



*The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*  
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# *Chinese Export Porcelain*

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THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART



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*Front cover: Detail of Plant Tub, Chinese (English market); see pp. 14, 15. Back cover: Detail of Punch Bowl, Chinese (American market); see p. 43*

# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

By the eighteenth century trade between China and Europe had expanded from a quest for spices to embrace tea, textiles, silver, and porcelain. Porcelain was incidental to the success of this trade, constituting 6 percent or less of the value of East India Company cargoes. But the quantity of exported porcelains—some 300 million pieces are believed to have reached England over two centuries—ensured a lasting influence on Western taste and ceramics history. Several hundred thousand blue and white porcelains received yearly in ports from London to Gothenburg graced shelves, cabinets, and dinner and tea tables, as the novelty of the material impelled its reinvention by fledgling European porcelain factories. An entirely new aesthetic—part Western, part Asian—emerged with private traders, who gave rein to their individual tastes by ordering, directly from China, specially designed porcelains painted with armorials, views, or timely images based on drawings and prints. Today, part of the appeal of Chinese export porcelain lies in the biographical and historical contexts of these orders, which provide a personal element that is particular to the porcelain trade.

The foundation of the Museum's collection of Chinese export porcelain for the European trade was the Helena Woolworth McCann Collection of about four thousand pieces, which was formed in the late 1930s in Europe and the United States and focused on eighteenth-century armorial

services. Half of the collection was lent to the Metropolitan in 1946, and 414 pieces were given to the Museum in 1951 by the Winfield Foundation, established by the McCann family. By agreement with the foundation, and in collaboration with the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the remainder of the McCann Collection was dispersed among twenty-four American museums. Subsequent additions, for the most part generously supported by the Winfield Foundation, have been made with a view to illustrating more of the stylistic and cultural interactions between China and Europe that have come to light over two decades of ever-widening scholarship.

No single collection, donor, or collector stands out among our American-market porcelains. Works with important American connections were bought during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. What is consistent in the pattern of acquisitions is that a number of significant porcelains were not "collected" per se but cherished and passed down from generation to generation of family members, who felt, ultimately, that the best place for their heirlooms to be cared for and appreciated was at the Metropolitan Museum. I refer in particular to superb examples given by Verplanck descendants and to three great American-market punch bowls made for John Lamb, Benjamin Eyre, and Ebenezer Stevens, as well as to the large Paine service, a gift from the family.

The authors of this *Bulletin* are Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, Anthony W. and



Lulu C. Wang Curator of American Decorative Arts, and Clare Le Corbeiller, curator emerita in the Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, who retired from the Museum in 2000. We are delighted to have her contribution to this issue and to note that she maintains a strong presence at the Metropolitan. Through her impeccable curatorial practices and numerous important acquisitions, and as a stimulating mentor to colleagues and students, she has made a lasting mark

on this institution as well as on the field of decorative arts.

An exhibition, "Chinese Export Porcelain at The Metropolitan Museum of Art," will be held at the Museum from January 14 to July 13, 2003. We are very grateful to Mary and Marvin Davidson for their generous support of both the exhibition and this publication.

Philippe de Montebello  
Director

*Detail of Punch Bowl (fig. 51): British factory, or hong, on the Canton waterfront (see p. 48)*









1. Ewer. Chinese (Portuguese market), Ming dynasty (1368–1644), Zhengde period (1506–21), ca. 1520. Hard paste. H. 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (18.7 cm). Apocryphal mark of the Xuande period (1426–35). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Purchase, Winfield Foundation Gift, 1961 (61.196)

*The Islamic form of this ewer is a reminder that the West came late to the export trade, and its impromptu nature is further emphasized by the royal Portuguese arms painted upside down. The likelihood of porcelains having been produced during the first direct contact between Portugal and China has long been debated, but the physical characteristics of this ewer—its distinctly greenish glaze, mild blue painting, and misty surface—place it in that inaugural period.*



# THE EUROPEAN TRADE

At once exotic and mundane, ornamental and utilitarian, Chinese porcelain began to alter Western taste at the onset of the seventeenth century. Until then its influence had been intermittent and circumstantial, its occasional presence the result of a rare gift (fig. 2) or a princely collection, like that of the Medici grand dukes in the mid-sixteenth century. Commercial trade with the West was made possible by the Portuguese opening of the sea route around the Cape of Good Hope in 1498, and the first porcelains decorated specifically for the Western market resulted from Portugal's direct contact with Beijing between 1517 and 1521 (fig. 1). A failure of diplomacy caused a breach lasting until 1554, but a sizable and heterogeneous group of porcelains datable to this early period bears witness to Portugal's success in establishing the mechanics of East-West trade. Among these porcelains are ewers bearing the coats of arms of Portuguese active in the East, large dishes with Christian emblems, a bowl with Renaissance grotesque



2. Covered Cup. Chinese with English mounts, ca. 1565–70. Hard paste and silver gilt. H. 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (18.7 cm). Gift of Irwin Untermyer, 1968 (68.141.125a, b)

*Six bowls of this type were recorded at Schloss Ambras in the Austrian Tyrol in 1596, five marked with a seal translated as "fine vessel for the rich and honorable." Our cup, with its sober mounts by an unidentified English silversmith, corresponds closely to the description of one given to Queen Elizabeth I in 1582.*

*The outside of the bowl was originally covered with finely drawn gold decoration; although now almost entirely lost, it is still a dramatic contrast to the blue and white interior. This style of painting in gold on a colored ground was produced in the mid-sixteenth century primarily for the Japanese market, where it was termed kinrande ("gold brocaded").*



*Covered cup, interior*

masks, and several bowls and bottles inscribed and dated either 1541 or 1552. What is important for the impact on taste and trade is the expeditiousness with which Chinese porcelain became available and that it was all in underglaze blue and white, a relatively recent innovation of the Yuan dynasty (1260–1368) that was in production in Jingdezhen, southeastern China, by about 1330 and was, by the sixteenth century, the lingua franca of export porcelain.

Little is known of the extent of Portugal's sixteenth-century trade, even after the country was accorded a permanent station in Macao in 1557, but it succeeded in initiating the two most defining aspects of export porcelain: as a vehicle for Western decoration and as tableware that would ultimately determine the repertoire of the eighteenth-century European ceramics factories. In 1563 the archbishop of Braga observed that "in Portugal we have a kind of tableware which, being made of clay, may be compared advantageously to silver both in its elegance and in its cleanliness. . . . We call it porcelain. . . . The pieces which are decorated in blue dumbfound the eyes. . . . They are not concerned about their fragility since they are quite cheap." Here are all the features that made Chinese porcelain so attractive—and even, until the late eighteenth century, necessary—to the West: material, usefulness, color, and cost.

It was in competing with the Portuguese for inter-Asian trade that the Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Ostindische Compagnie, hereafter VOC) created a European market for Chinese porcelain. Founded in 1602, the company captured two Portuguese ships between 1602 and 1604, one with a cargo estimated at 100,000 porcelains. The profitable sale of these cargoes in

Middelburg and Amsterdam established a demand that the VOC was quick to recognize.

The allure and novelty of the blue and white palette—then and still synonymous with the material itself—called for no change. The immediate challenge was to exploit the existing industrialized production of Jingdezhen and the responsiveness of the private kilns to new markets by making Chinese porcelain useful in a Western context. For the Dutch, as for the Portuguese, export porcelain was intended chiefly for table use, and this emphasis would eventually result in the programmed table service of the eighteenth century (figs. 31, 41).

The cargoes of the late Wanli period (1573–1620) were composed largely of what has come to be known as *kraak* ware (fig. 3). Mass produced from the second half of the sixteenth century to nearly 1640 for export within Asia as well as to Europe, it quickly defined Chinese porcelain in the European marketplace, figuring as early as about 1615 in still-life paintings by Floris van Dijck (1575–1621) and Osias Beert (ca. 1580–1623). The shapes were chiefly bowls, cups, and dishes in standard sizes, and though these continued to be in demand, the VOC records indicate a growing desire for specifically Western forms. In 1608 the company requested butter dishes, mustard pots, saltcellars, and wine pots "if they can make them"; but there is no surviving evidence that these early orders were filled. Steady trade began about 1634, when relations between the Chinese merchants and the Dutch, established a decade earlier in Taiwan, became settled. From then until 1647, when the first period of Dutch trade came to a halt, the range of forms expanded to encompass a wide spectrum of utilitarian wares: standing salts, jugs, tankards, mustard pots, and plates. Patterns for these pieces





3. Dish. Chinese (European market), early 17th century. Hard paste. Diam. 11¼ in. (28.6 cm). The Hans Syz Collection, Gift of Stephan B. Syz and John D. Syz, 1995 (1995.268.1)

*A defining feature of kraak porcelain (so-called from the Dutch name for caracca, the Portuguese merchant ship) is the device of paneled decoration, seen here in the wide border of the dish, with its alternation of sunflowers and emblems. The central scene of ducks on a pond and the paneled motifs are among the numerous variants on the basic format of this extensive class of export porcelain. Closely similar examples to our dish, which is well made and painted with strong color and with care, if not with spirit, were found in the cargo of the Dutch ship Witte Leeuw, sunk in battle off Saint Helena in 1613.*

were reportedly furnished as early as 1632, but the first confirmed order was placed in 1635 and requested unfamiliar forms for which models were required. The models were made of wood in Taiwan, where the Dutch governor, Hans Putmans, "had a turner and 2 or 3 painters working for more than 2 months to turn and paint jugs, wash-basins, cooling-tubs, dishes, mugs, salt cellars and mustard pots." There being no repertoire in Western ceramics for most of these shapes

4. Bowl. Chinese (Dutch market), Ming dynasty (1368–1644), ca. 1635–44. Hard paste. Diam. 13⅜ in. (34 cm). Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

*Despite the paneled kraak format and the Chinese figures, the bowl is more Western than Chinese in its decoration. European prints must have provided the landscape compositions, with their horizon lines and gabled buildings; the thin-stemmed flowers evoke Dutch embroidery patterns of about 1635–45.*







5. Taperstick. Chinese (probably Dutch market), ca. 1700–1710. Hard paste. H. 5¼ in. (13.3 cm). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Purchase, Winfield Foundation Gift, 1970 (1970.266.3)

*The stepped, square-sectioned form of the taperstick is derived from late-seventeenth-century metalwork, but this example—with its multiple stages and carefully zoned decoration—is probably based on a painted wood model.*

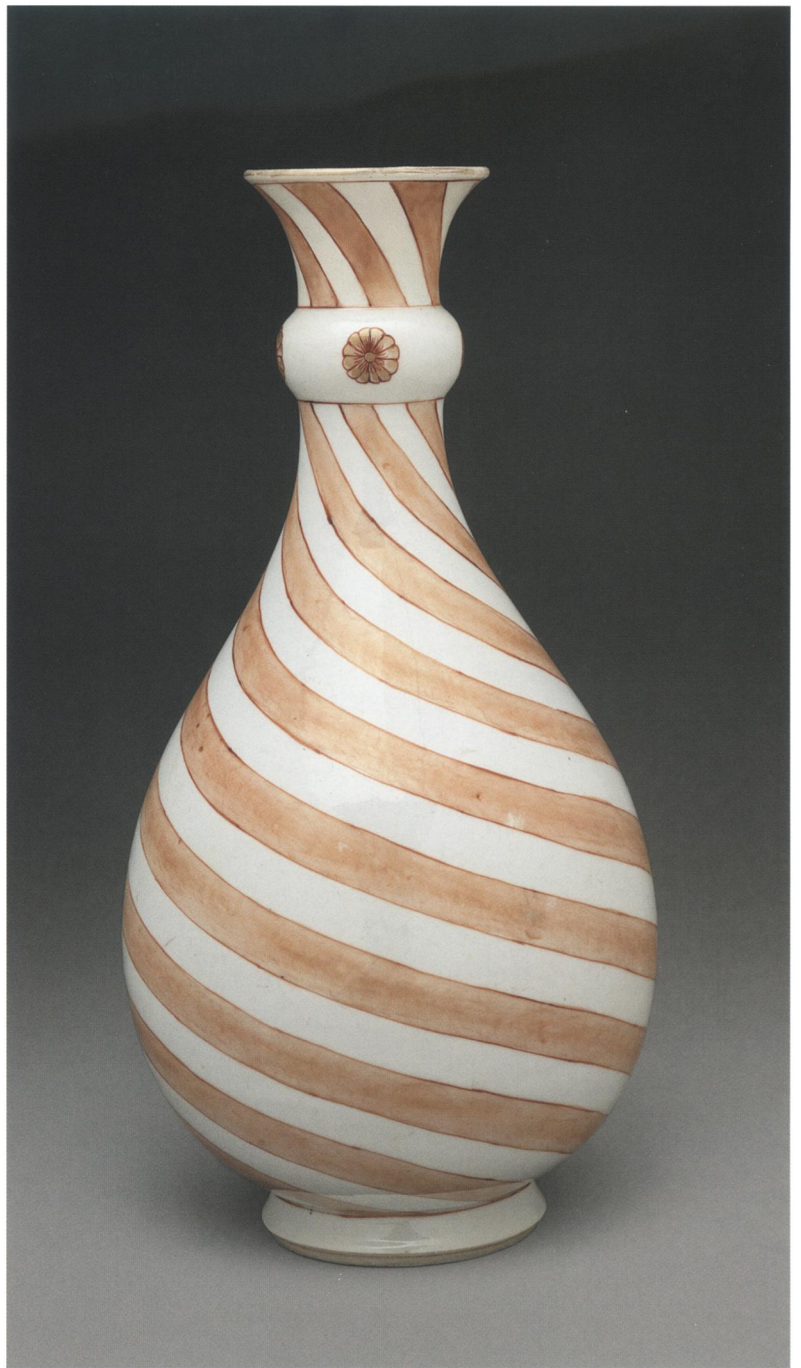


6. Standing Covered Cup. Chinese (European market), ca. 1690–1700. Hard paste. H. 9 in. (22.9 cm). Purchase by subscription, 1879 (79.2.242a, b)

*A very similar form has been recorded in Netherlandish glass of about 1690, and glass may have been the inspiration for this goblet; but the multiple turnings and the highly organized decoration suggest a painted wood model as its immediate source. Ten variant examples of the goblet, similarly painted, were found in the cargo of the Vung Tau, a Chinese junk bound for Batavia that sank off the southern coast of Vietnam about 1690–1700. By far the largest portion of the cargo consisted of different types of vases, a clear indication that it was intended to meet the new fashion in northern Europe for collecting Chinese porcelain as interior decoration to be displayed on furniture, on floors, and on shelves covering entire walls.*

at the time, the wood models would have copied examples in other materials, most likely pewter or silver. Wood models are referred to intermittently by the Dutch as late as 1757 (and once, in 1710, by the English), but none is known to have survived and evidence of their use can only be inferred (figs. 5, 6). Other materials also came into play: plates with flat, wide rims in imitation of a Dutch pewter model were requested by the VOC in 1634, and earthenware forms were supplied for the Japan trade in 1661. Several later shapes have been traced directly or indirectly to glass (figs. 6, 7). With the rise of European ceramics factories, export shapes were increasingly drawn from the pottery repertoire, in a practice of trading up from a lesser material that would be followed through the eighteenth century (figs. 34, 37).

With the issue of utility in hand, the Dutch turned to the matter of decoration. European customers may have demanded Western shapes to suit their domestic customs, but at the same time they clung to the unfamiliar charm of Chinese decorative style. In 1635 and again in 1637 the VOC insisted on ornament "in the Chinese manner and in the custom of their country," further observing that "Dutch paintings, flower or leafwork . . . should be excused entirely, because the Dutch paintings on porcelain are not considered strange nor rare." This injunction notwithstanding, Western motifs began to infiltrate Chinese decorative schemes without disturbing their rhythm: tulips stretched up the long necks of bottles, Western gabled buildings were set in landscapes with Chinese figures (fig. 4), friezes were punctuated by grotesque masks. These and other decorative incursions make it clear that a mechanism for receiving and employing Western images was well established by the VOC by the mid-1630s.



7. Bottle. Chinese (Continental market), ca. 1715–25. Hard paste. H. 9½ in. (24.1 cm). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Purchase, Winfield Foundation Gift, 1982 (1982.27)

*The serene rhythm of the spiraling bands imitates the opaque white threads of Venetian latticino glass of the late sixteenth century. This decorative technique was well known in the Netherlands in the early 1600s through Italian émigré glassworkers and Dutch copies and continued in practice into the eighteenth century. The point of departure for this example is likely to have been a contemporaneous model.*



8. Tazza. Chinese (Continental market),  
ca. 1700. Hard paste. H. 3¼ in. (8.3 cm).  
Purchase by subscription, 1879 (79.2.335)



*Tazza, top view (left) and detail*



What distinguishes many of the blue and white porcelains dating from this first period of Dutch trade to the close of the Kangxi period in 1722 is the exceptionally graceful balance between Western shape and Chinese decoration. This was an inadvertent harmony, as the Europeans had little knowledge of—or interest in—the iconography of the decoration. The literary sources of narrative scenes, the symbolism of motifs, emblems, even flora, were attractive simply because of their exoticism. An allegiance to Chinese imagery would provide the foundation of the company trade into the nineteenth century, as we know from the recovered cargoes of such ships as the Dutch *Geldermalsen* (1751), the Swedish *Götheborg* (1752), and the English *Diana* (1817), witnesses to the regular shipment of unpretentious porcelains painted with increasingly standardized Chinese land- or riverscapes, fauna, and floral sprays. The European ceramics production complemented this attraction, artistically and at somewhat comparable cost, through the chinoiserie of the faience factories and the derivative blue and white patterns produced by the German and English porcelain firms.

With the fall of the Ming dynasty in 1644 and the onset of the Qing (1644–1911), the export trade could well have come to an end. Political unrest, which included the destruction of the Jingdezhen kilns in 1675—they were rebuilt within five years—caused a suspension of official trade after 1647. But the VOC, determined to maintain its foothold and to continue supplying an established market, turned to Japan to fill the void. Trade was resumed with China after 1680 with significant changes for both East and West. Support by the Kangxi emperor (r. 1662–1722) occasioned a reorganization of the Jingdezhen kilns, leading to improvements in materials



9. Ewer. Chinese (Dutch market), late 17th–early 18th century. Hard paste. H. 6¾ in. (17.1 cm). Mark: *yu*. Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Purchase, Winfield Foundation Gift, 1979 (1979.284)

*Blue and white Kangxi porcelains of this lustrous clarity and vivacity of painting inspired “chinamania” in the 1860s, leading to such tributes as James McNeill Whistler’s evocation of the seventeenth-century “porcelain room,” his Peacock Room of 1876–77, designed for Frederick Leyland and now in the Freer Gallery, Washington, D.C. The mark, *yu* (“jade”), is one of several symbols used instead of reign marks on blue and white Kangxi export porcelains.*





and production methods; his receptiveness to Western artistic techniques and styles resulted in an entirely new aesthetic of porcelain decoration. On the European side the 1680s coincided with competition from flourishing faience factories and the first stirrings of attempts to invent a porcelain equal to the Chinese material. From this period to the end of the trade, export porcelain as an art and a commodity increasingly served as a pivot between the two.

One of the most influential changes was the introduction of color. Until the end of the seventeenth century blue and white was the near exclusive palette of Chinese export wares, although in 1699 the English East India Company ship *Nassau* carried porcelains carefully distinguished by such colors as brown, whey, olive, and codlin (the last being an apple tone). The mixed cargo of the *Vung Tau*, sunk off the southern coast of Vietnam between 1690 and 1700, was typical: all the porcelains destined for Europe were blue and white (figs. 6, 18).

The impetus for the change to color was not, as might be expected, the Chinese famille verte (figs. 13, 14). Had there been no interruption of trade there might well have been a general acceptance of the luminous palette of translucent enamels, dominated by shades of green, that had evolved by the third quarter of the seventeenth century. But because of the timing—this was during the interim trade period—the famille verte was effectively preempted by Japanese enameled porcelain. Polychrome wares were included in 1659 in the first shipment from Japan to Holland, and from then to the end of the century there is cumulative evidence of a growing taste for enameled decoration. Western models—salts, mustard pots, barbers' basins, enameled in a

light palette with multicolored flower sprays—document the appearance of color in the bulk trade of about 1670–90. The palette was one of the many variations on the basic Imari color scheme of underglaze blue, overglaze iron red, and gold that became popular both for useful wares and for display pieces (fig. 11). Its Chinese counterpart, although an adaptation, emerged at the turn of the seventeenth century as an original style, becoming more formulaic as part of routine trade after about 1730. Here, again, there is a wide range of Western forms and generic decoration but relatively little individualized porcelain (fig. 12). The spare and elegant Kakiemon style, with its light tones of turquoise, green, coral, and yellow, was never part of the popular export repertoire and entered European taste indirectly only in the late 1720s, by way of such selective collections as those of Augustus II of Saxony and the prince de Condé. Pieces were then copied

*Opposite, top and bottom*

10. Plant Tub. Chinese (English market), ca. 1693–97. Hard paste. H. 7¾ in. (19.7 cm). Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Rafi Y. Mottahedeh, 1976 (1976.112)

*The earliest known armorial porcelain for the English market, this tub was made for Sir Henry Johnson—the prosperous son of a shipbuilder—whose arms are seen on the front with those of his wife, Martha Lovelace, whom he married in 1692. It is one of six such surviving pieces, four of them hexagonal, suggesting that there were four of this circular shape. It would seem that, as was fashionable at the time, Sir Henry commissioned a set of “flower potts” to contain small orange trees or shrubs as part of the interior decoration of his house in Suffolk, where two of the pots have been discovered. In 1697 the English traveler Celia Fiennes noted “all sorts of pots of flowers and curious greens fine orange citron and lemon trees” set by the dining room window at Woburn Abbey. On our piece the vibrant, graded washes of cobalt blue are dramatically effective in the panels of flower sprays but are unequal to the multiple quarterings of the armorial.*





11. Dish. Chinese (Continental market), first quarter of the 18th century. Hard paste. Diam. 15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (39.1 cm). Mark: lozenge. The Hans Syz Collection, Gift of Stephan B. Syz and John D. Syz, 1995 (1995.268.70)

*The influence of Japanese style on Chinese export wares is seen in this large display piece, in which Chinese flora are enframed by Imari motifs and patterns.*



12. Bowl. Chinese (English market), ca. 1715. Hard paste. Diam. 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. (19.7 cm). Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Rafi Y. Mottahedeh, 1975 (1975.435)

*This airy version of Chinese Imari combines the Japanese iron red, blue, and gold with Chinese motifs of the lotus and scepter (ruyi) heads. The coat of arms is of the Horsemanden family, and—fortuitously?—as the colors and metals of the shield happen to match those of the Imari palette, the decorative scheme is uninterrupted. A branch of the family—that spelled the name Horsemanden—settled in America in the late seventeenth century; the service has been associated with Daniel Horsemanden of New York (1691–1778), but his ownership has not been confirmed.*



*Bowl, detail of coat of arms*

and adapted by their respective porcelain factories, Meissen and Chantilly, and thence circulated to a wider audience. Relatively few famille verte porcelains of Western form are known (figs. 13, 14) and almost none with personalized decoration. Rather—like the thousands of blue and white vases that

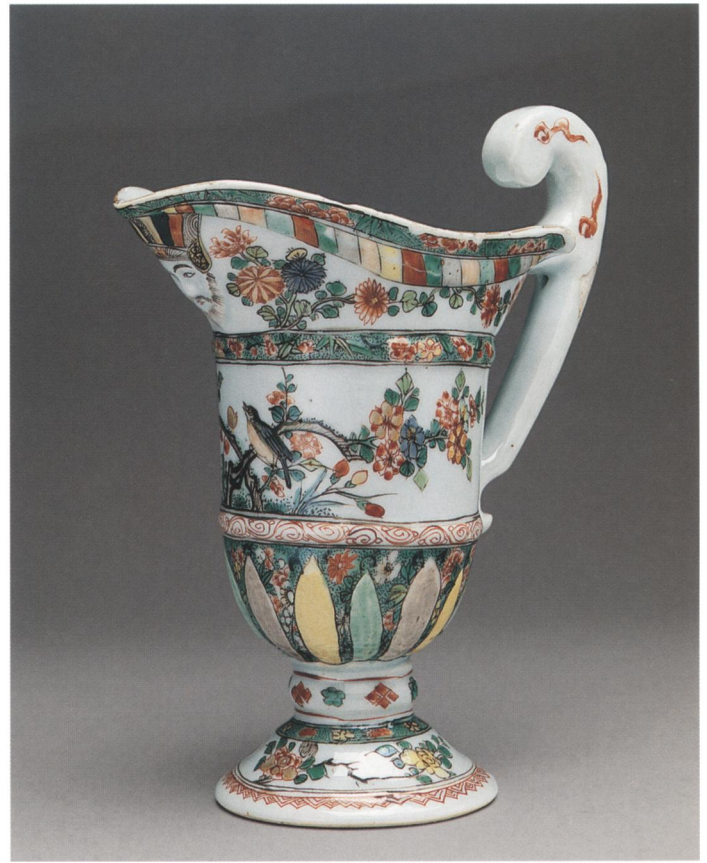




13.

made up the bulk of the *Vung Tau* cargo—they seem to have been imported primarily to the Continent for purposes of display.

New markets and new technologies tend to go hand in hand, and one impetus for the transition to color was very likely the emergence in the 1680s of a vigorous interest in personalized decoration, particularly for heraldic porcelain, which was the primary decoration of table services and the most revolutionizing contribution of the export trade to Western dining customs. Services had been anticipated by the visually coherent ensembles of blue and white dishes and bowls of the *kraak* porcelain cargoes. The planned table service of matched pieces was not fully developed until about 1740 on the Continent, but an unusually sophisticated service, of which 125 pieces survive, had been made as early as about 1685 at Delft, at the



14.

13. Ewer. Chinese (French market), ca. 1725–30. Hard paste and silver. H. 8¼ in. (21 cm). Marks: Le Riche (initials PLR, device a crescent); Paris countermark 1726–32 (crowned bell). Rogers Fund, 1925 (25.60.3)

*Its European form marks this ewer as a piece made for export, but the enamel decoration is in conventional famille verte style, elegantly composed to fit the Western shape. The mounts are by the Parisian silversmith Paul Le Riche (1659–ca. 1738, master 1686), who has only recently been identified as having specialized in garnishing Asian porcelain and lacquer as well as some early French porcelains.*

14. Ewer. Chinese (European market), ca. 1715–25. Hard paste. H. 7⅛ in. (18.1 cm). Gift of Erving Wolf, 1983 (1983.489)

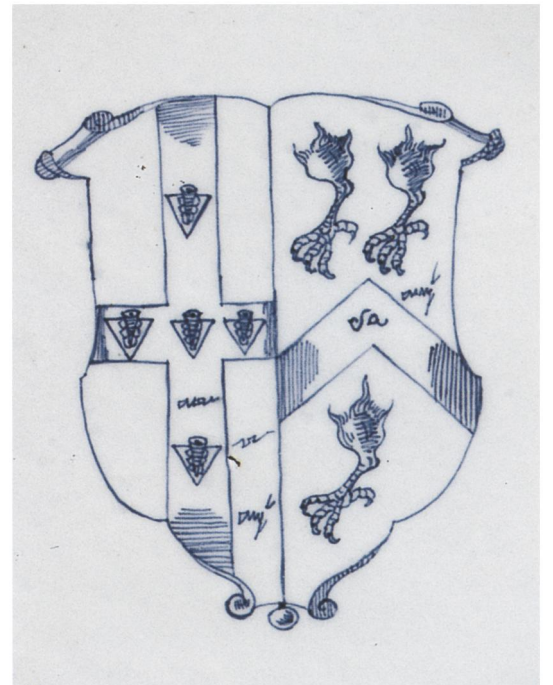
*The generic form of this ewer originated in late-seventeenth-century French silver, the frieze of upright leaves above the foot simulating cast and applied lappets. The mask under the spout, which could be mistaken for an Indian wearing a feather headdress, is a borrowing at some remove from such silver ewers, on which it represents a classical or grotesque head framed against a palmette. On imitative faience ewers made at Rouen and Lille early in the eighteenth century, the molded rays of the palmette were translated into the stripes that have been copied here.*





15. Dish. Chinese (English market), ca. 1715. Hard paste. Diam. 12<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (31.3 cm). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Purchase, Winfield Foundation Gift, by exchange, 1974 (1974.195)

*The arms are those of Edward Harrison (1674–1732) and his wife, Frances Bray (1674–1752). The painter would have copied a black and white drawing or print in which the colors and metals were indicated by heraldic language; the words sa (for sable, black) and argt (for argent, silver) are just decipherable. Harrison evidently recognized the inadequacy of his instructions, as one of his next services (there were six altogether for him and his immediate family) duplicates this one but is entirely polychromatic, as is necessary for correct blazoning.*



*Dish, detail of Harrison and Bray arms*





Factory of the Metal Pot for Wenzel Ferdinand, Prince Lobkowitz. From about that time armorial export porcelains were made for Dutch families associated with the trade in Batavia and elsewhere. These were blue and white, although the blazoning of a coat of arms requires observance of a rigorous and inflexible system of which color is an essential component. In its absence there are several ways of blazoning an armorial accurately. One is by means of a code of directional lines and dots representing the tinctures and metals of the shield, familiar from eighteenth-century bookplates. Another is through heraldic language (fig. 15). But coats of arms in shades of blue become either barely intelligible or

16. Dish. Chinese (Italian market), ca. 1698. Hard paste. Diam. 13<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (34.6 cm). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Purchase, Winfield Foundation Gift, 1962 (62.188)

*The dense foliate scrolls of the border are common to Portuguese-market porcelains of about 1700, and this dish is said to have been shipped from Goa to Lisbon in 1699. The arms, however, are those of the Ginoris of Florence. Several members of the family were active in Lisbon in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and the survival of pieces in the family today confirms their provenance; otherwise, the heraldry—being both unexceptional and in blue and white—would be difficult to identify.*

*The inheritance of Chinese blue and white and familiarity with Florentine Medici porcelains (ca. 1575–87) easily account for the experimental blue and white production in the 1740s at the Doccia factory, established outside Florence in 1737 by Carlo Ginori.*





17. Dish. Chinese (Scottish market), ca. 1735. Hard paste. Greatest w. 15 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (39.1 cm). Gift of Mary Knight Arnold, 1978 (1978.520.2)

*The thick and layered, rather than shaded, dark rose of the mantling identifies this as an early example of the famille rose, which first appeared in armorial porcelain about 1722. The thickness is characteristic: the enamel colors of Chinese export wares almost invariably sit higher on the surface than they do in other Asian or European hard-paste porcelains.*

*The arms are those of James, fifth duke of Hamilton (1702/3–1743). The service is nearly identical to another bearing his arms and those of his third wife, whom he married in 1737, and must have been ordered shortly before that year.*

easily confused with the arms of other families, if the shield is a common one (figs. 10, 16); so it is not surprising to find an enameled armorial as early as 1702 on dated plates for the Dutch family de Vassy. Enamel colors—especially those of the later famille rose—must surely have stimulated the fashion for armorials, which pervaded the private trade of all the participating countries (fig. 17).

The development of the famille rose changed the character both of export porcelain and of Chinese porcelain made for the domestic market. Its much discussed origin has centered on the Jesuits, whose role in introducing the art of painted enamels in the



18. Covered Beaker and Saucer. Chinese (presumably Dutch market), 1690–1700. Hard paste. Beaker (.210): h. with cover 3½ in. (8.3 cm). Saucer (.211): diam. 5¼ in. (13.3 cm). Mark: stylized seal. Purchase by subscription, 1879 (79.2.210a, b; .211)

*The scene on the saucer has not been identified. The inscription, L'Empire de la vertu est établi jusqu'au bout de l'univers, is likely to refer to Dutch pride in spreading that country's influence as far as Asia. Twenty-five covers alone were found in the cargo of the Vung Tau, datable to about 1690–1700—a mixed shipment of which part was intended for Holland.*



19. Plate. Chinese (Dutch market), ca. 1692. Hard paste. Diam. 7⅞ in. (20 cm). Apocryphal reign mark of Chenghua (1465–87). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Purchase, Winfield Foundation Gift, 1966 (66.27.2)

*The earliest known example of a topical subject in export porcelain, the scene depicts the storming of the house of the chief bailiff of Rotterdam on October 4, 1690, and was copied from a silver medal by Jan Smeltzing (1656–1693) struck the same year. Ephemeral subjects were not well suited to the export trade, as popular interest was not likely to have survived the two years it took for an order to be completed; this plate should therefore be seen more as a commemorative order than as the porcelain equivalent of a broadsheet.*



20. Plate. Chinese (Dutch market), ca. 1740. Hard paste. Diam. 9 in. (23 cm). Gift of Estate of Jeffrey S. Childs, 1988 (1988.180.1)

*The woman represents Clemency, as described and first illustrated in the 1644 edition of Cesare Ripa's Iconologia, originally issued in 1593. Ripa's work was republished and reillustrated in several countries (including the Netherlands) well into the eighteenth century. This version of the image, in which an additional landscape with luxuriant foliage has been drawn with careful attention to textural effects, presumably comes from one of the later editions.*





21. Plaque. Chinese (Continental market), mid-18th century. Hard paste.  $10\frac{3}{8} \times 17\frac{7}{8}$  in. (26.4 x 45.4 cm). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Purchase, Gift of Winfield Foundation, by exchange, and Winfield Foundation Gift, 1982 (1982.128)

*The riverscape is a familiar type from seventeenth-century Dutch prints and drawings, but the particular pictorial model for this plaque has not been identified. Although entirely drawn in line of varying intensity, the effect is unexpectedly painterly.*

22. Teapot. Chinese (Swedish market), ca. 1755. Hard paste. H. with cover  $5\frac{1}{4}$  in. (13.3 cm). Purchase, Erving Wolf Foundation Gift, 1983 (1983.164a, b)

*The scene, which is repeated on the opposite side, depicts the apotheosis of Gustav III (1746–1792) as heir to the Swedish throne; it is copied with care and fidelity—and a modest addition of flesh tones—from an engraving by Abraham Delfos (1731–1820), published in 1754 after a drawing by Hieronymus van der My (1687–1761).*



imperial workshops between 1716 and 1729 has been well documented. European enamels on copper—the base material was covered by an opaque white, painted and fired in colors that included shades of pink—were the stimulus, acquired from the Jesuits as gifts for the Kangxi emperor, who in turn enlisted several missionaries to teach the technique. As the materials and firing methods were applicable to enameling on metal as well as on porcelain, the famille rose developed in both media contemporaneously, at the end of the Kangxi period; its earliest datable appearance in export porcelain is in a service of about 1722 for a wealthy English merchant, Sir John Lambert (d. 1723). A difference between the Chinese and European formulas has recently been noted. In both, colloidal gold was the basis of the red, but in Europe the white was opacified by the admixture of tin oxide, while the Chinese used lead arsenate, which had long been an ingredient of their cloisonné enamels.





Platter, detail of Château of Läckö

23. Covered Punch Bowl with Platter. Chinese (Swedish market), ca. 1745. Hard paste. Punch bowl: h. with cover 12½ in. (31.8 cm). Platter: diam. 21¾ in. (55.2 cm). Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1940 (40.133.1a, b; .2)

*This monumental punch bowl, with its original cover and platter, must have been one of the most ambitious porcelains to grace an American colonial household. We can only speculate as to how the bowl, the decoration of which indicates that it was made for the Swedish market, found its way to a prominent Charleston family during the eighteenth century. It was listed among the effects of Mary Brandford Bull, upon her death in 1772, as "1 large China Bowl Dish & Cover." The Bulls, one of Charleston's wealthiest families, lived in the grand style. Through the four daughters, the bowl descended in the family and ended up in Philadelphia by 1790. The detailed painted scene on the platter is based on a 1691 engraving of the Swedish Château of Läckö, on Lake Vänern. Two other Swedish châteaux drawn from earlier print sources are represented on the bowl; the cover features two Swedish churches in a landscape with huntsmen, fishermen, and sailors.*





24. Dish. Chinese (Scottish market), ca. 1735–40. Hard paste. Diam. 15¼ in. (38.7 cm). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Purchase, Winfield Foundation Gift, 1962 (62.187.1)

*This beautifully drawn flower basket derives from an untraced engraving after Jean Baptiste Monnoyer (1634–1699)—one of his many variant compositions that were freely adapted to a wide range of media long after his death. The dish is one of two in the Metropolitan, and a third is in the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts; originally there was probably a set of four or, at most, six. The placement of the basket on a gold ground may have originated with the Chinese painter but, alternatively, could have been inspired by Western familiarity with Yongzheng export porcelains richly patterned in gold, silver, and black.*

*Little is known of the French family of Berwickshire, whose arms appear on the reverse of this dish. The same armorial appears on the reverse of two plates in the British Museum, London.*





25. Plate. Chinese (French market), ca. 1745–50. Hard paste. Diam. 10 in. (25.4 cm). Gift of Charles K. Davis, 1948 (48.172.10)

*The arms are those of Orry, and the plate may well have been made for Jean-Henri-Louis Orry, comte de Fulvy (1703–1751), Louis XV's intendant des finances. Fulvy was actively engaged in the trade and manufacture of porcelain, as in his official position he was involved in the importation of Chinese wares; about 1740 he was also the effective promoter of the Vincennes (later Sèvres) factory. The ornamental patterns surrounding the arms recall motifs in Watteau's decorative panels, of which some—like the bat's-wing element—occur on early Vincennes porcelain. The pattern on the rim is unique to this service, and it is tempting to interpret the stylized tower motif as an oblique reference to the coat of arms of Madame de Pompadour, the guiding patroness of the Vincennes factory.*



26. Platter and Plate. Platter: Chinese (Swedish market), ca. 1755–60. Hard paste. W. 16 in. (40.6 cm). Purchase, Winfield Foundation Gift, 1982 (1982.212). Plate: Chinese (Swedish market), ca. 1750. Hard paste. Diam. 12<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (32.2 cm). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Purchase, Winfield Foundation Gift, 1971 (1971.149)

*Seven export services were ordered between about 1750 and 1800 by the Grill family, active in the Swedish East India Company; four are conspicuous for their originality. The decoration of the plate has been attributed to Christian Precht (1706–1779), a goldsmith and jeweler working independently of the guild system; his French-trained Rococo style is documented in designs for silver and for export porcelain and Marieberg faience. The graceful Rococo flourishes of the border cartouches are consistent with Precht's expansive style, and the attribution is plausible. The identical border occurs on a plate, possibly for the Swedish market, dated 1750. On the platter, which is of coarser material, the unidentified designer has playfully reinvented the heraldry.*





27. Plate. Chinese (Dutch market), ca. 1740. Hard paste. Diam. 11 in. (27.9 cm). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Purchase, Winfield Foundation Gift, 1984 (1984.224)

*Known as "Arbor," this design is accepted as the last of four commissioned from Cornelis Pronk (1691–1759) by the VOC between 1736 and 1739. No preliminary drawing survives, but in subject matter and decorative scheme it is consistent with the style of Pronk's recorded designs for his "Parasol" and "Doctors" patterns. Distinguishing features are a narrative subject that hovers between Chinese and chinoiserie, border designs that combine—a little naively—Chinese and stylized European decorative elements, and vivid color combinations.*



*Plate, detail of border on exterior rim*

The importance of the famille rose in export porcelains lies less in the particular color than in the range of palette made possible by the opaque white, which offered shading and compositional depth.

Once the custom of ordering armorials was established, it was a natural step to commissioning pictorial subjects, and the earliest recorded ones are datable to the early 1690s (figs. 18, 19). These were necessarily painted in underglaze blue, but fine-line painting in black, in imitation of the Western engravings that were to become the most common iconographic source, was in practice by the late 1720s. In 1722, in the second of two letters describing porcelain production at Jingdezhen, Father Xavier d'Entrecolles mentioned "painting in ink" as being a current but as yet unsuccessful experiment. As with the famille rose, the promotion, and even the invention, of this technique has often been attributed to Jesuit influence, largely from the association of print-derived New Testament subjects and strapwork border patterns evocative of those widely used in Vienna in the later years of Claudius Du Paquier's porcelain factory (1719–44). But penciled decoration has a definite tradition in Chinese porcelain for the domestic market, reaching from the Wanli period (1573–1620) to the end of the seventeenth century. The later examples depict narrative or landscape subjects, often traceable to woodblock prints. While these were originally intended for a literati clientele, they are seen on Western forms for export, and, as they were also executed in Jingdezhen, line painting after print sources would have been a familiar technique. A parallel and contributing precedent may have been one borrowed from Japanese Arita porcelains of the late seventeenth century, in which foliage was outlined and veined in





a fine iron-red line. Drawing in thin red line and wash can be seen in export porcelains of the early 1700s painted with both Chinese and Western subjects. If Jesuit influence is to be invoked in this context, it should perhaps be in light of the role of Father Matteo Ripa (1682–1746), who at the request of the Kangxi emperor introduced the technique of copper engraving to the imperial court, producing in 1713 the first Chinese engravings of the emperor’s palace at Jehol. Penciled—or grisaille—decoration with both Chinese and European subjects began to appear regularly, with differing border patterns, toward 1730. Stylistically, those in a freely derived Du Paquier manner are later, associated with armorials datable to the 1740s and centering around examples dated between 1750 and 1756. Labor intensive and, at its highest level of skill, of

28. Partial Tea Service. Chinese (Dutch market), ca. 1740. Hard paste. H. of milk jug with cover (.3) 5¼ in. (13.3 cm). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Purchase, Winfield Foundation Gift, 1961 (61.64.1–8)

*There is a distinct stylistic connection between the decoration of the “Arbor” plate (fig. 27) and this design, which has been uncertainly attributed to Cornelis Pronk. Pronk was a skillful topographical artist and portraitist; his known work for the VOC is uncharacteristic of his manner, and this abstract pattern even more so. No mention of it has been found in VOC references to Pronk, but he is known to have made detail drawings, some of which could have provided the motifs for the palmette, diaper, and lappets, all shared by the “Arbor” design. If Pronk’s drawings (sent in duplicate) were in circulation in Jingdezhen, is it possible they were used by a Dutch merchant on his own account, who revised Pronk’s motifs to create a new pattern?*

*Although these eight pieces were acquired as an ensemble, differences in the quality of the material and the painting indicate that they derive from more than one set. The same pattern exists in a red and black palette, the plates having a variant design of reversed palmettes.*





29. Sauceboat. Chinese (European market), ca. 1715–20. Hard paste. W. 7 in. (17.8 cm). Gift of Margaret H. Davis, 1983 (1983.250)

*No single export porcelain documents so richly the widespread diffusion of a model as does this sauceboat. Probably derived from silver, the form first appears in Delft pottery in an Imari-style example of about 1715, possibly painted by Ary Rijsselbergh (active ca. 1715–23); it appears among Chinese export armorial services for the English market about 1723. A version decorated in the Chinese Imari style was in the Dresden collection of Augustus II by 1721 and was copied exactly by Meissen about 1730–35. The model was interpreted in English delftware about 1750–60 and in Worcester porcelain about 1755–58. The handles of the English versions have traditionally been described as foxes, but in the Delft model they are too vague to be identifiable.*

extraordinary delicacy (fig. 24), this technique of imitation engraving continued in use late into the eighteenth century. For the English market its appeal was lessened by the 1760s, when competition from transfer printing obviated both the time and the art.

The concurrent developments of grisaille and famille rose decoration are a good indication of the expansion and force of the European trade, which, by the opening of the reign of the Qianlong emperor in 1735, included more than half a dozen countries: Holland, England, France, Sweden, Denmark, Portugal, and Spain. All except the two last—based in Macao and Manila, respectively—had their factories in Canton (Guangzhou), which soon became the center not only of trading but of decoration. Painting in underglaze blue would always be carried out in Jingdezhen, but its distance from Canton—some 400 miles—usually meant a lapse of over two years for completion. Porcelains enameled in Canton, however, could be supplied within a few weeks, and we may well suppose that as the volume of the private trade increased so did the desire to have orders filled more quickly. The establishment of enameling workshops in Canton seems to have taken effect about 1740. According to VOC records, the porcelains commissioned from the Amsterdam draftsman Cornelis Pronk between 1736 and 1739 (fig. 27) were completed in the north, at Jingdezhen, and the simultaneous appearance of certain pictorial subjects and decorative borders in under- and overglaze color schemes datable to the early 1740s (fig. 30) indicates Jingdezhen's continued role in the enameling of export porcelains to that time.

By its nature, Chinese export porcelain is an artistic hybrid, subsuming ever-shifting balances between East and West as well as interactions within each culture. Even the





30. Dish and Plate. Dish: Chinese (Dutch market), ca. 1740–45. Diam. 12<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (32.1 cm). Inscribed 22 in underglaze blue on the underside. Purchase, Winfield Foundation Gift, 1971 (1971.32.1). Plate: Chinese (Dutch market), ca. 1740–45. Diam. 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (25.6 cm). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Gift of Winfield Foundation, 1951 (51.86.100)

*The coat of arms, long ascribed to the Snoeck family, has recently been identified as that of Guillot of Amsterdam, with the suggestion that the service was ordered by Elias Guillot (d. 1743), active in the VOC in the East. The blue and white dish comes from one of at least two table services depicting stages in tea cultivation. The individual pieces of each service were numbered from 1 to 23. Several of the scenes are identical to watercolors in an album at Drottningholm, Sweden, of about 1750, itself apparently copied from a Chinese woodblock series of 1739. Whether the striking border pattern shared by these pieces implies a link between them is not known; the work of a master designer, it borrows elements from a Rouen faïence border of the early 1740s.*

*Plate, detail of tea-cultivation scene*









31. Pieces from a Table Service. Chinese (Portuguese market), ca. 1760–65. Hard paste and enameled copper. H. of bottle cooler (.203) 8 in. (20.3 cm). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Gift of Winfield Foundation, 1951 (51.86.190–.206)

*One of three table services made for Dom Gaspar de Saldanha e Albuquerque (b. ca. 1720), this one is unusual for the number and variety of its forms and for the inclusion of nearly two dozen dish covers enameled on copper (one is placed on the deep covered dish at the left). What we recognize as a table service, with its complement of matching objects for every aspect of dining, came into being in Continental silver and porcelain in the early 1740s. Services varied greatly not only in size but in the unequal number of their component parts; however organized, the average service after about 1750 comprised between 150 and 300 pieces, approximately.*

*The iconographical program of the Saldanha service, featuring an unidentifiable, wreathed haunch and an abundance of game, fruit, and vegetable trophies, was obviously designed specifically in accordance with Saldanha's taste.*





32. Plate. Chinese (English market), ca. 1739–43. Hard paste. Diam. 9 in. (22.9 cm). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Purchase, Gift of Winfield Foundation, by exchange, 1978 (1978.196)

*A pattern for this plate survives, the only complete design for an armorial service to be recorded. It was made for Leake Okeover, whose arms are impaled with those of his wife, Mary Nichol; their conjoined monogram, LMO, appears in cartouches on the rim. The service was shipped from Canton in two installments in 1740 and 1743. Invoices refer only to plates and dishes, and this limitation, together with the richness of the decoration, suggests that they were intended more for display than for use.*

*The unattributed design is identified on the reverse as a “Pattern for China”; clumsily, however, it is painted on buff-toned paper, so that the white flowers in the drawing had to be colored in the porcelain to be effective on the white ground.*

private trade, which might be presumed to mirror Western artistic conventions, is elusive, there being surprisingly few exact correspondences between export forms and decorations and European prototypes. This invites attention to the origins of designs, how they were conveyed, and whether Chinese painters played any role in the interpretation of Western style. Documentation of the private trade is almost entirely lacking; that of the bulk trade is still quite one-sided. There are important gaps in the English East India Company records between 1705 and 1711 and again between 1754 and 1774, and those of the Swedish company were regularly destroyed after triennial audits. Only the records of the VOC, which are extensive, have been systematically explored, and they presumably reflect the practices of its competitors as well. From them we find that from about 1634 to at least 1793 the VOC consistently provided examples of desired shapes, either in the form of three-dimensional samples and models or, after 1729, as drawings sent out each season to be reproduced in porcelain: usefulness was the primary goal.

Of what must have been thousands of drawings (they were supplied in duplicate) only seven sheets from a single season, 1758, survive, depicting designs for tea and milk pots, fish dishes, cups and tureens, vases and cuspidors. Such drawings were part of the VOC’s annual “Requirements” and accompanied written instructions, which survive and are more than guides to the conservative managerial practices of an East India company; absent porcelains that are (rarely) dated or are datable by circumstance of underwater archaeology or heraldic specificity, these “Requirements” provide an essential insight into the seasonal changes in European taste. As to decoration, VOC records indicate that

the company left it almost entirely up to the Chinese, stipulating generic patterns and color schemes. But there were occasional specific instructions: “samples of textiles” are mentioned in 1736 in a solitary reference to that medium as a design source; also in 1736 the first pattern was commissioned from Cornelis Pronk (fig. 27). The painting of ewers in 1762 was to be “in the Dresden manner,” and two years later a dinner service was to have a “Marseille ground.” In 1777 and 1778, in reaction to competition from the Swedish market, commercially popular patterns were requested. The presence in Canton from 1784 to 1791 of Willem Tros, a Dutch designer who had been employed—possibly as a modeler—at the Loosdrecht porcelain factory near Utrecht, is the only known instance of a European artisan active in Canton, although it is not certain whether he was active as a modeler or a painter.

As the principal trading center, Canton became a dispersal point for designs and shapes originating in different countries. The ready dissemination of pictorial and decorative designs was a natural result of the mechanics of the trade in which customers—company or private—simply handed over a pattern for copying. Once received in a painter’s workshop, it became design currency and an additional element in a widening repertoire made generally accessible through the finished porcelains displayed in the porcelain merchants’ shops. Thus, we find a number of standard border patterns enframing pictorial subjects and armorials for different markets; and at the same time, a border as original and specific as that in figure 30 has been found on porcelain with generic decoration. Similarly, a single print source would be rendered in different palettes and with different borders. While this explains the ubiquity of certain designs,



33. Dish. Chinese (Continental market), 1770–75. Hard paste. Diam. 15¾ in. (40 cm). Bequest of George D. Pratt, 1935 (45.174-35)

*A rare example of export porcelain reflecting German ceramic style, this dish comes from a dispersed service of more than 130 pieces, each painted with a different emblem and motto. A small number of the images and mottoes appear in Devises et emblemes anciennes et modernes, by Daniel de la Feuille, published in Amsterdam in 1697. The majority, including the present image, are untraced and would have been gathered into a yet unidentified compilation from other sources. The exuberant cartouche corresponds closely to the work of the Augsburg ornamentist Franz Xavier Habermann (1712–1796), whose designs occur on Fürstenberg porcelain.*



*Dish, detail of cartouche*





34.



35.

34. Sauce Tureen and Stand. Chinese (Scottish market), ca. 1785. Hard paste. H. of tureen with cover (.317) 5 in. (12.7 cm). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Gift of Winfield Foundation, 1951 (51.86.317a, b; .318)

*Both the tureen and the stand are copied from creamware models designed about 1770–71 by Josiah Wedgwood (fig. 35), who based the form of the stand on a Sevres model he had seen in 1765. The ensemble was clearly in general circulation in Canton, as it is found with a variety of armorial, pictorial, and floral decorations intended for different markets. On our pieces the arms are those of the Bruce family of Scotland; another example bears the arms of Peter III of Portugal (r. 1777–86).*

35. Josiah Wedgwood (1730–1795). Sauce Tureen and Stand. English (Staffordshire), ca. 1770. Cream-colored earthenware. Leeds Museums and Galleries (Temple Newsam House)

it accounts neither for their authorship—European or Chinese—nor for the number and fluency of their variant forms. Were there Westerners in Canton who were artists as well as traders? Did the Chinese painters, as has been suggested, introduce innovations of their own? This seems unlikely in the case of Western imagery that was being copied from exemplars, but reasonable in the light of secondary patterns that evoke traditional Chinese decorative motifs. Because the evidence of preparatory designs and written documentation is lacking, it is not yet possible to reconstruct a conduct of trade in Canton that would have permitted and fostered the development of decorative styles so independent of their respective Asian and Western origins.

The circulation and exchange of models were, for much of the trade, somewhat more restricted, as shapes tended to be specific to local customs; in addition, the steady production of table services for both the bulk and private trades prompted a degree of standardization. By the 1770s this began to change, as the production of creamware in England, especially Josiah Wedgwood’s Queen’s Ware, was moving taste toward a new material and style (figs. 34, 35). Wedgwood became a pivotal figure in the transition from the bright polychromy of porcelain to a quieter-toned earthenware, thereby hastening the decline of the export trade, as England in the last quarter of the eighteenth century commanded 70 percent of Europe’s trade with China. He congratulated himself on the success of his Queen’s Ware in India, writing in 1767 that he had been told “it was allready in Use there, & in much higher estimation than the finest Porcellain. . . . Don’t you think we shall have some Chinese Missionaries come here soon to learn the art of making Creamcolour?”



36. Plate. Chinese (Portuguese market), ca. 1820. Hard paste. Diam. 9¾ in. (24.8 cm). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Gift of Winfield Foundation, 1951 (51.86.328)

*With Macao as a continuing base for trade, the Portuguese market was active well into the nineteenth century. The coat of arms here is that of Francisco Antonio da Silva Mendes da Fonseca (d. 1831), a government official, merchant, and landowner.*



37. Salad Bowl. Chinese (Portuguese colonial market), ca. 1800. Hard paste. H. 4¾ in. (12.1 cm). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Gift of Winfield Foundation, 1951 (51.86.10)

*The origin of the model is an English creamware bowl produced in Staffordshire or Yorkshire about 1780–1800; its currency in the export trade is evidenced by this piece, made for the Portuguese colonial market, and by another forming part of a Danish-market service made about 1800.*

*The bowl comes from one of three services made for Dom Bernardo José Maria da Silveira e Lorena (1756–1818), governor and viceroy of India from 1806 to 1816.*



*Salad bowl, detail of Silveira arms*





38. Plate. Chinese (American market), ca. 1765. Hard paste. Diam.  $13\frac{7}{8}$  in. (35.2 cm). Gift of James DeLancey Verplanck and John Bayard Rodgers Verplanck, 1939 (39.184.22)

*The overglaze floral decoration on the Verplanck service is entirely European. Were it not for its unbroken family history, the close relationship of the design to that on Meissen porcelain would suggest that it had been made for the German or Scandinavian market. The ownership by Samuel and Judith (née Crommelin) Verplanck is well acknowledged, however; the service was presumably ordered for their house at 3 Wall Street, New York, where they lived from 1763 until 1803.*

# THE AMERICAN TRADE

Archaeologically excavated shards, estate inventories, period advertisements, and surviving porcelains with credible histories provide ample evidence that Americans enjoyed the spoils of the China trade as early as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Toward the end of the eighteenth century, when the United States was in direct contact with China, there was a tremendous influx of Chinese goods.

References to “India China” and “Burnt China” in early colonial inventories of the estates of individuals in New York, Boston, Salem, and Philadelphia are tantalizing clues to the existence of Chinese porcelains in those cities. Chinese export porcelain was mentioned in an American context as early as about 1622, in an English publication reporting on English travelers to the Potomac River; the late-seventeenth-century will of a member of a New York family lists “2 East India floure potts white”; and an estate appraisal dating to the second quarter of the eighteenth century cites “6 Burnt China Cordials.” The scanty information gleaned from such documentary sources is supplemented by the archaeological evidence that small cups and dishes in underglaze blue and white, in particular, were used by some American urban coastal households during the seventeenth century. Beginning in the 1620s such porcelains made their way to the United States from ships of the Dutch East India Company, or VOC, that sailed American waters, exchanging goods for tobacco. Fragments unearthed from excavations of seventeenth-century



39. Plate. Chinese (American market), ca. 1750–55. Hard paste. W. 8½ in. (21.6 cm). Gift of the Wunsch Americana Foundation Inc., 1977 (1977.257.2)

*Samuel Vaughan's coat of arms embellishes this plate, originally part of a larger service. The design is based on an engraved bookplate, which was small enough to have been easily shipped to China to be replicated. Vaughan, whose wife was a Hallowell of Boston and Maine, came to America from England and spent time in Philadelphia, where he was a chief planner of Philosophical Hall, home of the American Philosophical Society, one of the nation's first learned societies.*

sites along the James, Chesapeake, and Hudson Rivers are mostly utilitarian Dutch-market blue and white wares.

During the eighteenth century, when maritime trade thrived out of the colonies' major ports of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, Chinese porcelains were more





40. Plate. Chinese (American market), 1785–90. Hard paste. Diam. 9 in. (22.9 cm). Bequest of James T. Woodward, 1910 (10.149.1)

*The elaborate Rococo-style coat of arms that Justice Samuel Chase (1741–1811) of Maryland had emblazoned on his extensive service (fig. 41) was actually an armorial borrowed from his aunt Margaret Townley. It is represented at a somewhat larger scale on the individual pieces (above) than was typical on porcelains with armorial decoration. The delicate, polychrome floral sprigs on the rim both soften and complement the elaborate armorial. Chase had an important political career in the early republic, serving first as a Maryland delegate to the Continental Congress and then wielding his considerable influence in persuading other Maryland delegates to vote for independence. A devout Federalist, he was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, served as chief judge of the Maryland General Court, and later became a contentious United States Supreme Court justice, often abusing his position in favor of ardent partisanship.*

*Opposite*

41. Dinner, Tea, and Coffee Service. Chinese (American market), 1785–90. Hard paste. L. of largest platter (.216) 18 ¾ in. (47.6 cm). Bequest of James T. Woodward, 1910 (10.149.1–.247)

*This may be one of the largest sets of Chinese export porcelain surviving in such a great quantity of pieces. There were at least 250, and the service comprised dozens of plates and soup plates, teacups, and coffee cups, plus a wide variety of platters, bowls, covered dishes, and other serving pieces. Among the more unusual individual forms is that of the small pudding dishes. Samuel Chase may have commissioned the special-order service on the occasion of his marriage to Hannah Kilty Giles in 1784. The inventory recorded after Chase's death listed a "dinner service of china, white and gold with a coat of arms."*

readily available indirectly through England. Agents of the monopolistic British East India Company were headquartered in these active seaport centers, whence they would disseminate Chinese goods. Luxury items such as porcelain tea, breakfast, and dinner wares, as well as serving pieces, were advertised by enterprising colonial merchants. Still other Americans ordered Chinese porcelains from their London factors, or agents—the likely source for the more ambitious decorative and ornamental pieces. Moreover, overseas residents and travelers placed orders through agents in England for porcelains to be sent to their families and friends in America.

The repertoire of Chinese porcelains for the European trade found in an American context expanded during the 1730s and 1740s to include brown-glazed, grisaille, and overglazed enameled wares, in addition to the still popular underglaze blue and white pieces. By the mid-eighteenth century wealthy American colonial families, such as the Bulls of Charleston (fig. 23) and the Verplancks of New York (fig. 38), owned fine porcelains comparable to the grand table services in England. Porcelains such as these demonstrate the popularity in America of the kind of floral patterns that were very much in favor with the English and Continental markets. In fact, since floral designs were equally favored on both sides of the Atlantic, it is often difficult to assign such porcelains to a particular market.

Armorial decorations were standard on eighteenth-century Chinese wares for the British and Continental markets. Although services personalized for Americans were not prevalent until after the United States entered into direct trade with China in 1784, armorial porcelains may have been here by









*Saucer, detail of armorial*

42. Saucer. Chinese (American market), ca. 1785–88. Hard paste. Diam. 3½ in. (8.9 cm). Rogers Fund, 1936 (36.52.2)

*This saucer was made for James H. Giles of New York, lieutenant in the artillery during the Revolutionary War. Giles's bookplate was evidently sent to China for the artists to copy. The result is a richly ornamented Rococo armorial with scrolls and lion rampant. The patriotic pseudo-armorial displays both the American flag and the motto Libertas et Patria Mea (My freedom and my country). The tea bowl for this saucer has a simplified decoration consisting only of the crest with the family initials.*

as early as about 1715, the date of a service owned by the Horsemanden family, some of whom settled in New York (fig. 12). Other early examples include porcelains for the Higginson family of Salem, Massachusetts, and for the Clarke family of New York City, the former dating to the early 1730s and the latter to 1735. Plates from a service made for Samuel Vaughan (1720–1802) of Boston, London, and Jamaica, which date to about 1750, are embellished with his coat of arms (fig. 39).

The popularity of armorial designs grew over the ensuing decades, as large personalized services appealed to American merchants eager to profit from a trade that had been dominated by the British East India Company. During the American Revolution and the years immediately following it, commerce for Chinese goods through Great Britain was curtailed. However, shortly after the United States signed the Treaty of Paris in 1783, signaling the country's ultimate independence, a group of four enterprising businessmen from Philadelphia and New York formed a syndicate that would embark on direct trade with China for the first time. America's entry into trade with China was equally fortuitous for the Chinese, who had experienced a drastic decline in business from England and the Continent, where domestic products had achieved a competitive edge.

The *Empress of China*, with a cargo of ginseng from Maryland and Virginia, furs from the northern states and Canada, and lead, wine, tar, and silver dollars, sailed from New York Harbor on February 22, 1784, bound for Canton (Guangzhou). She was captained by John Green of Philadelphia, and her ship's agent, or supercargo, was Bostonian Samuel Shaw (1754–1794),





43. Fan. Chinese (American market), ca. 1800–1810. Ivory. W. 16<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (42.9 cm). Gift of Mrs. Morgan Grinnell, 1932 (32.134.1)

*This Chinese export fan bears the monogram RO within a shield and was probably imported by Captain John Osgood (1758–1826) of Salem, Massachusetts. The cipher may refer either to Osgood's wife, Rebecca, or to his daughter of the same name, in whose family the fan descended. For decades fans were a staple of the fancy goods coming from China, and they were included in the inventory of the Empress of China's first return voyage. Their intricate carving held a particular fascination for Westerners.*

44. Pagoda. Chinese, ca. 1785–92. Ivory and wood. H. 43<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. (111.1 cm). Rogers Fund, 1958 (58.73a)

*This extraordinarily delicate and intricate nine-story ivory pagoda has a history of having been brought back from China by Samuel Shaw, who gave it to a relative of his wife's, Mrs. Josiah (Abigail Phillips) Quincy Jr. The pagoda, which miraculously survives with the original wooden case used to transport it from China, was prominently displayed in various Quincy family households in Boston, Cambridge, and Quincy, Massachusetts. From 1829 until 1845 it graced Abigail's son's house at Harvard University during his tenure as president. The openwork pagoda is complete with carved bells suspended from each roof, a fretwork fence, and willow, overscale flowers of stained ivory. A vitrine with classical decorative rosettes, made to protect the fragile pagoda, survives. It dates to as early as 1800 and has been described as having been designed by the architect Charles Bulfinch (1763–1844).*





45. Plate. Chinese (American market), ca. 1784–85. Hard paste. Diam. 9½ in. (24.1 cm). Rogers Fund, 1917 (17.73)

*This plate bears a rather whimsical Angel of Fame displaying the blue and white ribbon and emblem of the Society of the Cincinnati. Its underglaze blue Fitzhugh border—an elaborate pattern of the late eighteenth century incorporating flowers, pomegranates, often butterflies, and other Chinese motifs—and its overglaze decoration correspond to the large group of porcelains owned by George Washington (1732–1799) and Henry Lee (1756–1818), each of whom owned an extensive service in the pattern.*



*Plate, detail of emblem of Society of the Cincinnati*



who had been aide-de-camp to George Washington during the Revolutionary War and later to General Henry Knox. Green and Shaw were responsible to their investors not only for guiding the ship safely from New York to China and back again but also for navigating the intricacies of doing business there. Shaw became an important figure in promoting the taste for Chinese porcelain in America and later was appointed the first United States consul in Canton. When the *Empress of China* arrived back in New York Harbor on May 11, 1785, her cargo consisted of precious silks, teas, fans (fig. 43), umbrellas, window blinds, and porcelains—goods all actively sought by American



consumers. It is possible that among Shaw's prized personal treasures, acquired during that or a subsequent voyage, was a towering, carved, and pieced ivory pagoda, the complexity and delicacy of which must have entranced all who saw it (fig. 44).

Porcelains were a significant part of the *Empress of China's* cargo. The number of pieces purchased by Shaw was so great that the second American ship to voyage to China, the *Pallas*, brought the remainder when she arrived in Baltimore in August 1785. Among the orders Shaw placed in Canton was one for a service decorated with an intricate underglaze blue border similar to that on numerous British armorial services. It was distinguished by a central motif in overglaze enamels and gilding, the Angel of Fame, holding aloft the ribbon and badge of the Society of the Cincinnati (fig. 45). The Chinese interpretation of the motif, though pleasing to Shaw, may not have been

46. Punch Bowl. Chinese (American market), ca. 1788. Hard paste. H. 4<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (12.4 cm). Gift of the grandchildren of Francis George Shaw, 1927 (27.144)

*Samuel Shaw, in whose family this bowl descended, ordered numerous sets of porcelain embellished with a large version of the badge of the Society of the Cincinnati (see back cover). This rendering of the emblem is highly detailed and suspended from a tiny ribbon above the florid initials SS, for Samuel Shaw. The rest of the bowl has been left mostly undecorated, accentuating the pure whiteness of the body. Shaw ordered sets with decoration virtually identical to that of his own service but personalized for fellow members of the Massachusetts chapter of the newly formed society.*





*Above and opposite*

47. Punch Bowl. Chinese, ca. 1786–90. Hard paste. Diam. 16 in. (40.6 cm). Inscribed on the underside: *Syngchong*. Gift of Lucille S. Pfeffer, 1984 (1984.449)

*This extraordinary punch bowl features a remarkably faithful replica of an engraved certificate, dated December 1785, issued to Ebenezer Stevens (1751–1823) by the Society of the Cincinnati. Stevens was a major general in command of the New York artillery and was vice president of the New York branch of the society. The decorative silver-gilt mount on the rim and around the foot were probably made during the early nineteenth century in response to an earlier crack—evidence of the extent to which the bowl was valued by its owner. A related bowl, a polychrome version, was made for Colonel Richard Varick (1753–1831). Varick was president of the New York branch of the society while Stevens was vice president. Although Varick’s military career was tarnished on account of his association with Benedict Arnold, he later became Washington’s confidential secretary and was mayor of New York from 1789 to 1801.*

exactly as he had anticipated, for he felt that it was “difficult to regard it without smiling.” The Cincinnati service, which was part of the cargo on the *Pallas*, was quickly advertised in the Baltimore newspapers, but only members of that elite society would have been ready buyers. Two substantial portions, totaling more than one hundred individual examples known today, were purchased in 1786 by Colonel Henry (“Light-Horse Harry”) Lee and by George Washington.

On subsequent trips Shaw commissioned more porcelain decorated with the emblem of the Cincinnati for himself (fig. 46) and for friends. The large number of Cincinnati services shipped is a good indication of the influence he wielded. Probably persuaded by Shaw, other members, such as Ebenezer Stevens of New York, requested pieces decorated with motifs or emblems relating to the society. One of the most



elaborate known today is a bowl formerly owned by Stevens (fig. 47). It is a testament to the Chinese decorators' abilities to replicate in minute detail every line of a Western engraving without introducing personal interpretation. Finely decorated pieces such as this are indicative of the high quality of porcelains entering the American market during the early years of this country's direct trade with China.

Boosting international commerce and increasing financial rewards were the primary motivations for doing business in China, and in the years following 1784, the business brought great prosperity to American shipbuilders, traders, and merchants. This was due in large part to the fact that government-sponsored organizations, such as the Dutch and British East India Companies, no longer held a monopoly in China; the country was open to private enterprise. The exchange

grew steadily after 1784, and by 1810 the United States had assumed a position second only to Great Britain in trade with China, surpassing France, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Spain, and Austria.

Merchants in the American trade with China influenced the taste for imported goods, not only for porcelains and silver but for more ephemeral products such as textiles and tea, which have received comparatively little attention from scholars. The northern and mid-Atlantic states largely dominated this trade, and it is not surprising that the majority of surviving porcelains with solid American provenances are associated with families directly or indirectly involved in it—merchants, traders, shipbuilders, and carpenters—from the port cities of Boston, Salem, Providence, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore (figs. 48, 50, 51).





48. Covered Sauce Tureen and Underplate. Chinese (American market), ca. 1786. Hard paste. Tureen: h. 5½ in. (14 cm). Rogers Fund, 1948 (48.8.1a, b). Underplate: l. 7⅞ in. (20 cm). Purchase, Anna Glen B. Viotor Gift, in memory of her husband, Alexander Orr Viotor, 1992 (1992.287)

*This sauce tureen may originally have amplified a 272-piece dinner service, described merely as "ciphered," that was ordered by Elias Hasket Derby (1739–1799), a wealthy Salem merchant active in the China trade. It was presumably part of the cargo of the 1786–87 voyage of the Grand Turk, a ship financed by Derby and one of the first American vessels to embark on trade with China following the voyage of the Empress of China.*



49. Plate. Chinese (American market), ca. 1785–90. Hard paste. Diam. 9⅝ in. (24.4 cm). Gift of Charles K. Davis, 1948 (48.172.3)

*This restrained plate was made for the Morgan family of Hartford, Connecticut. There were two similar Morgan services, each of which featured the family arms. Below the arms on one version is the name "Morgan"; the other (shown here) includes the given name "Elias" as well. The Morgan family had ties to the China trade through John Morgan, a carpenter on the Empress of China's first voyage to the Far East. Relatives of his, the half brothers John and Elias, were prominent hardware merchants from Hartford.*





50. Punch Bowl. Chinese (American market), ca. 1784–90. Hard paste. H. 6¼ in. (15.9 cm). Bequest of Edith Pryor, 1935 (35.112)

*The first punch bowls to come from China to America on the Empress of China feature a rim decoration of floral swags and tassels that relate closely to those on this example. Furthermore, the merchant ship flying an American flag painted on the side and on the interior is very similar to the Empress or another American vessel, the Grand Turk. The initials JL that appear on the bowl's exterior are those of John Lamb (1735–1800), an American Revolutionary leader and prominent New Yorker. In 1784, the year the Empress of China sailed, he became collector of customs for the port of New York, a role that gave him close ties to the burgeoning sea trade out of the harbor to China.*

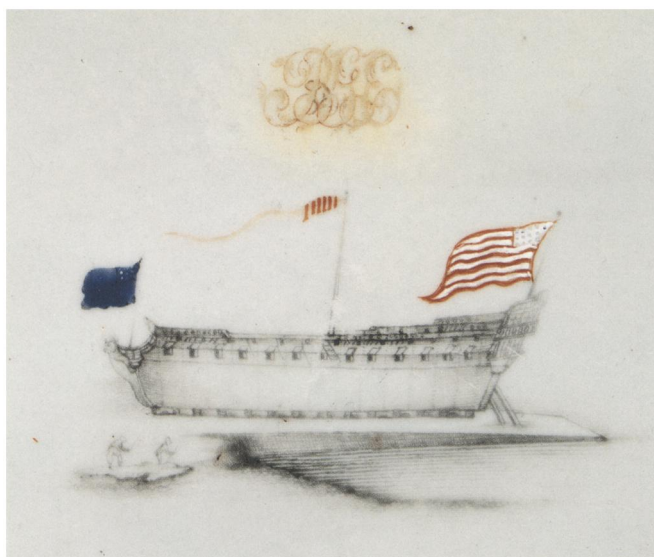


*Punch bowl, detail of interior*



51. Punch Bowl. Chinese (American market), ca. 1785–90. Hard paste. H. 5¾ in. (14.8 cm). Bequest of Elizabeth V. Loudon and Gift of John C. Dreier, Theodore C. Dreier, Dana S. Lamb, Mrs. Garrett R. Stearly and Mrs. Peter V. S. Voorhees, 1973 (1973.167)

*A number of punch bowls are known that depict a continuous scene of the Canton waterfront and its foreign factories. This example is distinguished by an American flag, which appears to be original but was perhaps an afterthought, given its incorrect placement amidst the sequence of the foreign factories, or hong; its size (slightly smaller than the other flags); and its irregular shape. Typically, “hong” bowls feature a floral motif on the interior, but in this instance the interior is decorated with a ship. The vessel is shown not under full sail but in the process of being constructed. That vignette, in combination with the initials BGE above it, give the bowl historical and biographical interest. The cipher refers to Benjamin G. Eyre (b. 1738), in whose family the bowl descended. Eyre, an aide-de-camp to George Washington, was one of three brothers. All of them were shipbuilders in Philadelphia, where they launched frigates used during the Revolutionary War. The bowl may have been cargo on the Globe, one of the Eyre ships that made eight voyages to Canton.*



*Punch bowl, detail of interior*



52. Plate. Chinese (American market), ca. 1796–1805. Hard paste. Diam. 8⅞ in. (22.5 cm). Sansbury-Mills Fund, 1971 (1971.94)

*This plate comes from a service made for DeWitt Clinton (1769–1828) and his wife, Maria Franklin Clinton (1775–1818), of Albany, New York, and bears a monogram of both of their initials, DWMC, in gold on the border of each piece. The rest of the border is decorated in polychrome with eight Chinese immortals, each standing on stylized clouds of varying colors. The central design features a broad Chinese landscape in a complementary palette.*

Elias Hasket Derby of Salem became one of the wealthiest men in the country in large part because of his success in China (fig. 48). In addition to the products he brought back for a local clientele, Derby and others established a thriving trade with the southern states, which were not as actively involved in importing goods. As the United States's exchange with China grew, the field also became highly competitive, with merchants from American ports contending for their share of this lucrative business.

Foreign traders—including Americans—were restricted to certain areas along the waterfront at Canton. Each country had its own site, called a factory, identified by its national flag. When the United States began shipping goods from there, the total number of factories grew from thirteen to fourteen, an event celebrated by a series of punch bowls elaborately painted with a continuous view of the coastal factories and their colorful flags (fig. 51). Such bowls were likely part of the earliest Chinese-American trade: the *Empress of China* carried in its porcelain cargo one tub with “4 Factory Painted Bowles @ 5 1/2 [dollars] each,” dutifully recorded in Captain John Green’s account books from his first and second voyages. Business at the American factory grew at a rapid rate. From 1784, when American vessels accounted for fewer than 3 percent of all foreign ships in Canton, to 1800, they had increased by a factor of ten.

New York swiftly became America’s busiest market for Chinese export, a fact that might explain the large number of extant porcelains decorated with the arms of the state, many with family histories and ciphers and some with imaginatively interpreted elements of proper coats of arms (fig. 53).



53. Sugar Bowl. Chinese (American market), 1770–1800. Hard paste. H. 6 in. (15.2 cm). Gift of Mrs. Edward S. Harkness, 1935 (35.25.2a, b)

*The fact that there are more Chinese export porcelains depicting the coat of arms of New York than of any other state is an indication of the prominent role it played in the trade. The first American ship to make the voyage came from the port of New York, and the city surpassed all others in terms of long-standing exchange with China. The arms all contain the essential symbols of Fame and Justice, but there is great variation in painting styles and in the representation of the different motifs in the central design, some personalized with a name or initials.*





Punch bowl, interior

54. Punch Bowl. Chinese (American market), 1812. Hard paste. H. 10 in. (25.4 cm). Inscribed on foot rim: *Made by Syngchong in Canton, Fungmanhe Pinxt.* Lent by the City of New York

*This extraordinarily capacious punch bowl was made for the city of New York and presented by Brigadier General Jacob Morton on July 4, 1812. The inscription is emblazoned in gold within a broad border around the rim. The Great Seal of the United States appears on two sides. On another side is a rendering, unique on Chinese porcelain, of the arms of New York City (opposite, bottom). The interior features a careful rendering of New York Harbor from Brooklyn, copied from an engraving by Samuel Seymour published by William Birch of Pennsylvania in 1802. Morton, who gave the*

*bowl during Mayor DeWitt Clinton's tenure, had close ties to Clinton, particularly through their various important leadership positions with the Freemasons of New York. Although the exact occasion for the presentation is not known, it undoubtedly celebrated the success of Clinton's commission, appointed to explore an inland water route from the Hudson River to Lake Erie, in its plea for funding from the Senate. Clinton's goal to establish such a canal was derailed shortly thereafter by war with England, until 1825, when the Erie Canal finally opened.*

*In an unusual departure, the bowl is one of the few signed export porcelains. In bold lettering around the foot rim, credit is given to the Cantonese merchant Syngchong and to the bowl's painter, Fungmanhe.*





*Punch bowl, New York City view*

Among the notable New Yorkers to acquire large dinner services after 1784 was Mayor (1811–15) DeWitt Clinton (fig. 52). Clinton may also have played a role in securing the enormous punch bowl presented to the city of New York on July 4, 1812 (fig. 54). The inscription on the bowl—well used, as shown by the wear on the interior—reads: “Drink deep. You will preserve the City and encourage Canals.” The last reference paid tribute to Clinton’s mission and most significant accomplishment, the construction of the Erie Canal, which over a decade later opened up New York to the West. On the interior and exterior of the bowl are scenic views of the state faithfully copied from print sources, as were many landscape designs on European porcelains of the early nineteenth century.



*Punch bowl, detail of arms of the city of New York*





55. Plate. Chinese (American market), ca. 1785–90. Hard paste. Diam. 6¼ in. (15.9 cm). Gift of Ginsburg and Levy Inc., 1956 (56.68)

*Part of a much larger service, this small pudding plate was made for Elias Boudinot (1740–1821) of New Jersey. It features the Boudinot armorial within a floral border. Boudinot is not known to have had any direct ties to the China trade, although he was a friend of George Washington's and had been an American Revolutionary leader. A lawyer by profession, he had a distinguished political career, serving as New Jersey delegate to the Continental Congress from 1777 to 1778 and again from 1781 to 1784; he was its president in 1782 and 1783. A family tradition maintains that the service with the Boudinot arms was commissioned for entertaining at Boudinot's house in Philadelphia while he was president of the Continental Congress and that he later moved the service to Boxwood Hall, his home outside of Elizabeth, New Jersey, where he hosted Washington on the way to his inauguration.*

56. Jug. Chinese (American market), 1800–1815. Hard paste. H. with cover 10 in. (25.4 cm). Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1934 (34.74a, b)

*The initials ET in gold under the spout of this jug are those of Edward Tilghman (1750–1815), a prominent lawyer in Philadelphia. One of a pair, the jug was given to Tilghman by his uncle Benjamin Chew Wilcocks, active in business in Canton. Wilcocks originally ordered four jugs similarly decorated with portrait busts of George Washington in grisaille. In addition to Tilghman's pair, he had one inscribed with his own initials, BCW, and the fourth with the cipher CI, presumably for Charles Ingersoll, a friend of Wilcocks's. The portrait of Washington was faithfully copied from an engraving by David Edwin (1776–1841), who was working in Philadelphia.*







57. Covered Tureen. Chinese (American market), early 19th century. Hard paste. H. with cover 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. (27.3 cm). Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Gift of Winfield Foundation, 1951 (51.86.334a, b)

*This is one of the more striking porcelains to emerge from the American trade with China. The four quadrants of the so-called Fitzhugh pattern of leaves and flowers, rendered in brilliant green enamels, serve to contrast with and accentuate the large spread eagle clutching an olive branch and a bundle of arrows in its talons. Such porcelains often feature the shield of the United States in the center of the eagle's body, yet here the shield encloses a monogram or initials—in this case an M—that would have been painted on site in Canton per instructions given by the purchaser.*

58. Saucer. Chinese (American market), ca. 1795. Hard paste. Diam. 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. (15.9 cm). Rogers Fund, 1928 (28.83)

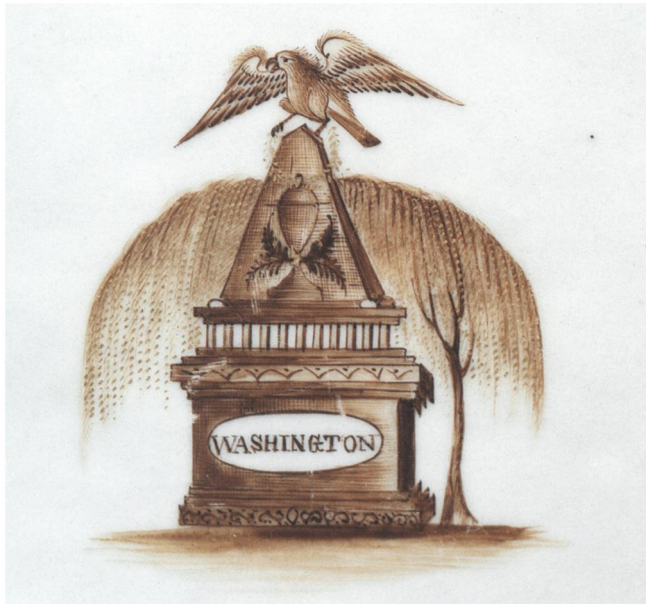
*Thirty-three chests of porcelain, including "A box of China for Lady Washington," were part of the cargo of the ship Lady Louisa, a vessel chartered by A. E. van Braam Houckgeest (1739–1801), commercial director of the Dutch East India Company; it sailed from China around the Cape of Good Hope and arrived in Philadelphia on April 25, 1796. The design of the service is distinctive and was probably van Braam Houckgeest's own. Martha Washington's initials adorn the center of this plate on a gold circular reserve, from which emanate the rays of a sunburst. The inscription emblazoned below on a banner, Decus et Tutamen Ab Illo (A glory and defense from it), was taken from Virgil's Aeneid. The border features a circle of fifteen oval chain links, each of which contains the name of an individual state; the message is of strength and union. The chain links are further encircled by a slender blue serpent biting its tail, symbolizing eternity.*







59. Platter. Chinese (American market), ca. 1800–1810. Hard paste. W. 14¾ in. (37.5 cm). Gift of Mrs. W. Murray Crane, 1954 (54.87.31)



*Platter, detail of George Washington's tomb*

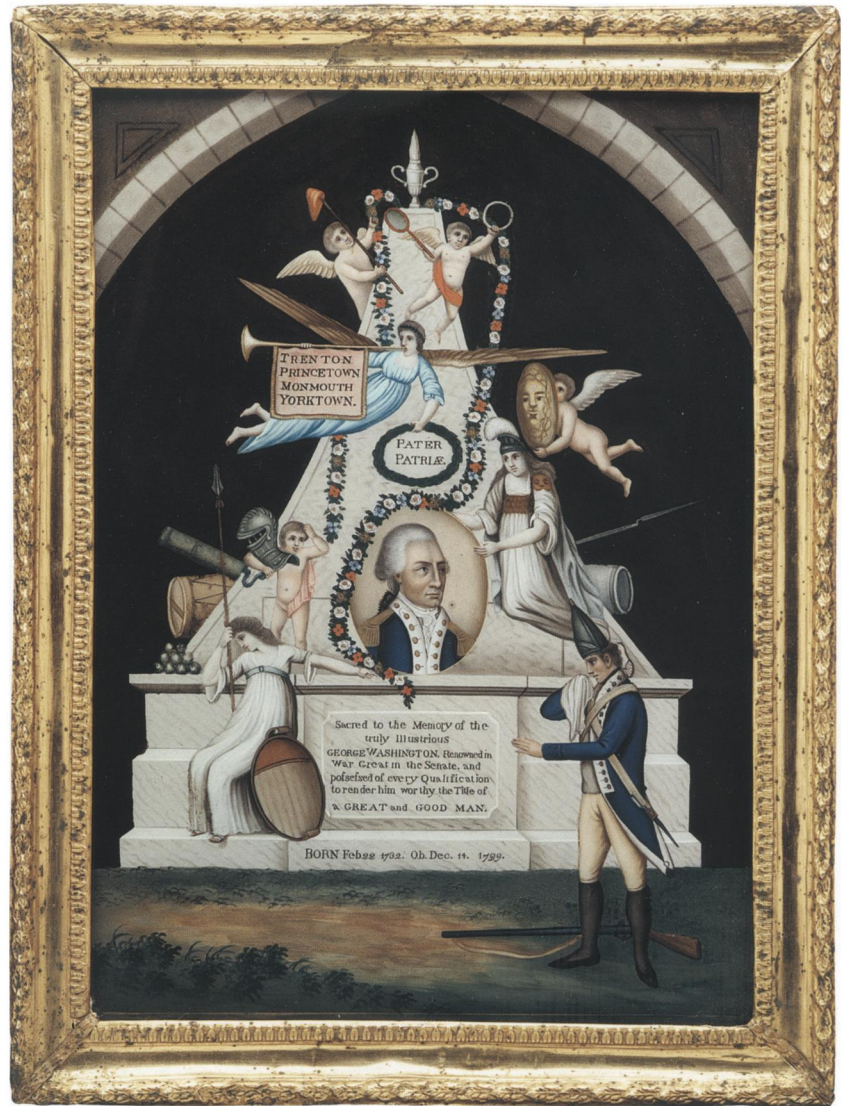
*Exquisitely rendered here in brown enamel is George Washington's tomb, a scene that became a virtual icon and was depicted in engravings (probably the source of this design), needlework, and reverse paintings on glass (fig. 60).*



After 1785 pride of ownership played a great role in consumer taste for porcelain from China, and there was increased interest in personalization of the wares. The ordering of specialized pieces was facilitated by Americans who now had easier access to Chinese traders, and shields and swags, suggesting an armorial design and typically enclosing a family's initials, suited the pretensions of a newly prosperous merchant class. Personal initials alone soon replaced armorials and pseudo-armorials.

The young republic's history also provided lucrative subject matter for Chinese artists. Among export porcelains were those with references to America's emblems and heroes. Following the 1787 signing of the Constitution, there was an enormous outpouring of affection for the country's forefathers, which gave rise to the depiction of patriotic motifs on objects of many media, of both European and domestic fabrication. The new sentiment also influenced ships' agents and merchants stationed in Canton, leading to commissions for myriads of household goods adorned with, among other patriotic motifs, portraits of George Washington (fig. 56), Benjamin Franklin, and John Adams. Icons such as the eagle (fig. 57), the flag, and the Great Seal of the United States also found a ready market. An unusual service presented to Martha Washington in 1796 cleverly displays themes of the new republic (fig. 58). George Washington's death in 1799 brought not only a period of mourning across the country but also a flood of portraits in various media, and even images of his tomb (fig. 59).

There is little evidence of the process by which designs were transmitted to the Chinese artists. Presumably, supercargoes and merchants brought drawings or prints



60. *Pater Patriae* (memorial to George Washington). Chinese (American market), ca. 1800–1818. After an engraving by Enoch G. Gridley, from a painting by John Coles Jr. Reverse painting on glass. 14¼ x 10¼ in. (36.2 x 26 cm). Gift of Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch, 1964 (64.309.6)





61. Bowl. Chinese (American market), ca. 1811. Hard paste. H. 2½ in. (6.4 cm). Gift of Thornton Wilson, in memory of Florence Ellsworth Wilson, 1954 (54.147.106)

*This bowl is part of a large tea, coffee, and dinner service that Mrs. Benjamin Chew of Philadelphia ordered from China on June 25, 1811. She placed the order with Benjamin Chew Wilcocks (1776–1845), who was a merchant stationed in Canton and who is also known to have ordered porcelains (fig. 56). All of the articles, including bowls of varying sizes—from “2 Bowls holding about a Gallon, each” to “12 Bowls from a quart to smaller sizes”—were especially designed to conform to patterns (now lost) supplied with the order. The design of classical figures on a yellow ground with a classically inspired gold border relates more closely to the increasingly popular porcelains imported from Paris for fashionable Philadelphia households than to typical Chinese patterns.*

62. Tureen. Made by Hoaching, Chinese (American market), ca. 1843. Silver. H. 10 in. (25.4 cm). Mark: H. Purchase, Robert G. Goelet Gift, 1967 (67.109a, b)

*This ornate, repoussé tureen was made for Abiel Abbot Low (1811–1893), a founder of A. A. Low and Brothers of New York. Not surprisingly, Low was a merchant with close ties to the China trade and had worked with Russell and Company in Canton between 1833 and 1840, before starting his own firm. The piece, which features evocative images of Chinese warriors and horses in a mountainous landscape, descended in the Low family.*





to be copied. One rare surviving memorandum dating to 1811 concerns a service ordered from Benjamin Chew Wilcocks of Philadelphia, who operated a successful business in Canton (fig. 61). It mentions a drawn pattern, regrettably no longer known to survive, sent with the order to Canton. A bowl from this service bears classical motifs similar to those on Parisian wares, indicative of the importation into China of designs fueled by the prevailing taste of wealthy Americans for Parisian porcelains.

As the nineteenth century progressed, travel became easier, and tourists from this country witnessed firsthand the skills of Chinese artisans and painters and were fascinated by their creations. They returned with many goods, including reverse paintings on glass (fig. 60) and watercolor and gouache landscapes and vignettes of the stages of work needed to produce various handcrafted products. Also prized were decorative household furnishings made of lacquer, carved ivories, silks, soapstone carvings, metalwork (silver, pewter, and *paktong*, an alloy of copper, zinc, and nickel that resembles silver), and, of course, porcelains.

Porcelain was still imported commercially in very large quantities. By the 1820s, at least, the more common blue and white ware—called Canton ware—was shipped in such numbers that this cargo was calculated as part of a vessel's ballast. During the mid-nineteenth century, trade, which was disrupted during the Opium Wars of the 1840s, became less regulated. Merchants, who had been required to deal only with the small number of factories in Canton, were given far greater latitude and the right to do business in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Ningbo, Amoy (Fujian [Xiamen]), and

Foochow (Fuzhou) in 1844, when the United States signed the Treaty of Wanghia, so named after a small village near Macao. While tea and textiles were still imported in sizable quantities, porcelain and other decorative items now accounted for a smaller percentage of the China trade.

At midcentury tastes turned to overelaboration of the decoration on silver, carpets, carved furniture, and upholstery fabrics. This shift in preference had an immediate effect on imported Chinese goods. For example, heavy repoussé designs of flowers and landscapes in a naturalistic style, promoted in America especially by Samuel Kirk of Baltimore, were mimicked by Chinese craftsmen. Their high-relief designs on Western silver forms made for export feature scenes of Chinese warriors in battle and are graced with dragons' heads and tails that served as finials and handles (fig. 62).

The vogue for large porcelain services was revived, especially by families retaining ties to the China trade. These services were often densely decorated in overglaze enamels and gilding, with tight floral scrollwork surrounding panels of figures or flowers—a style that gained in popularity beginning about 1840. They were often personalized by the addition of an elaborate monogram in a central reserve (fig. 63). Ulysses S. Grant ordered such a service just prior to becoming president, and no doubt this acquisition for use in the White House ensured the success of the style in America.

Patriotism revived late in the century, culminating in a major celebration of the nation's one-hundredth birthday in 1876 at the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia. Among the many attractions of the fair was the Chinese booth, where decorative items were displayed and offered for sale.







63. Partial Service. Chinese (American market), ca. 1860–66. Hard paste. Diam. of large plate (.40) 13<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (35.2 cm). Gift of Elizabeth Hazard and Marion H. McVitty, in memory of their mother, Mrs. Lauriston H. Hazard, 1960 (60.III.33a, b; .34, .39, .40, .47, .48, .56–.58, .135, .171, .203, .207–.209)

*Daniel Paine (1808–1866), a merchant in Providence, Rhode Island, ordered a large service of nearly two hundred pieces, of which this is a selection, for his wife, Louisa Thurber Paine (1806–1880). Each piece displays famille rose decoration typical of the period from about 1850 to 1870, featuring shaped reserves with flowers, birds, and butterflies within a ground of green ornamented with tightly spaced scrolls in gold. For many years services of a scale comparable to this one remained in favor with Americans; the most notable customers were Ulysses S. Grant (1822–1885) and his wife, who ordered 315 pieces in 1868, shortly before he assumed the presidency. Typically, one or more initials in a decorative style, enclosed in a central, circular reserve, as here, replace the personalized pseudo-armorials of decades earlier. Louisa Paine's ornate LP cipher appears at the center of each piece.*



64. Cup and Saucer. Chinese (American market), 1840–75. Hard paste. Cup: h. 2½ in. (6.5 cm). Saucer: diam. 5¾ in. (14.6 cm). Bequest of R. Thornton Wilson, in memory of his wife, Florence Ellsworth Wilson, 1977 (1977.216.I, .2)

*The decoration on this unusual cup and saucer depicts the signing of the Declaration of Independence, as proclaimed in the banner carried in the beak of the oversize spread eagle. Here, the Chinese painters condensed and scaled down a version of the famous 1786 painting by John Trumbull in the United States Capitol. The Founding Fathers, portrayed with Asian features and without their powdered wigs, have been transformed into nineteenth-century gentlemen.*

It is likely that the centennial also yielded porcelains with patriotic themes relating to the nation's early history, including wares inspired by John Trumbull's iconic painting of the signing of the Declaration of Independence (fig. 64).

By the late nineteenth century Chinese export porcelains, especially blue and white wares, had achieved a status above the merely utilitarian. Looked upon with nostalgia, they became emblematic of the colonial era. That Chinese export porcelains were very much valued by their owners is evidenced by the number of pieces cherished and carefully mended in order to be handed down to future generations (fig. 47). During the last decades of the century Chinese export porcelains were increasingly collected by connoisseurs, an indication of a new antiquarian interest in America's past. Indeed, today such porcelains open a window onto one aspect of the lives of some of America's important historical figures.



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