

Porcelain in Jiang Nan

瓷之江南



Qing Ying 青盈 著 • JIANG NAN THE BEAUTIFUL • 锦绣江南丛书

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青盈著

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Echo of Porcelain in Water Towns

水乡瓷音

Porcelain, also called "china" in English, has been one of the symbols of Chinese culture.

In Europe, exquisite porcelain can be seen everywhere, in Windsor Castle, at Goethe's former residence, in a small town in Delft, in the Copenhagen Airport. People in different countries have their own versions of beautiful ceramic art, and they always choose to create a few blue-and-white porcelain wares. Every museum and store will tell you that porcelain is from Jingdezhen, China. Some people think that china is a transliteration of "Qin", the name of the first dynasty in ancient China. Others hold that china is a transliteration of Jingdezhen, for the town was once called "Changnan".

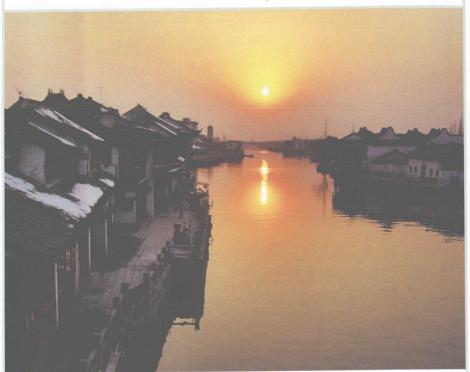
China is the hometown of porcelain. Two thousand years ago, in the late Eastern Han Dynasty, porcelain was born in the green mountains of Jiang Nan*. This is a long historical process.

Delft, the capital of porcelain in the Netherlands

荷兰瓷都代尔夫特小镇



*Jiang Nan, the areas south of the Yangtze.

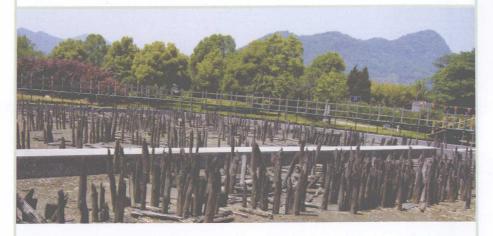


Water towns in Jiang Nan, China 中国江南水乡

瓷器是中国的文化符号,英语中China是瓷器,也是中国。

在欧洲旅行,在温莎堡、在歌德故居、在代尔夫特小镇、在哥本哈根机场,到处都可以看到精美的瓷器,每个民族都用自己的智慧演绎着美丽瓷艺,可是谁都不会忘记做几件青花瓷器物,每个博物馆,每个商铺都会告诉你瓷器源自中国,源自景德镇。有人说,China是大秦帝国"秦"的译音;也有人说,景德镇古时叫昌南,China是"昌南"的译音。

中国是瓷器的故乡,约二千年前东汉中晚期,瓷器诞生在中国江南的青山绿水之中。这是一个漫长的历史过程。



Fence style architecture unearthed in Hemudu Cultural Relics, reflecting the life style of Jiang Nan primitive tribes and giving some insights about the origin of porcelain in Jiang Nan

河姆渡文化遗址出土的干栏式屋桩反映了江南原始部落的生活方式, 这或许对瓷出江南的原因有所启示

Archaeological discoveries indicate that in the middle of 16th century B.C., potters of the ancient Yue State in China's southeast coast made the primitive porcelain in the long practice of baking hard pottery and white pottery. The primitive porcelain, which was in a transitional stage, had the essential properties of porcelain, but the purity was not good enough and the baking temperature did not reach the standard of porcelain proper. Primitive porcelain was mainly produced in Jiang Nan (the areas south of the Yangtze River) and other parts in southern China. It was similar to the hard pottery and bronze produced in the same period in terms of shapes and decorations. Meanwhile, primitive porcelain had inherited the features of being sophisticated, delicate and neat, which were characterized by the culture in Wu and Yue.

考古发现,大约在公元前16世纪的商代中期,中国东南沿海古越国的陶工在长期烧造印纹硬陶和白陶的基础上烧造出原始瓷器,原始瓷处于陶与瓷的过渡阶段,已采用瓷石作为原料,具备了瓷的基本属性,但材质纯度和烧成温度还未达到瓷器的高度。原始瓷的产地主要分布在江南和华南,在造型和纹饰上十分接近同一时期的印纹硬陶和青铜器,还继承了马家浜、良渚、河姆渡等吴越文化精巧、细腻、严谨、工整的特色。



Primitive porcelain (the Western Zhou Dynasty), collected in Cixi Museum of Zhejiang Province

原始青瓷(西周) 浙江省慈溪市博物馆藏





Early celadon (the Eastern Han Dynasty), collected in Cixi Museum of Zhejiang Province

早期青瓷(东汉) 浙江省慈溪市博物馆藏

In the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period, the primitive porcelain was prevalent. However, most of the kilns had been severely damaged during the war between the Chu state and the Yue state. In Qin and Han dynasties, the primitive porcelain production had been restored in Ningbo and Shangyu, though the technique were completely different from that in the Warring States period. It was a new type of porcelain. On this basis, pottery and porcelain had been gradually separated, and finally in the late Eastern Han Dynasty (1st century AD), the real porcelain—the early celadon came into being.

春秋战国,原始瓷器本已极盛,但是在楚灭越国的兼并战争中,大多数陶坊遭到严重破坏。秦汉时期,原始瓷器生产在浙江宁波、上虞一带得以恢复,但工艺已与战国时期完全不同,是另一种原始瓷器。在此基础上,逐步实现了陶、瓷分烧,人们终于在东汉晚期(公元1世纪)烧制出真正的瓷器——早期青瓷。



Celadon chamber pot (the Eastern Han Dynasty), collected in Shanghai Museum

青瓷虎子(东汉) 上海博物馆藏

With the development of navigation in the 16th and 17th centuries, a large number of Chinese porcelain was introduced to Europe. Aristocrats in the European courts were very keen on collecting Chinese porcelain. The upper class community took the possession of the top Chinese porcelain as a marker for their noble identity. At first they did not know what porcelain wares were. What they knew was nothing but the porcelain wares were from China. So they called porcelain "china". Later on, porcelain wares became the representative articles of Chinese art and culture. At that time, porcelain was more valuable than gold, which sparked an upsurge of imitating Chinese porcelain. A French missionary, who had been to Jingdezhen, recorded the process of firing porcelain in great details. However, this ancient oriental art was so complex that it took the Europeans almost a century to explore the mystery of porcelain. Until in 1709, urged by King of Saxony who was a keen porcelain collector, Bottger, an alchemist, discovered the mystery of firing porcelain, thus enjoyed the honor of father of porcelain in Europe. Dresden, the city which was later devastated during World War II and revived miraculously, became the birthplace of European porcelain. 20 kilometers from the urban area of Dresden was located the Meissen royal kiln that went into operation in June 1710, and mass production of real hard porcelain began in 1713. The success of Meissen stirred the whole Europe, giving rise to the increasing demand of porcelain. But this kind of workshop could not satisfy the booming market. The British people were destined to be bound with modern industry. Another giant in European porcelain industry Wedgwood completed the mission. The three great British figures Wedgwood, Salad and Spode in the 18th century invented the transfer decals technology and bone china. Porcelain production moved into the modern industrial era. The European porcelain wares gradually replaced the Chinese products, and became dominant in the market.



Dresden 德累斯顿

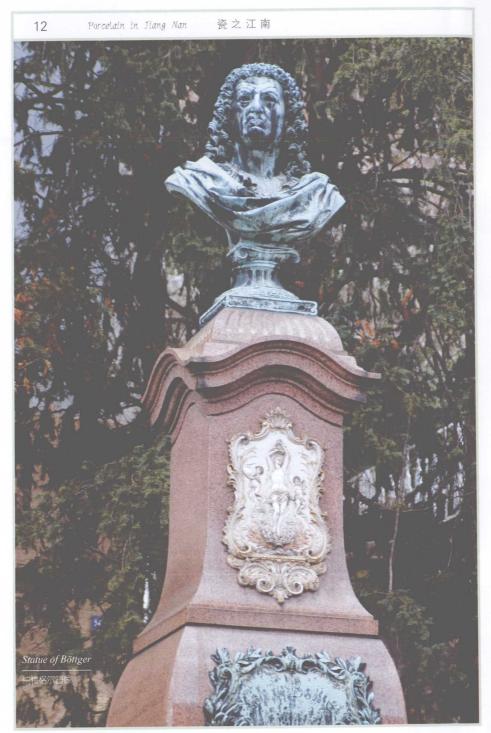
16-17世纪,航海的发达,将大量中国瓷器带到欧洲,欧洲宫廷贵族热衷于收藏中国瓷器,整个社会上层都以藏有中国瓷器体现身份的尊贵。起先他们并不知道瓷器是何器物,只知道来自中国,于是就把瓷器称作"china",久而久之瓷器就成了中国文化和中国艺术在海外的代表性器物。当时瓷器的价值超过了黄金,也激起了欧洲人仿制瓷器的热潮,一位到过景德镇的法国传教士甚至极其详细地记录下景德镇制瓷的过程在国内发表。然而这古老的东方技艺竟如此复杂,欧洲人整整摸索了近一百年,直到1709年,在瓷器收藏家萨克森国王奥古斯特的重压之下,伯特格尔,一位因炼金失败逃往萨克森首都德累斯顿的炼金术师,终于破解了制瓷之谜,成为欧洲瓷器之父。德累斯顿,这个后来被二战炮火摧毁,又奇迹般复苏的文化名城,成了欧洲瓷器的发祥地。距德累斯顿市区20公里的迈森王室瓷窑在1710年6月开业,到1713年终于开始批量生产真正的硬质瓷器。迈森的成功震惊了整个欧洲,需求量剧增,而它手工作坊式的生产又难以满足。英国人是注定与机器大工业连在一起的,欧洲瓷业的另一位巨人威基伍德工坊完成了这一使命,三位英国人威基伍德、萨拉德、斯普特在18世纪开创了转移贴花技术和骨灰瓷,瓷器进入大工业生产时代,欧洲瓷器终于逐步取代中国瓷器成为市场主流。



Meissen porcelain

迈森瓷器





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