of how to understand the mythic creatures mentioned in the *Classic of Mountains and Seas* is actually a very important issue in the historiography of evidential research, or *kaozheng xue* 考證學, which has flourished since the eighteenth century. The famous sinologist Wang Guowei 王國維 (1877–1927) used the texts written on excavated oracle bones to conduct intertextual reading between them and the *Classic of Mountains and Seas*, confirming that the records in the *Classic of Mountains and Seas* are not total fantasy, but that they actually reveal important facets of ancient Chinese history.[57] It is not clear whether the Qianlong emperor and his team of compilers ever inquired into the authenticity of the records in *Classic of Mountains and Seas*. However, by juxtaposing the colophon's criticism of Guo Pu's *Annotations to Classic of Mountains and Seas* as "[being] hidden peculiarities" and the actualization of those fantastic creatures by appropriating the features of known animals, such as their skin color, fur, and some details, to create a "realistic" style—using layers of opaque coloring and shadowing to create the tangible solidity of physical existence—we may at least say that the *Album of Beasts* took a very clear approach to actually materializing the unknown in classical texts.

Therefore, despite the fact that the *Album of Beasts* did not involve any first-hand investigation, it successfully replaced traditional images with contemporary ones originating from first-hand experience, such as horses, and materialized the unknown through building solidity and volume on the surface of silk with delicate applications of color and shading in a European fusion style. Most importantly, it effectively exerted the cultural perception of a "Western style" and "information

[56]See *Yuzhi shiji sanji* 御製詩集三集 (*Qianlong Imperial-Compiled Poem Collection, Collection III*), *juan* 31, 10b–11a, in *Jingyin wenyuange siku quanshu* 景印文淵閣四庫全書 (*The Wenyuange Edition of the Complete Collection of the Imperial Four Treasuries*), vol. 1305, 722.

[57]For example, his breakthrough research on *nao* 夔, using records in both *Classic of Mountains and Seas* and oracle bones, argues that it was the ancestor of people in the Shang and Zhou (1100–256 BCE) period; Wang Guowei 王國維, "Yin puci zhong suo jian xiangong xianwang kao 殷卜辭中所見先公先王考 (The Research on the Early Dukes and Kings seen in the Oracle Bones of the Yin Period)," in *Guantang jilin* 觀堂集林 (Collected Works of Guantang) (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1992), *juan* 9, 1a–15b.

from the West" as something that was closely related to reality. The *Album of Beasts*, like the other two projects, proclaims its close connection with reality and indicates that "the paintings included are all based on verifiable facts."[58]

Virtualizing Ideal Rule

If this is the case, we should then ask how images conceptualizing a sense of reality could be equated with the real? This reminds us of Qianlong's famous series of paintings entitled *Shiyi shier tu* 是一是二圖 (*One or Two*), which were started in 1745 and extended until 1750, around the same time that the three projects were initiated. In this series, by adopting the format of a painting within a painting, the image is combined with an inscription that states, "One or two? My two faces never come together yet are never separate."[59] In so doing, the Qianlong emperor asks whether the portrait in the painting or the painting itself is the real him. For Qianlong, images of illusion and reality mirror each other and were created, not by denial or substitution, but through inter-dependence.[60] In Patricia Berger's words, "If the portrait needs the emperor to take form in the first place, the emperor likewise needs his portrait to project himself into history as a series of mirrored, familiar, but ever transforming shapes."[61] Similarily, if we ask whether the animals depicted in the *Album of Beasts* and the animals in reality are "one or two," the answer should be that "they never come together, yet are never separate." This is similar to using the style of Castiglione or Attiret to depict Qianlong's horses in reality for the leaf of the idealized "Fine horse" in the *Album of Beasts*, which, on the one hand, endows the *Album of Beasts* with a sense of reality, and, on the other, makes Qianlong's horses the embodiment of the "Fine horse" defined by the historical canon. They are certainly created in response to each other and are mutually dependent.

If the illusion of images can be equated to the truth of reality, then there are probably no differences between mythical creatures such as the *qilin*, fictional ones such as the "Enlightened beast," court animals such as the "Fine horse," or foreign animals such as the rhinoceros, as long as they are rendered in an eclectic European style with an illusionistic effect. According to this logic, is it still necessary to conduct first-hand investigation to see if there is a difference? According to its preface, the *Album of Beasts* imitates the format of the *Album of Birds* and was planned a little bit later than the *Album of Birds*, though they were created side by

[58]Orig. "繪事所垂, 皆悉徵實." Yuan, *Qinggong Shou pu*, 407.

[59]Orig. "是一是二, 不即不離." This translation is from Wu Hung, *The Double Screen: Medium and Representation in Chinese Painting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 235.

[60]Kristina Renée Kleutghen, "One or Two, Repictured," *Archives of Asian Art* 62 (2012): 25–46; Patricia Berger, *Empire of Emptiness: Buddhist Art and Political Authority in Qing China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003), 51–4; Wu Hung, *The Double Screen*, 200–36.

[61]Berger, *Empire of Emptiness*, 53

side. Is it therefore possible that the *Album of Beasts* gave up first-hand investigation after the development of visual discourse shown in *One or Two* from around the same time? This is an aspect worth considering in further studies on the subject.

Finally, returning to the original question of how the Qianlong emperor understood the world he ruled, we must ask: What role did visual imagery play in his perception? The *Album of Beasts*, modeled after the structure and content of *Complete Collection*, superimposes information associated with reality but without challenging the original understanding. In this context, the "beast with a nose horn" and rhinoceros, *qilin,* and giraffe, as well as the imaginative "Enlightened beast" and a real horse, can co-exist without the need for further dialogue. Nevertheless, with the information, images, and styles from Europe, especially the fusion European style with its dense rendering of details, texture, and light (hence, its illusionistic effect), the *Album of Beasts* is able to diminish the inconsistencies within and expunge the possibility that any viewer might differentiate the fictional from the real or the imaginative from the foreign, while at the same time also claiming that its depictions have close ties with reality. Therefore, despite the fact that no first-hand investigation was undertaken for the production of the *Album of Beasts* and some of its images are far removed from reality, the album successfully uses imagery to refer to, correspond to, and even construct an outside world.

The "world reality" that the *Album of Beasts* constructs is populated by mythical animals that were plucked from traditional classics and actual species from specific geographical habitats. Therefore, it combines a mixture of the "truth of philology" and the "truth of reality." In that floating age of outside stimuli and a re-examination of old traditions, it may not always have been easy for the Qianlong emperor and the people around him to differentiate between the two, despite the effort he showed in overthrowing some apparent absurdities and falsehoods in traditional texts using information from his version of reality. Thus, the knowledge of the world that the *Album of Beasts* encompasses is by no mean comprehensive, but rather fragmented.

So how could fragments of knowledge or information enable Qianlong to comprehend the empire he was ruling? It brings to mind the priming mechanism in psychology that refers to an implicit memory effect in which exposure to a stimulus influences a response to a later stimulus. For example, if one sees an incomplete sketch that one is unable to identify and is then shown a more complete segment of the sketch until they are able to fully recognize the motif in its entirety, one will later identify the sketch at a much earlier stage than he/she did the first time. In other words, fragments can be completed by previous experiences through priming.[62]

In the case of the *Album of Beasts*, the fragments of reality and the fragments of traditional texts (mostly carrying layers of Confucian moral meaning) could be primed as universally "real" and "ideal" worlds based on the Qianlong emperor's previous experiences of reality and knowledge in Chinese classical learning. Moreover, through the mediation of mimetic visual images, these two worlds collided,

[62]See Bryan Kolb, and Ian Whishaw, *Fundamentals of Human Neuropsychology* (New York: Worth Publishers, 2003), 453–4, 457.

syndicated, and merged into one "reality," in which the Qianlong emperor perceived himself as, acted as, and actually was a Sage King, bearing knowledge of every living thing in the realm of his rule. In this world of "reality," foreign animals taking shape and materializing on the basis of European texts no longer appear in front of an abstract background, but like other domestic animals and mythic creatures from classical texts, they live in a traditional Chinese blue-and-green style landscape. Despite their origin in foreign lands, these animals have become "domesticated" in submission to the benevolent government of the emperor on Chinese soil. This notion is echoed in the colophon which records that the region of Altishahr bowed to Qing sovereignty, resulting in the picture of the tribute of heavenly steeds in the *Album of Beasts*.[63] These foreign animals appropriated from Verbiest's text, though they never reached China, represent virtual tribute and embody an answer to the call of the benevolent rule of the Qianlong emperor. This is one of the most traditional rhetorics of Chinese politics. However, given the help of global knowledge, transcultural imagery, and crucially, the new technique of (re)making them in China in a palpable fashion, the rhetoric is not just an abstract statement but a make-believe representation of ideal rule in painting.

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[63]Orig. "回部嚮化底貢, 而圖天驥之材." Yuan, *Qinggong Shou pu*, 407.

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Part IV
Ceramic Matters

Delftware and the Domestication of Chinese Porcelain

Dawn Odell

Abstract In contrast to scholarship that has emphasized a European exoticization of China in the early modern period, this essay focuses on the "domestication" of Chinese material culture through an examination of the Dutch reception and reproduction of Chinese porcelain. The term "domestication" is used here to explain the evolving identification of blue-and-white ceramics as a Dutch, rather than a Chinese, national product. Tracing almost 300 years of history, the essay argues that the quotidian domestic language with which Chinese porcelain was first described in Dutch texts, was replaced in the eighteenth century with concerns about the corrupting influences of porcelain, as it was displayed and imitated (in delftware) and exported to female consumers in eighteenth-century England. Following a period of neglect and decline, delftware was rediscovered by Dutch entrepreneurs and American tourists in the nineteenth century, who returned these blue-and-white wares to a benign domestic space. American writers, responding in part to the resurgence and promotion of the Dutch delftware industry, presented Dutch femininity and domesticity as a model of stability and harmony. None of these interpretations would have been possible, however, had the viability of delftware as a specifically "Dutch" material relied on only the physical properties of the earthenware body; instead, this essay argues, their interpretations depend upon the representational possibilities of the vessels' painted surfaces, upon particular combinations of blue and white, to form an image of "Dutchness."

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In response to the great popularity of Chinese blue-and-white porcelain in the seventeenth-century Netherlands, but lacking the knowledge of how to produce porcelain themselves, the Dutch imitated that material in tin-glazed earthenware or delftware.[1] Using this historical case, I will demonstrate how a material's meaning can be manipulated and transformed through time and in various consumer contexts. How and why did a material that was a sign of the "Orient" come to represent indigenous European, specifically Dutch, aesthetics?[2] In contrast to scholarship that seeks to emphasize the European exoticization of China, I will focus on the prosaic manner in which Chinese porcelain was first discussed in seventeenth-century European texts. Not only descriptions of but also imitations of Chinese ceramics by Dutch craftsmen provide further evidence of a domestication of Chinese material culture, and convey information about the ways that the materiality of objects and their decoration conjoin to signal cultural specificity. The Dutch were not alone in their imitation of Chinese export wares; until Europeans discovered how to make porcelain in the first decades of the eighteenth century, other materials were used—Europe-wide—to imitate the imported goods. Those imitations took on a uniquely appealing aesthetic of their own, but one that could be configured differently in different European countries. In Dutch hands, porcelain-like material became a surface for representations from a variety of media, including oil painting, engraving, and architecture, drawing imagery from sources well beyond the decorative motifs found on Chinese porcelain. Once delftware was freed from the constraint of an "Oriental" referent, it was able to support a number of specifically Dutch visual types, which were then exported to other parts of Europe and America. In addition to the ceramics themselves, Dutch conventions for decorating with and displaying porcelain and porcelain-like materials also traveled beyond the country's borders and became sites around which ideals (and critiques) of European domestic life and feminine consumption were formed. By the nineteenth century, Dutch craftsmen and American tourists, self-consciously referencing the history of Asian porcelain in the Netherlands and earlier Dutch responses to these wares, repositioned delftware as a material perfectly suited to visualizing Dutch national identity.

This essay moves through almost 300 years of history as it traces the Dutch reception of Chinese porcelain in the seventeenth century, the English consumption of Dutch ceramics inspired by Chinese porcelain in the early eighteenth century, and following the decline of the Dutch tin-glazed ceramic industry, the rediscovery of delftware by Dutch entrepreneurs and American tourists in the nineteenth century. The long chronology of this investigation is unified and justified because an understanding of delftware's successful reincarnation in the nineteenth century depends in

[1] I employ the popular term delftware to refer to blue-and-white tin-glazed earthenware (also called faience) produced not only in the city of Delft but throughout the Dutch republic in the seventeenth century.

[2] Others have noted this transformation, see for example, Julie Hochstrasser, *Still Life and Trade in the Dutch Golden Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 122 and Julie Hochstrasser, "Wisselwerkingen Redux-Ceramics, Asia, and the Netherlands," in *Points of Contact: Crossing Cultural Boundaries*, ed. Amy Golahny (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2004).

part upon the nineteenth-century consumer's knowledge of the material's historical associations. In addition, and more important in terms of my larger argument, this essay focuses on delftware's materiality through an investigation of the ways that its decorated surface reinforces but also competes with the associations of its ceramic body, depending upon the contexts of its temporal (for example, the seventeenth as opposed to the nineteenth century) and geographic (English as opposed to American) consumption.

I employ the concept of "domestication" to provide a new model for understanding the reception of Chinese visual culture in seventeenth-century Europe, one that allows for the presentation of porcelain and porcelain-like ceramics not as exotic objects but as surfaces and materials made conventional within European domestic spaces.[3] In addition, "domestication" refers to the evolving identification of blue-and-white ceramics as a specifically Dutch, rather than Chinese, national product. As delftware and Dutch conventions for the display of porcelain moved from the Netherlands to England, English writers further "domesticated" the material in terms of its "Dutchness" by uniting femininity with the consumption of porcelain and porcelain-like ceramics, and positioning the Netherlands as the corrupt origin of "female china lovers."[4] In order to return blue-and-white wares to a more benign domestic space, nineteenth-century American writers, responding in part to the resurgence and promotion of the Dutch delftware industry, presented Dutch femininity and domesticity as models of stability and harmony. Neither the English nor the American interpretations would have been possible, however, had the viability of delftware as a specifically "Dutch" material relied on only the physical properties of the earthenware body; instead, their interpretations depend upon the representational possibilities of the vessels' painted surfaces, upon particular combinations of blue and white, to form an image of "Dutchness."

[3]In a recently published essay Anne Gerritsen also employs the term "domestication" to explore the embodied experiences that result when objects from overseas are brought into seventeenth-century Dutch domestic spaces. She concludes that "Through physical proximity, these global goods produce a version of Dutchness that is global yet domesticated, and exotic yet familiar; 'other' in the past, but self in the present." Anne Gerritsen, "Domesticating Goods from Overseas: Global Material Culture in the Early Modern Netherlands," *Journal of Design History* 29, no. 3 (2016): 232. Kristel Smentek makes similar claims about the French reception and reframing of Chinese monochrome porcelain. Kristel Smentek, *Rococo Exotic: French Mounted Porcelains and the Allure of the East* (New York: Frick Collection, 2007).

[4]The term "female china lover" is employed by Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace in "Women, China and Consumer Culture in Eighteenth-Century England," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 29, no. 2 (Winter 1995/1996): 153–67.

Destroying Myths and Domesticating Porcelain

The quantity of East Asian porcelain imported into Europe in the early modern period was enormous. It is estimated that 300 million pieces were shipped from Asia to Europe between 1499 and 1799; forty-three million of these were imported by the Dutch East India Company (VOC) alone in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and of the official VOC shipments, three million porcelain objects circulated primarily in the Netherlands.[5] These statistics allow us to imagine the volume of porcelain pieces inundating Europe in the early modern period but provide little context for how European consumers, and the Dutch specifically, understood the meaning and value of porcelain. In contrast to earlier descriptions of Asia, which tend to emphasize the "magical" properties of Chinese porcelains, accounts published in the seventeenth-century Netherlands often describe porcelain (and other aspects of East Asian material culture) in more mundane, pragmatic and familiar terms, conveying the production and utility of porcelain in language that made it "at home" in Dutch domestic interiors.

Bartolomeu dos Mártires (1514–1590) exemplified the earlier, more exoticized, tradition of writing about porcelain when, in conversation with Pope Pius IV, he described the material in terms that present it as more precious than rare stones and minerals: "The clay is so fine and transparent that the whites outshine crystal and alabaster, and the pieces which are decorated in blue dumbfound the eyes, seeming a combination of alabaster and sapphires…They may be esteemed by the greatest princes for their delight and curiosity…"[6] Descriptions such as dos Mártires' ask viewers to think of porcelain as a naturally occurring, rather than a human-made substance, one akin to valuable gems, nautilus shells, and peacock feathers. But in keeping with the generally more prosaic seventeenth-century approach to Chinese visual culture, the qualities of Chinese porcelain that prompted early writers to draw allusions between it and natural rarities from distant shores fade from later descriptions of China. Jan Huygen van Linschoten (1563–1611), for example, acknowledges the elegance of the best Chinese porcelains, "…the finest are not allowed outside of the country on penalty of corporal punishment, but serve solely for the

[5]Tijs Volker, *Porcelain and the Dutch East India Company, as recorded in the Dagh-registers of Batavia Castle, those of Hirado and Deshima, and other contemporary paper, 1602–1682* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1954), 227. Volker's text is central to an understanding of the VOC porcelain trade in East Asia; however, his estimate does not include those wares ordered privately. Although the trade in porcelain between China and Europe was important, China conducted an even more extensive intra-Asian trade. Chuimei Ho shows that in 1645 alone 229,000 pieces of porcelain were sold to the Japanese. Europe never comprised more than 31 percent of the Chinese porcelain trade and this only for the brief period from 1645 to 1661, while the South Seas and Japan claimed in general over 80 percent of the trade. See Chuimei Ho, "The Ceramic Trade in Asia, 1602–82," in *Japanese Industrialization and the Asian Economy*, ed. Heita Kawakatsu and John Latham (London: Routledge, 1994), 37–8. For more on the VOC porcelain trade in East Asia, see also Christian J.A. Jörg, *Porcelain and the Dutch China Trade* (the Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982).

[6]Quoted in Maria Antonia Pinto de Matos, "The Portuguese Trade," *Oriental Art* 45, no. 1 (1999): 27.

lords and governors of the country, and are so fine that there is no crystalline glass to match it."[7] On the same page, however, Linschoten continues by describing porcelain and the process of its making in terms that stress a human hand—or more often, human hands working together in a factory-like setting—and disavows the more supernatural stories of porcelain's origin.[8] Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) echoes Linschoten's tone as well as his content when he writes:

> The ordinary tableware of the Chinese is clay pottery. It is not clear to me why it is called porcelain in Europe. There is nothing like it in European pottery either from the standpoint of the material itself or its thin and fragile construction. The finest specimens of porcelain are made from clay found in the province of *Kiam*, and these are shipped not only to every part of China but even to the remotest corners of Europe where they are highly prized by those who appreciate elegance at their banquets rather than pompous display. This porcelain, too, will bear the heat of hot foods without cracking and, what is more to be wondered at, if it is broken and sewed with a brass wire it will hold liquids without any leakage.[9]

Like Linschoten, Ricci acknowledges the elegance and fragility of porcelain's shell-like body, but his description contains more mundane observations as well—among these, the ceramic's impermeability to liquid, ability to hold hot foods without cracking, and even its aesthetic reserve, which is appreciated by those who covet elegance "rather than pompous display."[10] While both authors note the beauty of porcelain, particularly in terms of its thin crystalline walls, they stress the craft that goes into its making and overtly discount stories, which had circulated for some time in Europe, about porcelain's magical origins. One of the most alarming of these myths suggested that porcelain was made from a "clay" of ground-up human bones. This story was repudiated by Alvaro de Semedo (1585–1658), among others, who assures readers that:

> In this work [porcelain] there are not those mysteries that are reported of it, neither in the matter, the form, nor the manner of working; they [porcelains] are made absolutely of the earth, but of a neat and excellent quality. They are made in the same time and in the same manner as our earthen vessels, only they make them with more diligence and accurateness.[11]

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[7] Jan Huyghen van Linschoten, *Itinerario, voyage ofte schipvaert naer Oost ofte Portugaels Indien 1579–1592: Eerste stuk*, ed. H. Kern, rev. by H. Terpstra (the Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1955), 97.
Die porceleynen, dieder ghemaeckt worden, is ongheloofl ick te vertrecken, ende die daer jaerlicks uytghetrocken worden naer Indien, Portugael ende Nieu Spaengien ende ander weghen; maer die fijnste en mogen uyt het landt niet ghevoert werden op lijfstraffe, dan dienen alleenelick voor die heeren ende regierders van 't landt, welcke zijn so fijn, dat gheen cristalynen glas daer by te gelijcken is (Translation mine).

[8] van Linschoten, *Itinerario*, 97.

[9] Matteo Ricci, *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583–1610*, trans. L.J. Gallagher, S.J. (New York: Random House, 1953), 14–5. Gallagher's text is a translation of Matteo Ricci's journals, which were first published in an edited and translated (from Italian to Latin) version by Nicolas Trigault, *De Christiana expeditione apud Sinas* (Augsburg: Christoph Mangium, 1615). Ricci's description of the "brass wire" (*filo aereo* in Trigault's text, page 14) used to mend broken porcelain is the kind of specific, objective, and unadorned detail that sets Ricci's text apart from more popular descriptions of Chinese "marvels" and, as noted by this essay's anonymous reader, may refer to the Chinese use of heated iron staples to repair porcelain.

[10] Ricci, *China in the Sixteenth Century*, 15.

[11] Alvaro Semedo, *The history of that great and renowned monarchy of China: wherein all the particular provinces are accurately described, as also the dispositions, manners, learning, laws,*

Slightly later, Engelbert Kaempfer (1651–1716), when writing about Japanese porcelain, also notes that the earth from which the pots are made is itself firm and clean, but much kneading, cutting and rinsing is necessary to reach the kind of perfection that makes it possible to produce fine, transparent porcelain. "That is how the old tale originated that fine porcelain requires human bones."[12]

Earlier descriptions of China had also suggested that porcelain was created not by high temperature firing in a kiln but from being buried for decades, even centuries, and that the earth itself—or entombment in it—transforms the common clay into porcelain. Again, and in contrast to these earlier stories, Linschoten's text provides a more nuanced and practical explanation:

> These porcelains are made inland of a certain earth that is very hard, which is pounded to pieces or ground, and they leave it to soak in troughs cut out of stone, and when it is well soaked and frequently stirred, as milk is churned to make butter, they make of that which floats on top the finest work. . . and then they are dried and baked in the kiln.[13]

Like Kaempfer and others, Linschoten emphasizes the similarities between the creation of porcelain and the making of bread, butter, and other kitchen products. Porcelain is "churned," as one churns milk, then it is worked and kneaded, and finally it is baked in an oven-like kiln. By drawing associations between the production of porcelain and daily tasks familiar to any Dutch housekeeper, Linschoten subdues the magic of porcelain and describes its creation in terms that make it akin to the activities of European domestic life.

The physical qualities of glazed porcelain, its smooth, easily-wiped surface and impermeability to liquids, make porcelain a "cleaner" material than wood, earthenware, or pewter, a trait celebrated by writers who otherwise adopt a more reserved view on porcelain's manufacture and origins.[14] This is a position echoed by the playful text decorating a delftware plate: "Pewter plates are no good/because one has to scrub them/but a plate of porcelain/Gets from washing white and clean/there for arrange upon the table/rather a plate that is painted well."[15]

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militia, government, and religion of the people, together with the traffick and commodities of that country (London: E. Tyler for John Crook, 1655), 19.

[12]Engelbert Kaempfer, *Kaempfer's Japan: Tokugawa Culture Observed*, ed. and trans. B.M. Bodart-Bailey (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), 293.

[13]van Linschoten, *Itinerario*, 97.
Dese porseleynen worden ghemaeckt te landewaerts binnen, van een seker aerde, die seer hert is, welcke wordt aen stucken gestooten ofte ghemalen, ende latent dan in backen van ghehouwen steen, daer toe ghemaeckt, in water weycken, ende alst wel gheweyckt ende dickwils gheroert is, gelijck alsmen die melck karent om die botter te maken, so makense daer na van het ghene, dat boven drijft, het alderfijnste werck, ende daer nae wat onderder grover, ende alsoo naer venant, ende schilderense ende makender die figueren ende conterfeytsels op, diese willen, ende werden also ghedrooght ende inden oven gebacken (Translation mine).

[14]Although glazed earthenware is also impermeable to liquid, early seventeenth-century earthenware bodies were, in general, heavier than porcelain bodies and more prone to chipping.

[15]Frits Scholten, *Dutch Majolica & Delftware, 1550–1700: The Edwin van Drecht collection. Exhibited in the Paleis Lange Voorhout Museum, The Hague* (Amsterdam: E. van Drecht, 1993),

Delftware's Surface Imitation

It is precisely the material qualities of porcelain—its light, strong, translucent, white body—that Dutch manufacturers, and European potters in general, were not able to imitate. Although Linschoten's and Ricci's texts tell us a great deal about how porcelain is made, they do not provide the precise recipe for porcelain clay. This information would remain secret until the first decades of the eighteenth century when Francois Xavier Dentrecolles (1664–1741), a Jesuit missionary and early modern "industrial spy," made close observations of Chinese potters at Jingdezhen, where he discovered, and quickly conveyed to Europe, the specific types and combinations of clay that were required to produce the thin, translucent bodies in such demand at home.[16] The history of a European search for the "secret of porcelain" has been well documented and acknowledges a number of motivations, from the alchemical to the mercantile, behind the quest. My focus is not on the history of the replication of the porcelain body but rather on the Dutch imitation of Chinese porcelain's surface appearance, on the ways that Dutch potters referenced the materiality of porcelain by decorating earthenware bodies with particular combinations of color and form.

Dutch merchants amassed great profits by transporting Chinese porcelain to Europe, but for Dutch potters, the circulation of millions of pieces of Chinese porcelain within their country challenged their conventional practices. Some of the potters who thrived in the wake of Chinese imports embraced the production of cheap pots, which were marketed in great volume and formed of coarse and poorly mixed clay, with simple designs and crude painting. Others went in another direction and aimed to produce ceramics that matched the elegance of their Chinese models which came to be known as *Hollants porcelyen*.[17] Through a variety of purification techniques that refined their previously "fatty" clays—techniques used by potters in Delft as early as the 1620s—Dutch potters discovered how to produce thinner and more porcelain-like earthenware bodies. But even these vessels could not match the lightweight and refined texture of Chinese porcelain. By applying an opaque white tin glaze over the surface of the vessel and creating a canvas for painted decoration—formed of colors derived from metal oxides, above all cobalt which produced a deep blue—tin-glazed Dutch earthenware was able to imitate the appearance if not the material of China's most famous ceramics. The opaque tin glaze was not itself an innovation; it had been used in Italian majolica since the sixteenth century and also

32. Pewter, in contrast to porcelain, requires scouring to clean, which often results in pitted and scratched surfaces that hold dirt.

[16]François Xavier Dentrecolles, *Lettre du pere d'Entrecolles missionnaire de la Compagnie de Jésus, sur la porcelaine, au pere Orry de la même Compagnie* (Amsterdam: Jean Frederic Bernard, 1738). For more on "espionage" as it relates to porcelain, see Lydia He Liu, "Robinson Crusoe's Earthenware Pot," *Critical Inquiry* 25, no. 4 (1998): 728–57.

[17]For more on the term "Dutch porcelain," see Jan-Daan van Dam, *Delffse porceleyne: Dutch Delftware 1620–1850* (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 2004), 14.

by majolica potters in the Netherlands before the arrival of Chinese porcelain in large quantities. The innovation was in the kinds of motifs and decorative forms, originally inspired by Chinese prototypes, which were created from this combination of white tin and cobalt blue. Over time, the white glazed earthenware surface became a space not only for the imitation of decorative forms derived from Chinese porcelain, but also a place for the reproduction of imagery from a number of media, including intaglio print, written texts, and oil painting.

This emphasis on the ceramic vessel's surface as an entity separate from the material qualities of the body is echoed in the work of Johan Nieuhof (1618–1672), one of the most influential travel book writers on China in the seventeenth century. His text, which was written fifty years before Dentrecolles' discovery, is concerned not with the secret of porcelain clay but rather with the secret of the painting on the pot's surface:

> Upon the vessels, which are made of this earth, they know how to paint all kinds of animals, flowers, and trees very deftly and artistically with indigo or *weed* (that in the southern landscapes occurs in great abundance). And this art, of painting on porcelain, they keep so hidden that they will not teach it to anyone but their children, friends, or other relations. The Chinese are also so dexterous and swift in this painting, that one cannot show them an animal or plant, which they cannot copy (or mimic) on porcelain.[18]

This dexterous Chinese style was described in *daghregisters* (journals and letters produced by VOC administrators) as "fine and curious."[19] The phrase is one of the few that gives us any sense of how seventeenth- and eighteenth-century viewers might have articulated the appeal of porcelain in aesthetic terms, not simply as useful, "clean" three-dimensional objects but also as surfaces for representation. However, "curious," particularly when it is used to describe China in the seventeenth-century, is a complex and multi-faceted term that was employed by European intellectuals engaged with a study of Chinese history and culture as well as by merchants concerned with the acquisition of Chinese objects. When "curious" appears in seventeenth-century travel books about China it can often be read as "careful" and "considered," relating to method, as well as "worthy of note," or exotic.[20] Johan

[18]Johannes Nieuhof, *Het Gezantschap der Neêrlandtsche Oost-Indische Compagnie, ann den Grooten Tartarischen Cham, den tegenwoordigen Keizer van China*. . . (Amsterdam: Jacob van Meurs, 1665), 91.

> Op de vaten, die van deze aarde gemaakt zyn, wetenze allerlei slagh van dieren bloemen en boomen zeer aardig en kunstig met Indigo of Weed (dat in de Zuiderlijke Landschappen in grooten overvloet voort komt) te schilderen. En deze kunst, van op Porcelein te schilderen, houdenze ook zoo verborgen, datze die aan niemant, dan aan hunne kinderen, vrienden, of nakomelingen, willen leeren. De Sineezen zyn ook zoo vaerdig en gaauw in dit schilderen, dat men hen geen gedaante van dier of kruidt vertoonen zal, of zy weten dat op het Porcelein na te bootzen (Translation mine).

[19]Volker, *Porcelain*, 143, quotes a letter from Batavia to Deshima dated June 21, 1662, "Your Honour shall look to it that everything is fine and curious as to painting. . ."

[20]See David Mugello, *Curious Land. Jesuit Accommodation and the Origins of Sinology* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989) for use of the term *curiosus* and its relationship to seventeenth-century scholarly work on China. For recent examinations of the early modern preoccupation with curiosity, see Barbara Benedict, *Curiosity: A Cultural History of Early Modern*

Nieuhof, for example, frequently describes Chinese architecture and Chinese objects as "curious" in passages that go on to enumerate the fine, detailed, and skillfully constructed qualities of Chinese structures and material goods.[21]

Lacking substantial seventeenth-century written sources that directly address the aesthetics of porcelain as they circulated within the Dutch republic, we must turn to evidence presented by the objects themselves and consider how Chinese porcelain was translated visually by Dutch artists, both painters on and painters of ceramics, in order to better understand what the product, as a material, signified. My aim is to decouple Chinese porcelain, and delftware painted in a Chinese manner, from an undifferentiated vocabulary of the "exotic" and instead consider the representational possibilities that were presented to Europeans when porcelain and porcelain-like earthenware became associated with Dutch domestic interiors.

The wars in China that marked the transition from the Ming (1368–1644) to the Qing (1644–1911) dynasties caused a disruption of porcelain production and a severe decline in porcelain imports to Europe, particularly in the years between 1657 and 1681.[22] As Christiaan Jörg and Jan-Daan van Dam have shown, Dutch potters, particularly those working in Delft, reacted quickly to the change in trade patterns caused by the Chinese civil wars and expanded production to create high-quality earthenware pieces that would satisfy Dutch consumers' taste for Chinese porcelain.[23] But how did the Dutch understand "Chineseness" in decoration? Although scholars often claim that the Dutch "exactly" copied Chinese prototypes, two plates (Figs. 1 and 2), one created in China and the other in Holland, give us a sense of how closely delftware could adhere to a Chinese model and also demonstrate the ways that these imitations strayed from the originals.

Inquiry (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Neil Kenny, *The Uses of Curiosity in Early Modern France and Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); and Robert John Weston Evans and Alexander Marr, *Curiosity and Wonder from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006). For use of the term "curious" and its application to art, see Peter Parshall, "Introduction. Art and Curiosity in Northern Europe," *Word & Image* 11, no. 4 (1995): 327–32; and Christopher Wood "'Curious Pictures' and the Art of Description," *Word & Image* 11, no. 4 (1995): 332–52.

[21]John Nieuhoff, *An embassy from the East-India Company of the United Provinces, to the Grand Tartar Cham, Emperor of China*. . . (London: John Ogilby, 1673), 45, 102, 106, and 120. Nieuhof also uses "curious" in ways that suggest it may be understood as similar to "particular" or "fastidious" as on page 168 "not curious in their diet, for they eat all manner of flesh without difference" and on page 177 "in the preserving [who may be buried in gravesites] whereof they are "very curious, insomuch that none other are admitted to be Interr'd there. . ." While the English translation of Nieuhof's text employs the word "curious," the earlier Dutch (Nieuhof 1665) and French (Nieuhof 1665) editions use terms such as *duur* (expensive/costly), *aardig* (pleasant/nice), and *waardig* (worthy/dignified).

[22]Volker, *Porcelain*, 60.

[23]van Dam, *Delffse*, 18; and Christian J.A. Jörg, *Interaction in Ceramics: Oriental Porcelain & Delftware* (Hong Kong: the Council, 1984), 19. Jörg writes, "Where there were only three or four faience factories in Delft in 1647, there were already twenty or more in 1661, while in the last quarter of the century faience was being made in over thirty factories, most of it painted in Chinese style."

Fig. 1 Unknown artist, *Porcelain painted in underglaze cobalt blue*, c. 1595–1625. Jingdezhen, China. Porcelain. Diameter: 21 cm. London, Victoria and Albert Museum

The Chinese porcelain piece (1595–1625, Fig. 1) was made in the ceramic center of Jingdezhen and is decorated in underglaze cobalt blue. The Dutch earthenware plate, also decorated with cobalt blue, was made approximately 50 years later (1690–1700). The plates are different in size (the Chinese dish is 21 cm in diameter, the Dutch plate is 39.3 cm) and the colors are different in tone, but the patterning follows a similar division along the rim and surrounds a large central motif in the basin of the vessels that is typical of *kraak* wares. Possibly derived from "Carrack," the Dutch word for a type of Portuguese merchant ship, the term *kraak* refers to Chinese porcelains that were mass-produced for export to Europe, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia from the 1570s onwards. Although both plates display the *kraak* panel-bordered rim, the decoration is not identical in its details.[24] There are

[24]Although Jörg suggests (Jörg, *Interaction in Ceramics*, 142) that a Dutch vessel is a "literal imitation" of a *kraak* porcelain bottle, a comparison of the two vessels he cites provides an additional example of similar but not identical decoration.

Fig. 2 Unknown artist, *Tin-glazed earthenware painted with tin-glaze blue*, c. 1680–1700. Gift of Madame Roux-Berger in memory of her husband. Delft, Netherlands. Tin-glazed earthenware/ Faience. Diameter: 39.3 cm. Sèvres, Cité de la Céramique

differences in the positioning and form of the birds' bodies, in the specific motifs and segmentation of the rim decoration, and especially in the creation of illusionistic space in the bowl of the vessels. In the Chinese dish, as in Chinese landscape painting, the watery terrain inhabited by the birds moves not back into space but rather up, as if layers of space were piled one on top of the other so that the viewer's eye travels up the plate as it looks from foreground to background. In contrast, in the Dutch example, by providing flowers and rocks that diminish in size as one looks from the birds' shoreline to the rocky shoreline of the background, the Dutch painter creates a sense of depth more in keeping with European standards of perspective.

Although the painter of the Dutch plate was clearly imitating a Chinese prototype, the image painted on the vessel was modified through the lens of culturally specific conventions for picturing space. Even in this closely matched comparison, the Dutch work appears to capture the "feel" rather than the "rightness" of the original.[25] These are Claire Corbellier's terms and they point us toward the ways that we might understand early delftware as equivalent in intention and spirit to Chinese porcelain rather than as an exact copy of it. Her analysis also calls into question, as do the

[25]Claire Corbeiller, "China into Delft: A Note on Visual Translation," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 26, no. 6 (February 1968): 269–76.

works themselves, the degree to which artists are able to "see" in Chinese terms and to fully adopt Chinese conventions of picturing. In this comparison, there is little evidence that Dutch potters were self-consciously attempting to distinguish themselves from their Chinese models, instead the differences appear to be the result of an imperfect translation. But in other examples, Dutch potters overtly separate themselves from Chinese prototypes to create works that signal "Dutchness" and Dutch craft, rather than "Chineseness."

In addition, Jan-Daan van Dam's important work on the legal dispute between father and son potters, Willem and Gerrit Verstraeten, suggests that the term "Dutch porcelain" could be used in the seventeenth century to specify types of decoration rather than material, creating a distinction between surface and body rather than between national origin and clay composition. As van Dam notes:

> On 26 February, Hendrick van Gogh testified that "he knew in truth that everything that is called porcelain (and is made here) that the same must be painted all over, and that what was painted with little wreaths or with little manikins or with coats of arms, that the same was called white goods"... The three men stated that white goods were faience with a small amount of decoration and that "porcelain" was faience with full decoration. The last two statements on the father's behalf only speak to the decoration whereas the son evidently asserted that all the better made flatware (in other words faience) was called "Dutch porcelain," irrespective of the decoration.[26]

As Michael Archer suggests, there is no indication that seventeenth-century European producers of porcelain-like ceramics employed the terms "earthenware" (faience) or "porcelain" based upon differences of material or geographical origin (the Netherlands as opposed to China). "Evidence confirming this can be found in van Hamme's patent application of 1676, which refers to the 'Art of makinge tiles and porcelane and other earthen wares, after the way practiced in Holland.'"[27]

By the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, as delftware more completely distanced itself from its Chinese models, the medium no longer stood as a substitute for the Chinese original but became a new and independent commodity, one that was capable of displaying the artistry and technical sophistication of Dutch, as opposed to Chinese, craftsmen.[28] A still life painting by Cornelis de Man (1621–1706) depicts a blue-and-white lidded jar on a table covered with a carpet of Asian origin and juxtaposed with a boy of non-European origin and a multi-colored parrot (Fig. 3).[29] In this image, and unlike many other seventeenth-century still life

[26]van Dam, *Delffse*, 18.

[27]Michael Archer, *Delftware: The Tin-Glazed Earthenware of the British Isles, A Catalogue of the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London: The Stationery Office, 1997), 3.

[28]Maxine Berg makes a similar argument for British semi-luxury goods in the eighteenth century. Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 45.

[29]van Dam, *Delffse*, 37, notes this painting as well. Lauren Craen's (active c. 1643–1664) still life of 164(3?) also appears to depict a delftware jug. It is placed on a table with a lobster, crayfish and façon-de-Venise wine glass. The painting was recently sold at auction (Christies, November 7, 2001, Lot 77/Sale 2526).

Fig. 3 Cornelis de Man (1621–1706), *Still Life with a Frankfurter Faience Vase*. Oil on panel. Frankfurt, Historisches Museum. Photo: Horst Ziegenfusz

paintings, the ceramic vessel in the work does not appear to be a piece of Chinese porcelain but rather an earthenware tin-glazed pot produced in the Netherlands.[30] Its

[30]The size, shape, and decoration of this vase—particularly the ways that visual spaces are organized and divided, the clothing and posture of the figures, and the decoration within the cartouches—are consistent with ceramic pieces produced in Delft in the second half of the seventeenth century. The Historisches Museum Frankfurt has titled the painting *Still Life with Frankfurter Faience Vase*, but as Jan Danïel van Dam has argued, "Much of the faience preserved in Germany with a decoration derived from Chinese porcelain was, from about 1920, attributed by German art historians to the faience factory in Frankfurt. In reality, though, this faience was made in Delft, partly as an export product for German courts. On statistical grounds alone, a substantial technically excellent and varied production was impossible in Frankfurt: one factory with an estimated 30 employees could obviously never have made more than the over 20 [Delft] factories with an estimated 1500 employees." van Dam, *Delffse*, 37.

presence reminds the viewer that not all blue-and-white ceramics depicted in still life paintings are of East Asian origin and that indigenous production of these wares was also celebrated in Dutch art. By recognizing a Dutch hand in crafting blue-and-white ceramics, still life paintings that contain delftware pieces offer a further sign of the domestication of Chinese porcelain and expand seventeenth-century ideas of "exoticism" and cross-cultural contact. These paintings suggest that not only foreign things, but also Dutch things made in a foreign manner held status in Netherlandish society. Works like de Man's complicate ideas of how Dutch cosmopolitanism is both materialized and visualized, and offer the possibility that foreign objects do not always remain "other" but are instead translated and re-interpreted, in their representation as well as in their physical presence, within Dutch domestic spaces.

Delftware Tiles: Flattened Objects and Pictorial Space

In addition to objects intended for use, such as tableware, seventeenth-century potteries produced objects intended for display. The line of demarcation between these two realms is permeable but it is clear that some ceramic objects are much less like vessels and much more like paintings than others. However, the qualities of durability and cleanliness, which had made Chinese porcelain tableware so appealing to Dutch housekeepers, are also the qualities that made tile pictures attractive as an element of interior decoration for consumers across Europe.[31] Tile pictures were especially well suited to the heat and humidity of kitchens, entrance halls, and other places where the walls would receive a great deal of wear. In addition, these "painting-like" ceramic tile pictures build upon the representational aspect of imitative Dutch earthenware and derive their meaning not only from the images they present but also from the material upon which they are painted, not canvas, but clay. Blue-and-white painted earthenware became a surface for representation and reproduction of imagery across media. This is true in the Chinese tradition in terms of how print intersects with porcelain and also in Europe as delftware expands to include "paintings" composed of porcelain tiles.

Although, as discussed above, it is difficult to locate examples of perfect one-to-one matches between Dutch blue-and-white earthenware and Chinese porcelain, we do have many examples, both from the Chinese and the Dutch traditions, of ceramic decorations that copy, in some cases line for line, woodblock prints (in China) and engravings (in the Netherlands).[32] In the Dutch world, these examples become even

[31] See van Dam, *Delffse*, 63, and Caroline Henriette de Jonge, *Dutch Tiles* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1971), 100, for assessments of Daniel Marot's role in introducing new models for the display of porcelain and delftware in domestic interiors.

[32] For more on the relation between print and porcelain in Ming dynasty China, see Craig Clunas, "The West Chamber: A Literary Theme in Chinese Porcelain Decoration," *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* 46 (1981–1982): 69–86; Hsu Wen Chin Hsü, "Fictional Scenes on Chinese Transitional Porcelain (1620–ca. 1683) and Their Sources of Decoration," *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* 58 (1986): 1–146, and Stephen Little, "Narrative Themes and

more numerous when the shapes of ceramic objects are extended and flattened from rounded pots into tiles, plaques, and tile pictures. The flat surface enabled artists to more easily transfer engravings to the ceramic body by first pin-pricking a drawing, based upon or traced from an engraving, and pouncing powder through the pin-pricked holes to the tin-glazed surface beneath. The pounced design was then outlined with pigment and finally mineral-derived tints and colors were applied to complete the decoration. Pictorial tiles and plaques resulted in an explosion of imagery previously beyond the realm of ceramic decoration and, in many cases, derived from prints drawn from a variety of genres—landscape, seascape, portraiture, genre scene, still life, city views, and histories—that were also the focus of Dutch oil painters.[33] In the seventeenth century, pictorial plates, plaques, and tile pictures were made more abundantly in the Netherlands than anywhere else in Europe.[34] They became a kind of "popular picture gallery" for the mercantile community and were hung on the wall or embedded into a tiled wall, as one would display a painting.[35]

Seventy-eight tiles, decorated with numerous figures of seemingly East Asian and South American origin, compose the Rijksmuseum *Tile Panel with Chinese Ornament and Africans* (Fig. 4), which provides an example of Dutch ceramic tile work that on the one hand is almost unique in its specific combination of subject matter and technical prowess and, on the other hand, is not uncommon in the ways that even this "Chinese" subject speaks to a particular form of "Dutchness" that was appropriate in an elite European domestic setting. Among other striking aspects of this work, the rare depiction of black Brazilians, located in the center and lower right of the composition, has made the piece a focus of recent scholarship.[36] Beyond the Afro-Brazilian figures' iconographic implications, the rendering of the deep black color that forms their bodies is a technical tour-de-force in keeping with the work's overall more lively, relative to earlier

Woodblock Prints in the Decoration of Seventeenth-Century Chinese Porcelains," in *Seventeenth-Century Chinese Porcelain from the Butler Family Collection*, ed. Michael Butler (Alexandria: Art Services International, 1990), 21–33.

[33]van Dam, *Delffse*, also makes this point.

[34]Rotterdam, rather than Delft, was the center of the tile production and in some ways tile remained an industry separate from other forms of delftware production. Wall tiles had been a Dutch industry before Europeans encountered Chinese porcelain and some potters concentrated on this product, which was relatively unaffected by Chinese ceramic imports throughout the seventeenth century. For more on this issue, see van Dam, *Delffse*, 11. In addition, as Hans van Lemmen, *Delftware Tiles* (New York: Lawrence King, 1997), 35, explains, the idea of a tile picture is not a Dutch invention but the use of tiles by an expanding Dutch middle class was a new phenomenon and marked a new pattern of consumption in Europe.

[35]Plates were also displayed on racks, forming a different kind of "gallery." See Alan Caiger-Smith, *Tin-glaze Pottery in Europe and the Islamic World; the Tradition of 1000 years in Maiolica, Faience & Delftware* (London: Faber and Faber, 1973), 136; van Lemmen, *Delftware*, 35.

[36]Caroline Henriette de Jonge, "Hollandse tegelkamers in Duitse en Franse kastelen," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 10 (1959): 161–3; Hendrik Enno van Gelder, "Het grote tegeltableau der Collectie Loudon," *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 4, no. 4 (1956): 96–101. For a more recent discussion, see Esther Schreuder and Elmer Kolfin, ed., *Black is Beautiful* (Amsterdam: De Nieuwe Kerk, 2008), catalogue no. 32.

Fig. 4 Unknown artist, *Tile panel with Chinese ornament and Africans*, c. 1690–1730. Tin-glazed earthenware/Faience. 170 × 79 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

delftware, and challenging color scheme. Floating unmoored against the white background and decoupled from a clear narrative, the black figures' presence in this work not only adds to the general sense of a foreign and exotic scene but also becomes a vehicle for expressing the artistry of Dutch potters. Moving beyond Chinese blue-and-white models, the panel is an example of the Dutch response to Japanese multicolor *imari* wares, which were imported into the Netherlands as a substitute for Chinese porcelain during the mid-seventeenth-century transitional period, when exports from China were disrupted.[37] Striking in color and size (170 × 79 cm), the tile panel frustrates viewers who aim to find a legible narrative within it, in part because the panel derives its imagery from a number of different and competing media, and references a variety of cultures and artistic traditions. The black figures and their relation to Albert Eckhout's paintings of Brazilians have already been noted and much discussed, but the larger theme of the tile picture appears to be "China." To modern viewers the panel's iconography is almost incoherent but the very diversity of imagery and media that are source material for this panel is evidence of the complex visual vocabulary that seventeenth-century viewers had at their disposal in imagining foreign places and imitating foreign things.

As others have observed, individual scenes of the panel look as if they may have been motivated, or even "abstracted," from Chinese porcelain decoration, which, as noted above, has its own prototypes in woodblock print illustration. The most obvious difference between these possible models and the tile panel is that, in either porcelain decoration or print illustration, the image would more likely be a single vignette rather than a large composition, as in the case of the panel. And although each of the scenes in the panel looks as if it might have been based on "quotations" from porcelain or print, compositional and iconographic awkwardness elide any particular identity. For example, the figure sitting on a large lotus flower descending from the top right corner initially strikes the viewer as a Buddhist deity, and has often been identified more specifically as the benevolent Guanyin. The figure pours water from a vessel—a trope that may be related to purification—yet there is no recipient of the water, for the scenes below are unrelated to the descending deity. Instead the flowing water is depicted as falling into a diamond-shaped pattern that fits neatly between the diagonal thrust of the upraised banner to the left and the curling point of the pavilion to the right. The flowing water makes design rather than narrative sense. It appears then that although the individual vignettes in the panel may be based on pictorial models found in Chinese woodblock prints and/or on decorated porcelain, the selection of the scenes is decided by the design of the tile's overall composition rather than by any unified narrative.[38]

[37]For more on *imari* and delftware, see Frits Scholten, "Vroege japonaiserie in Delft, 1660–1680," *Mededelingenblad van de Nederlandse Vereniging Vrienden van de Ceramiek* 128, no. 3 (1987): 17–25.

[38]My interpretation of the panel has benefited from discussions with Wei-Cheng Lin and Bonnie Cheng. Although there is no evidence that Dutch artists would have been aware of this model, the composition of the tile panel—its proportions, rendering of space, and the inscription contained in the cartouche rectangle at the top left of the image— is strikingly similar to Chinese cave temple murals. Temple murals in late imperial China were often composed of narrative vignettes, usually based on stories found in sutras, which unfolded within a larger composition and could be read in conjunction with an inscription.

The Rijksmuseum tile panel resonates with Chinese painting because its status as a three-dimensional object, its ability to be held and moved, has been almost completely erased, as the tile is now sutured to the wall and, barring force, inseparable from it. Despite the light grid of lines that mark the spaces where the tiles meet and which remains visible even from a distance—reminding the viewer of the panel's material qualities and fracturing the illusion of a unified whole—the tiles are first and foremost a support for the images positioned across them, a surface for display and an aspect of interior decoration. Visually, the panel is the logical conclusion of the referential qualities found in earlier blue-and-white Dutch earthenware vessels. It presents a "picture of" China without allusion to being an object from China, firmly fixing its status as a representation and thus creating a surface upon which to demonstrate Dutch artistry.[39] As a "picture of" this tile panel, and others like it, also encourages a distanced viewing that moves earthenware from being a material for the creation of utilitarian objects to a material for the creation of surfaces across which artists appropriate and re-position imagery from other media and other cultures. While celebrating the "Orient," the panel also domesticates the porcelain that first brought these exotic Asian images to the Dutch republic by transforming a pseudo-porcelain material into a vehicle for the display of Dutch, rather than Chinese, craftsmanship.

The "Dutch Taste" and Female China Lovers

In its original context, the Rijksmuseum panel may have occupied a wall similar to the one in the kitchen of the Amalienburg pavilion at Nymphenburg Palace, designed by Francois Cuvillies between 1734 and 1739, which is decorated with a tile picture very like the Rijksmuseum work, minus the Brazilian figures.[40] Because the Amalienburg panel is in situ near Munich, it allows us to expand an analysis of how Chinese imagery and a Chinese material—porcelain—were domesticated both commercially, in the sense of being brought "home" to the Netherlands, where they were then imitated to promote Dutch artistry across Europe, and physically, as china was made a common component of the decoration of European domestic spaces,

[39] As Maxine Berg argues, the practice of "imitation" was fundamental to the production of material goods that had at their heart an "economy of delight" and of "modern luxuries." "[These products] relied upon a perception of the exotic and oriental provenance of traditional luxury goods.... Sometimes substitutes, but more frequently quite new commodities, their production processes were to be marked by skill, technique, variety and artistry. These attributes were also perceived at the time to be the principles underlying the success of oriental luxuries." Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, 45.

[40] The content of the Amalienburg image is even less coherent to modern eyes than the Rijksmuseum panel, for many of the Amalienburg tiles appear to be wrongly placed and the composition disrupted.

particularly those spaces associated with feminine realms such as kitchens and parlors.[41]

Within the Dutch republic, earthenware tiles were first valued for domestic use because of the physical properties of their material, the same properties that had made Chinese porcelain so attractive. Their impermeability to liquids and their surface that was easy to wipe clean, meant that they were often used to decorate baseboards, fireplace surrounds, and other spaces within the home that required frequently cleaning. By the early 1600s, simply decorated blue-and-white tiles were available for approximately twenty-five guilders per thousand, which would have allowed a tradesman to embellish the kitchen-parlor of his home for the equivalent of three weeks' wages.[42] By the late seventeenth century, however, the Dutch market for simple blue-and-white tile became primarily a rural rather than an urban one, a taste associated with "old fashioned" and conservative values.[43] Between 1670 and 1800, the high quality, technically innovative tiles produced in Holland (of which the Amalienburg and Rijksmuseum panels are examples) no longer aimed to satisfy a home market but were instead positioned as an export appealing to a luxury market. German, Russian, French, and Polish aristocrats ordered tile pictures, or entire tile rooms, from Dutch manufacturers, prompted in part by the unparalleled technical refinement achieved by Dutch craftsmen. As Caroline Henriette de Jonge notes, the 1677 marriage of William of Orange to Mary Stuart helped to make the continental fashion for tin-glazed tile pictures popular among the English aristocracy as well.[44] As with the imitation of Chinese porcelain in the early seventeenth-century Netherlands, the true value of delftware tile may be measured in terms of its imitation beyond the Dutch Republic, in the works of German, Danish and French craftsmen who attempted to copy the look, if not precisely the fine clay body, of the original Dutch product. By the late seventeenth century, Holland was so closely associated with decorated ceramics, both their creation and their display, that European consumers outside of the Netherlands identified not only tile pictures but also any large

[41]Although the aesthetic qualities of porcelain were appreciated in the seventeenth century, porcelain as interior decoration belongs to the eighteenth century. See Volker, *Porcelain*, 25.

[42]As quoted in Simon Schama, *An Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 318.

[43]". . .after 1700 the market for tiles within the Netherlands was exclusively rural. Sales in the cities were negligible," Jan-Daan van Dam, *Dutch Tiles in the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1984), 29. "Such flexibility [to produce fewer and more expensive tiles depending on demand] enabled Dutch tile-makers to deal with orders from abroad, particularly when changing fashions in interior decoration led to a decline in the market for tiles in the urban areas of Holland towards the end of the seventeenth century," van Lemmen, *Delftware*, 1997. Not only delftware tiles but also Chinese porcelain generally fell out of fashion in the Netherlands by the late seventeenth century, ". . .porcelain, once the sensation of the public sales and eagerly sought by Hollander and foreigner alike for a high price and in 1619 still a 'curiosity,' had 63 years later come down to a merchandise of so little importance to the Company as hardly to be worth mention and auctioned off with more important goods." Volker, *Porcelain*, 18–9.

[44]de Jonge, *Dutch*, 90–1.

massing of porcelain as "Dutch."[45] Whether porcelain from China or its delftware imitation, blue-and-white pottery had become a sign of Dutch national identity.[46]

This "Dutch taste" was not, however, a wholly positive designation. The further porcelain and porcelain-like ceramics moved from being strictly utilitarian commodities, and the more closely they were tied to interior decoration and massed display, the more often these materials were perceived as degenerate and potentially dangerous. In addition, by at least the middle of the eighteenth century, porcelain and other elite ceramics, which had been associated with positive aspects of domesticity (for example, cleanliness) when circulating internally in the Netherlands, became, as export goods, conflated with the worst aspects of femininity and consumerism within the increasingly fraught realm of the domestic.[47] In locations outside of the Dutch republic, the trope of the "female china lover" was used to signal an ongoing debate about the role of women in the economy.[48] In England, chinaware and the women

[45]See, for example, the Arundel Castle Archives of 1641, as discussed in Juliet Claxton, "The Countess of Arundel's Dutch Pranketing Room," *Journal of the History of Collections* 22, no. 2 (2010): 187–96. In France and England, the term *chiminées hollandaises* was used to describe any shelved arrangement of porcelain. For more on the "Dutchness" of tea drinking and porcelain collecting, see Roger G. Panetta, ed., *Dutch New York: The Roots of Hudson Valley Culture* (Yonkers: Fordham University Press, 2010), 280–1: van Lemmen, *Delftware*, 70, "In an entry for 1695, the English diarist Celia Fienne (fl. 1685–1712) used the words 'Delft-Ware Closet' in a description of a small room in Queen Mary's Water Gallery at Hampton Court. This room was filled with a display of Dutch blue-and-white pottery and Chinese porcelain and had tiles made in Delft on the walls." Oliver Impey, *Chinoiserie: The Impact of Oriental Styles on Western Art and Decoration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 56, cites Daniel Defoe, who blamed Queen Mary for introducing into England "the custom. . . of furnishing houses with Chinaware. . . piling the China upon the tops of Cabinetes, scritoires, and every Chymney Piece. . . And here was also her Majesty's fine collection of Delftware which indeed was very large and fine; and here was also a vast stock of fine Chine ware, the whereof was not to be seen in England. . ."

[46]See, for example, Jean-Nicolas de Parival (1605–1669), *Les delices de la Hollande, contenant une description éxacte du païs, des moeurs et des coutumes des habitans...* (La Haye: van Dole, 1710), 121: "Cette ville [Delf] fait un grand Commerce de cette Porcelaine de terre qu'on fait dans ses maufactures, qui se débite par toute la Hollande et dans les pais étrangers." Eventually, even the term "delft," like the term "china," came to signal not simply a country of origin but a material that could be appropriated by ceramic producers from other places. See, for example, Archer, *Delftware*, 4, for use of term "delft" to refer to English wares.

[47]Although it may not have been true in practice that women collected more porcelain than men, it was true in the popular imagination. "By the late eighteenth century porcelain had become synonymous with effeminacy, and [as a journalist of 1755 put it] a man's soft spot for porcelain and chinoiserie smacked suspiciously of a 'delicate make and silky disposition,'" Robert Finlay, *The Pilgrim Art: Cultures of Porcelain in World History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 284.

[48]David Porter, *The Chinese Taste in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), addresses gender and chinoiserie generally. Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, "Women;" Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects, Women, Shopping and Business in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); and Stacey Sloboda, "Porcelain bodies: gender, acquisitiveness, and taste in eighteenth-century England," in *Material Cultures, 1740–1920: The Meanings and Pleasures of Collecting*, ed. John Potvin and Alla Myzelev (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 19–36, consider gender and porcelain specifically.

who liked it were conflated through popular texts and images as alluring playthings whose physical accessibility was promoted by their appearance in the public marketplace, projecting the culture's ambivalence about consumption onto women. As Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace argues, the image of china functions as a marker for female superficiality, or for a potential female depravity located in an inordinate attraction to "things," rather than positioning women as conservative managers of a familial economy.[49] Just as the English "female china lover" is a far cry from the clean and tidy Dutch housewife extolled by earlier English travelers to the Netherlands, expensive tile panels were no longer perceived to carry the material and ethical associations of earlier tiled spaces. The practicality of tile and its ability to resist the dangerous qualities of both moral and physical dirt were now subsumed in concerns with the economy, corrupt feminine tastes, and aristocratic privileges. As the Dutch shifted from being primarily consumers of Chinese porcelain, in the early seventeenth century, to successful exporters of wares that imitated East Asian appearances by the late seventeenth, their role in ceramic culture changed. Their success as exporters to the elites of other European countries ensured that Dutch ceramics were no longer associated only with a homely domesticity. Or rather, domesticity itself was no longer seen as the realm of moral restraint in the European imagination, but came to be associated instead, through the very goods produced by the Dutch, with mass display and overt consumption. In addition, as elite Europeans gained greater access to "authentic" Chinese goods and acquired more familiarity with Chinese material culture generally throughout the eighteenth century, the popularity of tin-glazed earthenware in a "Chinese style" contracted, and after 1750 the Dutch ceramic industry suffered a decline that would extend into the nineteenth century.[50]

[49]Kowleski-Wallace, "Women," 15, argues that the female, originally the object of male desire, became over the course of the long eighteenth century, the desiring subject.

[50]As one example of the resurgence in popularity of Chinese porcelains among elite collectors in the eighteenth century, see Oliver Impey, "Collecting Oriental Porcelain in Britain in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in *The Burghley Porcelains: An Exhibition from The Burghley House Collection and Based on the 1688 Inventory and 1960 Devonshire Schedule*, exhibition catalogue, ed. by Alexandra Munroe and Naomi Noble Richard (New York: Japan Society, 1986), 36–43. While blue-and-white delftware and many forms of blue-and-white Chinese export ware became increasingly common, inexpensive, and undesirable over the course of the eighteenth century, European elites continued to collect (and even compete for) exquisite East Asian porcelains. These high prestige wares were often embellished with innovative multicolor overglaze enamel, rather than simple underglaze blue, which facilitated special orders for personalized decoration, including family coats of arms and depictions of country houses. See, for example, Nishida Hiroko's entry on the Burghley Bowl in Alexandra Munroe and Naomi Noble Richard, ed., *The Burghley House Collection and Based on the 1688 Inventory and 1960 Devonshire Schedule*, exhibition catalogue (New York: Japan Society, 1986), 102–3, cat. 17. My thanks to this essay's anonymous reviewer for drawing my attention to this point.

Inventing Tradition and Bringing Delftware Home Again

When delftware was revived in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, its producers appear to have been self-conscious in the ways that they referenced the historical associations of the material. In an 1886 advertisement placed in a Paris newspaper, for example, the Delft ceramic company De Porceleyne Fles recommended its wares as "beautifully decorated entirely by hand, and copying exactly past forms."[51] De Porceleyne Fles had been in existence since the seventeenth century, but its renaissance began only in 1876, when Joost Thooft (1844–1890) purchased the factory. Thooft, not unlike other delftware entrepreneurs, was motivated not only by profit but also by the artistic aims of the Arts and Crafts movement. He saw the revival of delftware as a means of saving the craft of pottery as much as resuscitating the ceramics industry. From at least 1877, the company participated in exhibitions and fairs that attempted to position De Porceleyne Fles' products as art rather than commerce.[52] The artistic heritage—the "past forms" copied "exactly" by De Porceleyne Fles potters—was not to be found in the ceramics of the antique world but rather in the tin-glazed earthenware of seventeenth-century Netherlands. As with seventeenth-century Dutch imitations of Chinese porcelain, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century delftware manufacturers rarely attempted to replicate exactly seventeenth-century examples. Although Thooft began the revival of de Porcelyne Fles by reintroducing original delftware techniques, he soon abandoned this process and, in order to make the original fragile delftware ceramic stronger, developed a white-bodied fine clay, which he fired at high temperatures to produce more durable stoneware. On this white body, blue decorations were applied by hand and covered with a transparent glaze, creating objects that had the strength of English stoneware but the outer appearance of traditional Delft pottery.[53] In the resuscitation of delftware as a national commodity, "feel" mattered more than "rightness," and it was the recognizable combination of blue-and-white across a ceramic body, regardless of the vessel's particular shape, decoration, or the material under the glaze, that signaled a "past form." In addition, as a material that linked the "Golden Age" to the contemporary moment, delftware, in the hands of men like Thooft, was uniquely capable of promoting an image of the Dutch nation. In works such as *Tile Picture of a Painting by Frans Hals* (c. 1900, Fig. 5), Dutch history and Dutch craft are united in a perfect manifestation of Dutch identity.

Tile Picture of a Painting by Frans Hals is similar to the tile panels decorating ocean liners that made routine voyages between Holland and the United States in the

[51]"Faïnce artistique veritable Delft, décor bieu entièrement fait à la main, copie exacte des forms anciennes chacque object porte la marque authentique: Delft." Advertisement reproduced in Rick Erickson, *Royal Delft: A Guide to De Porceleyne Fles* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 2003), 37.

[52]For more on nationalism, the revival of the delftware industry and exhibitions, see van Jan-Daan van Dam, "Van een verwaarloosd naar een nationaal product: het verzamelen van Delftse faience," *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 49, no. 1 (2001): 72–83.

[53]van Lemmen, *Delftware*, 167.

Fig. 5 Joost Thooft & Labouchere, *Tile Picture of a Painting by Frans Hals*, c. 1900. Dutch glazed tiles in a wood frame. Yonkers, Hudson River Museum, gift of Mrs. Arthur W. Little. Photo: John Maggiotto

nineteenth century and facilitated American tourism of the "Old World."[54] The location on transatlantic ships of ornate interior decorations in the vein of *Tile Picture* points to the primary audience for De Porcelyne Fles' products.[55] For

[54]Panetta, *Dutch*, 267.

[55]For more on American tourism in the Netherlands, see Laura Vookles, "Return in Glory: The Holland Society Visits 'The Fatherland'," in *Dutch New York: The Roots of Hudson Valley Culture*, ed. by Roger Panetta (Yonkers: Fordham University Press, 2009), 257–97.

although judges at the fairs where De Porceleyne Fles showed its work were occasionally offended by the facile reproduction of seventeenth-century Dutch paintings on plates and tiles, Thooft understood that it was precisely this combination of image and material that would appeal to American tourists to the Netherlands, especially those who held specific ideas of how history, ceramic, and painting were united in an idealized view of Dutch material culture.[56] In *Holland and Its People*, Edmondo de Amicis (1846–1908), an Italian author of novels and travel books, recounted his experiences traveling through the Netherlands. His book became a bestseller in the United States and helped to articulate a New World idealization of Dutch domestic life:

> Everywhere there was a profusion of porcelain vases, of cups, lamps, mirrors, small pictures, bureaus, cupboards, knickknacks, and small objects of every shape and for every use. All were marvelously clean, and bespoke the thousand little wants that the love of a sedentary life creates—the careful foresight, the continual care, the taste for the little things, the love of order, the economy of space; in short, it was the abode of a quiet domestic woman.[57]

De Amicis' emphasis on things, beginning with a ceramic vase, as the most overt manifestation of a "the abode of a quiet domestic woman" returns the reader to a pre-eighteenth century vision of domesticity, when materials such as porcelain were understood not as dangerous commodities but rather as emblems of virtue. Earlier in his text, de Amicis is overt in his praise of delftware:

> Moreover, there followed the decline and almost the extinction of that industry which once was the glory and riches of the city, the manufacture of Delft ware. In this art at first the Dutch artisans imitated the shapes and designs of Chinese and Japanese china, and finally succeeded in doing admirable work by uniting the Dutch and Asiatic styles. Dutch pottery became famous throughout Northern Europe and it is now-a-days as much sought after by lovers of this art as the best Italian products.[58]

In this excerpt, de Amicis makes clear that in the popular imagination of nineteenth-century consumers, Dutch tin-glazed earthenware owed a debt to their East Asian models, even as they become vehicles, in works similar to *Tile Picture of a Painting by Frans Hals*, for representations of specifically Dutch content. Like the Rijksmuseum *Tile Panel with Chinese Ornament and Africans*, the *Tile Picture of a Painting by Frans Hals* is not meant to be viewed primarily as a painting. In other words, an oil painting copy of an oil painting by Frans Hals would not have the same

[56]Not only delftware but also Dutch craft in general was understood by viewers from the United States to reflect "the delights of peaceful domestic life" well into the 1930s. In a 1936 publication of the *Pennsylvania Museum Bulletin*, for example, the newly installed "Dutch room" of 1608 was described in these terms: "Its task was the adornment not of the palace, but the house of a simple citizen, raised for the first time to a plane of economic security and solid industrious well-being. His household possessions—the work of skilled local craftsmen—reflected the delights of peaceful domestic life," quoted in Ella Schaap, *Delft Ceramics at the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2003), 3.

[57]Edmondo de Amicis, *Holland and Its People*, vol. 1, trans. from the 13th edition by Helen Zimmern (Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, 1884), 159.

[58]de Amicis, *Holland and Its People*, 136.

resonance as a painting on tile of an oil painting by Frans Hals. The work's meaning depends upon our ability to see the panel as *both* material and image—and to find the place where these two concepts meet in a celebration of national history.

In ways that go beyond the scope of this essay, American nineteenth-century conceptions of home, family, and femininity differed markedly from Dutch seventeenth-century or English eighteenth-century ideas of domesticity. The nineteenth-century popularity of delftware in the United States was inspired in part by Americans' desire to imitate what they understood as seventeenth-century Dutch domestic lives, or at least the material aspects of those lives. The American aim to decorate in the "Dutch style" was part of a larger effort, as Annette Stott has argued, to identify with the seventeenth-century Dutch who colonized North America and to give American history material form.[59] Amassing a collection of delftware was one vehicle for inventing a cultural tradition that would legitimize the New World (not simply the New World as a whole but a particular class of "old" elites who aimed to shore-up their status against the rise of the newly wealthy and the influx of Eastern European and Chinese immigrants) through an evocation of the Old. This aim was carried out largely through the buying habits and decorating tastes of nineteenth-century women who saw delftware as an heirloom from America's adopted past.

In satisfying the American taste for Dutch blue-and-white wares, men like Thooft benefited from the model of earlier Dutch delftware producers. Building upon the historical associations of blue-and-white tin-glazed earthenware as a specifically "Dutch" material, and continuing to treat the delftware surface as an ideal location for imagery drawn from diverse media, Thooft and his colleagues repositioned delftware as an evocative representation of Dutch history, Dutch domesticity, and Dutch craft—in other words, a material that was ripe for the consumption of New World enthusiasts.

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[59] Annette Stott, *Holland Mania: The Unknown Dutch Period in American Art and Culture* (Woodstock: Overlook Books, 1998), 198.

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A Global Crayfish: The Transcultural Travels of a Chinese Ming Dynasty Ceramic Ewer

Eva Ströber

Abstract An unusual type of small stoneware ewer in the shape of a crayfish was produced in private kilns in southern China during the second half of the sixteenth and the early seventeenth century. It seems that these vessels were made exclusively for export, for no "crayfish ewers" are known to be preserved in China proper. Three narratives will follow the global travels of this type of vessel; they will examine how the appreciation and use of "crayfish ewers" changed when crossing borders and entering different markets in varying historical and socio-cultural contexts. The "crayfish ewer" thus exemplifies the prototypical "trans-cultural" object.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, "bizarre" shapes in Chinese ceramics were highly appreciated by Western collectors and became part of the *Kunstkammer* or "Cabinet of curiosities" collections at European courts. In fact, a crayfish ewer was part of the famous "Medici Gift," of a group of Chinese porcelains given by the Medici to the Dresden court as a diplomatic offering in the year 1590. Objects like the "crayfish ewer" were appreciated and valued in this context as extremely rare and exotic decorative objects. But ewers in the shape of a crayfish were also used by the indigenous people of the Kelabit and Murut in Borneo on the Indonesian archipelago. Vessels in the shape of animals, such as ducks or crayfish, were used to drink *borak* (fermented rice-wine) as part of the traditional rituals for headhunting.

In Japan, highly sophisticated aesthetics developed around the ritual of tea drinking *chanoyu*. *Karamono,* literally "Tang things," referring to mostly antique Chinese objects assimilated to Japanese taste, played a prominent part in the aesthetic repertoire of the *chanoyu.* It is in this third context, that the type of ewer in the shape of a crayfish was appreciated, probably as a conversation piece.

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In some historic cases, the ways in which East meets West and East meets East materialize in surprising ways. The focus of this article is a rather unusual ceramic object, an ewer in the shape of a crayfish, and the role it played in East and West relationships as well as East and East connections.

The crayfish ewer belongs to a group of stoneware objects, which were made in kilns in Southern China, in the provinces of Fujian and Guangdong. These mostly molded pieces were glazed on the biscuit in a bright green, a deep yellow, a brownish and in a few cases, a turquoise glaze. They can be dated to the late Ming period, the second half of the sixteenth to the first half early seventeenth century. Chinese ceramics, from the Tang dynasty (618–907) onward, were made not only for the local market, but for different clients around the world. When they crossed culturally defined borders, they were "changed" by the people who took possession of them. In a different historical and socio-cultural context, objects were used for other purposes than originally intended by the Chinese potters and consequently appreciated in a different way in a variety of aesthetically defined systems.

As a museum curator for Asian ceramics one has the traditional option to present the pieces from your collection with a label that merely indicates measurements, material, provenance, and dating. One also has the option to allow a piece of ceramic to tell its own story, by addressing questions of use and other frameworks of reception (for example through collecting). The "object," sitting silently in all its beauty in the depot or in a showcase, does not simply speak to you, the curator, or others, the museum visitors. It often takes extensive research and sometimes also a good bit of luck, or a combination of both, to make the object "talk."

The story I am going to tell here is the story of a Chinese ceramic object, an ewer in the shape of a crayfish, and the three intercultural narratives related to it. The first time I came across this remarkable object was while I was working as a curator in the Dresden Porcelain Collection, which mainly consists of the porcelain accumulated by Augustus the Strong (1670–1733).[1] The ewer, however, came into the court collection much earlier, as part of a gift of 14 Chinese porcelains from the Medici family of Florence to the court of Dresden, in 1590.[2] Keeping in mind its history in the Medici collections in the Palazzo Pitti and other comparable pieces in European *Kunstkammer* collections, the small crayfish seemed to me to be a classical *Kunstkammer* object.

When I moved to the Netherlands a few years ago to work at the Princessehof Museum, Leeuwarden, I found a ceramic collection that was very different from the Renaissance and Baroque court collections in Dresden. The Princessehof Museum mostly consists of Chinese export ceramics that were found and collected in the twentieth century in the former Dutch colony of Indonesia, where Chinese ceramics

[1]Eva Ströber, '*La Maladie de Porcelaine': East Asian Porcelain from the Collection of Augustus the Strong* (Leipzig: Edition Leipzig, 2001).

[2]Eva Ströber, "Porzellan als Geschenk des Großherzogs Ferdinando I. de' Medici aus dem Jahre 1590," in *Giambologna in Dresden: Die Geschenke der Medici*, ed. Dirk Syndram et al. (Dresden: Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, 2006), 103–10.

Fig. 1 Ewer in the Shape of a Crayfish. Porcelain, unglazed, painted in overglaze enamels, traces of gilding. China, probably Fujian province. Ming dynasty (1368–1644), Jiajing period (1522–1566). H. 12.5 cm. Inv. No. P.O. 3479. State Art Collections Dresden, Porcelain Collection. Photo: Lukas Kraemer

traditionally played an important role as heirloom pieces, status symbols, as well as ritual vessels for the indigenous people, particularly on the island of Borneo.

Rummaging through the museum library for material on Borneo I came across the *Sarawak Museum Journal*, edited by the museum in Kuching, Sarawak, in Borneo. The articles deal with Orangutans and hornbills, excavations of Neolithic sculls, and Chinese coins. I was completely taken by surprise to find, in an old, rather grainy black-and-white photograph illustrating a headhunting ritual of the Kelabit, an ewer in the shape of a crayfish. How did this sophisticated *Kunstkammer* piece make it to a head-hunting ceremony in the highlands of Borneo?

When the crayfish ewer made its appearance again while I was preparing a presentation of objects used in the refined rituals of the Japanese tea ceremony, I was no longer surprised. I became curious. This article is an attempt to approach this intriguing, transcultural object as a case study in order to find out which role it played in the wider networks of relationships between East and West and between East and East.

Crayfish Ewers in European Cabinets of Curiosities

A couple of ewers in the shape of a crayfish found their way into European *Kunstkammer* collections and cabinets of curiosities. As published elsewhere, this type of vessel appeared as part of a seventeenth-century *Kunstkammer* in the Dresden Porcelain Collection, Germany.[3] In fact, there are two crayfish ewers in the Dresden collection. As mentioned, crayfish number one is part of the famous gift from the Medici family to the Dresden court in the year 1590 (Fig. 1). Eight of the original 14 pieces of this gift are still preserved in the Dresden collection: three blue

[3]The Medici gift is discussed in Eva Ströber, "The Earliest documented Ming-Porcelain in Europe: A Gift of Chinese Porcelain from Ferdinando de Medici (1549–1609) to the Dresden Court," *International Asian Art Fair* (2006).

Fig. 2 The Medici Gift. From left: *Kinrande* bowl, green. H. 6.5 cm. Inv. No P.O.3228; *Kinrande* bowl, red. H. 6.5 cm. Inv. No P.O. 3229; Porcelain, painted in overglaze enamel and gold. Ming dynasty (1368–1644), Jiajing period (1522–1566); Crayfish-shaped ewer. Porcelain, unglazed, painted in overglaze enamels, traces of gilding. China, probably Ming dynasty (1368–1644), Jiajing period (1522–1566). H. 12.5 cm. Inv. No. P.O. 3479; Phoenix-shaped ewer. Porcelain, unglazed, painted in overglaze enamels, traces of gilding. China, probably Fujian province, Ming dynasty (1368–1644), Jiajing period (1522–1566). H. 28.5 cm; Inv. No. P.O. 3578; Bowl, painted with a river landscape. Porcelain, painted in underglaze cobalt blue. China, Jingdezhen, Ming dynasty (1368–1644), Jiajing period (1522–1566), mark of the Xuande period (1426–1435). H. 6.7 cm. Inv. No. P.O. 3225; Bowl, painted with ships. Porcelain, painted in underglaze cobalt blue. China, Jingdezhen, Ming dynasty (1368–1644), Jiajing period (1522–1566). H. 10.5 cm. Inv. No. P.O. 3226; Lamp with Kui Xing on a boat. Porcelain, unglazed, painted in overglaze enamels, traces of gilding. China, probably Fujian province, Ming dynasty (1368–1644), Jiajing period (1522–1566). H. 9.5 cm. Inv. No. P.O. 3791; Bowl with cover. Porcelain, painted in underglaze cobalt blue. China, Jingdezhen, Ming dynasty (1368–1644), Jiajing period (1522–1566). H. 11.5 cm. Inv. No. P.O. 3227. State Art Collections Dresden, Porcelain Collection. Photo: Lukas Kraemer

and white pieces, two so-called *kinrande* bowls glazed in green and red, and three figurative vessels: a wine jug in the shape of a phoenix, an oil lamp in the shape of the Chinese mythological figure Kui Xing 奎星 on a boat, and the ewer in the shape of a crayfish (Fig. 2). The Medici were the earliest collectors of Chinese porcelain in Europe.[4] Fifty-one pieces were recorded in the collection of Lorenzo de' Medici (1449–1492) alone. In the sixteenth century, Cosimo I (1519–1574) and his son Francesco I (1541–1587) also excelled as art collectors and collectors of porcelain.

[4]For the collecting of Chinese porcelain in Renaissance Italy, see Marco Spallanzani, *Ceramiche orientali a Firenze nel Rinascimento* (Florence: Libreria Chiari, 1997).

The collections by Cardinal Ferdinando I (1549–1609) comprised Greek and Roman sculptures, bronzes, and paintings; they were housed in the Villa Medici in Rome and formed the prototype for the opulence and splendor of Renaissance collecting. In 1587, Ferdinando became Grand Duke of Tuscany and moved his collections from Rome to Florence, where they were placed in the Palazzo Pitti.[5]

Far away from Italy, in Dresden, the Saxonian electors of the sixteenth century wished to turn Dresden into a princely city and to establish themselves as rulers of European-wide importance. This endeavor implied modernization, particularly in the cultural field, and modernization during the early modern period implied a certain degree of Italianization. Already by the middle of the sixteenth century, the Saxonian Elector Moritz (1521–1553) had made a journey to Italy; and in the year 1547, he had his portrait painted by Titian (probably 1488/90–1576). His successor, Elector Augustus (1526–1586) strengthened this relationship with Italy. After the death of Augustus in 1586, Christian I (1560–1591) became the elector, and ruled for only a short period until 1591. Christian, who loved everything Italian, was a great collector. His ambition was to enlarge the *Kunstkammer* and turn it into a collection of European-wide importance.

For their part, the Medici were interested in good relationships with these German princes who could provide them with skilled mining and artillery specialists, as well as give them political support. Gift exchanges were intended to serve the establishment, facilitation, and maintenance of these socio-political connections. In the year 1587, the Medici sent three works by the famous sculptor Giovanni da Bologna (1529–1608) to the Dresden court. To this day, his famous sculpture of the messenger of the Gods, Mercurius or Mercury, is one of the artistic highlights of the Green Vault in Dresden. But it was in 1590, on February 26 to be exact, that Cardinal Ferdinando gave 14 pieces of Chinese porcelain to Christian I of Saxony. This was the very first real porcelain (as opposed to other sorts of ceramic like earthenware or pottery) to appear in Dresden.

A register of these gifts has been preserved. It was written at the Medici court in Florence by a man called Giovanni del Maestro,[6] who packed three boxes for Dresden. The first contained bronzes and paintings; the list mentions "paintings from *Indie* with figures and landscapes."[7] *Indie* in this context refers generally to the Far East and other "exotic" places. While the Dresden examples have not been preserved, potentially comparable extant objects include the Chinese paintings in the *Kunstkammer* of Ambras Castle, Austria.[8]

[5]For the Medici porcelain collection, see Francesco Morena, *Dalle Indie orientali alla corte di Toscana: Collezioni di arte cinese e giapponese a Palazzo Pitti* (Florence: Giunti, 2005).

[6]The complete list in Marco Spallanzani, "Le porcellane Cinesi donate a Cristiano di Sassonia da Ferdinando I de' Medici," *Faenza* 65 (1979): 383.

[7]Orig. "quadro di pitura de l'Indie a figure e paesi." Quoted from Spallanzani, "Le porcellane Cinesi," 383.

[8]For the Chinese paintings in Ambras, see Harry Garner, "Chinese Paintings of the Sixteenth Century at Schloss Ambras," *Oriental Art* XXII (1976): 262–4.

The list of gifts was recorded in Florence as well as in Dresden. According to the preserved lists the second box was filled with classical Italian gourmet food that was very popular in the northern side of the Alps and remains so today. From the registry we know that this box contained "Parmesan cheese" (*cacio Parmigiano* respectively *Zwei Formen Parmesan kese*) and "sweet oil" (*barili dua di olio dolce* respectively *Zwei feslein mit suessem oel*), different kinds of special ham (*prosciutto*, *salami di Firenze*) and "salted geese" (*un baile doche salate* respectively *ein feslein mit eingesatzenenn Gensen*). To wash this down more pleasantly, the Medici also added Italian wine, for example *Graeco di 48 anno*, *Vino Falangino di Sicila* or *Trebbiano di Pesca*.[9]

The third box was filled with Chinese porcelain. Again, the list of gifts was recorded twice, first in Florence and again in Dresden's 1595 *Kunstkammer* inventory.[10] In this inventory the Medici porcelain gift appears as "drinking and other vessels from Italy,"[11] however, the entries of the inventory also allow for an identification of individual pieces. The crayfish vessel was inventoried as "one porcelain goblet with gold, blue, and red, almost the shape of a crayfish."[12]

The ewer is small, only about 10 cm high, and the crayfish is perched on a lotus pod and a brown lotus leaf. On the back of the animal is an opening through which the vessel can be filled. This opening is sculpted in the shape of a small flower and enameled in bright turquoise. The piece is decorated in yellow, green, brown, and turquoise, and the yellow-glazed parts show traces of gold leaf application.

In the description of the Medici collection from the year 1579, the entry for the crayfish ewer indicates "a vessel for pepper made of porcelain in the shape of a crayfish, with gold."[13] The term *peparola*, which can be translated as "a small pepper pot," is quite surprising. Based on its shape one might think that the vessel was used as a kind of dropper to pour water. But the term *peparola* indicates that the Medici apparently filled pepper—at that time an exotic and very expensive commodity—into the opening at the back and poured it from the spout and mouth of the crayfish ewer. This indication of the ewer's function corresponds with the fact that the Medici kept porcelain objects not only as collectors' items or for display, but actually used them at the table.[14]

As previously mentioned, there is yet another crayfish vessel in the Dresden collection. The crayfish of type number two is a modified shape, and with a height of 23.6 cm it is much bigger (Fig. 3). In this example the crayfish sits on an inverted

[9]The list is preserved in Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Dresden, Geheimer Rat, 8517–5.

[10]For the Medici lists, see Spallanzani, "Le porcellane Cinesi." The Dresden inventories are preserved in the archive of the Green Vault, Grünes Gewölbe, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden.

[11]Orig. "Ahn Italienischen trinck und anderen geschirre."

[12]Orig. "1 Pocal von porcellana verguldet blau und rot farben fast eines Krebses gestaldt."

[13]Orig. "Una peparola di porcellana a moda di gambero, dorato."

[14]The functions of Oriental porcelain at the Medici court are discussed in Marco Spallanzani, *Ceramiche alla Corte dei Medici nel cinquecento* (Modena: Panini, 1994), 121–6.

Fig. 3 Ewer in the Shape of a Crayfish. Porcelain, unglazed, painted in overglaze enamels. China, probably Fujian province, Ming dynasty (1368–1644), Jiajing period (1522–1566). H. 21.0 cm. Inv. No. P.O. 3480. State Art Collections Dresden, Porcelain Collection. Photograph: Lukas Kraemer

lotus leaf, the stalk of which forms a spout; on its back a lotus pod opening appears with a flat lid surmounted by a sculpted frog and a stalk forming the handle. The lower part is molded with a design of breaking waves and a leaping carp on both sides; a sculpted crab appears below the handle. The recessed, oval base is unglazed, but it is coated with washes of colored glazes in leaf-green, aubergine, and turquoise, the latter representative of the Ming porcelain glaze color palette. The body is glazed in yellow and has been gilded. The white crests on the green waves are coated with a thin, lustrous, and almost transparent wash, which fills in for white in the biscuit color scheme.

This vessel was probably already part of the seventeenth-century Dresden *Kunstkammer*, but it later entered the separate porcelain collection of Augustus the Strong and was inventoried in 1721 as "a teapot in the shape of a green and gilt

crayfish, with a yellow lid, on which sits a small frog. The pot is mounted with gilt brass."[15]

There is another extant crayfish that is very similar to the Dresden piece of type two in that it is also heavily gilt and is connected to a famous *Kunstkammer* collection known as the *Hainhofer Kunstschrank*, the Hainhofer cabinet, which is now on display at Uppsala University, Sweden.[16] The *Kunstschrank* is named after Philipp Hainhofer (1578–1647), the most famous early modern promoter of these special cabinets and a man of remarkable talents and manifold activities who provides a remarkable link between *Kunstkammer* collecting, the Medici, the court of Dresden, and the previously described Chinese crayfish vessels labeled as *peparola* or tea pot (*Thee-Kanne*). Hainhofer was a wealthy trader in luxury goods from Augsburg, Germany, with business contacts all over Europe. He was also a collector, and his *Kunstkammer* in Augsburg became famous and had many distinguished visitors, including King Gustavus II Adolphus of Sweden (1594–1632), German princes, the king of Denmark, some Medici princes, and traveling English aristocrats such as Thomas Howard, the second Earl of Arundel (1585–1646), one of the most famous English collectors of his time. Hainhofer's most famous and original achievement lies in the invention and strategic promotion of a piece of multipurpose furniture—his *Kunstschrank*. These cabinets were intended to be a *Kunstkammer en miniature*; Hainhofer had them custom-made by Augsburg artisans, and tried to sell them to kings, princes, and dukes.[17] In Italy, the cabinets were usually called *stipo tedesco,* German cabinets, a reference to their origin, and it was in a Hainhofer *Kunstschrank*, acquired by Ferdinando de' Medici, that the Medici family kept their porcelain treasures at the Palazzo Pitti in Florence.

Another spectacular cabinet made by Hainhofer between 1625 and 1631 remained in Hainhofer's house until the Swedish troops entered the city of Augsburg in 1632. Wishing to offer a spectacular gift to the king, the Lutheran counselors of Augsburg bought the cabinet from Hainhofer and proudly presented it to King Gustavus II Adolphus. It was transported to Sweden, and in 1694 the cabinet and its contents were given to the University of Uppsala, where it is still on display in one of the university buildings' most splendid rooms.

Gustavus II Adolphus's cabinet came with a number of curiosities that had been assembled by Hainhofer himself. Originally, there must have been an inventory of the objects, but it is now unfortunately lost. The crayfish vessel in the Hainhofer cabinet was surrounded by a host of other objects representing "natural items" (*naturalia*) and "artifacts" (*artificalia*), precious stones and minerals, biblical pictures, objects supposedly possessing medicinal or aphrodisiac properties such as the

[15]Orig. "Eine Thee–Kanne in Form eines gruenen und Verguldten Krebsses, mit enem gelben Deckel, worauff ein braunes Froeschgen. Die Kanne ist mit verguldtem Messing beschlage."

[16]For Hainhofer and his cabinets, see Hans-Olof Bolstroem, "Philipp Hainhofer and Gustavus Adolphus' Kunstschrank in Uppsala," in *The Origins of Museums: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe*, ed. Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

[17]See Bolstroem, "Philipp Hainhofer," 125–32.

Seychelles nut, objects "*for vexation*" creating special effects like vexing mirrors, automata, and pastimes "amusements."[18] Apparently, the objects that qualified for inclusion in this *Kunstschrank* had to be rare, peculiar, and exotic, and it seems the crayfish ewer fit this description perfectly.

Crayfish Ewers Used in Rituals on Borneo

The second part of the story of an ewer in the shape of a crayfish takes place in Borneo. For centuries the people on the Southeast Asian archipelago—present-day Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei—have had a special relationship to and with Chinese ceramics, be it blue-and-white porcelain or wares decorated in the bright colors of over-glaze enamels. They were not only used as vessels, but also represented status and became part of a number of rituals.

In the year 1956, Penghulu Miri, a local chief from the Kelabit, indigenous people who live in the highlands of Sarawak (present-day Malaysia) and North Kalimantan (present-day Indonesia, on the island of Borneo),[19] presented a vessel in the shape of a crayfish to the Sarawak Museum in Kuching. The chief reported that the ewer was a family heirloom that had been passed down for generations.[20] Unfortunately, we do not know much about Penghulu Miri and his family, and the generation-spanning meanings, symbolisms, or (ritual) functions they might have ascribed to their crayfish ewer. We are, however, better informed about the Englishman Tom Harrisson (1911–1976), the curator who accepted the special treasure presented by the local chief for the collections of the Sarawak Museum in present-day Sarawak, Malaysia.

Harrisson was born in Argentina and educated at Harrow School in England. Over the course of his remarkable life he worked as ornithologist, explorer, mass observer, journalist, broadcaster, soldier, ethnologist, museum curator, archaeologist, filmmaker, ecologist, and writer.[21] During the Second World War, Harrisson joined the army and was at some point attached to a special Allied unit executing a plan that was intended to exploit and instrumentalize the native peoples of Borneo against the Japanese forces, and in 1945 Harrisson was parachuted onto a high plateau occupied by the Kelabit people. After the war, he joined the Sarawak Museum where he held the position of a curator from 1947 to 1966. He and his wife, Barbara Harrisson (1922–2015), were working on the excavation, collection, preservation, and interpretation of Chinese export ceramics on the archipelago. At a

[18]Bolstroem, "Philipp Hainhofer."

[19]*Penghulu* in Malay refers to a local chief, from the Malay *hulu*, "head, top."

[20]Tom Harrisson, "Ceramic Crayfish and Related Vessels in Central Borneo, the Philippines and Sweden," *Sarawak Museum Journal* XV, no. 30–31 (1967): 1–9.

[21]For Harrisson's biography, see Judith M. Heimann, *The Most Offending Soul Alive: Tom Harrisson and His Remarkable Life* (London: Barnes and Noble, 2003).

time when the traditional societies and cultures of the natives on Borneo were disintegrating, the Harrissons were on hand to observe and listen in order to "translate" their knowledge into publishable scholarship. The results of their research appeared in numerous articles in the *Sarawak Museum Journal*.[22]

In Tom Harrisson's article on the crayfish vessel, published in 1967 in the *Sarawak Museum Journal*,[23] he reported that during the Japanese occupation

> I was dropped into the Bornean cult of old stone wares and porcelains. From the Kelabits, I first learned to respect, indeed to love the great export ware jars and other artifacts brought to Borneo centuries ago from China... in many parts to become the principal base line for value judgment, taste and status symbolism. The Kelabits are principally jar-lovers... But they have (or had, until recent devaluation of the old ways) high regard for many other ceramic forms as well. Notable among these were curious figures of various aquatic creatures, in several bright colors, shaped as vessels to contain fluid – in the Kelabit context inevitably borak, rice wine. The few such ewers existing in the uplands in 1945 were not regarded by their owners as the oldest sort of the Kelabit scale of time, which is closely traced into the ancient past. They were, however, regarded as old, rare, and used especially in connection with head-rites (from headhunting), associated with crop fertility and some other (largely alcoholic) ceremonials.[24]

After Tom Harrison received the gift of this crayfish-shaped vessel from Penghulu Miri for the Sarawak Museum, he began research on the new acquisition, trying to find documented pieces for comparison. To his surprise he found that there was a comparable piece in the Hainhofer cabinet in Uppsala, which had been published in the book by Robert Lockhart Hobson, *The Wares of the Ming Dynasty*, in 1923.[25] Hobson (1872–1941) dated the group of biscuit figures glazed yellow, green, turquoise, and brown from kilns in Southern China into the Kangxi period (1662–1722). But how did this dating align with the crayfish ewer in the Hainhofer cabinet that was definitely made no later than the late Ming? Hobson describes this ewer as a "bizarre piece, shaped like a crayfish on a rock," which, because it is documented as belonging to the first half of the seventeenth century, had to be "definitely authenticated as Ming."[26]

In his article on the crayfish ewer, Tom Harrisson makes an interesting observation, when he —mockingly—mentions that Hobson was reluctant to date the piece to the Ming because it did not fit the conservative Western, and particularly British

[22]Barbara Harrisson was later to become the director of the Museum Princessehof, Leeuwarden, the Netherlands, and published the results of her pioneering research on the important collection of Swatow/Zhangzhou ware in the Keramiekmuseum Princessehof Leeuwarden and of Martaban, ancient jars. See Barbara Harrisson, *Swatow in Het Princessehof: The Analysis of a Museum Collection of Chinese Trade Wares from Indonesia* (Leeuwarden: Gemeentelijk Museum Princessehof, 1979); and Barbara Harrisson, *Pusaka: Heirloom Jars of Borneo* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

[23]Tom Harrisson, "Ceramic Crayfish," 1–2.

[24]Tom Harrisson, "Ceramic Crayfish," 1–2.

[25]Robert Lockhart Hobson, *The Wares of the Ming Dynasty* (London: British Museum, 1923), 127, pl. 36.

[26]Hobson, *Wares of the Ming Dynasty*.

Museum, concept of "Ming." According to this stylistic categorization, "Ming" was classical and could hence never be "bizarre." Tom Harrisson comments: "Though the Kelabits, with their more liberal ideas about Asian art-form, would hardly use his word 'bizarre,' the Hainhofer crayfish indeed disturbs western scholars of eastern ceramics because they have decided that this sort of thing does not really belong to their conception of what is (or should be) 'Ming.' The more we learn of the Far Eastern end of the ceramic trade, the less we can be satisfied that this expertise has got its sequences correct for these sorts of ceramics, so far less esteemed in the west; the pieces there thought of as bizarre, odd, even ugly and (whisper) un-Chinese."[27]

Harrisson's article not only reflects the cultural context of the Indonesian crayfish ewer, but also the difficulties of doing research in Borneo some 50 years ago. It was a time without fax machines or emails, and so communicate with colleagues in England or Sweden was limited.

Harrisson had meanwhile found comparable, as well as matching, material that had been excavated on the Philippines from a Ming site and thus dated his crayfish vessel—quite correctly—between the late sixteenth to early seventeenth century. On this site in the Philippines, comparable pieces in animal shapes, including ducks, cranes, and fish, were found.[28] In his 1967 article, Tom Harrison mentions a detail which at first sight seems unremarkable. Parts of some of the animal shaped ewers, were broken off, or, as in the case of the crayfish ewer, their feet were missing. When I talked to Barbara Harrisson, who lived and worked with her husband Tom on Borneo, she mentioned that the people there used parts of Chinese pots and dishes and buried them into the ground for a length of time, after which they dug them up, ground them, and ate them, thereby participating in the magic powers of these vessels by consuming them.[29] But how were these vessels in the shape of aquatic animals, such as the crayfish ewer, used on Borneo? The Kelabits and the Dayak on Borneo had a tradition of head hunting; Fig. 4 shows an old photograph of a Kelabit ritual related to this practice. In the image, we can see pots of different sizes placed in front of a small table, which can be identified as Thai and from the fifteenth and sixteenth century. At ceremonies these jars were sealed with wooden or antler stoppers to preserve their spirits: strings of beads, highly valued by the Kelabits and used in ritual, were attached to the jars. On the table, a number of animal-shaped vessels also appear. In the center, there is an ewer in the shape of a duck known as the "Kelabit duck," on the right a vessel in the shape of a flying fish, and on the left a vessel in the well-known crayfish shape. These vessels were used for passing around rice wine (*borak*) among Kelabit aristocrats. Until recently, these objects were regarded as so valuable and sacred, that outsiders were not permitted to handle them.

We do not know how exactly our example of the crayfish ewer was used during these ceremonies, but it is certain that its function and treatment was similar to the

[27]Harrisson, "Ceramic Crayfish," 3.

[28]Robert B. Fox, *The Calatagan Excavations: Two 15th Century Burial Sites in Batangas, Philippines* (Manila: Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus, 1965).

[29]The author is grateful to Barbara Harrisson for personal communication on the subject.

Fig. 4 Vessels for a Kelabit Ritual. Photo of Sarawak Museum exhibit 1965. *Sarawak Museum Journal* XV, 30–31 (1967): plate V

vessel in the shape of a duck, the so-called Kelabit duck. A duck-shaped vessel was known to be in the possession of a Kelabit from the highlands, the village headman Anyi. After the Second World War he, too, presented his vessel to the Sarawak Museum. Tom Harrisson reported:

> This vessel was used in ritual drinking of rice wine at head and other festivals, when I first reached the uplands in 1945. Fill by the spouted hole above, hold high over the head, tilt until the booze jets out of the duck's beak into your open mouth. The Kelabits of the forties did not consider these and other related vessels as very ancient ceramics. Rather, they were esteemed as unusual, rare. Headman Anyi felt his duck one was unique; indeed no others are known in the interior. It was a big thing when he gave it to me. I hope that since I presented it to the Sarawak Museum, it will always be treated as the curious treasure that is, echoing now not only a Chinese mainland past but the departed virile adat of the "old days" before the Borneo Evangelical Mission took over the ritual and spiritual life of the far interior, in imitation of the West.[30]

[30]Tom Harrisson, "The Kelabit 'Duck Ewer' in the Sarawak Museum," *Sarawak Museum Journal* XVI, no. 32–33 (1968): 100.

Crayfish Ewer in the Japanese Tea Ceremony

The last stop on the journey of the crayfish ewer is Japan. In the Japanese tea ceremony (*chanoyu*), a number of vessels are employed for special purposes, and all vessels should blend into a particular kind of aesthetic system, creating an atmosphere of naturalness, refined simplicity, calmness, and austerity. Objects considered to be antique are particularly desirable in this context.

For centuries, all things Chinese formed a part of Japanese culture. They were called *karamono*, or "Tang things," referring to the Chinese Tang dynasty (618–907) when China exerted an enormous amount of influence over Japan. In later centuries, the term *karamono* continued to signify Chinese elements that had been assimilated into Japanese culture, and "Tang" came to denote a remoteness from contemporary China as well as an idealized "China past." *Karamono*, which was highly appreciated and venerated by the Japanese elite, included Chinese paintings, bronze vessels, and ceramics.

Ceramic vessels made in Southern China were already being imported to Japan by the twelfth century, but it was only from the fourteenth century onward that they were aesthetically appreciated and finally considered an appropriate part of the sophisticated ensembles of the *chanoyu* tea ceremony. By contrast, in China these vessels were considered purely functional, utilitarian, and without any aesthetic appeal.[31]

A most spectacular example of this is the story of a Chinese storage jar, which was made as a commonplace container. After it arrived in Japan, it was appropriated for *chanoyu* use and highly valued both as a functionally superior jar for storing tea leaves and as an aesthetically outstanding object. It was given the Japanese name, *Chigusa*, which means "myriad plants" or "myriad things," a poetical name referring to autumnal motifs. Starting in the sixteenth century, tea men wrote about this jar in their diaries and letters, and various owners of the jar transmitted these documents together with the jar, reflecting the jar's long history. In 2014, The *Chigusa* jar formed the focus of an outstanding exhibition in Washington D.C.[32] The jar was produced in China, but "remade" in Japan through a transcultural process that Watsky elsewhere calls a "critical creative act," arguing that in "recontextualizing the Chinese jar, tea men participated in a longstanding tradition in Japan of collecting all manner of things from China and around the world and absorbing them into Japanese cultural practices."[33]

The Chinese crayfish ewer encountered a comparable fate when it reached Japan. In a number of Japanese collections of traditional tea utensils, we once again encounter vessels made in Southern China during the sixteenth and seventeenth

[31] Andrew Watsky, "Locating 'China' in the Arts of Sixteenth-Century Japan," *Art History* 29, no. 4 (September 2006): 614.

[32] Louise Cort and Andrew M. Watsky, ed., *Chigusa and the Art of Tea* (Washington D.C.: Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, 2014).

[33] Cort and Watsky, *Chigusa*, 18.

centuries that were painted in the biscuit in green, yellow, and brown, and formed a type ewer in the shape of a crayfish. They include items in the shape of small boxes, originally used as incense containers, and water droppers, some in the shape of animals, which were considered appropriate for use during the tea ceremony.[34] Pieces of the incense container type known as *kogo* included small lidded ceramic boxes in the shapes of fruit, flowers, or animals. They contained incense, valued for its special scent, that was added to the charcoal used to heat the water during the *chanoyu*. Some Guangdong-made containers used in the *chanoyu* are preserved in venerable wooden boxes. These storage boxes are not part of the tea equipment, but have an important role in the practice of *chanoyu*, as they carry inscriptions that give names to a particular vessel or indicate the names of previous owners.[35]

In Japan, this colorful stoneware is known as *Cochi* (or *Guchi* in an antiquated form), after an area in Northern Vietnam, Cochin China. Some Japanese collectors mention that these wares were actually produced in this region. In their 1993 publication, Honda and Shimazu suggest by contrast that Cochi indicates a market, not a kiln, implying that the wares were merely traded in a region of that name, a region that was frequented by Japanese traders. During the fifteenth century, the markets of the Red River delta area in Cochin China came under Chinese control. They then became a major *entrepôt* for cargoes from China, a position they hold to this day. These markets connected (and still connect) objects from a variety of regions, since important shipping lines merge in this region. They include a southern route (via the Gulf of Siam to western Indonesia), an eastern way across the South China Sea to Luzon, a third line going north to Taiwan and Japan, and another fourth connection linking the Red River to important inland markets. Many of the objects named *Cochi* in Japan can tentatively be assigned to the kilns south of Guangzhou in Guangdong. One specialty of the Guangdong kilns was the use of green lead glaze, a tradition dating as far back as the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE), with its most popular color scheme, a combination of yellow, ochre, and brown, emerging during the Tang dynasty (618–907). The famous *Tang sancai*, "Three colors of Tang" ware was traded "internationally," overland by the Silk Road to inner Asia and India, northwards along the coast to Japan, or southwards and westwards to Persia.

In the sixteenth century, with the loosening of the Ming court official bans on private sea trading, a revival of these wares came with the return of the private junk trade to Southeast Asia. In the Philippines and Indonesia, as in Japan and Vietnam, clients ordered green and polychrome wares, which were kept as heirlooms or used on special occasions. Numerous vessels, glazed in green, yellow, and aubergine,

[34]For a discussion of these pieces, see Hiromu Honda and Noriki Shimazu, *Vietnamese and Chinese Ceramics used in the Japanese Tea Ceremony* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[35]Seikaido Bunko Art Museum, *Masterpieces of Tea Utensils from the Seikado Collection* 静嘉堂茶道具名品選 (Tokyo: Seikadō Bunko Bijutsukan, 2004), nos. 37–39. For a spectacular example of a Chinese storage jar used in Japan as vessel for tea leaves in the *chanoyu* context, see Cort and Watsky, *Chigusa*.

were found in Indonesia.[36] To this day Japanese connoisseurs are charmed by the sophisticated simplicity of this type of Southern China stoneware, a visual and material criterion which, in addition to the objects being perceived as related to antiquity, qualify them to be accepted as part of the aesthetic language of the Japanese rituals of tea drinking.

The kilns in Guangdong produced mainly small-scale objects, like water droppers, ewers, covered boxes that were to be used as incense containers in Japan, jarlets and figurines, as well as vessels in the shapes of fruits, plants, and animals such as fish and birds—motifs that appear throughout the designs of Japanese tea wares.[37] The collection of ceramics used in the Japanese tea ceremony, as found and published by the Japanese connoisseurs Honda and Shimazu, include a vessel in the shape of a duck, which is comparable to the aforementioned "Kelabit duck." Consequently, we also discover the well-known shape of a crayfish in the panoply of tea ceremony objects.[38] It is exactly the same kind of crayfish ewer as the type number one that we encountered as part of the 1590 Medici gift to the court of Dresden.

But what was the function of these ewers in animal shapes in the Japanese tea ceremony? I would suggest that in the context of the tea ceremony these vessels were considered interesting conversation pieces, through which the owner could show the refinement and sophistication of his taste. As Watsky has demonstrated for "Tang things" (*karamono*), Chinese objects that were re-contextualized in the Japanese rituals of *chanoyu*[39] served as "conversation pieces" in the personal comments in diaries or letters, and in the poetic descriptions or aesthetic reflections of the tea men. Conversing on a special object formed an integral part of the ritual of drinking tea and, at the same time, these "materialized conversations" created the story of the object itself. Who knows: Perhaps someday we will find a poem praising the small Chinese crayfish among the notes of a Japanese tea lover.

Conclusion

As has been illustrated, there are a number of ways in which to look at the crayfish-shaped vessel and its stories. At the start of the early modern period, which in China has been dated to the late Ming dynasty by some scholars,[40] the private kilns in

[36]See Sumarah Adhyatman, *Antique Ceramics found in Indonesia* (Jakarta: The Ceramic Society of Indonesia, 1990), 240–1.

[37]See Seikaido Bunko Art Museum, *Masterpieces.*

[38]Honda and Shimazu, *Vietnamese and Chinese Ceramics*, 164, pl. 152.

[39]Watsky, "Locating 'China'."

[40]For a discussion of this as a problematic way of equating Europe and China, see Søren Clausen, "Early Modern China—A Preliminary Postmortem" (Working Paper 84–00, Centre for Cultural Research, University of Aarhus, 2000), accessed July 11, 2017, http://www.hum.au.dk/ckulturf/pages/publications/sc/china.pdf.

Southern China supplied a "globalized" market with colorful ceramics in shapes modelled after existing animals and fruit that are dominated by the color palette of green, yellow, and ochre lead glazes. Through not only the inner Asian junk trade to markets on the Southeast Asian archipelago and Japan, but also the ships of the Portuguese and the Spanish, and later the Dutch, a few pieces of these wares eventually reached the West.

The case study of an ewer in the shape of a crayfish illustrates how objects of a certain type are appreciated and used in varying cultural contexts and in different ways. European Renaissance rulers and collectors used the rare pieces as parts of their sophisticated *Kunstschrank* ensembles and for German-Italian gift exchanges, Borneo tribesmen employed the vessels in their fertility and head-hunting rituals, museum curators have engaged in debates on historic tastes and dating, and Japanese connoisseurs have made the ceramics part of the highly formalized aesthetic system of the tea ceremony. All these different people, in different times, and in different parts of the world, with different religious and cultural backgrounds and various concepts of what defines a "vessel" in terms of functional and aesthetic criteria, became involved with and were fascinated by an ewer in the shape of a crayfish.

The recorded narratives leave us wondering about the stories related to this type of ceramic in China proper. However, it seems that in China almost all comparable pieces are lost; to my knowledge no crayfish ewer has been preserved in China itself. By the Chinese elite these wares were perhaps regarded as export pieces, as functional, and not artistic. The taste for porcelain within the Chinese elite was, and still is, focused on the "perfect" piece; the highest standard is represented by the wares produced for the imperial court: made of only the finest clay, decorated in a controlled manner with refined styles, and impeccably executed. Consequently, our examples were not appreciated, collected, and carefully preserved in China proper.

In recent scholarship, "there is a growing awareness of the social and economic factors that influenced the development of the Chinese ceramic industry, and the ways in which Chinese ceramics have linked widely different social groups of merchants and consumers."[41] As further illustrated by the recorded narratives, the type of object discussed here is just a tiny material fragment of the enormous number of ceramics "made in China" for an early modern globalized market. Thus, the ceramic examples presented in this article once more prove that, as John Carswell put it, "it seems there is no other commodity that can so perfectly illustrate the complexity of human relations in the past, and the interaction of civilizations at the opposite ends of Asia and indeed around the whole world."[42]

With thanks to Lukas Kraemer and Aafke Koole

[41]John Carswell, *Blue & White: Chinese Porcelain around the World* (London: The British Museum, 2000), 195.

[42]Carswell, *Blue & White*, 195.

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The Reception and Value of Chinese Porcelain in Habsburg Spain

Cinta Krahe

Abstract Spanish interest in Chinese exotic products was clear from the very beginning of colonization of the Philippines in 1571, when access to the sources of supply became much easier through the Manila galleon trade. However, only a few pieces of Chinese porcelain for Spain dating to the Habsburg period (1517–1700) are preserved in private or non-Spanish collections. This presents a stark contrast to King Philip II's collection of Chinese porcelain, which in its day was the largest in Europe. Sadly, nothing is known to have survived from that great collection, which held a little more than 3000 pieces, and although the inventories of some Spanish Habsburg monarchs, noblemen, and other individuals reveal that some of them had considerable amounts of Chinese porcelain, other great Spanish collectors of the period had no interest in Chinese porcelain at all. This article will examine the occurrence of Chinese porcelain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Spain through key records in different Spanish archives in order to establish the concept, reception, appreciation, use, and monetary value attributed to Chinese porcelain in the general context of the decorative arts in Spain.

This article analyzes the reception of Chinese porcelain in Habsburg Spain (the crowns of Castile and Aragon) from 1517 to 1700 through primary sources, mainly the probate inventories and trade registers preserved in Spanish archives. These written records of Spanish monarchs, courtiers, and other individuals demonstrate that although some of the Spanish Habsburg monarchs once had large collections of Chinese porcelain, other kings and important art collectors of that period had no interest in East Asian porcelain at all; today no porcelain from the vast collection of the Habsburg period survives in the Spanish National Heritage. This article will seek to establish the concept, reception, appreciation, use, and monetary value attributed to Chinese porcelain in relation to other commodities in Spanish material culture during this period.

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The time frame of this discussion begins in 1517, with the arrival of the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V (1500–1558), in Asturias to become Charles I of Spain, and it ends in 1700 when King Charles II (1661–1700), the last Spanish Habsburg, died at his royal residence at the Alcázar of Madrid. This period witnessed Spain's establishment in the Americas as well as its colonization of the Philippines and, along with other European seafaring nations, the exploration of trade with East Asia. Chinese porcelain and exotica were certainly part of the global Iberian trade, but until recently it was not clear which of these East Asian goods (specifically Chinese porcelain) were actually imported into Spain itself, nor how they were used or what value they had. Although the crown of Portugal was part of the Hispanic Monarchy for 60 years (1580–1640), it had a very different cultural tradition in regard to porcelain because this material was highly appreciated by the Portuguese and had an essential influence on their culture, perhaps due to its direct links with China (Macao). In fact, there are many extant pieces preserved in Portugal, such as the display of 260 dishes and plates from Jingdezhen (Jiangxi province) and Zhangzhou kilns (Fujian province) that cover the ceiling of the drawing room in the Santos Palace (the present-day French Embassy).[1] Late Ming blue-and-white porcelain decorated inlaid murals or *embrechados* can be found in different buildings in Portugal, for instance in the former royal Palace of Alcaçovas and the palace of the Marquis of Fronteira in Lisbon. They are also found in other residences in the south of Portugal, particularly the Casa de Fresco and the Paço de Sao Miguel in Evora. In addition, many archaeological sites in Lisbon, Oporto, Coimbra, Leira, Silves, Tavira, and Lagos have yielded an important number of shards which demonstrate that large quantities of Chinese porcelain were imported to Portugal and were greatly appreciated by the court[2] and the aristocracy. Moreover, an important number of shipwrecks have also been found containing Chinese porcelain, including the Sao Joao (1552), Sao Bento (1554), Espadarte (1558), Santo Alberto (1593), Nossa Senhora dos Martires (1606), Santo Espiritu (1608), and Nossa Senhora da Luz (1615), among others.[3] This aspect establishes radical differences between Portuguese and Spanish collecting values, specifically in relation to Chinese porcelain.

On the other hand, in Spain, there are currently no extant pieces from the Habsburg era in the royal collections; nothing is left of the sixteenth century's

[1]This porcelain was collected by King Manuel I of Portugal (1469–1521) and his successors together with the later owners of the palace, the Lencastre family.

[2]Catherine of Austria, wife of John III of Portugal, had many pieces of porcelain in her *guardaroba* and often sent porcelain as gifts to her family. See Annemarie Jordan, "The Development of Catherine of Austria's Collection in the Queen's Household: Its Character and Cost" (PhD diss., Brown University, 1994) and by the same author "Verdadero padre y señor: Catherine of Austria, Queen of Portugal," in *Los Inventarios de Carlos V y La Familia Imperial*, vol. 3, ed. Fernando Checa Cremades (Madrid: Fernando Villaverde Ediciones, 2010).

[3]Teresa Canepa, *Silk, Porcelain and Lacquer: China and Japan and their Trade with Western Europe and the New World 1500–1644, A Survey of Documentary and Material Evidence*, (Leiden: Universiteit Leiden, 2016), 128–46.

largest collection of Chinese porcelain in Europe. Charles I's son, King Philip II (1527–1598) amassed about 3000 pieces of Chinese porcelain, as testified by the inventory of his possessions at his death.[4] The collection was housed in the so-called New Tower of the Alcázar in Madrid. This amazing collection was dispersed in state auctions, taken or given away by members of the royal family, or distributed as vessels containing royal gifts of food to convents near the Alcázar.[5] The Alcázar itself was completely destroyed by fire in 1734, and it is probable that during that unfortunate event anything that might have survived of the original sixteenth-century collection was finally lost.

There are about twenty blue-and-white bottles preserved in non-Spanish or private collections that are decorated with the coat-of-arms of Castile and Leon, but they cannot be definitely connected with any specific commission by a Spanish individual.[6] A Spanish inventory from 1674, during the regency of Queen Mariana of Austria (r. 1665–1675), does mention a pair of porcelain bottles that the appraiser describes as *botixas* (flasks) standing one-third of a *vara* (almost 28 cm) tall, "round" (presumably meaning the body was round), and decorated in blue and white with a coat-of-arms. Another group of dishes and *guan*-type blue-and-white jars decorated with the emblem of the Augustinian Order (the double-headed eagle over a heart pierced with arrows beneath a coronet) datable to circa 1590–1635 can be found in several public institutions. However, it is not clear when or for which market they were made: Spain, New Spain (Mexico) or Portugal.[7] The only specially commissioned piece from a Spanish client still surviving was ordered by the Marquis of Cañete while he was in Peru serving as viceroy from 1590 to 1596.[8]

But why is Chinese porcelain of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries so scarce in Spain today when Spain's trade networks and wealth at that period were at their strongest and most far-reaching? And what place did Chinese porcelain have within the Spanish culture of the golden and global age? I have tried to find some answers to these questions in the primary sources, mainly probate inventories and trade registers from Spanish archives.[9] And in this brief paper I will discuss a few of the key records

[4]For the king's full inventory of Chinese porcelain, see Francisco Javier Sánchez Cantón, *Inventarios Reales: Bienes Muebles que pertenecieron a Felipe II,* vol. 2, (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 1956–59), 265–80.

[5]Cinta Krahe, "Chinese Porcelain in Spain during the Habsburg Dynasty," *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* 77 (2012–2013): 31; and *Chinese Porcelain in Habsburg Spain* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica, 2016), 125–32.

[6]See Krahe, "Chinese Porcelain in Spain," 32. For the latest research on these bottles, see William R. Sargent, *Porcelana china en la colección Conde* (Madrid: Ediciones El Viso, 2014), 112–3; Rocío Díaz, *Porcelana china para España* (London: Jorge Welsh, 2010), 74–9.

[7]For a recent survey of such pieces, see William R. Sargent*, Treasures of Chinese Export Ceramics from the Peabody Essex Museum* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 56–60 and Sargent, *Porcelana china en la Colección Conde*, 114–5.

[8]See dish with the coato farms of Don García Hurtado de Mendoza, IV Marquis of Cañete, Viceroy of Peru, in a private collection, USA, in Díaz, *Porcelana China para España*, 87–91.

[9]This paper contains material from my PhD thesis "Chinese Porcelain and other Orientalia and Exotica in Spain during the Habsburg dynasty," directed by Professor Dr. Christiaan Jörg and

that reveal how Chinese porcelain was valued in Spain during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The first document I would like to highlight is a very interesting letter that is preserved in the Archive of the Indies in Seville and dated 1586. This is a formal complaint made by the Spanish merchants in New Spain (Mexico) to their viceroy, stating that their goods were being undercut by the much cheaper Chinese products arriving from Manila.[10]

In New Spain's multicultural society, Chinese porcelain was valued for many reasons: it was exotic, beautiful, light, clean, and most importantly, it could be obtained at a very competitive price. In the letter of 1586, Chinese porcelain and other imported exotica—like garments or bolts of silk, lacquered furniture, fans, or devotional objects made in the East (Hispano-Filipino ivories)—were all defined under the generic term *bugerias.* This term, according to the dictionary of Autoridades of 1726, indicated "things of low price and value but made with care and grace, and to be given to woman and children."[11]Other documents from this period also refer to these Oriental goods as *bagatelas*, which could be translated roughly as trifles.[12]

The Covarrubias dictionary of 1611 offers different meanings for the specific term *porcelana*, which refers to a type of lustrous and transparent pottery from

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defended on September 18, 2014, at Leiden University. Cinta Krahe, "Chinese Porcelain and other Orientalia and Exotica in Spain during the Habsburg dynasty" (PhD diss., Leiden University, 2014), accessed July 24, 2017, http://hdl.handle.net/1887/28741. See also the publication of the thesis: Cinta Krahe, *Chinese Porcelain in Habsburg Spain* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica, 2016).

[10]Translation by Cinta Krahe: "Addressing what your Noble Sire disposed regarding commerce// with New Spain in the Philippine Islands, yesterday Don Christobal de Mora and I met and looked at a long list that Ledesma had taken from many papers//that both parties had sent each other and from a chapter of a letter for your Noble Sire from the//Viceroy Don Martin Enriquez written on twentieth of March//of the last year eighty where he says that the merchants of//that land were very sorry that merchandise had been brought//from the Philippine Islands because although the satins and damasks and other//silks, and even the finest [silks], contain very little silk and [have] other fabrics woven [into them]//with grassy fibres (all valueless) in the end people would bargain //and lower the prices of the silks that leave [i.e. come from] Spain, and of these silks the// taffetas had been sold at a price of more than eight reales and the // satins and damasks had gone down a lot, and fearing that were this to go // further it would not be necessary to take silks from Spain and that// other than that everything that is (not) traded with those islands is trinkets (bugerías) //that have no useful purpose on this earth, such as porcelains, writing deks (scriptorillos), small boxes, fans and straps for shields , all counterfeited and useless, // and that there can be not trade with China except (in exchange) for gold// and silver because all the rest is futile." Archivo General de Indias, Filipinas 18, AR 8, N 53, 1586.

[11]Bugerias (Bujerias or buxerias): "This term is generally used in the plural form. Things of low price or value, albeit of good taste and made with care and grace and that are usually given to ladies and children. Comes from the Latin *buxum*or Castilian *box*, because such objects were usually carved from wood." *Diccionario de la lengua castellana,* facsimile of the original edition of 1726–1737, vol. 1 (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1979), 722.

[12]Tomé Pinheiro da Veiga, *Fastiginia: Vida cotidiana en la corte de Valladolid* (Valladolid: Ámbito ediciones, 1989), 105.

China; however, it could also mean a type of clay found in Puçol (Pozzuoli, in Italy).[13] In the later Autoridades dictionary of 1726, a *porcelana* could also refer to the particular shape of a bowl or cup with different practical uses such as serving soups or sweets, but it could also indicate a white enamel or even a color (white mixed with blue).[14] In his dictionary of the terms used in the notary registers of Valladolid during the Spanish Golden Age, Anastasio Rojo Vega also lists the different usages of the term and the value of several porcelain objects at the time. The inventories suggest that a *porcelana* or bowl could be made in a variety of materials such as alabaster, horn, wood, silver, or glass.[15]

Another very interesting document is the invoice of 1596 of the third Marquis of Velada (1590–1666), Don Gómez Dávila y Toledo (who was very fond of East Asian porcelain and is recorded in 1616 as having a cabinet of glass and porcelain) who gave a bowl of East Asian "*porçelana*" to the silversmith Luis de Morales to serve as a model for making silver bowls for the future King Philip III (1578–1621).[16] In the invoice he uses the same term to describe both the porcelain material and the shape of the bowl. What is most intriguing is that the shape of the bowl was as—if not more—interesting to the Spanish than the material it was made from. Even Father François Xavier d'Entrecolles (1664–1741), the first Westerner to visit the kilns at Jingdezhen in China—and who described the process of porcelain manufacture at the beginning of the eighteenth century—had no clear idea about the exact meaning of the word "*porçelana*" in the West because it varied so much from country to country. He explained that the Portuguese qualified the term according to

[13]"A transparent clay used to make vessels of different shapes. It comes from China and the material it is made of is said to take a long time to mature. In Italy there is a type of clay that some call *puscelana*, because it can be found in Puçol [referring to the town of Pozzuoli and the vessels made of volcanic ash from Vesuvius]; some people have corrupted the word and call it *porcelana*." Sebastian de Covarrubias, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española* (Madrid: 1611), accessed July 24, 2017, http//fondonsdigitales.us.es/fondos/libros/765/16/tesoro-de-la-lengua-castellana-o-española/.

[14]"A certain type of fine, transparent, clear and lustrous ceramic that is extensively made in China or Japan. Covarrubias mentions that porcelain was applied to a certain type of clay from Puçol [Pozzuoli], a city of the kingdom of Naples, from which the term derives, but it seems likely that the term comes from the French term *porcelaine,* a type of white shell from which the ancient people shaped containers very similar to our present porcelain. [2.] A type of wide deep cup made of fine clay that is used to serve sweets, clear soups, milk and other things. [3.] What should taste better, tell me: to drink poisoned sweet milk from a porcelain cup or to know it in advance and spill it? [. . .] In the countryside, friends, sisters and women with bunches of flowers attended, holding porcelains full of aromatic beverages. [4.] White enamel, mixed with a little blue that is used by silversmiths to decorate jewelry and pieces of gold. [5.] White color mixed with blue. Latin: *Color porcellaneus*." Real Academia Española, *Diccionario de Autoridades*, vol. 3 (Madrid: Gredos, 1979), 325.

[15]Anastasio Rojo Vega, *El siglo de Oro: Inventario de una* época (Salamanca: Junta de Castilla y León, 1996), 64–70.

[16]Almudena Pérez de Tudela Gabaldón, "La educación artística y la configuración de la imagen del príncipe Felipe," in *La monarquía de Felipe III: La Corte*, vol. 3, ed. José Martínez Millán and Maria Antonietta Visceglia (Madrid: Fundación Mafre, 2008), 127.

the shape of the container, for instance whether it was a bowl or a cup, and that "*loça*" (ceramics) was the general term used by the Portuguese to refer to porcelain.[17]

In addition, some documents in the Archive of the Indies reveal that merchants sending Chinese crockery from the port of San Juan de Ulúa (Veracruz, Mexico) to Seville (Spain), would use almost any term to refer to porcelain goods from East Asia, including *barro* (clay or ceramic), *loça* (tin-glazed pottery), or remarkably even *porcelana*. It is obvious that they were not very clear about and probably not very concerned with the particular quality of the goods they were handling.[18] *Kraak* porcelain of different types and quality was mixed with Swatow-type porcelain.[19] Indeed, there must have been high and low-quality porcelains that ranged according to their price, including the so-called *kinrande*,[20] which was greatly appreciated, as the Spanish inventories of the period show.[21] One of the few pieces preserved in Spain that is still in-situ is a bowl in the church of Sta. María de los Corporales, Daroca (Zaragoza). The bowl (Fig. 1) has a very fine white body and a transparent and glossy glaze without impurities. It is decorated under the glaze with cobalt blue depictions of a plum tree branch with a bird and with a band around the foot displaying a stylized lotus panel decoration. The interior of the bowl is ornamented with a flying, long-tailed phoenix. The commendation mark 精藝 ("masterpiece") is written within a square in underglaze blue. The piece was enriched with a gold leaf decoration, probably applied in China, that consists of

[17]"*Porcelana*, specifically means a cup or a bowl and *loza* is the general term that [the Portuguese] give all objects that we call *porcelana*." Pere d'Dentrecolles, *Cartas edificantes y curiosas, escritas de las misiones estrangeras, y de levante por algunos missioneros de la compañía de Jesus traducidas por el padre Diego Davin de la misma Compañía*, vol. 8 (Madrid: Viuda de Manuel Fernández, 1753–1757), 69–70.

[18]See, for example, several documents in the General Archive of the Indies (AGI). For 1596: "Two bowls of pottery from China (*Dos escudillas de barro de la China*)," AGI, Contratación, n°1 (Veracruz: 1799), fols. 94v–95v. For 1591: "A crate of pottery from China (*Una caxa de loça de la China*)," and " Sixteen medium-sized porcelains from China and 12 smaller bowls (*Diez y seis porcelanas medianas de la China e doze escudillas mas pequeñas*)," AGI, Contratación, 2490, registro n°9, cuaderno 12, ramo 2, (Veracruz: 1795), fols. 51–100.

[19]Zhangzhou, the so-called Swatow wares, were elaborated in the Zhangzhou kilns (Fujian province) from the middle of the sixteenth to the middle of the seventeenth century. It was decorated over gray porcelaneous stoneware using different techniques such as blue and white, polychrome enamels etc.

[20]Japanese term meaning "gold brocade," indicating porcelain ornamented over the glaze or enamel with gold leaf.

[21]However, what is quite surprising is the lack of shards of better quality polychrome porcelain of the *kinrande* type in Spain—there is only one piece in the monastery of San Clemente, Seville—especially when there are so many descriptions of gilt porcelain in the inventories. See Krahe, *Chinese Porcelain in Habsburg Spain*, 193. For the latest research into these types of wares, see Linda Rosenfeld Pomper, "New Perspectives on Kinrande," *Arts of Asia* 44 (September–October 2014): 73–82.

Fig. 1 Blue-and-white Chinese bowl with gold leaf decoration applied over the glaze. C. 1570–80. Late sixteenth century. H. 7.7 cm, D. 10.5 cm. Church of Santa María de los Corporales, Daroca, Zaragoza

pine-like sprays and other incised details and leaves scattered around the central decoration; however, much of the gold has been worn away.[22]

What is clear is that Chinese porcelain was imported from China through the Philippines by the Manila galleon trade and was an essential article of that trade, the third most important cargo after silks and spices.[23] It became an essential commodity in the households of New Spain (Mexico) from where it was distributed widely throughout the Spanish Americas and was used as tableware, for storage purposes, and, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for interior decoration. The Spanish treasure fleet sailing every year from Veracruz (Mexico) to Seville (Spain) via La Habana (Cuba), and numbering about twenty merchant ships, included mixed cargoes of Asian and American products. But for the traders from Spain, silver was clearly the most important and profitable commodity, as were different raw materials such as indigo for dying, ginger or sarsaparilla for medical uses, and new plantation products such as tobacco, sugar and cocoa, all of which were becoming

[22]This cup has been connected to a few shards of another bowl excavated at the Spanish town of Santa Elena on Parris Island, present day South Carolina, occupied from 1566 to 1576 and also to shards of a blue-and-white bowl recovered from the Spanish shipwreck *San Felipe* (1576). Therefore, the bowl in Daroca can be dated by stylistic comparison to the late Longqing (1567–1572) or early Wanli (1573–1620) reign. See Canepa *Silk, Porcelain and Lacquer*, 168.

[23]Carmen Yuste López, *El comercio de la Nueva España con Filipinas, 1590–1785* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1984), 26.

very popular in the Spanish markets during the second half of the seventeenth century.[24] Among the luxury goods, pearls and gems from the New World were seen as the most important trade items, and Chinese porcelain clearly figured as a very minor import to Seville. According to the historian José Luis Gash-Tomás, who made a thorough study of the probate inventories of the elites of Mexico and Seville from 1580 to 1630, 25 percent of Mexican inventories contained Chinese porcelain, but only 10 percent of inventories from Seville registered porcelain.[25]

Research in Spanish inventories and archaeology in Spain tell the same story:[26] the supply and demand for Chinese porcelain was low in Spain in comparison to the Spanish Americas[27] and in Northern Europe.[28] And with the exception of particular individuals in the court and nobility, such as King Philip II,[29] the Infantas Isabella Clara Eugenia[30] and Catherine Michelle,[31] the Prince of Éboli,[32] the Duchess of Alba (who had in her palace of Alba de Tormes (Salamanca) a cabinet full of glass

[24]Marina Alfonso Mola, "La carrera de Indias," in *El Galeón de Manila*, exhibition catalogue, ed. Marina Alfonso Mola and Carlos Martínez Shaw (Madrid: Ministerio de Educación Cultura y Deporte, 2000), 29.

[25]I am grateful to José Luis Gasch-Tomás for the information taken from his unpublished article "Southeast Asia and New Spain in the making of World History: The Manila Galleons and the Circulation of Asian Goods in the Hispanic Empire, c. 1565–1650" (Paper presented at *Encounters, Circulations and Conflicts*, Fourth European Congress on World and Global History, Paris, September 2014).

[26]See Krahe, *Chinese Porcelain in Habsburg Spain*, 26–33.

[27]See George Kuwayama, "Archaeological Excavations of Chinese Ceramics Transported by Manila Galleons," in *Chinese Ceramics in Colonial México*, ed. George Kuwayama (Los Angeles: Hawaii University Press, 1997), 20–2.

[28]For the latest research into Japanese and Chinese porcelain in Holland, see Jan van Campen and Titus Eliëns, ed., *Chinese and Japanese Porcelain for the Dutch Golden Age* (Zwolle: Waanders Uitgevers, 2014).

[29]See Linda R. Shulsky, "Philip II of Spain as porcelain collector," *Oriental Art* XLIV, no. 2 (Summer 1998): 51–4.

[30]Isabella Clara Eugenia took about 300 pieces from her father's porcelain collection when she was appointed Governess of the Southern Low Countries. See Almudena Pérez de Tudela, "Making, Collecting, Displaying and Exchanging Objects: An Overview of Archival Sources Relating to the Infanta Isabel's Personal Possessions (1566–1599)," in *Isabella Clara Eugenia: Female Sovereignty at the Courts in Madrid and Brussels*, ed. Cordula van Wyhe (Madrid: Centro de Estudios de Europa Hispánica, 2011), 60–87.

[31]"When *infanta* Catherine Michelle settled in Torino in 1585, her sister Isabella Clara Eugenia often sent her presents, including Oriental exotica of which they were both fond. When court jester Gonzalo de Liaño departed for Turin in 1587, he carried a load of objects that included *búcaros*, porcelains, silks, fans, cordovans, gloves and perfumes." Almudena Pérez de Tudela, "Regalos y retratos: Los años de la infanta Catalina Micaela en la corte de Madrid (1567–1584)," in *L'infanta Caterina d'Austria, duchessa di Savoia (1567–1597)*, ed. Blyte Alice Raviola and Franca Varallo (Rome: Carocci, 2013), 130.

[32]See Cinta Krahe, "El coleccionismo de porcelana china: de curiosidad real a mercadería de exportación," in *Orientando la Mirada: Arte Asiático en las colecciones públicas madrileñas*, exhibition catalogue, ed. Grupo de Investigación Arte de Asia (Madrid: Conde Duque, 2009), 31.

and pottery in 1573),[33] the Spanish did not develop a pronounced taste for East Asian porcelain. Thus, Chinese porcelain appears only in a limited number of the inventories of household goods of the Spanish elite in main cities like Madrid, Seville, or Valladolid.

Inventories made at the time of death offer very interesting clues to the "hierarchization" of other household goods in relation to Chinese porcelain. Silver objects took precedence in quantity, especially after the great economic crisis of the 1630s. Traditionally within Spanish society, objects made of precious metals were seen as the best expression of the wealth of the individual or the sacredness of a religious object.[34] Such objects also had the advantage of being easily re-shaped as bullion or coin when circumstances required. Although silver had an intrinsic value and was connected with the powerful, by contrast pottery in Spain had very humble associations; although positive qualities such as humility, dignity, and virtue were also related to it.[35]

Thus, it is interesting that Chinese porcelain appears primarily in the inventories of women. And indeed, it is women who played a very important role in establishing new fashions and consumer habits during this period. For instance, María Luisa de Orleans (1662–1689), the first wife of Charles II (1665–1700), was, like most women in the Spanish court during the second half of the seventeenth century, very fond of chocolate drinking, and this passion for chocolate soon spread to the rest of society. Chinese porcelain *jícaras* (bell-shaped cups) were frequently used for this type of beverage, and it is clear that María Luisa was not only fond of chocolate but also of Chinese porcelain, as she kept a cabinet in one of the towers of the Alcázar containing 108 porcelain *jícaras* that could have been Chinese or Japanese as well as bowls from China.[36] Although Chinese porcelain (blue-and-white bowls and bell-shaped cups or *jícaras*)[37] appear in some Spanish paintings from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, these instances are rare in comparison to the frequency with which such objects appear in Dutch paintings of the period (Figs. 2 and 3).[38]

Unlike elsewhere in Europe, porcelain failed to capture the imagination of many of the great aesthetes in Spain during this period. One of the most important art collectors from the reign of Phillip III (1598–1621) was Don Francisco Gomez de Sandoval y Rojas, Duke of Lerma (1553–1625). He was the king's *valido,* or royal

[33]Almudena Pérez de Tudela, "The Third Duke of Alba: Collector and Patron of the Arts," in *Alba, General and Servant to the Crown*, ed. M. Ebben, M. Lacy-Bruijn and R. van Hövell tot Westerflier (Rotterdam: Karwansaray, 2013), 186.

[34]Margarita Pérez Grande, *Los plateros de Toledo en 1626* (Toledo: Instituto Provincial de Investigaciones y Estudios Toledanos, 2002), 30–1, footnote 4.

[35]Javier Portús Pérez, "Que están vertiendo claveles," *Revista Espacio, Tiempo y Forma: Historia del Arte Series VII* 6 (1993): 262.

[36]The inventory of goods of Queen Maria of Orleáns (Doña Maria Luisa de Borbon or Orleáns), Archivo General de Palacio, Madrid, Sección Registros, no. 5269, 1689.

[37]See, for example, the painting by Antonio Pereda (1611–1678), *Still Life with* an *Ebony and Marquetry Table Cabinet*, c. 1652, the Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.

[38]See Krahe, *Chinese Porcelain in Habsburg Spain*, 386–7.

Fig. 2 Francisco de Zurbarán (1598–1664), *La virgen niña dormida*. Oil on canvas. 1664. 110 × 93 cm. Fundación Santander Central Hispano collection, Madrid

favorite, and the most powerful noble during the first decade of the seventeenth century in Europe;[39] his palace at Lerma (Burgos) was decorated with great magnificence. In 1600 the government issued sumptuary laws (proscribing the conspicuous consumption of luxury goods) and the duke urged wealthy Spaniards to buy "services of tin-glazed pottery" (barro vidriado) instead of silver ones. However, he certainly did not suggest purchasing Chinese porcelain—which is strange, as it was relatively inexpensive, a better quality of ceramic, and widely available either through merchants in Seville or Lisbon. Indeed, the Duke's own inventory reveals very few pieces of Chinese porcelain,[40] and those that are recorded are mentioned as

[39]For the Duke of Lerma's full inventory of goods, see Luis Cervera Vera, *Bienes muebles en el Palacio Ducal de Lerma* (Valencia: Editorial Castalia, 1967).

[40]Cervera Vera, *Bienes muebles en el Palacio Ducal de Lerma*, 22.

Fig. 3 Francisco de Zurbarán (1598–1664), *Saint Hugo in the Refectory*. Oil on canvas. c. 1630–1635. 262 × 307 cm. Museo de Bellas Artes, Seville

being broken and smashed. Perhaps the duke promoted tin-glazed pottery because it was a domestic product, and he could thus encourage the production of Talavera pottery over foreign, imported porcelain.

Probate inventories also reveal interesting information about the daily usages and consumer habits connected to Chinese porcelain. Most pieces had a functional role in daily life: for example, a large batch (912 pieces) in Philip II's inventory were used as *trincheo* plates for individual portions of food served by the *trinchante*.[41] *Kendi*-type bottles defined as *garrafas* were used as oil and vinegar containers, which are described as "a jug with a long neck, gilded, of one-quarter [of a *vara*][42] in height, with a breast like a spout," "gourd-shape vessels with silver lids contained scented waters."[43] During the reign of King Philip III (1598–1621) blue-and-white porcelain bowls with silver mounts were used for serving broth, while other larger bowls (of the *klapmutsen*-type) were used for fish soups consumed on Friday by the

[41]The servant responsible for cutting the food.

[42]A *vara* corresponds to 0.836 m.

[43]General de Palacio, Madrid, Sección Administración General, leg. 903, Tesoro. 1617.

mandate of the church.[44] From an inventory of King Philip IV (1621–1665) dated to 1654, we know that seventeen dozen bowls of blue, white, scarlet, and gilded porcelain (perhaps old *kinrande,* as *imari* only started to be introduced in Europe from Japan around 1657) were used by the king for soup.[45] During the reign of King Charles II (1665–1700), as in previous reigns, most porcelain was registered in the treasury, but from now on porcelain would be stored within the *guardamangier*, an office for foods and tableware.[46]

The precise monetary value of Chinese porcelain in Spain during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is very difficult to establish due to the constant fluctuation of the currency and the price of metals. According to Juan Gonzalez de Mendoza's account from 1585, Chinese porcelain was so cheap in China that for four *reales* "they give you 50 pieces."[47] On the other hand, in 1596, 2 years before King Philip II's death, Princess Isabella Clara Eugenia bought six bowls and six plates of Chinese porcelain for four and a half *reales* each; by comparison she paid two *reales* for one pound of fibre to wrap these porcelains, two *reales* for a wicker basket and two *reales* to pay the king's muleteer for one day to transport the porcelains.[48] According to a document dated to 1600 from a potter from Talavera de la Vera (tin-glazed pottery in Extremadura, Spain), an "ordinary" Talavera plate could be sold for two *reales*.[49] In comparison, a boat made in rock crystal in King Philip II's inventory (1602) was appraised for 500 *ducados*[50] (there are eleven *reales* to a *ducado*), and a figure of a rooster from the Indies for 800 *ducados,*[51] while a painting by Titian (Charles V with a dog) was appraised at only eighty *ducados*.[52] And in the inventory of the last Habsburg, King Charles II, Chinese porcelain was not even

[44]Archivo General de Palacio, Madrid, sección Administración General, leg. 902, Inventory of jewelry and objects of Queen Margaret of Austria.

[45]Archivo General de Palacio, Madrid, sección Administración General, leg. 904, 1654: "seventeen dozen bowls, blue, white and scarlet, with gilt, totaling one hundred and four porcelain bowls of the type in which His Majesty has his soup."

[46]For the full inventory of King Charles II of Spain, see Gloria Fernández Bayton, *Inventario sreales: Testamentaría del Rey Carlos II, 1701–1703*, 3 vols. (Madrid: Museo del Prado, 1975, 1981, 1985).

[47]Juan González de Mendoza, *Historia de las cosas más notables, ritos y costumbres, del gran reyno de la China sabidas assi por los libros de los mesmos chinas, como por relacion de religiosos y otras personas que an estado en el dicho reyno ... Con un itinerario del nuevo mundo* (Antwerp: Pedro Bellero, 1596), 22.

[48]Archivo General de Palacio, Madrid, sección Administración General, leg. 902, Account of the expenses of Hernando de Rojas.

[49]Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de El Escorial, box LVII-4-5, fol. 3.

[50]Sanchez Cantón, *Inventarios Reales*, 315.

[51]Sanchez Cantón, *Inventarios Reales*, 315.

[52]Sanchez Cantón, *Inventarios Reales*, 230.

appraised with a value since "the pieces had more a sentimental rather than intrinsic value."[53] It is curious to note that, by contrast, Dutch inventories from the same period contained old porcelain of the *kraak* type that was valued at a much higher sum than new porcelain.[54]

The development of the importation of Chinese porcelain and other exotica in the trade networks from China-Manila-Mexico and Spain did not trigger a significant shift of the lifestyles and consumer habits of Spaniards during the Golden Age. And with the exception of a handful of individuals, porcelain was identified as a thing for women, and even in this context occupying only a limited space in their cabinets. Chinese porcelain had a practical use and a relatively low monetary valuation and place in the goods hierarchy for Spanish households. As time passed, pieces were discarded and deemed unworthy to be kept or to survive the centuries. However, as we have seen, these "invisible East Asian objects" left important traces in Spanish records, and these are what we have been able to partially reconstruct.

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[53]Fernandez Bayton, *Inventarios reales*: *Testamentaría del Rey Carlos II*, vol. 1, 222; and Archivo General de Palacio, Madrid, Testament of King Charles II of Spain, sig. 240, Guardajoyas y ofiçios de voca.

[54]Jan van Campen, "Chinese and Japanese Porcelain in the Interior," in *Chinese and Japanese Porcelain for the Dutch Golden Age*, ed. Jan van Campen and Titus Eliëns (Zwolle: Waanders Uitgevers, 2014), 209.

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Part V
Postscripts

Transcultural Objects, Movements, and Bodies

Anne Gerritsen

When the Polish Jesuit Michal Boym traveled to China in 1643, he brought with him a strong interest in botanics and medical science. The book he published on his return, *Flora Sinensis* (Vienna 1656), offered observations on flowers and fruits, spices and medicinal plants, and animals particular to China, with thirty beautiful colored illustrations. It included this image of a pineapple (Fig. 1). The accompanying Latin text explains that the fruit is referred to as *fan-po-lo mie* in Chinese, and *ananas* in India. In the French version of the *Flora Sinensis*, the description suggests this was an entirely unfamiliar fruit: it is described as having the shape of an egg, but much bigger than all the other fruits of the world, with a taste like honey, even surpassing melons in flavor.[1] Boym's visit to China and the publication of this text can be understood in many different ways: they could be seen as part of the thirst for knowledge of the wider world that was widespread in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe, the quest to convert "heathen" souls to Christianity, the commercial desire for new goods, markets, and consumers, or all of these (and others) combined.[2]

[1]Michel Boym, *Flora Sinensis, Fructus Floresque Humillime Porrigens* (Vienna: Matthaeus Rictius, 1656).

[2]Edward Kajdański, "Michael Boym's Medicus Sinicus," *T'oung Pao* 73 (1987): 161–89; Edward Kajdański, "The Traditional Chinese Medicine as Reflected in the Works of Michael Boym," *Monumenta Serica* 59, no. 1 (2011): 383–400; Claudia von Collani, "A Missionary on his Journey: Michal Boym and Religions in East Asia," *Monumenta Serica* 59 (2011): 315–40; Hartmut Walravens, "Eine Anmerkung zu Michael Boyms Flora Sinensis (1656)—einer wichtigen naturhistorischen Quelle," *China Mission Studies* (1979): 16–20.

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Fig. 1 *Fan-Po-Lo-Mie* or *Pineapple*. Color illustration in Michal Boym (1612–1659), *Flora Sinensis* (1656), 34. ©UNamur, Bibliothèque Universitaire Moretus Plantin

The appeal of the unknown, including the appeal of an unknown fruit like this pineapple, runs like a thread throughout the early modern world.

It should thus come as no surprise that the appeal of the unknown features in one form or another in almost all of this volume's chapters. In the introduction, the

editors of the volume refer to objects of interest that form "a bridge between worlds, both known and unknown"; Kyoungjin Bae talks of an "ambiguous new shape," "transmitted from somewhere unknown"; Ching-fei Shih's chapter is entitled "Unknown Transcultural Object"; Chen Kaijun analyzes lenses that are a foreign and "unknown artifact"; and Yu-chih Lai's *Album of Beasts* "materializes the unknown." Where the unknown is a concrete entity, the unknown takes many forms: it can be the shape of a thing that makes it unknown or the material it is made of, its function or its nature. But somehow the unknown is wrapped up in the desirability of things. Arguably, then, it is also this desire for the unknown thing that explains why things, and the idea of things, move from the realm where they are known into a world where they are not.

Apart from the appeal of the unknown, things that move feature throughout this book. The objects are varied in terms of their material composition, shape, design, and meaning, and they move in multiple directions and temporalities across Eurasia, but they all move. As the two editors of the volume say in the introduction: the scholarship on objects is somewhat divided between those who focus on the thing itself—its materiality, its technology, its appearance—and those who explore the agents and contexts through which things acquire their multiple meanings, but these authors all "bring the materiality of the objects/things/matter they investigate to conjoin with the force that they gain by virtue of their relationality with human subjects and socio-cultural contexts, viewing these as dynamic and reciprocally constitutive processes." When objects move, their materiality cannot be separated from the human agents and socio-cultural contexts that shape that movement.

These contributors are, of course, by no means the first to identify that objects move throughout and across Eurasia. Things have been given social and global lives for some time now.[3] Instead, and more significantly, the editors and authors of this volume seek to explore the complex dynamics of the relationship between materiality, context, and movement. And thus, this is also a book about the juncture between movement and rest, where the absence of movement, even if only temporarily, creates a new context for the materiality of objects, things, and matter to take meaning. Several of the authors in this volume explore precisely that juncture and identify that process at work as "domestication": the desire to appropriate the unfamiliar and render it known, to localize it, and give the other its place within the spaces and experiences of the self.

One can think of domestication in many different ways. Let us return briefly to the pineapple, represented as an unknown plant by Boym in the mid-seventeenth century. By 1700, a woman known as Agneta (or Agnes) Block (1629–1704) took a pineapple seed and succeeded in growing the fruit in the garden of her Vijverhof

[3] Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello, ed., *The Global Lives of Things: The Material Culture of Connections in the Early Modern World* (London: Routledge, 2016).

Fig. 2 Jan Weenix (1640–1719), *Agnes Block, Sybrand de Flines en twee kinderen op de buitenplaats Vijverhof*. Oil painting. c. 1694. Amsterdams Historisch Museum, inv.nr. SA 20359

estate in Loenen on the river Vecht in the Netherlands.[4] Her gardens were full of exotic plants, about which she corresponded with famous botanists like Jan Commelin (1629–1692), and she invited artists to draw these plants and flowers, including Maria Sybilla Merian (1647–1717). When the painter Jan Weenix (1642–1719) depicted her with her second husband and two children in her garden, he surrounded the couple with their botanical treasures, drawings, and books, including, on the far left, the pineapple (Fig. 2).[5] It was her success with the cultivation of a pineapple in her Vijverhof garden that led to the creation of a commemorative coin by the famous Dutch medalist Jan Boskam (Fig. 3). The prickly cactus and spikey leaves of the pineapple plant in the foreground have not lost their otherness, but they have also become part of a local, cultivated garden and have been integrated into a symbolic world and would have been recognized by Dutch viewers as signs of fertility and wealth. Like the silver material itself, which

[4]Catharina van der Graft, "Agnes Block en haar Liefde voor Tropische Gewassen," *Jaarboekje van Oud-Utrecht* (1962): 117–24.

[5]John Dixon Hunt, ed., *The Dutch Garden in the Seventeenth Century* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1990).

Fig. 3 Silver coin, designed by Jan Boskam, decorated on one side with the image of Agneta Block, and on the reverse with a woman holding the horn of cornucopia and a flower in front of her garden, 1700. Diameter 6 cm, Weight 93,93 gr. Rijksmuseum, inv. no. NG-VG-1-1812

may well have originated in the mines of New Spain, the otherness has become part of the world of the self.

Domestication through cultivation is also at work in this volume, albeit in a slightly different form. Wang Lianming describes "physical spaces created through domesticated nature," which he shows to have served as "vehicles for conveying certain attitudes, ideas, and concepts." The Jesuits were key agents in this process; they "described and studied foreign flora and fauna" while building garden spaces that served as sites for harnessing nature and creating order. But this process of domestication happens in many other ways too. It happens in Chen's chapter when a once foreign object in the shape of his lenses becomes domesticated through commercial marketing strategies that are entirely situated within the domestic context and rhetorical strategy. Tools of knowledge creation, too, serve to domesticate. For example, in Lai's study of the *Album of Beasts*, it is the representation of the creatures and their descriptions in Manchu and Chinese that harness their wildness. In this imperial Chinese publication, we see the process of domestication at work in the implementation and categorization of new techniques of drawing and

applying colors. Similarly, we see a process of domestication in Dawn Odell's study, when the Dutch start making Delft "porcelain," using their own clay and with a decorative technique that came from Spain, to look like something that came from China and eventually came to be marketed as something intrinsically Dutch. And although Eva Ströber's late Ming crayfish may always retain its exotic otherness—its shape, its colors, its function—at the same time it is domesticated when it enters into European knowledge systems through the media of photography, museum record keeping, and display.

Most intriguingly, it strikes me, is the significance of the body and its senses in this domestication. To return to the pineapple one final time, this illustration from the French fashion magazine *Journal des Dames et des Modes*, features an elegant French lady with a flat-topped turban, decorated with pearls, feathers, and a pineapple (Fig. 4). The pineapple retains some of the same characteristics we saw in the Boym drawing, the Weenix painting, and the Boskam coin: spikey branches, a rough-skinned egg-shaped fruit, and green leaves sprouting from the top of the fruit. But the association with the body and the sense of touch have brought the fruit closer than ever before. Through the presence of the body and its physical experiences, the fruit has become part of the self. Similarly, when people sit around the round table and share food, it is that physical experience that brings the once strange shape into the world of the self, as we see in Bae's piece, or when Chen's foreign lenses are marketed by means of the physical experience of seeing, "the bodily efficacy they were purported to enhance." Although Shih's piece is about the transmission of tools and technologies from Europe to China, it is also about the physical experience of making things, and the hands that transmit their knowledge through touch and embodied skills.

Perhaps we have underestimated the significance of bodily experiences in our approaches to the transcultural object.[6] Our attention has always been drawn to the layers that objects acquire as they move, the changing meanings of the materiality of thing and matter, and the constantly shifting relationalities of human and thing in context. But the body surely is key in this. Think, by way of conclusion, of the Chinese porcelains that feature in Cinta Krahe's chapter. In many ways, her work challenges our idea of the value of porcelain in Europe. Her meticulous research has shown that in Habsburg Spain the reception and value of Chinese porcelain was quite different from the rest of Europe, as it was rarely treasured, collected, and preserved. But her work also shows the extent of its integration into the domestic sphere, and, for example, its use for the consumption of food: fine Chinese porcelains were "taken or given away by members of the royal family or distributed as the vessels containing royal gifts of food." Perhaps there we can see how far the once exotic commodity had become domesticated: used as a vessel for containing or serving food, it enters the bodily realm and becomes part of the self. The hand that

[6]My own attempt at grappling with this can be found here: Anne Gerritsen, "Domesticating Goods from Overseas: Global Material Culture in the Early Modern Netherlands," *Journal of Design History* 29, no. 3 (2016): 228–44.

Fig. 4 *Costume Parisien*. In the caption, the outfit is described as 'Turban à Calotte plate, orné de Perles et d'un Ananas', 1797. Engraving, 181 × 118 mm. From the *Journal des Dames et des Modes*, Paris, September 21, 1797, Fig. 6. Rijksmuseum, RP-P-2009-1315

touches the plate and the lips that envelop the rim of the cup move the material from other to self. Through the bodily experience, EurAsian objects, including Boym's once exotic pineapple, find their way into the gardens and domestic spaces of their new homes, and by ways of bodies, hands, eyes, and heads, into the domesticity of our own bodies.

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Looking INTO the Transcultural Object

Marta Ajmar

As a historian of European material culture and design, it is refreshing to embark on a volume in which "art history" encompasses unapologetically anything from furniture and ceramics to ivory boxes and illustrated books, and where the meaning and materiality of objects are seen as a continuum rather than in opposition. The perspective presented in these essays builds on a growing historiography which challenges hardened art taxonomies and goes beyond the limitations of "contextual" methods in the understanding of objects, approaches which have tended to reduce artifacts to "meanings" and social relations.[1] Thanks to the "material turn," a renewed attention to the role of objects in interpersonal relationships and to our own relationship to artifacts has emerged within the humanities and the social sciences. This volume highlights how humans have an innate ability to form and transform themselves through inanimate objects.[2] It shows that artifacts should be placed at the core of emotional, sensual, representational, and communicative "expression" and treated as an irreplaceable source for any kind of historical inquiry, a key tool to providing insights into the lives of those with limited or no access to the

[1]Bruno Latour, "The Berlin Key or How to Do Words with Things," in *Matter, Materiality and Modern Culture*, ed. Paul M. Graves Brown (London: Routledge, 2000), 10–21; Carl Knappett, *Thinking through Material Culture: An Interdisciplinary Perspective* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005); Daniel Miller, *Material Cultures: Why Some Things Matter* (London: UCL Press, 1997).

[2]Bill Brown, *A Sense of Things: The Object Matter of American Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

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written word.[3] Collectively, these chapters underline the need to mobilize material culture not as mere "illustration" but as "exploration" of "practice, ideology or emotion."[4] They also align themselves with some of the most effective anthropological interpretive tools for exploring and affirming the significance of objects, for example through the concept of agency—whereby things can be understood as agents of cultural, political, or social change. Agency has shifted the emphasis from a dominant understanding of objects as nothing more than a manifestation or representation of intentional human production and meaningful human use, to one in which, in the processes of use and consumption, humans give agency to existing things, attributing autonomous power to them. Thus, things can be seen as able to "act" upon social situations, and objects might be interpreted not merely as "the product of history but also active agents in history."[5]

This volume owes much to these "material turn" approaches, but it also goes beyond them in significant ways, particularly by engaging uncompromisingly with design. Thanks to a close and subtle design analysis we learn how, almost paradoxically, the Cantonese round table develops its distinctively Chinese local identity while also maintaining its core British blueprint, becoming a fully-integrated transcultural object that in its usefulness does not need to change aesthetically to fit in. Another apparent contradiction emerges from the design *in absentia* of European optical lenses as featured in the seventeenth-century booklet authored by a Chinese lens maker, where the close analysis of the visual and textual apparatus of the pamphlet highlights strategically the effects and affects provided by their different designs *without representing them*, thus allowing for their successful reinvention and effective commercialization. Through a detailed examination of Jesuit garden designs in Beijing and their complex and strategic plant biota, we learn how instrumental these microcosmic manufactured spaces were to the symbolic representation of much wider political and religious ideology. This attention to design and material detail, this growing of a forceful argument from focused empirical observation is aligned in these essays with the wider historical implications brought about by a close study of transcultural artifacts. Thus, collectively, these essays shake the foundations of key concepts: cultural essentialism and the unproblematic acceptance of larger metageographic assumptions.

> After the myth of continents and the fable of an enduring East-West division, the most debilitating geographical misconception is probably the myth of the nation-state.[6]

[3] Leora Auslander, "Beyond Words," *American Historical Review* 110, no. 4 (2005): 1017.

[4] Sara Pennell, "Mundane Materiality, or, Should Small Things Still Be Forgotten? Material culture, Micro-histories and the Problem of Scale," in *History and Material Culture: A Student's Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources*, ed. Karen Harvey (London: Routledge, 2009), 173–91.

[5] Auslander, "Beyond Words," 1015–45. For the concept of agency, see also Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

[6] Martin W. Lewis and Karen E. Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 7.

Lewis and Wigen's powerful reminder of the constructed and contingent nature of these enduring political-geographical entities might be seen to operate as a consonant counterpoint to the artifacts whose complex biographies unfold in this volume. Beyond the obvious consideration that speaking of the transnational would be especially problematic for the period under scrutiny (1600–1800), when many European nation-states were not yet even embryonically formed, what is clear is that the intrinsic cultural complexity of these objects defies simple "national" labelling, and invites instead an approach where national references should only appear between quotation marks, ready to be challenged. From the Cantonese round table conflating English practice with Chinese convivial ritual, to the Ming ceramic crayfish traveling between Renaissance cabinets of curiosities, Japanese tea ceremony, and Bornean drinking ritual, the objects at the heart of this collection of essays subtly undermine and complicate any fixed metageographical category, revealing scenarios in which cultural meaning and identity are fluid, temporary, stratified, and multifarious. Under their apparent material solidity and objectiveness, artifacts emerge as semantically ephemeral and prone to subjective, located interpretation, demanding an approach that is sensitive to the complexities of hybrid geographical identities.

This approach centred on the transcultural is of direct relevance to the ways in which museums construct their exhibits. We may take the Victoria and Albert Museum as a useful platform for discussion. In recent years the V&A has employed different strategies for representing transcultural objects within its galleries. A range of different, momentous taxonomies interlock within the large swathes of V&A displays. "Primary" galleries provide contextual historical displays through an approach that usually embraces several centuries and multiple regions. So-called secondary galleries focus on materials and techniques, addressing head-on questions of materiality, technology, and design. The Europe Galleries 1600–1815, which opened in 2015, operate within this institutional intellectual framework and interweave artifacts from all over the world in the pursuit of a critical narrative of the growth and expansion of early modern European art and design, including some of the less palatable aspects underpinning their blossoming, from slavery to colonialism. Transcultural interconnectedness features prominently within these new galleries. In a section devoted to Global Trade, for example, placed next to each other in close dialogue are seventeenth-century delftware imitating Chinese porcelain, and contemporary Jingdezhen porcelain aimed at the European market, artifacts whose genesis and social *modus operandi* depend fundamentally on transcultural forces. The methodology at work clearly manifests the significance of mutual exchange, knowledge circulation, and connectivity. While keeping each object firmly within strict geographical and temporal parameters, this display offers a point of entry into a complex, continuous and reciprocal flow of design ideas, technological knowledge, and cultural and aesthetic values that have informed each other in the making, marketing, and consumption of these transcultural artifacts. This and other displays within the Galleries project a vision of the intense "horizontal," synchronic transcultural relations between Europe and the rest of the world at one point in time. Because of their clearly defined chronological boundaries and thematic approach,

however, these galleries tend not to engage directly with the *longue durée*, diachronic, temporally deep aspects of such relations. If, to give one example, we are interested in finding out how particular transcultural designs, technologies, or types of artifact developed over space *and* time, we would have to look for answers elsewhere. So how might we think about the transcultural through a two-pronged approach combining geographical with chronological connectivity?

This question is of direct relevance to various chapters in this volume. As the significance of transcultural objects as expressions and agents of globalization attracts increasing scholarly attention, it is vital to point out that the opening and questioning of the geographical frameworks brought about by them should also make us sensitive to the need to reconsider their supposedly simple, "thin," linear temporalities. In other words, the cultural complexity embedded in their diverse and dynamic "geography" should encourage us to begin to also consider alternative *chronological* models, from the *longue durée* view proposed by historians to the "open time" approaches emerging from art history and anthropology.[7] In a recent article I have proposed ways of thinking about transcultural artifacts as multi-layered compounds resulting from long-term temporal forces working across wide geographies, mobilizing their intrinsic material and technological complexity to disrupt nationally defined, chronologically located labels and comfortable periodizations.[8] Through this approach, transcultural artifacts might be seen as stratified temporal and geographical clusters, not unlike geological specimens resulting from multiple, diachronic, synchronic, and anachronic, spatially interwoven phenomena: objects embodying a global DNA.

If we focus, for example, on a medium referred to in this volume as a direct predecessor of Delft ceramics, Italian tin-glazed earthenware or *maiolica*, we can see that the evidence for *intrinsic*, material and technological global matrixes at work and for long-term temporal stratification is compelling. Maiolica is generally aligned with "high culture" and humanism because of its engagement with the pictorial through narrative representation, from the biblical to the classical. Through this association, maiolica is made to fit the still dominant cultural template that sees the Renaissance as a revival of a Greco-Roman antiquity, a view that has cemented a Eurocentric view of the past. However, another perspective central to fifteenth- and sixteenth-century ceramics can help us to illuminate the complex and deep material roots of this medium and take it out of Italy and even Europe and away from a comfortable Greco-Roman lineage: the application to pottery of metallic lustre, which created a new ceramic commodity in high demand—lustreware. Lustre was a new technology that was reliant on a copper- or silver-based metallic glaze and

[7]Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le Monde Méditerranéen à l'Epoque de Philippe II* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1949); George Kubler, *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962); Georges Didi-Huberman, "The Surviving Image: Aby Warburg and Tylorian Anthropology," *Oxford Art Journal* 25, no. 1 (2002): 59–70.

[8]Marta Ajmar, "The Renaissance in Material Culture. Material Mimesis as Force and Evidence of Globalization," in *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization*, ed. Tamar Hodos (London: Routledge, 2016), 669–86.

Fig. 1 Tin-glazed earthenware with lustre decoration. Gubbio. 1490–1510. Victoria and Albert Museum © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

involved a third firing of the pot. Thanks to lustre, ceramic vessels could in some ways aspire to compete with their more valuable metallic counterparts, which they also often approximated through design inspired by metalware (Fig. 1). Sixteenth-century sources sensitive to the novel aesthetics and technological innovation embedded in lustred maiolica remark on the lack of classical precedents for it. For example, the Italian artist and man of letters Giorgio Vasari observes how "of this kind of vases the Romans had none . . . for the vases of those times don't have that lustrous glazing . . . which has been seen and is still seen in our times."[9] Lustred Italian maiolica did not originate from ancient classical pottery, but stemmed out of what we might see as the immediate technological reference and commercial

[9]Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori*, vol. 5, ed. Paola Barocchi et al. (Florence: Giunti, 1966), 465.

competitor for Renaissance pottery in Italy more generally: lustreware imported from the Middle East or Southern Spain and produced by communities of Muslim potters. Thus if we were to assess these kinds of pots "across space," we would point out their geographically wide, horizontal make up—tin (probably) from Cornwall, cobalt blue pigment from the Middle East, copper and silver from various parts of Europe, and local clay. What makes these global lustrous artifacts central to our argument about periodization, however, is that their production relies also on a multiplicity of *chronologically stratified technologies*. The transparent, vitreous glaze found beneath the metallic lustre is an ancient Mesopotamian and Chinese technology, while tin-glazing, which involves shrouding the clay body of the vessel in a white canvas-like coating, is a technology that developed in the Islamic world from as early as the ninth century. Thus, this lustrously glazed medium, whose distant precedents are not rooted in classical antiquity, complicates our comfortable narratives about the Renaissance as a direct revival of Greco-Roman culture, and by doing so provides instead a window into an alternative chronological mapping of the period, one that is indebted to non-European material culture and infused with artisanal technological continuities and connections over the *longue durée* and with the wider world. When we dissect transcultural objects of this kind we can thus identify a multiplicity of horizontal, but also vertical forces at work, that are jointly responsible for their structural depth and complexity. Their literal, material layering and their metaphorical, historical depth can be seen to merge. These pots are both global and cross-temporal in their make-up, each layer stemming from a different time and place but coming together in a new, embodied and present whole.

The approach summarized here argues for a shift from *looking at* to *looking into* transcultural objects, interrogating their structural, material complexity and temporal stratification and exploring their inter-connectedness not just as commodities in motion or as material incarnations of multiple cultural forces but as *multilayered technological compounds*.[10] We might want to ask ourselves what would we find if we were to open up, to "hold these objects up to the light"—as Renaissance natural philosophers proposed as an apt way to materially apprenhend Chinese porcelain—and *see into* them, cutting through and scrutinizing their materiality and structural complexity through a lens sensitive not only to global connections across space, but also to historical stratification. This would allow us to question the enduring geographical and temporal frameworks and taxonomical practices that allow for these objects to be labeled within a mono-cultural, clear-cut space and time framework. Instead, by looking into these objects and opening them out we can start to unpick their structural complexity—where material and temporal layering can be made to coincide and their transcultural interconnectedness be allowed to surface.

[10]Marta, Ajmar, "The Renaissance in Material Culture," 684. This approach is fully developed in my forthcoming book, *Material Mimesis: Local and Global Connections in the Arts of the Italian Renaissance*.

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