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## Introduction

For centuries, and in the Chinese case for at least a millennium, Asian art and artefacts were created, collected, consumed and traded first and foremost on Asian markets. While the historical record is spotty and a survey of the art markets in Asia remains to be written, there is sufficient evidence for the existence of specialized platforms and networks which allowed creators or owners to trade in their goods and collectors from all walks of society to satisfy their desire for the acquisition of antiquities and contemporary art.<sup>1</sup> Nowadays the Asian market for Asian objects is once again on the rise.

However, since antiquity objects from East Asia also reached the Western world, particularly via the Silk Roads. The discovery of a sea route to Asia by the Portuguese in the early sixteenth century laid the foundation for organised large-scale export of Asian goods to Europe, with porcelain, lacquers and textiles as leading cultural assets. A majority of these artefacts were export goods, which – according to Western models – were produced especially for the European market. These found their place as luxury goods above all in the salons of bourgeois individuals and aristocrats as well as in the princely chambers of arts and curiosities.

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1 Cf. among others Lothar Ledderose, Some Observations on the Imperial Art Collection in China, in *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* 43 (1978/79), 33-46.; Michael Sullivan, Some Notes on the Social History of Chinese Art, in *Collected Papers of the International Conference on Sinology* (Taipei: Zhongyang Yanjiuyuan, 1981); Ankeney Weitz, Notes on the Early Yuan Antique Market in Hangzhou, in *Ars Orientalis* 27 (1997), 27-38; Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Accumulating Culture – the Collections of Emperor Huizong* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009); Jason Steuber with Guolong Lai, eds.: *Collectors, Collections & Collecting the Arts of China – Histories & Challenges* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2014); Vimalin Rujivacharakul, ed., *Collecting China – the World, China, and the History of Collecting* (Newark: Delaware University Press, 2015); Tōbi Kenkyūjo / Segi Shin'ichi, eds., *Tokyo bijutsu shijōshi rekishi-hen* [A History of the Tokyo Art Market, Historical Part] (Tokyo: Tokyo Bijutsu Kurabu [Art Club Tokyo], 1979); Elizabeth Lillehoj, ed., *Acquisition – Art and Ownership in Edo-Period Japan* (Warren: Floating World, 2007); Yamamoto Masako, *Karamonoya kara bijutsushō he – Kyoto ni okeru bijutsu shijōshi wo chūshin ni* [From Vendors of 'Things Chinese' to Art Dealers – Focusing on the Art Market in Kyoto] (Kyoto: Kōyō shobō, 2010).

The enforced opening of East Asia and the power asymmetry between Asia and the Western powers in the mid-nineteenth century provided the latter for the first time with ready access to the enormous Asian markets of arts and artefacts. The novelty of the objects which became available then set off a wildfire of Asia euphoria in the West. Over the course of the nineteenth century, a flurry of collecting and dealership in art objects from East Asia developed. Asian arts went global. Well into the twentieth century the scale and sources of supply and the scope of demand in the West first for Japanese, then for Chinese and even later for Korean art grew constantly. The activities of individual and institutional collectors, most notably museums, have been addressed, though frequently summarily, in many instances on the occasion of the centennial of said institutions.<sup>2</sup> While much remains to be done, the central role played by merchants of art has also come under scrutiny for some time.<sup>3</sup> However, the provenance of individual Asian art works in Western collections has – with the notable exception of some sales and collection catalogues – but for a few exceptions rarely been explored in depth, and reflections on the history and mechanisms of the markets as well as on the impact of the translocation of objects still constitute an emerging field.<sup>4</sup>

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- 2 Thomas Lawton / Linda Merrilln, eds., *Freer – A Legacy in Art* (New York: Abrams / Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., 1993); Christine Guth, *Art, Tea, and Industry - Masuda Takashi and the Mitsui Circle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Peter Noever, ed., *Japan yesterday – Spuren und Objekte der Siebold-Reisen* (Vienna: MAK / Prestel, 1997); Musée Cernuschi, ed., *Henry Cernuschi (1821-1896) – Voyageur et collectionneur* (Paris: Paris musées, 1998); Herbert Butz, ed., *Wege und Wandel – 100 Jahre Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst* (Berlin: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 2006); Caroline Reimers, “Wer schaffen will, muss fröhlich sein” - *Alexander Georg Moslé, Kaufmann aus Bremen und Sammler japanischer Kunst* (Berlin: ProBusiness, 2007); Adele Schlombs, *The Dawn of a New Era – the Foundation of the Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst in Cologne* (Cologne: Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst, 2009); Noriko Murai / Alan Chong, eds., *Journeys East: Isabella Stewart Gardner and Asia* (Boston: Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 2009); Ting Chang, *Travel, Collecting, and Museums of Asian Art in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013); Eberhard Illner, ed., *Eduard von der Heydt – Kunstsammler, Bankier, Mäzen* (Zurich: Museum Rietberg / Prestel, 2013); *Les Trésors d'Émile Guimet – Un homme à la confluence des arts et de l'industrie* (Musée des Confluences, Lyon/Paris: Actes Sud 2014); Fondation Baur / Monique Crick, eds., *Alfred Baur – Pioneer and Collector* (Milan: 5 continents / Fondation Baur, 2015); John Ayers, *Chinese and Japanese Works of Art in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen* (London: Royal Collection Trust. 3 Vols., 2016); *Enquêtes vagabondes – Le voyage illustré d'Émile Guimet en Asie* (Musée national des arts asiatiques Guimet/Paris: Gallimard, 2017).
- 3 Cf. Jōdsuka Taketoshi, *Gashō Hayashi Tadamasu* [The picture dealer Hayashi Tadamasu] (Tomiyaama: Kita-Nihon shuppan, 1972); Brigitte Koyama-Richard, *Japon Rêvé – Edmond de Goncourt et Hayashi Tadamasu* (Paris: Editions Hermann, 2002); Daisy Yiyu Wang, ‘The Louvre from China – A critical study of C.T. Loo and the Framing of Chinese art in the United States, 1915-1950’ Ph.D. thesis Ohio University, 2007; Kigi Yasuko, *Hayashi Tadamasu* (Tokyo : Minerba shobō 2009); Kuchigi Yuriko, *Hausu ob Yamanaka – Tōyō no shihō wo Ōbei ni utta bijutsushō* [The House of Yamanaka – The Art Dealers who Sold East Asian Treasures to Euroamerica] (Tokyo : Shinchōsha, 2011); Jaron Borensztain, ed., *Ghosts and spirits from the Tikotin Museum of Japanese Art – Felix Tikotin: A Life Devoted to Japanese Art* (Leiden Publications / Sieboldhuis, 2012); Géraldine Lenain, *Monsieur Loo – Le roman d'un marchand d'art asiatique* (Paris : Philippe Picquier, 2013).
- 4 Stacey Pierson, *Collectors, Collections and Museums – The Field of Chinese Ceramics in Britain, 1560-1960* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2007); Shaheen Merali, ed., *Re-imagining Asia – A Thousand Years of Separation* (Berlin: Haus der Kulturen der Welt, 2008); Louise Tythacott, *The Lives of Chinese Objects – Buddhism, Imperialism and Display* (New York: Berghahn, 2011); Stacey Pierson, *From Object to Concept – Global Consumption and the Transformation of Ming Porcelain* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2013); Noriko Murai / Alan Chong, *Inventing Asia – American Perspectives around 1900* (Boston: Isabella Stewart Gardner Muse-

The current debate on the provenance of extra-European artefacts in Western museum collections has a strong focus on the origin and translocation of objects from Africa, while other world regions receive less attention. This journal issue would like to encourage a broader perspective and consideration of the circumstances and itineraries of objects from East Asia that passed into Western collections. This is important as artefacts from the Far East were the most favoured among collectors of so-called world art in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and collections in the West therefore abound in artefacts from China, Japan and Korea. Research on art market mechanisms and actors is an indispensable basis for tracing their past.

This expansive JAMS issue on *Asian art: Markets, Provenance, History* offers 13 articles focusing on the dynamics of the Western market for East Asian art in Europe, North America and Japan and its impact on museum collections in the West. The idea for this issue was born during the workshop “Provenance research on East Asian art” jointly organised by the Institut für Kunstwissenschaft und Historische Urbanistik, Technische Universität Berlin and the Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, which took place on 13-14 October 2017 in Berlin.<sup>5</sup> This workshop was the first to bring together curators and academics engaged in research on the provenance of German, Swiss and Austrian museum objects from Asia and the market dynamics behind their acquisition. Five of the papers presented at the workshop provide this issue with a special focus on Asian Art on the German market (Jirka-Schmitz, von Przychowski/Tisa Francini, von zur Mühlen, Neumann, and Reuther).

## Early collecting

The trade in export goods and artefacts from East Asia in the early modern period was for a long time dominated by the Dutch East India Company. In “How to Furnish a Palace” **Ruth Sonja Simonis** traces the paths of Asian porcelain imported from the Netherlands to the court of August the Strong in the early eighteenth century by revealing the activities of a number of Saxon and Dutch dealers involved in the transfer and their networks. Simonis’s article shows the importance of inventories as sources for art market studies of early modern times and their impact on the provenance research in our museum collections. Her research results from the project “Microstructures of global trade. East Asian porcelain from the Augustus the Strong Collection” at Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden.

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um, 2014). Readers might also refer to: *Journal for Art Market Studies*, vol. 2, no. 2, Translocations and the Art Market (<https://fokum-jams.org/index.php/jams/issue/view/6>).

5 All lectures are available under: <https://voicerepublic.com/series/provenienzforschung-zu-ostasiatischer-kunst-herausforderungen-und-desiderata> (accessed: 21 July 2018). The workshop subsequently inspired the foundation of a network of scholars in this field that meets annually.

## Asian Art on Western markets

In the nineteenth century, among the three East Asian countries it was only China which had to face Imperialist aggression that resulted in a form of Western colonialism which Osterhammel named “Stützpunktkolonialisierung” [roughly: foothold colonialisation]<sup>6</sup>: China remained an independent state but had to accept a Western presence with extra-territorial rights in treaty ports and protectorates. Two major events are related to the forced translocation of parts of the Imperial Chinese collection to the West: the looting of the Old Summer Palace (Yuanmingyuan) at the end of the Second Opium War (1856-1860) in October 1860 by the British and French Army and the plunder of the Forbidden City (and other Imperial sites) after the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion by Allied Expeditionary Forces in August 1900. In both cases, military intervention led to the appearance of thousands of objects<sup>7</sup> on the European art market and allowed Imperial artefacts to enter private and public collections.<sup>8</sup> According to Chinese sources, 1.64 million Chinese relics are today housed in more than 200 museums in 47 countries outside China.<sup>9</sup>

For many years **Louise Tythacott** has been on the forefront of scholars exploring the destiny of Summer Palace loot in British and French collections. In her contribution, she takes a close look at one specific strategy of enhancing the value of Chinese Summer Palace loot on the European market after 1860. By exhibiting the objects before an auction, army members involved in the sacking of the Yuanmingyuan prepared their market entry and the commodification of the objects.

**Akiko Takesue** takes the slightly later active Canadian collector of Japanese ceramics, Sir William Van Horne (1843-1915) as an entrance point to research the influence of art dealers and the global market on private collectorship in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. She sheds not only fresh light on the market for East Asian art in the United States but demonstrates that collectorship was often a collaborative process.

**Ai Fukunaga** explores the dynamics of the market catering to European customers in Japan and unearths the significant contributions of local agents. Besides dealers and their shops, she identifies hotels as spaces of contact and exchange of commodities. Local agents played a significant role as intermediaries between suppliers, dealers and the Western clients. Taking the British ceramic collector Henry Marsham (1845-1908) and his

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6 Jürgen Osterhammel, *Kolonialismus. Geschichte, Formen, Folgen* (Munich: Beck, 2009), 17.

7 Tythacott even quotes a figure of more than one million objects: Louise Tythacott, ‘Trophies of War: Representing ‘Summer Palace’ Loot in Military Museums in the UK’, in *Museum and Society* 13 (2015), 469.

8 On this topic see also the article: Tracking dispersal: Auction Sales from the Yuanmingyuan Loot in Paris in the 1860s by Léa Saint-Raymond and Christine Howald in the previous issue of this journal (DOI 10.23690/jams.v2i2.30).

9 See for example Zuozhen Liu, *The Case for Repatriating China’s Cultural Objects* (Singapore: Springer, 2016), 1. Like most published statements, Liu allegedly quotes UNESCO but does not provide a source.

acquisitions at the Miyako Hotel in Kyoto as an example, Fukunaga discusses Western collectorship as part of an emerging tourist industry in Japan.

While the activities of European dealers of East Asian art on the Parisian and the London market have been studied to some extent, and research on the German market is in progress, so far very little is known about the situation in Italy. **Massimiliano Papini** draws on documents in the Archive of the Museo Stibbert in Florence, which evolved out of the collection amassed by the British expat Frederick Stibbert (1838-1906), to illuminate the business of the gallery Janetti Padre et Figli. Pappini reveals that the family business of the Janettis was able to supply Stibbert with *objets d'art* of exceptionally high quality, documented by remarks of visiting Japanese dignitaries, courtesy of a direct supply chain from Japan.

**Anna Pushakova** invites us to explore yet another under-researched buyers and collectors scene for East Asian art: the Russian market. Her paper focuses on the years following the Revolution of 1917 when the market saw a strong shift as a result of the changes implemented by the new communist regime. Free market activities were severely limited, the export of artworks forbidden and most private collections nationalized. Newly founded museums took over the (re-)distribution of objects. By taking the Moscow State Museum of Oriental Art as example and based on unpublished material of the museum, Pushakova traces the new ways of selling and buying East Asian art in Russia between 1918 (the founding year of the museum) and 1930.

## Special Focus: Asian Art on the German Market

Auction catalogues are an indispensable source for art market studies. Since 2010, catalogues published between 1901 and 1945 in Germany, Austria and Switzerland have been identified and digitized in two projects under the heading “German sales” which were carried out in a joint effort by Heidelberg University Library, the Kunstbibliothek, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin and the Getty Research Institute (Los Angeles). **Britta Bommert** evaluated all German Asian auctions for the period between 1901 and 1929 and her article provides the first systematic study on the development of this market.

Until the late 1930s, Berlin was not only the mecca for German trade in Western art, but also in art from the Far East. In her article, **Patrizia Jirka-Schmitz** explores the market for Far Eastern Art in Berlin during the Weimar Republic (1918-1933) by presenting four key dealers of the late 1920's – Theodor Bohlken (1851-1954), Edgar Worch (1880-1972), Otto Burchard (1892-1965) and Felix Tikotin (1893-1986). Through the lens of their activities she presents a survey of the market, points out the shift in focus from Japanese to Chinese art objects, provides an overview of preferred object categories and highlights the most important auctions of that time.

One key actor in collecting East Asian and so-called world art in the 1920's and 1930's was the German Swiss banker Eduard von der Heydt (1882-1964), who was based at different times in Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland. **Alexandra von Przychowski**

and **Esther Tisa Francini** trace his collecting, the parameters and methods which informed his selection of works, and his networks of advisors. They also describe current strategies at the ultimate destination of his collection, the Museum Rietberg in Zurich, to address issues of provenance.

## Asian art and Jewish collectors and dealers

As in the better established field of provenance research on European art, the identification of Asian objects plundered by the Nazi regime from Jewish collectors and dealers constitutes one of the most pressing issues at hand. While this aspect has so far received but scant attention, it is particularly virulent as many European art collectors in the first half of the twentieth century habitually assembled Asian works of art and artefacts, if only to decorate their homes and residences. To various extents, Dr Otto Burchard, Edgar Worch, Felix Tikotin and many other leading European art dealers shared the tragic fate of their Jewish compatriots in having to face threats to their possessions, their homes, health and lives and the sufferings of flight and exile.

In taking us to a veritable court room drama, **Ilse von zur Mühlen** describes the complexities encountered in the attempt to establish the property rights for a group of Chinese objects acquired by a museum in 1935 at the auction of stock from the then already dissolved gallery Dr Otto Burchard & Co. Tax debts and the finance authorities, banks and the securities for loans, as well as the claims from various parties or their respective heirs form a tight web which could hardly be untangled. The possibility that individual objects of this stock might have been illegally removed from even earlier owners further complicates the situation.

Among the many spectacular cases of academic dealer-curators that were entangled in Nazi loot almost none shook the German public as severely – and garnered as much media attention – as the discovery of the massive stock of Hildebrand Gurlitt found in the residences of his son and heir Cornelius. As introduced here for the first time by **Nathalie Neumann**, and unnoticed by the wider public, the Gurlitt finds also included a significant number of objects hailing from Asia. Neumann's report details the Herculean task and quotidian frustrations of a provenance researcher called upon to establish the ownership history for Asian art objects which may be alike and lack any documentation. Confined to the markings and easily overlooked pointers on the objects themselves her contribution underlines the need for close examination of the scraps of physical evidence as well as the necessity to enlist one's powers of imagination, even to come up with a potential hypothesis.

**Silke Reuther**, who pioneered provenance research into non-European arts at the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe in Hamburg, takes a close look at the collection of Chinese artefacts assembled between 1934 and 1945 by the industrialist Philipp F. Reemtsma and the central role of his advisors. These included the Berlin museum curator Leopold Reidemeister and Martin Feddersen in Hamburg, who was forced to leave his curatorial position in 1937 because of his Jewish wife and acted as a part-time advisor to

the collector. While neither Reemtsma nor Feddersen appear to have kept records of the acquisitions on which they commented, auction catalogues from the library of Feddersen bequeathed upon his death to the museum, which also received the Reemtsma collection, provided almost the only crucial clues for the provenance of individual pieces.

## Asian Art on the Market today

**Anita Archer**'s analysis of the strategies adopted by the auction house Sotheby's in its almost single-handed inauguration of the auction market for Chinese contemporary art in 2004 brings this issue right up to the current situation on the market for Asian art. Her contribution takes the sale catalogue as a research source to trace the strategic selection of works by artists whose reputation had already been established through overseas' exhibitions and backing by foreign experts, the focus on recognizable styles, a mixture of media, and of more affordable and ambitiously priced art works.

It remains to be seen whether the tendency towards the dominance of Chinese objects and buyers and the shift of the market place to Asia will continue further, whether other areas of interest will (re-)emerge or whether new developments or actors might appear. Whatever the case might be, we trust that the contributions assembled here might serve as stepping stones for the history of the dynamic market for Asian arts and would like to express our gratitude to all contributors as well as to the editor of the *Journal for Art Market Studies*, Susanne Meyer-Abich, for making our collaboration so pleasurable.