

SHARDS

A Newsletter of the

Volume 8, Issue 2

China Students' Club of Boston

January 2005

A Message from Our President

The China Students' Club of Boston program year is off to a great start! The transition from the Women's Educational and Industrial Union to the College Club has gone extremely well. The College Club staff is very helpful, the lunches are delicious, and the meeting room is quite elegant. In the first three programs this year, we have explored topics ranging from Asian ceramics in Latin America, redware made in Huntington, Long Island, and remarkable delftware in King William and Queen Mary's European and English palaces. These lectures were at once eye-opening, inspiring, and informative, and taken together showcase the wide-ranging interests of Club members. The strength of the Club continues to be our excellent programming, coordinated by Anne Lanning.

Anne has worked very hard to make the transition to the new meeting space as seemingly effortless as possible, and I am grateful to her for her efforts. If you haven't yet attended a meeting at the College Club, Robert Mowry's lecture on 27 January would be a good time to start. This lecture is sponsored by former Club president, Jim Kaufman.

I look forward to seeing you at the winter and spring programs. Until then, I wish you and your families the very best that the season has to offer and a new year filled with lots of interesting pots!

Sincerely,
Carolyn Parsons Roy

Gauvin Bailey on Asia in the Arts of Latin America Report by Jeff Brown

The China Students' Club of Boston kicked off its new season with a lecture in its new Back Bay home, The College Club on the Commonwealth Avenue Mall. Everyone seemed very pleased with our new elegant location and with the added perk of being able to lunch in the Club dining room before meetings. And those attending were equally pleased with the very informative speaker, Gauvin Alexander Bailey of Clark University, who spoke to us on "The Phoenix and the Hummingbird: Asia in the Arts of Latin America, 1520-1820"

Colonial Latin America was more profoundly affected by Asian culture in its time than most of the Western World. Over a century before the fad for Chinoiserie took Europe by storm, colonial societies in Brazil, New Spain (Mexico), and Spanish South America were captivated by the arts of Japan, China, and India. Even a cursory look reveals that much of the furniture, ceramics, and textiles that adorned 17th and 18th century homes and churches was either inspired by Asian art or actually came from Asia.

Directly linked to Asia by overseas trade with Por-

tuguese India, Brazil was the first to experience Asian products in the second third of the 16th century, soon after the establishment of permanent European settlements on the coasts of that continent. Great quantities of Indian and Chinese goods were imported from the city of Goa, once Portugal's richest overseas colony. As key ports of call between India and Portugal, the Brazilian towns of San Salvador and Rio de Janeiro acquired Asian goods before they reached Europe. Indian furniture, ivory objects, textiles, and Chinese porcelains became part of everyday life not only for the elite, but they also played a prominent role in the churches and monasteries of the colony and were familiar to people of many walks of life. The taste for Asian styles and the objects themselves then spread into neighboring Spanish South America, especially the Rio Plata region (present day Argentina and Uruguay).

The Brazil-Goa route was not Latin America's only link to Asia. Beginning in 1565, with the establishment of what was known as the "Manila Galleon"—an annual

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Gauvin Bailey on Asia in the Arts of Latin America

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trade ship with direct service from Manila to Acapulco, Mexico—the rest of Spanish America encountered and imitated Chinese blue and white porcelain, Japanese lacquer work and folding screens, and Chinese and Gujarati silk textiles. Goods from the Orient traveled overland from Acapulco to Veracruz along what was known as the “China Road” and then by sea from Veracruz to Seville. The trade with New Spain was fueled by Spanish American silver, a crucial commodity for many regions in Asia including China, and merchants in Spanish Manila and Portuguese Macao eagerly traded handicrafts for taels of silver (3.75 grams)—at a rate of a million taels a year by 1600.

Manila’s Chinese ivory carvers were among the most skilled and productive in the world. Their ivories flooded the Spanish market and were the most common found in the region. Another major source for ivories, polychrome wood sculptures, and paintings was the Portuguese colony of Macao near present day Hong Kong.

Communities of Asian immigrants lived in Latin America as early as the first decades of the 17th century. From 1618, Japanese Christian converts fleeing persecution at home settled outside Puebla and Guadalajara, and Chinese goldsmiths may have plied their trade in Mexico City. In the 18th century Chinese, Filipino, and Indian workers, known as *chinos*, emigrated in large numbers to Spanish America and Brazil and worked as sailors, miners, and plantation hands. However, there is very little evidence of specific Asian artisans traveling to the Americas.

Colonial Latin America’s interest in Asia was deeper than a mere passion for exotica. It was tied to self-identity. Whether intellectuals or aristocrats, *Criollos* (people born in America of European background) believed in a cultural affinity between Asian civilizations and those of America’s pre-Hispanic peoples. As anti-European sentiment grew in the late 17th and 18th centuries, native-born Latin Americans embraced Asian culture as part of their reclamation of their own continent’s indigenous past. The *Criollo* elite surrounded themselves with the trappings of Asia in part because these objects belonged to an ancient civilization comparable to that of Greece and Rome but related—however tenuously—



Tapestry in the Chinese Style. Highland Peru, 17th or early 18th century. Cotton, wool, silk, and linen, 238.3 x 207.3 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

to the “otherness” of America.

Amerindian artisans also discovered affinities with Asian arts. In the 17th and 18th centuries New Spain and the Northern Andes indigenous lacquer workers seized upon similarities between Japanese and pre-Hispanic lacquer traditions to create hybrid lacquer trays and furniture of great delicacy and originality. Some of the most overtly Asian objects were chests, lecterns, and writing desks. Similarly, textile workers in 17th century Peru adapted designs of Chinese silk “Mandarin squares”—a kind of heraldic badge—to pre-Hispanic embroidery traditions, manufacturing tapestries and garments that united Chinese colors, designs, and symbols

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Gauvin Bailey on Asia in the Arts of Latin America

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with those of the Andean region.

The most celebrated Latin American response to Asia was that of the Talavera Poblana kilns in the Mexican city of Puebla, which came to specialize in intricate imitations of Jingdezhen blue and white porcelains. Puebla was blessed with both of the clays required for a strong body and perfect color, one of them pink and the other black. These clays were blended in equal portions, ripened, dehydrated, cut into blocks of varying sizes, and then ripened for another year before they could be used. Then they were molded by hand or thrown on a wheel, fired in the kiln, dipped into the glaze and dried. Artisans then applied decorations with mineral pigments, either freehand or using powdered carbon sketches as a guide. Finally, the piece was fired for as long as 40 hours to fuse the pigments into the glaze. By the later 17th century Poblano potters started to make Jingdezhen-inspired wares in response to the Chinese imports, using underglaze blue designs over white slip. These pieces not only included vessels but also tiles,

and soon the walls of the houses and convents and the domes and facades of the churches of Puebla were covered with blue and white and polychrome tiles. Like their counterparts in Europe and New England, prominent families in New Spain and Spanish South America also ordered sets of Chinese porcelains directly from the Jingdezhen kilns bearing the family coat of arms.

Despite their mutual importance as conduits for Asian goods and influence, marked differences existed between the Brazilian and Spanish American spheres. Portuguese America's connection with Asia was earlier and more intense. Brazil was an artistic backwater during the first century and a half of the colony, lacking advanced artisanal workshops. This void was filled by high quality Asian furniture, ivories and other objects. It is only in the late 18th century, with the popularization of Chinoiserie at the Portuguese court, that Asian-inspired furniture and other products began to be popular in Brazil. The curious thing is that in Brazil these forms are almost entirely limited to the Church: altar panels, choir stalls, organ cases, and vestry closets.

In conclusion, one can see the profound debt Latin America owes to Asia, and that the cultural and artistic exchanges in the Colonial era did not always involve Europe. Objects such as we have seen remind us that our multicultural world today is not the first in which the peoples of the world's continents regularly interacted.



Left: Porcelain jar, 17th century, China
Museo Franz Mayer, Mexico City

Right: Vase, 18th century, Talavera Poblana kilns,
Puebla (Mexico)
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



Basin, Early 18th
century, New
Spain, tin-glazed
earthenware
Museo Franz
Mayer, Mexico
City

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Anthony Butera on The Huntington Long Island Pottery Explored Through the Eye of a Collector Report by Jeff Brown

The well attended October meeting presented a talk on collecting Long Island pottery, explored through the eyes of the collector—our speaker, Anthony W. Butera, Jr.

Anthony, who is from a historic area of Long Island, grew up appreciating antiques and history. After the purchase of his first piece of redware his curiosity and appreciation of these wares never abated. He described a path all too familiar to many of us—visiting antique shows, shops and museums, as well as attending lectures, reading articles and books and asking lots of questions!

Anthony decided to focus on collecting locally produced wares—those from the Long Island pottery—as he was especially attracted to these incised and slip decorated redwares. The history of the Huntington pottery, or more accurately, the potteries, extends over a century. The Huntington area was rich in clay deposits and had easy water access to New York City and the Connecticut markets. Although the clay sources were used in brick-making as early as 1751, it is uncertain when the first pottery was founded. The first historical mention of a pottery on the site occurs in 1805 when a firm known as Samuel J. Whetmore and Company took over the property. From that point on, documentation of the pottery varies in detail, as various owners and workmen are known to have been associated with the operation. The best documentation for the pottery comes from the tenure of the Brown brothers from 1863 until 1905 when the operation ceased.

In spite of existing documentation Anthony was dissatisfied with the descriptions and publications of the factory. The most puzzling questions were: Why did simple redwares seem to require such labor-intensive processes to produce them? Why did so many redware plates have areas of missing slip and why did some plates have more slip applied than others? The questions were soon answered when in 1996 he attended the first annual ceramics workshop of Don Carpentier in Eastfield Village, N. Y. Don, no stranger to the CSC and an expert on early ceramics production methods, demon-

strated that it really wasn't that labor intensive to decorate redware: a simple tin stamp was made, dipped into slip and pressed into the clay to leave a slightly incised mark. The first stamp would leave a lot of slip, the second pressing less, etc. This would explain why some plates had more, some less slip decoration. This stamping method coincides with that used on English encaustic tiles of the same period. These tiles also employ some of the same Gothic Revival design motifs.

So far, Anthony has discovered thirteen different stamped designs, but is uncertain about attributing them all to Huntington without firm archaeological evidence. He also uses plate size and shape as well as local provenance to help make an attribution. His collecting continues and now includes shards from waster sites, and the diversity of these pieces reflects the diversity of the ceramics trade of the period. As for repaired pieces, he does not like them as he thinks damage is just part of the history of the piece. He also finds great pleasure in, and learns a lot from well-made reproductions.

Some of the best books to read on the subject are Lura Woodside Watkins' *Early New England Potteries and Their Wares*, in addition to William C. Ketchum's *Potters and Potteries of New York State, 1650-1900*.
(another picture on page 6)



Loaf dish, Huntington, NY, ca. 1840-1860
Lead-glazed earthenware with stamped decoration
(reproduced from A. W. Butera Jr., *"Informed Conjecture": Collecting Long Island Redware*,
Ceramics in America 2003, pp. 215-237



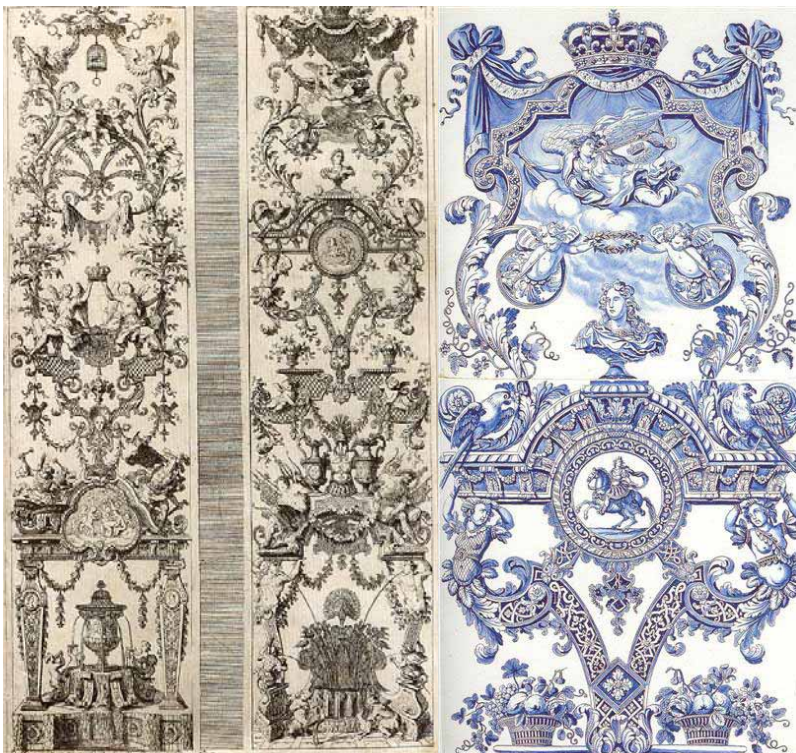
French and Italian Influences on the Use of Delftware in the Palaces of King William and Queen Mary in the Netherlands and England Summary by Virginia Dossett Dreux

At once innovative and traditional, 17th century Dutch delftware was inspired by both Oriental and Italian *maiolica* prototypes. The very best models, commissioned for the palaces of William and Mary, were designed by Daniel Marot (1663-1752) and made in Delft by Adriaen Kocks at *De Griexe A* factory. Trained as an engraver, Marot drew from the work of 17th century French *ornemanistes* Pierre Le Pautre and Jean Berain to create a distinct decorative style and iconographic program for the furnishings he designed for the King and Queen. Monumental flower vases were made for Hampton Court Palace based upon illustrations of *chinoiserie* pagodas as well as published designs for mannerist vases and pyramids (obelisks). Echoing Louis XIV's determination that art serve as propaganda, the vases bear motifs which give clues to the identity of their royal patrons such as crowns, royal ciphers, portrait busts, equestrian statues, and heraldic devices relating to the Stuarts, the House of Orange, and the Order of the Garter.

William and Mary, an extraordinary group of tall flower vases and a ewer on socle are in the collection of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at Hampton Court Palace. Examples of large elaborately decorated tiles and cream pans which scholars have linked to either Mary's Dairy or 'Delft-Ware Closett' at the now demolished Water Gallery at Hampton Court Palace can be found in the ceramic collections of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, the V & A, London, and the Musée National de Ceramique, Sèvres. Additionally, a number of excellent pieces can be found in the collections of English courtiers associated with William: important individual objects can be found at Erdigg, Althorp, and Castle Howard and larger collections are at Chatsworth and Dyram Park. Excavations carried out from 1977-1984 during the restoration of the gardens at Het Loo Palace in the Netherlands brought forth a large number of delftware shards whose study revealed that the reconstructed objects were the ceramic precursors of the larger and more elaborate models made for the English court.

While few extant pieces can be directly linked to

(another picture on next page)



Far left: "Vertical panels with modern grotesques" etched and published by Daniel Marot, 1689-1702

Left: Delft tile decorated with design taken from the Marot etching, possibly made for Hampton Court Palace

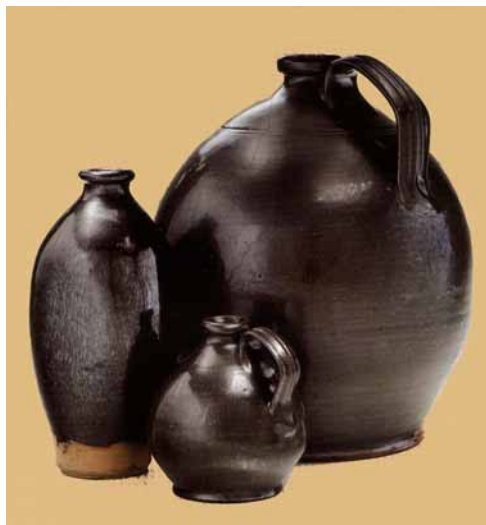
Right: "Flower Pyramid" (1689-95), Hampton Court Palace, made at the Greek A Factory, Adrien Kocks





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Left: Jugs and flask, probably Huntington, NY, late 18th/early 19th century
 Manganese enriched lead-glazed earthenware
 Collection of A. W. Butera Jr. (see page 4)



Right: King William Plate, Delft, ca. 1700
 Philadelphia Museum of Art (see page 5)

Upcoming Ceramics Events

CSC Meetings (All events at The College Club)
1/27/05: Robert Mowry on *Song-Dynasty (960-1279) ceramics and the problem of Jun ware*; 1 PM
2/24: *Bits and pieces*; 1 PM
3/24: Louise Richardson on *17th century ceramics in Newfoundland historic sites*; 1 PM
4/28, The Vivian Hawes Memorial Lecture: Tracey Albainy on *A decade of ceramics acquisitions at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1996-2005*; 11 AM
5/26: Annual meeting and tea, plus Amanda Lange on *The Canton connection: Chinese porcelain at Historic Deerfield*; 1 PM.

Auctions

Porcelain:

5/23-24, Sotheby's NY

British and/or continental:

1/15, Skinner Boston, featuring Wedgwood

2/10, Christie's London

2/21, Christie's London (Continental, from a Swiss private collection)

3/17, Christie's London

4/6, Christie's Amsterdam (European; Dutch Delftware, Wijnker collection of English porcelain)

4/14, Christie's London

Asian:

3/29, Christie's NY (Japanese & Korean)

3/30, Christie's NY (Chinese)

3/31, Sotheby's NY (Chinese)

5/3, Christie's Amsterdam.

Exhibitions

Made in China: Export Porcelain from the Lew and Doris Hordroff Collection, Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, DE, 2/26-5/15.

Fairs

NY Ceramics Fair, National Academy of Fine Arts, 1083 Fifth Ave., NY, NY, 1/19-23.

Conferences

Ceramics in America, East Meets West: Chinese Export Porcelain and its influence on European Ceramics, Winterthur Museum, DE, 4/15-16.