

**Porcelain circling the Globe. International Trading Structures
and the East Asia Collection of Augustus the Strong (1670-1733)**

Porzellansammlung, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden

Wednesday, 13 – Thursday, 14 June 2018

ABSTRACTS

ANNE GERRITSEN

Jingdezhen's porcelain and the merchant route books in late imperial China

This paper explores the routes travelled by porcelain from its site of production to its consumers within the empire and all over the world. The route books specified important details for the mobile merchant community: distances between postal stations, locations to stay, potential hazards to be avoided and important markets to visit. Porcelain traders of course focused on Jingdezhen, where the goods were prepared and packed for the journey. But they also frequented places like Wuchengzhen, the most important depot of the region, from where the goods were shipped north to the imperial palace, east to the busiest consumer centres of the lower Yangzi region, and south, where the foreign ships were waiting. The route books served as merchant manuals, but also provided the merchant networks with the necessary knowledge to facilitate their commercial activities. Without these route books, the supplies of porcelain that reached overseas destinations would have looked very differently.

SUN YUE

Imperial Wares in the Dresden Porcelain Collection: Possibilities of Provenance

There are some Chinese imperial wares in Augustus the Strong's collection. This article discusses several possibilities about the provenance of these pieces. Firstly, these are from the legacies of the Medici family. Secondly, commodities from Chinese imperial kiln factories in the late Ming dynasty. Thirdly, gifts through diplomatic channels to the Dutch Oriental India Company in early Qing period. Fourth, some pieces which have official reign marks are not necessarily imperial wares in Kangxi period, and vice versa.

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MIKI SAKURABA

The Chinese Junk's intermediate trade in Japanese porcelain for the West between the late 17th century and 1730's

Japanese porcelain was exported from Japan by means of VOC ships and Chinese junks. VOC carried porcelain made to order for the Company's trade until 1683. After then, their ships carried porcelain privately by Dutch personnel from Nagasaki. However Chinese junks trading between Nagasaki and ports in Asia exported much larger quantities of Japanese porcelain than the Dutch.

A percentage of the Japanese porcelain carried by Chinese junks to Chinese ports such as Amoy, Chusan and Canton, to ports in Tonkin (Vietnam) and Siam (Thailand), but also to Batavia, ultimately reached Europe. From Batavia, VOC ships carried Japanese porcelain to the Netherlands. In Amoy, Chusan and Canton, the English East India Company (EIC) was in a position to acquire Japanese porcelain from Chinese traders. Also ships of the other European East India Companies, which also traded in Canton, carried loads of porcelain back to their respective countries.

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This presentation introduces the records from the VOC and EIC archives between the late 17th century and 1730's and see what they tell us about the Chinese junk trade in Japanese porcelain and in particular pieces for the European market.

AMELIA MACIOSZEK

Let's Carefully Balance It! Safavid Adaptations of Chinese Blue-and-white Porcelain

When foreign stimuli in form of handicraft reach a foreign land, they evoke a plethora of responses. Frequently, they gain popularity, which leads to making derivative forms. The new decorative motifs undergo a careful process of adaptation, which is ruled by the needs of customers and in consequence such factors as their language, religion, and culture. Parallel forms are quickly recognized and applied or dropped for their bad associations, whereas those that are different create a possibility for a loose interpretation. How porcelain was traded between China and Persia, which objects were preferred, as well as how they were adapted by the Persian artists are the questions, which shall be answered in the presentation.

CHRISTIAAN JÖRG

Some aspects of the Dutch porcelain trade in Asia in relation to the collection of Augustus the Strong

Since the early 17th century, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) traded in Chinese porcelain, but it was a trade with ups and downs. Political changes in China influenced the availability of porcelain in the mid-century, but Japanese porcelain made in Arita offered an alternative. In the early 1680s, porcelain production for export was resumed in China, but by then the economic situation had changed. Competition was fierce, for producers as well as for buyers. At the same time demand in the Netherlands rose sharply, partly due to new fashions in interior design, partly due to the popularity of drinking tea and coffee. Facing losses, the VOC ceased buying porcelain altogether in the mid 1690s and private dealers took over imports in the Netherlands. Therefore, the acquisitions of Augustus the Strong were largely dependant on this private Dutch trade in porcelain. Only in 1728 the VOC started to participate in the tea trade in Canton, including middle-class porcelain as part of the return cargoes for the Netherlands.

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JAN VAN CAMPEN

Chinese Porcelain and the Netherlands

The seventeenth and early eighteenth century witnessed an interesting competition between European monarchs and their spouses: who had the most impressive porcelain cabinet. We all know that Augustus the Strong was the proud champion.

I should like to explore how this royal porcelain enthusiasm started and I think we need to (once more) focus on the Netherlands in the 17th Century to find out. My line of thinking is that Amalia van Solms had to come up with a plan to differentiate from Dutch citizens in a clearly

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recognizable way. Because ‘all’ citizens had large numbers of good quality porcelain, Amalia invented the princely cabinet of porcelain, an example that was followed and outdone by others. Questions are: why did so many affluent Dutch citizens have Chinese porcelain (e.g. compared to the situation in 16th C. Portugal and Spain) and how did Amalia’s cabinets relate to newly found descriptions of earlier porcelain rooms in Portugal, Spain and the Southern Netherlands.

MAX TILLMANN

„His Electoral Highness wishes to have a porcelain service mounted with gold“ – The role of the agents and dealers supporting the East Asian porcelain collection of Elector Max Emanuel of Bavaria (1662-1726)

Competing through the extravagant splendour of their courts, there are significant parallels to be drawn in view of the collecting strategies of Augustus the Strong and Max Emanuel of Bavaria, two electors with mutual royal pretensions. Both were baroque rulers who combined their passion for collecting East Asian porcelain with an interest in employing the expertise of connoisseurs. Examining the decisive role of Max Emanuel’s advisors, dealers and trade networks the specific profile of his porcelain collection comes to the fore.

STÉPHANE CASTELLUCCIO

From Cathay to Versailles: Oriental porcelain in the Louis XIV’s collection

As his contemporaries, Louis XIV owned fashionably oriental porcelain. He made it buy with traders belonging to both corporations which were divided the trade of ceramic in Paris: « faïenciers » and « marchands merciers ». The identification of their suppliers and the composition of their stocks, as well as the practised prices will allow to understand the importance of the economic constraints and their influence on the fashion and the purchases. Indeed, the variety of porcelain available on the French market remained limited during the second half of the XVIIth century, whereas the planned uses, either utilitarian on the table of the sovereign or ornamental in its apartments, also implied the choices of certain types of porcelain. The royal set, exceptional by its scale and by its quality, knew how to meet the expectations of the sovereign and its service.

MENNO FITSKI

Collecting Kakiemon porcelain in Holland and beyond

Since its inception around 1670, high-quality Japanese porcelain in the Kakiemon style became a fashionable item in European elite collections, and members of the Dutch House of Orange built collections for the porcelain rooms in their various residences. This lecture explores the trade that supplied these clients, tracking the way that these exclusive pieces porcelain may have travelled, from being ordered in Japan, via the Dutch East India Company, to dealers in Europe who catered to high-end clients.

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CORA WÜRMELL

The Dresden Porcelain Project: The 18th century collection reassessed

Since 2014, the Porzellansammlung Dresden has undergone one of its most ambitious projects to date: the scientific cataloguing of c. 8000 East Asian extant porcelain objects from the former Royal Collection of Augustus the Strong. Over 30 researchers from Europe, Japan, China and the USA are part of this international project, which aims to thoroughly examine, research and publish this important collection of Chinese and Japanese porcelain of the 17th and 18th centuries in relation to the original and unpublished 18th century inventories. This talk will present some of the results, new insights and discoveries as well as questions and problems raised during the research.

KAROLIN RANDHAHN

Writing the Japanese Palace inventories 1721 – 1727 and 1779

The greatest historical sources for examining the collection of Augustus the Strong are the two Japanese Palace Inventories of 1721– 1727 and 1779. Both documents present listings of his possessions. The process of writing the inventories consisted not only of categorizing porcelain to sort them into fixed chapters and subchapters, but of recording each piece and creating a framework of phrases for their characteristics.

During the 1720s, the inventory was a living document, constantly updated and witness to many plights at court. It lists around 27.000 pieces of porcelain on 884 bound pages, with an estimated 100 pages lost. The later account of 1779 can be used to shed some light onto these missing parts. Still, in many cases, the process of allocating porcelain to inventory entries amounts to detective work.

Assessing Augustus' porcelain through the inventories reveals new insights into the systematic recording practices at the Saxony court and permits to draw conclusions about the objects' reception and their place within the collection.

RUTH SONJA SIMONIS

The King's personal shopper: Count Lagnasco's porcelain acquisitions in the Netherlands for Augustus the Strong, 1716/1717

In 1716, Peter Robert Taparelli Count of Lagnasco (1659 – 1735), an Italian officer, was sent to Amsterdam and The Hague by Augustus the Strong to purchase Asiatica for the equipment of the King's palace. His letters, up to now unpublished, are a thorough account of the trading situation in Amsterdam, and describe in detail the availability of Asian goods in the Netherlands, the competition among buyers, as well as the objects that were bought for the King.

The messages exchanged between Lagnasco, his Dutch contacts and Augustus the Strong give us the opportunity to analyze the trade of Asiatica in great detail. They offer new insights into the porcelain trade, including information on the overall acquisition process. Through an analysis of the King's letters and his orders regarding the purchase of porcelain, it is possible to estimate

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his direct influence on the systematic acquisition of particular porcelain objects. Furthermore, the records give information about the variety of porcelain available on the Dutch market, prices, and trade networks. The paper examines the importance of individual merchants and their role in supplying European collectors with East Asian goods.

ANITA WANG/CORDULA BISCHOFF

August the Strong and his collection of Chinese prints and drawings

The Dresden Kupferstich-Kabinett's collection contains almost 1200 Chinese prints and paintings, acquired by August the Strong. Many of them are exceptional in terms of their quality and historical significance. Pieces in the collection range from examples of elite art to popular pieces of which, due to the use in day-to-day life and their general lower status, very few examples have survived in China. In two closely related talks the genesis and history of acquisition of some pieces are presented.

From China to Europe

This presentation provides details of the production centres in China for these artworks, and presents the influence of European artistic techniques on these Chinese works. It analyses the ways in which this collection can add to our understanding of both European and Chinese cultures, including the complexities of the inter-related elements of the two regions' histories and provides rich evidence of the artistic and cultural exchange between China and Europe during the 17th to 18th centuries.

From Europe to Dresden

This paper traces the various ways of August's acquisitions of East Asian graphic works which range from auctions in the Netherlands, the Leipzig fair and specialised dealers to diplomatic gifts from other potentates. It also outlines value and use of Chinese works at Saxon court.

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TOMOKO FUJIWARA

Early exported Arita wares in the collection of Augustus the Strong

Augustus the Strong, who was born in 1670, enthusiastically collected Asian porcelain from 1717 until his death in 1733. The extensive collection that resulted included Arita porcelain produced from 1650 to the 1660s. These characteristic works were produced only half a century after Arita porcelain was first fired and shortly after the advent of the first Japanese overglaze enamel ware. At the time, local craftsmen were trying to determine what sorts of products they should produce while overseas merchants in Nagasaki were grappling with the question of what to order and export to their own markets. Objects in the collection Augustus the Strong dating from the time of these earliest exports illustrate Dutch merchants' efforts to develop a new market. They represent only a small cross-section of the Arita ware exported at the time, but as such they were premium products that were distributed domestically in Japan and must have been seen as novelties by European merchants.

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STACEY PIERSON

Export or Exported? Challenging Classifications of Traded Porcelains

So-called 'export' porcelain is a major category of Chinese ceramics. Conventionally this is defined as porcelains that left China at one time or another and usually were made specifically for export. This type of porcelain has been made since the Tang dynasty in China (618-906) and can be found in sites and collections all over the world. 'Export wares' thus encompass a long time period and a vast geographical span but the classification of these wares is in fact somewhat one-dimensional. It is based on the assumption that 'export' was an exclusive category of porcelain when in fact manufacturers in China often made no such distinctions, apart from special commissions. Most 'export wares' were identical to those produced for domestic consumption but simply have been exported or transferred to another location beyond China. There is a further assumption associated with such wares which is that their movement was finite, when in fact objects often moved many times in their life histories and were themselves impacted by these movements, changing their identities each time. In order to understand and properly contextualize the movement of Chinese ceramics around the world, new tools for the interpretation of the wares themselves need to be developed. This paper will consider this problem and firstly propose a more neutral, objective description of movement: 'transfer'. As it focuses on movement, the concept of transfer may in turn offer new tools for a more nuanced analysis of export porcelains and their impact on consumers as well as local ceramic production and design. In order to test the notion of transfer as an analytical tool, this paper will examine key examples of Chinese porcelain from the 17th – 18th centuries in the former Saxon royal collection, now in the SKD, which possibly have been made specifically for export or were simply exported. Some of these were also subsequently moved to another location, through a mechanism which will be defined here as 'secondary transfer'. In each case, the impact of the movement will be considered as well as related typological issues as some of these porcelains were made at the Qing imperial factory. This challenges the convenient yet value-laden classification of some Chinese ceramics as 'guan yao' or 'imperial'. Export wares, by their current definition, can only be seen as the opposite, and therefore inferior.