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A GREEN-GLAZED RED POTTERY BRAZIER AND SCOOP

EASTERN HAN DYNASTY, 1ST CENTURY AD

The brazier is of round waisted form with a dome-shaped fire opening and a flat circular base, the mouth has three support pins. The piece is covered with a green glaze with some silvery iridescence, the partly glazed base reveals the reddish earthenware. 13.8 cm diameter.

The scoop is of square form with rounded corners and has a raised band around the rim, which is attached with a curved handle, covered overall with a silvery iridescent green glaze save the unglazed circular flat base. 14.3 cm long, including the handle.

A similar green-glazed pottery scoop excavated from a tomb at Huxian, Shaanxi province, has been dated to 133 AD (1). Compare also a similar green-glazed scoop in the Eumorfopoulos Collection (2).

1. Kaogu Yu Wenwu, 1980, no. 1, p. 45, Fig. 4

2. Eumorfopoulos Collection, *Catalogue*, Vol. I, pl. VIII, no. 54

FIVE DYNASTIES / TEN KINGDOMS 五代十國 (907—960)

The Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period was an era of political upheaval and division. Following the fall of the Tang dynasty in 906, five states quickly succeeded one another in the Central Plain, and more than a dozen concurrent states were established elsewhere, mainly in South China. The era culminated in the founding of the Song dynasty in 960.

In the following 19 years, Song gradually subdued the remaining states in South China, but the Liao dynasty still remained in the north and the Western Xia in the northwest. Many of the states had been de facto independent kingdoms long before 907 as the Tang dynasty's control over its officials waned. After the Tang collapsed, several warlords of the Central Plain crowned themselves emperor. During the 70-year period, there was near constant warfare between the emerging kingdoms and alliances they formed. All had the ultimate goal of controlling the Central Plain and establishing themselves as the Tang's successor.

The last of the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms regimes was Northern Han, which held out until the Song conquered it in 979, thereby ending the Five Dynasties period. For the next several centuries, although the Song controlled much of South China, they coexisted alongside the Liao dynasty, Jin dynasty, and various other regimes in China's north, until finally all of them were unified under the Mongol Yuan dynasty.

THE LIAO DYNASTY 遼朝 (907—1125)

The Liao dynasty, also known as Khitan (Qidan) empire, 契丹國 *qīdānguó*, ruled over Mongolia and portions of the Russian Far East, northern Korea, and northern China. Founded by Abaoji, Khagan of the Khitan people, it was the first state to control all of Manchuria.

Abaoji led the conquest of Balhae (Bohai) (698—926), covering Manchuria, the Korean Peninsula, and the Russian Far East. Later emperors would gain a region of the Later Jin dynasty in northern China along the Great Wall. In 1004 the Liao forced the Northern Song to recognize them as peers and heralded an era of peace and stability between the two powers that lasted approximately 120 years. Khitan women were engaged in hunting, managing family property, and held military posts. Marriages were not arranged, women had the right to divorce and remarry. Tension between Khitan and the traditional Chinese social and political practices led Abaoji to set up two parallel governments, the Northern Administration governed Khitan areas, while the Southern Administration governed areas with large non-Khitan populations and adopting the traditional Chinese governmental practices.

The Liao inherited ceramic technology from the Tang kilns in Henan and Hebei. However, Liao potters made their own Khitan shapes, such as long-necked vases, cockscomb vessels (Fig. 1), ewers with phoenix-headed mouths, and flattened flasks imitating animal hide bags. These were slipped and covered with a low-fired brown or green glaze or a fine white glaze. Liao kiln sites include Lindong and Chifeng in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, the Liaoyang kiln in Liaoning province, and the Longquanwu kiln in Beijing. The Liao dynasty was ended in 1125 by the Jurchen people of the Jin dynasty with the capture of the Liao emperor Tianzuo and driving the remnant Khitan to Central Asia before being conquered by the Mongols.



Fig. 1. White-glazed cockscomb flask, Liao dynasty.



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A GREEN-GLAZED POTTERY FIGURE OF A FEREGHAN HORSE

LIAO DYNASTY / FIVE DYNASTIES PERIOD, 10TH CENTURY

The powerful beast standing four-square on an unglazed rectangular plinth, the finely modeled head is tilted slightly to the right, with eyes alert, ears pricked and mouth agape. The tail is docked and tied. The figure is slipped and covered with a deep green glaze suffused with a fine crackle due to burial, the unglazed hooves showing remains of white slip and together with the unglazed plinth reveal the pinkish-buff earthenware. 48.6 cm high

The figure represents the revered 'blood-sweating' horses first introduced into China from Central Asia during the Han dynasty. All of their superior physical qualities are brought out in this figure. The complex modelling and strong linear contours harmonize perfectly to form an elegant beast that is as much animated as it is poised. The prestigious breeds bestowed great status to the Tang and Liao aristocracy, who owned these horses and for whom they were symbols of wealth and power.

The deep green glaze and pinkish-buff body are both characteristic of Liao pottery ware. The crazing of the glaze is due to the use of boric oxide as a flux, which also tended to make the glaze less rich than the Tang lead glazes (Wood, 1999). The glaze has also a slightly bluish-green tinge in comparison with the more emerald-green tone of Tang glazes.

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A QINGBAI GLAZED LOBED EWER

SONG DYNASTY, 11TH—12TH CENTURY

The ewer has a melon-shaped body with canted shoulders and is set with a ribbed flat strap handle opposite a tall curved spout. The slightly waisted collared neck is flanked by two flower-shaped molded strap loops. The depressed cover is topped by a cone-form bud finial and a small eyelet at the rim with the counter-eyelet on top of the handle. All beneath a thin pale grayish-green glaze stopping at the circular recessed base exposing the high-firing white china stone. 20 cm high, inclusive the cover



The ewer is from Fujian or Jiangxi province. The leaf-shaped lug ornaments are an early feature of the period from the Tang to the Northern Song. Also typical of this period is the asymmetrical shape of the strap handle made to allow a perfect grip.

A related qingbai ewer, 17.2 cm high, with a similar shaped base is in the Museum of East Asian Art (1). See also a Northern Song qingbai ewer, 17.8 cm high, from Xingzi county in Jiangxi province, dated to the year 1092 (2).

This type of ewers continued to be made into the 12th century Southern Song period. They have been found in the Jepara shipwreck, which sank in the Java Sea near Jepara on central Java, Indonesia, in the mid-12th century. The ship, a Chinese junk, was loaded with Fujian trade ceramics just like the example shown here.

1. Huo Jiena, 2008, p. 250

2. Peng Shifan, 1998, p. 50

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A BATAVIAN WARE IMARI TEA BOWL AND SAUCER

QING DYNASTY, YONGZHENG PERIOD, c.1723-1735

The exterior of both bowl and dish is glazed a coffee-brown color, the inside is painted in underglaze blue, iron-red and gilt with a rocky garden below a floral border at the rim. Diameter bowl 6 cm; saucer 10 cm



During the Ming and Qing dynasties, Jingdezhen became the porcelain capital of China. Its products were exported worldwide. The so-called 'Batavian ware' features a monochrome brown glaze on the exterior and a decoration in under-glaze blue or overglaze colored enamels on the inside. 'Batavian ware' is named after the Dutch East India Company port of Batavia (now Jakarta) in Java, from where these wares were transshipped into Europe.

Batavian ware was fashionable in Europe, particularly during the 18th century. They were much favoured in Holland and Sweden, and were also exported to America. Batavian ware is also depicted in many European oil paintings. Numerous similar tea sets have been excavated from the cargo of the Ca Mau shipwreck of c.1725 found in the coastal waters of south Vietnam.

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1N ENAMELED PEACH-FORM 'CADOGAN' WINE EWER

QING DYNASTY, JIAQING/DAOGUANG PERIOD, c.1800—1850

Modeled in the form of a peach set on a hollow splayed foot modeled like the bark of a tree, the peach is enameled in a very pale yellowish green with patches of powder-red, the long curving spout and the squared handle are shaped as gnarled green branches sprouting delicate green-glazed leaves, one leafy branch is attached to the body to support the spout, the turquoise-green base is pierced with a central circular aperture. 13.0 cm high



Peach-form wine ewers are constructed with an interior tube that is filled through the hole in the underside. They were made for domestic use as well as for export. The 19th century model shown here appears to follow a 17th century late Ming prototype (Fig. 1). Blue-and-white peach-form cadogan ewers formed part of the Hatcher cargo of c.1643, late Chongzhen period (1,2). They continued to be made throughout the Qing dynasty.

The name 'Cadogan' was coined in the 19th century by the English. The Earl of Cadogan seemed to have promoted their use as tea pots or as a mere curiosity.

1. Butler & Wang, 2006, pp. 316-317

2. Christie's Amsterdam, February 1985



Fig. 1. Cadogan ewer in copper-red and blue, 11.6 cm high, 1620–1640 (Flagstaff House, 1991).

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A QIANJIANG STYLE 'LANDSCAPE' BOX AND COVER

REPUBLIC PERIOD, c.1925

Potted of cylindrical form with a dome-shaped cover surmounted by a peach finial. The box is painted with a landscape in the Qianjiang style with subdued tones of green, blue and brown enamels, the flat base has five small prunes and is marked in overglaze blue with six characters 江西瓷業公司 *jiāngxī cíyè gōngsī* ('Jiangxi Industrial Porcelain Company'). 9.0 cm high



The term Qianjiang ('light umber') was only coined in the 1950s. It was developed in the mid-19th century and became popular in the Guangxu period and the early republic period. It was inspired by the Yuan literati landscape paintings. It uses a particular color scheme for outlining and shading in strokes of pale umber. Enamels were applied directly onto the fired glaze, much like a watercolor painting on paper. The often subdued tonal color gradations used in Qianjiang decorations stand in sharp contrast to the brightly painted fencai painted ware of the time. For other examples of the Qianjiang style, see cat. nrs. 239 and 270.

With the aid of private and government funding, the Jiangxi Industrial Porcelain Company took over the ceramic production of the Imperial kilns after the Qing dynasty had fallen in 1910. The company set up a school for research on mechanized production and for improving product quality. After the 1911 Revolution, government funding ceased, but production continued until 1934.

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A FENCAI RECTANGULAR 'PLAYING THE QIN' PLAQUE

粉彩人物圖瓷板桌屏

REPUBLIC PERIOD, EARLY 20TH CENTURY

The rectangular porcelain panel is finely painted in soft enamels with a scholar playing the qin while seated in a garden with pine and flowering branches borne on rockwork, two scholars engaged in conversation are standing behind him, all are clad in elaborate classic robes. 38.7 cm high; 25.7 cm wide

Beginning in the late Qing and continuing into the Republic period, a new trend toward individualism in porcelain-making emerged in Jingdezhen. Artists from private workshops would draw references from classical literati style of painting to decorate porcelain plaques and vessels, using them as a means of self-expression. The most famous of these artists were the 'Eight Friends of Zhushan'. See cat.nr. 250. In its soft colors and meticulous details the painting resembles the style of Wang Dafan (1888-1961), known for his fluid and expressive brush-strokes and exquisite colors.

Playing the qin (zither) was a favorite pastime of the educated Confucian scholar. The scene that is depicted here symbolizes a deep and true friendship. According to a Chinese saying a truly understanding and empathic friend is one who 'knows the tone' 知音 *zhīyīn*. The saying derives from a tale about the friendship between Yu Boya 俞伯牙 and Zhong Ziqi 钟子期, who lived in the State of Chu in present-day Hubei province during the Spring and Autumn period (770—476 BC). Zhong Ziqi was an ordinary woodcutter, who was nevertheless fully able to recognize exactly what was going on in the heart and mind of Yu Boya as he played the qin. One day, Ziqi had passed away. Boya broke the strings of his qin and never played again.



*Playing the qin, 1610
(Goodall, 1979).*