

Descriptio [Discriptio!]

insula Javæ. Anno 1750 d. 19 Julii. P.
 fœnicæ. Fœf. som tecknas p. E. B. har medföljt
 svenske ostindiefararen, skeppet Cron Printzen
 Adolphe Fredrik, som d. 19 Dec. 1749 afgick från Sverige.
 Synes vara original.

4^e Haft. i grön omslag. Gamm. sign. H. n) 3.

Lit.: Arce, J. G., En svensk Kinaresenär och hans signatur
 i: Unda maris 1960, s. 5-10.

FRANSSON, Johan Peter, 1743 - 1825;
assistent vid Ostindiska kompaniet.

Ekonomiskt diarium 1805-1815.

8:o 3 h., 1 bl.

Se: HILDEBRAND, B.O.H., Efterlämnade papper. Ser. 5: 153.

[Kbhvn, Rigsarkivet]

(Fol.) [Eleon]

Fotosam. incl

VERKAUFFUNGS-CONDITIONES

derer Wahren, so mit dem Schwedischen privilegirten ost-indischem Compagnie
Schiffe, die Königin Ulrica Eleonora, den 13. Februarii 1735 in Gothenburg
angekommen, und den 20. Junii 1735 daselbst an die meistbietenden öffentlich
sollen verkauffet werden ...

Fol. [Gothenburg 1735.]

[Xeroxkopia efter originalet i Rigsarkivet, Köpenhamn. - Rubriktitel. - 5 färg-
planscher i ficka.]

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TRANSACTIONS

Edited by

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The Danish National Library of

Science and Medicine

Chinese Watercolours from the 18th Century Illustrating Porcelain Manufacture

One of the greatest treasures of the Lund University Library remained comparatively unnoticed for about two hundred years. Then, in 1963, Folke Dahl discovered a volume classified as "Technology. Ceramics", properly placed in the stacks among the folios in technology¹. The volume consisted of fifty watercolours, 41x31 cm in size, illustrating the story of porcelain from the quarrying of the raw material to its transport by sea to Europe. The watercolours were joined together into a sequence which was 20 m long, folded between covers finished in silk.

Folke Dahl showed his find at three exhibitions: at Lund, Stockholm and Gothenburg, but died prematurely and never had the opportunity of making a scholarly presentation of his discovery. I have here relied on and benefited from the text in his exhibition catalogues, which he would no doubt have wished to revise². Being a librarian and literary scholar myself, I do not really possess sufficient expert knowledge of Chinese porcelain manufacture and artistic tradition to comment on the find but have deemed it of value that the pictures be briefly presented in an international context.

The decision to purchase "a book in folio... consisting of beautiful Chinese paintings, representing the whole of Porcelain manufacture; which was bought at an auction in Gothenburg"³ is recorded in the minutes of a meeting of the University Senate in October 1759. Folke Dahl did not identify the auction in question, but later on two librarians at Lund, Margareta Donner and Jan Olof Friström, have identified it with great certainty⁴. At the Royal Library, Stockholm they found two copies of "Catalogue of the Deceased ... Honourable Mr. Colin Campbell's Collection of Books which on the 27th of February 1758 and the days following will be sold by public Auction"- the title here translated from Swedish⁵. As no. 17 of the Folios in that catalogue we find "En Samling af Chinesiska målningar", i.e. "a Collection of Chinese Paintings".

One of the copies of the catalogue was interfoliated. Concerning the collection of Chinese paintings, it is noted on an interleaf that it had been procured by Jacob von Utfall, one of the directors of the Swedish East India Company at the time. A year later, among the accounts of the University of Lund, a receipt for an equivalent sum was found, apparently for the purchase of these paintings. Eva Gerle, who made a note of this in her history of the library, states that an initiative taken by Eric Gustaf Lidbeck, Professor of Natural History at Lund, is the probable explanation of Jacob von Utfall's buying and shortly afterwards selling the pictures to Lund. Lidbeck knew that Linnæus had obtained for himself and for the Natural History Department at Uppsala considerable additions to the collections thanks to the East India Company. Professor Lidbeck suggested that the Lund University Senate should write to the Chancellor of the Swedish Universities and ask him to put forward a proposal to the directors of the East India Company to see to it that "natural history specimens and curiosities of general interest" were brought back on behalf of Lund University. This was done. Jacob von Utfall's contribution may have been to buy the Chinese paintings at the auction of Colin Campbell's collection and then sell them to the University.

The importance that Linnæus attached to this type of pictorial representation is shown by the fact that he proposed for election to the newly-formed Academy of Sciences in Stockholm a merchant who could donate two "books" about rice cultivation and silk culture in China, which contained 46 woodcuts copied from paintings⁷.

The Scottish merchant Colin Campbell was one of the initiators of the Swedish East India Company, which received its first charter in almost 150 years after the first European Company of this kind had been formed in Portugal⁸. The Swedish company was very successful to begin with. Most voyages gave rich profits and

results. Colin Campbell himself went as first supercargo on the first voyage 1732-33, and also went along on the voyages of 1735-36 and 1737-39. On one of these trips, he probably bought this "Collection of Chinese Paintings".

Porcelain cargoes were very important to Sweden. According to the figures given by Koninckx, Sweden had larger imports than the United States, Holland or England⁹. On the voyages in which Colin Campbell took part, porcelain was naturally a substantial part of the return cargo.

Colin Campbell's detailed travel diary of the first voyage to China undertaken by the Swedish East India Company in 1732-33 has recently been recovered, as have two briefer diaries of his two later voyages. The diaries were among papers belonging to Charles Irvine, another Scot in the service of the Swedish East India Company. Irvine's archives, like Campbell's diaries, were put up for sale by the antiquarian bookseller H.P. Kraus in New York in October 1986. Irvine's papers were acquired by the James Ford Bell Library at the University of Minnesota, Campbell's diaries by the Gothenburg Historical Museum, which deposited them with the Gothenburg University Library¹⁰.

At least the first of Colin Campbell's diaries, containing detailed accounts of trade in Canton, is to be published in an annotated edition. By courtesy of Christian Axel-Nilsson, Former Director of the Museum, and Paul Hallberg, Chief Librarian, it has been possible for me to examine cursorily a transcription of the first diary and copies of the later ones. The purchase of the Chinese watercolours is not mentioned as far as I could ascertain. Nevertheless, it is probable that Campbell acquired the watercolours on one of his voyages.

As Folke Dahl pointed out, several similar series of pictures of Chinese origin are known from different collections in Europe, but there is none containing so many pictures. A series of thirty-four pictures, which was discovered in 1954, has been published in Walter A. Staehelin, *The Book of Porcelain*, London 1966¹¹. The oldest known series of this kind comprised twenty pictures and was painted towards the end of the 17th century. As far as we know, those pictures are

now lost. In 1743, they were sent from the Imperial Palace in Peking to Tang Ying, Imperial Overseer and Director of the Imperial Factory at Jingdezhen, to be arranged in the correct order and explained. The text, "The Description of the Twenty Illustrations of the Manufacture of Porcelain" by Tang Ying, is preserved in a work from 1774, *The T'ao Shuo* by Chu Yen.

T'ao Shuo has been translated and introduced in *Description of Chinese Pottery and Porcelain* being a translation of the *T'ao Shuo*, with introduction, notes, and bibliography by Stephen W. Bushell, Oxford 1910. I am going to compare the Lund series with the "Description of the Twenty Illustrations of the Manufacture of Porcelain" by Tang Ying as it is given in *T'ao Shuo*¹². Folke Dahl, for some reason, compared the Lund series with another text: *Ching-té-chên t'ao lu* being a translation with notes and an introduction by Geoffrey R. Sayer, London 1951. *Ching-té-chên t'ao lu* does not contain the Description of the Twenty Illustrations by Tang Ying, but remarks on fourteen other pictures. These remarks, however, are said to be taken mostly from the *T'ao Shuo*.

Folke Dahl attempted to date the Lund series primarily by studying how the porcelain in the pictures was decorated and how the European merchants were dressed. His conclusion is that the watercolours were probably painted in the 1730s. This dating is supported by the fact that the pictures belonged to Colin Campbell, information which Dr Dahl did not have. None of the other series of pictures preserved has been assigned such an early date, according to Folke Dahl.

The pictures found at Lund were bound together in the eighteenth century, and were, as Dahl points out, framed with European paper. The tension between the different qualities of the European and Chinese paper, when Dahl found them, had made the pictures wavy. A restoration, in which the volume was divided into its original constituents, the fifty water-colours, was accomplished in the 1960s at the Department of Oriental Antiquities at the British Museum. During restoration a label was discovered, bearing the Chinese text "List of pictures" and the

name Liu Tienhua. It is uncertain whether this is the name of the artist, the owner or the person who drew up the list.

The use of European paper shows us that the binding together was effected in Europe, perhaps in Sweden. Likewise, the putting of the pictures in a certain order was probably accomplished in Europe, perhaps in Sweden. Dahl has written the figures from 1 to 50 on the back of the watercolours. Apparently the order given them in the eighteenth century has been changed, as is suggested by Dahl's formulation in his catalogue text, that in putting the Lund pictures in order, he had followed Sayer's translation of *Ching-té-chén t'ao lu*.

In the first three watercolours in the Lund series there are workers obviously on their way to their places of work, on paths and roads in a landscape with lakes and high mountains. They are

carrying picks and baskets. The raw materials, feldspathic mineral and kaolin, are quarried inside the mountain (4)¹³ or opencast (5). Bearers are carrying the stones in baskets in yokes on their shoulders. The high mountains are seen in the background (6).

The bearers reach a broad watercourse, where the beginning of a bridge is seen (7). The baskets are emptied into a boat, which is already heavily loaded (8). We can see a steersman steering the boat down a river (9). Another boat is loaded (10). One of the boats arrives at a village. On the shore bearers are standing with empty baskets (11). The bearers are ready to carry the raw materials to mills in gushing water, where the stones are pounded (12-13, 13, fig. no. 1; see further, Tang Ying's commentary on the Peking illustration no. 1, below).

In the next pictures in the Lund series we see

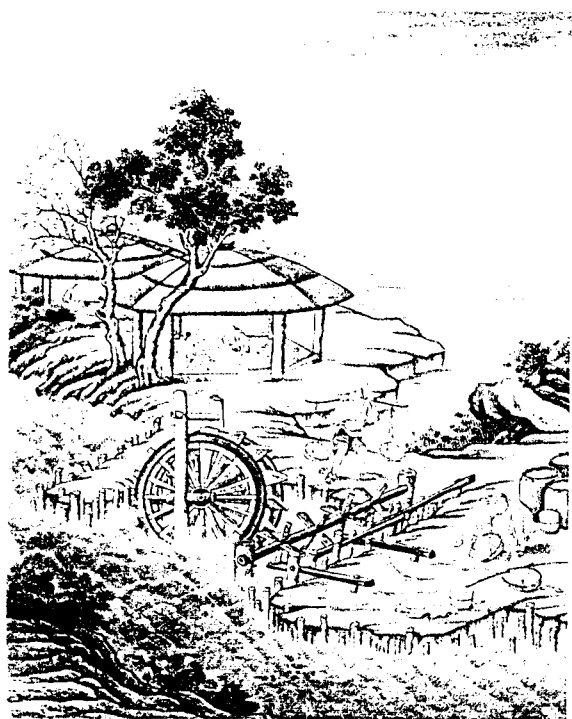


Fig.1: Tang Ying comments: "The natives take advantage of the streams flowing down the mountain side to erect wheels provided with crushers. The stones are finely powdered, washed clean, and made up in the shape of clay bricks, which are called *pai* (white) tun."



Fig.2: Buffaloes were used to pulverize the raw material.

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the pounded stones further pulverized in ponds (14-16), partly by buffaloes trampling on them (15, fig. no. 2). The stone pulp produced in this way is purified in different vessels (17). From this pulp are manufactured seggars, the containers that the porcelain was put into, when it was to be fired in the big kilns (18). The seggars are transported downstream (19). We assume that their destination is Jingdezhen, the town that was the centre of porcelain manufacture.

The next picture in the Lund series reveals a splendid house, perhaps situated in Jingdezhen, with a porter in the foreground (20). The seggars are being prepared. The bottoms are coated with porcelain powder so that the vessels placed in them will not stick in the firing (21). The porcelain mass is placed on stone blocks and pounded with clubs (22). The fine paste is cast in wooden moulds, and then cut into squares which are

packed separately and stamped with quality marks (23).

The pots are thrown. Two different kinds of potter's wheel are used; one where the potter's assistant sets the wheel rotating with the aid of a rope running through a notch round the wheel, the two ends of which he holds in his hands (24, fig. no. 3; see further Tang Ying's commentary on the Peking illustration no. 6, below), and one which he kicks round (25). Once completed, the pots are placed on boards so that the dampness will evaporate in the open air (28).

Behind the entrance gate to a fine workshop can be discerned a man with a reed basket containing porcelain already packed (29). Two men are carrying boards with pots on them (29). The pots are provided with a handle for holding them while they are being engraved and glazed. They are glazed and signed (26) and given a last finish

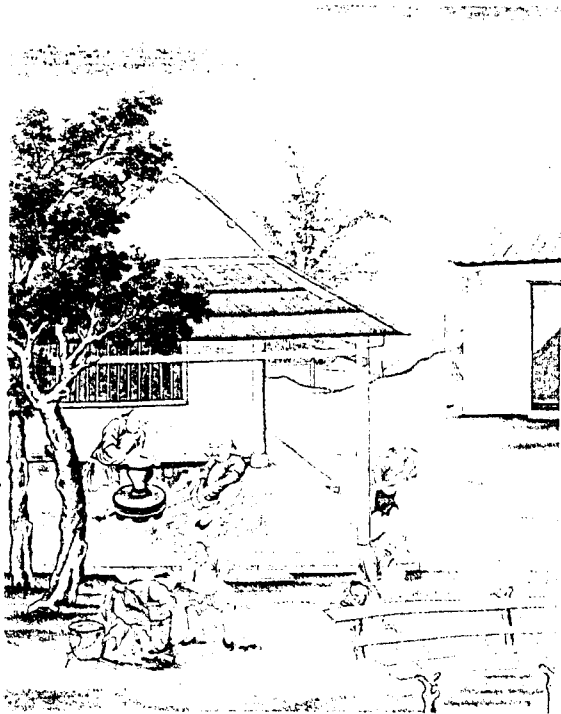


Fig.3: Tang Ying comments: "The wheel, which is like a round wooden table, is fixed so as to turn upon a perpendicular axle, [and] revolves continuously..."



Fig.4: Tang Ying comments: "the workmen, with their hands protected by gloves made of over ten folds of cotton soaked in cold water, go into the kiln to take out the contents."

(27). Wood is hewed and chopped into sticks. The vessels are put into the seggars which are then piled in kilns (30). When the kiln is full and the fire has been lit, it is bricked up (31). After the firing, the kiln is opened up again and the seggars are removed (32, fig. no. 4, Peking illustration no.16).

Porcelain, fired once, is decorated in different colours (33, fig. no. 5, Peking illustration no.17). Porcelain that has been painted with paint that cannot withstand high temperatures is fired again in so-called muffle ovens (34, 35).

In front of a building that has a flag on it with the Imperial colour yellow, stands a man to whom people are carrying the porcelain. Probably, he is the chief Imperial Overseer. In fact it could be the previously mentioned Tang Ying, to whom the first known twenty pictures were sent from Peking (36). The chief overseer carefully

examines the different products and evaluates them (37). The articles are packed either in wooden tubs, or in rush matting (38, fig. no. 6, Peking illustration no. 19).

An official or a merchant behind a counter is making calculations about his large store of porcelain (39). The Imperial Overseer supervises the packing and shipment (40). After that, he personally supervises the shipments when the cargoes are sent off by boat (42). But the transportation is also done overland by porters. It takes four porters to carry a barrel (41).

The porcelain is sold at a shop. We see three Chinese ladies on their way to make a purchase (43). The porcelain is also sold in a simpler way, from a rug spread out on the outskirts of town (44). Close by can be seen the shopkeepers and their shops. The Imperial flag waves above the walled part of the city in the background (45).

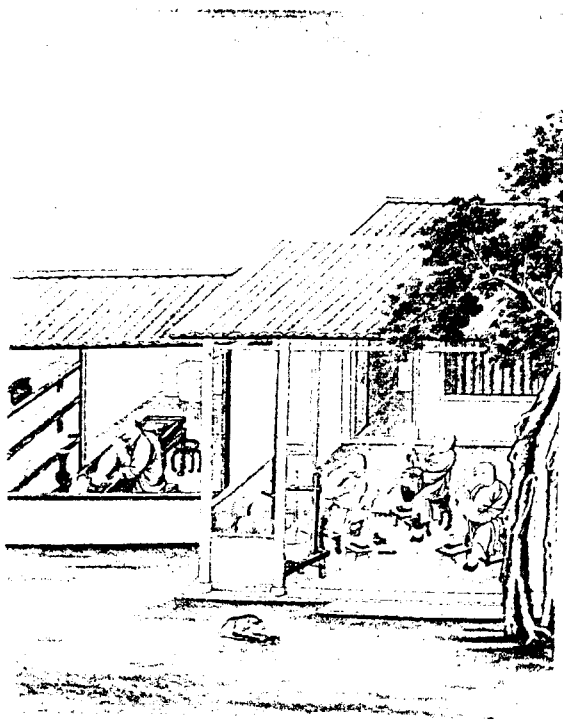


Fig.5: Tang Ying comments: "Clever artists are selected to paint the porcelain and combine the different colours. A clear eye, attentive mind, and exact hand, are required to attain excellence."



Fig.6: The porcelain is sorted and packed according to its quality.

According to Dr Dahl's interpretation, we can see a customs officer and his assistant. But there are quite a few boats. They have no cargo and are lying drawn up on the beach; so instead the figure may be a harbourmaster or a shipowner (46).

A European merchant is standing in the doorway of an elegant shop, probably in Canton, "The Shop of Great Perfection", according to the text on a streetlamp (47). Two European merchants are entering another shop followed by a servant holding a bag of money (48). Eventually the porcelain bought is transported by cargo boat out to the roads (49). In the roads, a large European vessel, probably a Dutch one, is waiting (50)¹⁴.

If you compare the Lund series with the twenty Peking pictures commented upon by Tang Ying, there are obviously both resemblances and dissimilarities.

The first of the twenty illustrations is called "Collection of the Stones and Fabrication of the Paste". As we have seen, in the Lund series as many as thirteen pictures, numbers 1-13 in Folke Dahl's numbering, depict this phase of the work.

The commentary by Tang Ying on the first Peking illustration describes what we see in the first Lund pictures; how the different kinds of earth used in the fabrication of porcelain paste "are found in the province Kiangnan ... on the mountains P'ing-li och K'u-k'ou, at a distance of two hundred *li* from the Porcelain manufactory. Mines are excavated to dig out the stones ... The natives take advantage of the streams flowing down the mountain side to erect wheels provided with crushers. The stones are finely powdered, washed clean, and made up in the shape of clay bricks, which are called *pai* (white) *tun*"¹⁵ (Lund picture no.13, fig. no.1).

The second illustration in the Peking series was called "Washing and Purification of the Paste". In the Lund series these procedures are depicted in several pictures. One procedure (Lund no.22) was commented upon by Tang Ying in the following way: "When freed from water the prepared paste is thrown on to large stone slabs, and turned over with iron spades till it be quite ductile and fit for the manufacture of porcelain. All the different kinds of paste are prepared

in this way, the various material being mixed in definite proportions according to the proper use of each"¹⁶.

The third illustration in the first Peking series was called "Burning the Ashes and Preparing the Glaze". The making of glaze is not illustrated in the Lund series. The fourth illustration in the Peking series was entitled "Manufacture of the Cases (Seggars)". The manufacture, transport and use of seggars are shown in three pictures in the Lund series.

Pictures no.5, 6 and 7 in the first Peking series were called "Preparing the Mould for the Round Ware", "Fashioning the Round Ware on the Wheel" and "Fabrication of the Vases". In the Lund series four pictures show different parts of this process (24-27). Tang Ying comments in the "Fashioning the Round Ware on the Wheel": "The wheel, which is like a round wooden table, is fixed so as to turn upon a perpendicular axle, and revolves continuously for a long time, so that the paste is turned properly without becoming too thick, too thin, flattened or misshapen ... The turner sits upon the border of the apparatus and turns the wheel with a bamboo staff. After the wheel has been set in motion he moulds the paste with his hands, and according to the rapidity of the motion of the wheel, and the heavy or light pressure of the hands, the round ware is fashioned into shape."¹⁷ In the Lund picture no.24, fig.no.3, we see the same process performed using a somewhat different technique.

Pictures no.8-12 in the Peking series were called "Collection of the Blue Colour", "Selection of the Blue Material", "Moulding the Paste and Grinding the Colours", "Painting the Round ware in Blue" and "Fabrication and Decoration of Vases". The descriptions of the pictures taken into consideration, these illustrations do not have evident equivalents in the Lund series.

No.26 and 27 in the Lund series, according to Dr Dahl's numbering, are close equivalents to no. 13 and 14 in the Peking series: "Dipping into the Glaze and Blowing on the Glaze" and no. 14 "Turning the Unbaked Ware and Hollowing out the Foot". For that reason I have changed their placing in the presentation above, putting them between no.29 and no.30.

Tang Ying comments on illustration no.14, corresponding to Lund no.27: "The size of the round ware is fixed in the mould, but to be polished smoothly it is given to the cutter, this process of polishing being a special branch of work. A wheel is used like the ordinary potter's wheel, but furnished with a wooden mandril in the centre, the size of which is proportional to that of the ware"¹⁸.

Illustration no.15 in the Peking series, "Putting the Finished Ware into the Kiln", corresponds to pictures no.30 and 31 in the Lund series. Illustration no.16, "Opening the Kiln when the Ware is Baked", is similar to the Lund picture no.32. The commentary of Tang Ying describes what we see in that picture and the phase of firing preceding it: "From the time of putting [the ware] in to that of taking it out of the kiln it takes three days generally, and early on the fourth day the furnace is opened. The seggars are still of a dull red colour and it is impossible to enter yet. After the furnace has been open some time the workmen, with their hands protected by gloves made of over ten folds of cotton soaked in cold water, and their heads, shoulders, and backs, wrapped round with damp cloths, go into the kiln to take out the contents"¹⁹ (Lund picture no.32, fig.no.4).

Picture no. 17 in the Peking series is called "Decoration [of] Round Ware and Vases in Foreign Colouring". Tang Ying comments: "Painting round ware and vases of white porcelain with signs in the five colours in imitation of Western Foreigners is called 'foreign colouring' (*yang ts'ai*). Clever artists are selected to paint the porcelain and combine the different colours ... A clear eye, attentive mind, and exact hand, are required to attain excellence"²⁰. This could have been a comment on picture no.33 in the Lund series (fig.no.5).

The Peking picture no.18, "The Open Stove and the Closed Stove", is commented upon by Tang Ying in the following way: "The open stove is used for the smaller pieces, the door of which opens outwards. A charcoal fire having been lighted all round, the pieces of porcelain are placed upon an iron wheel, supported upon an iron fork, by which it is passed into the stove, the

wheel being made to revolve by means of an iron hook, so as to equalize the action of the heat. It is taken out, when the colours appear clear and bright²¹... This sounds like an excellent description of the Lund picture no.34. Picture no.35 shows the other sort of stove, the closed one.

Illustration no.19 in the Peking series is called "Wrapping in Straw and Packing in Casks". Commenting upon this illustration, Tang Ying describes how the porcelain, when taken out of the kiln, is arranged "in four separate classes, known as porcelain of superior colour, of second-rate colour, of third-rate colour and inferior ware". The first two classes were "wrapped up in paper and packed in barrels". The plainer kinds were wrapped in straw²². In the Lund series this is shown in picture no.38 (fig.no.6). Picture no.20 "Worshipping the God and Offering up a Sacrifice" has no equivalent at Lund.

The principal difference between the Lund and the Peking series is that the emphasis in the Peking illustrations falls much more on technical matters. The work of quarrying, transporting and working up the raw material is described in great detail in the Lund series. This was not a very interesting process technically speaking. Instead the landscape stands out with its high mountains, lakes and the river. Against the blue, sometimes rain-heavy sky, flocks of birds can be seen in several of the pictures. The landscape depicted has perspective and depth.

Another difference is that the distribution of and trade in porcelain is described exhaustively in the Lund illustrations but is not dealt with at all in Tang Ying's commentary on the Peking series.

On the other hand, as we have seen, there are technically important parts of the process which are not touched on at all in the Lund series. This is true of "burning the ashes and preparing the glaze". It also applies to the whole process by which colours, particularly the blue colour, were produced and treated to attain the highest quality. This is an element in the characteristics of the lost Peking series. It was very much concerned with technique and materials. That was also why they could not interpret the series satisfactorily in the Imperial Palace in Peking but turned for assistance to the leading authority of the period,

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Tang Ying, the Imperial Overseer at Jingdezhen. His comments provided excellent information about the working process in porcelain manufacture.

The trade is described closely in the Lund series. European merchants are depicted in the later pictures, and in the last probably a Dutch East Indiaman. The Lund series appears to have been painted, not for a Chinese public but for a European one.

(English translation: Muriel Larsson.)

Notes

1. Folke Dahl (1905-70) was Deputy Librarian at the Lund University Library. I should like to thank Gunilla Eriksson, curator at the Lund Cultural Museum, who once worked with Folke Dahl, for initiating me into the problems concerning the Chinese watercolours.
2. I follow the text in the catalogue for the exhibition at Gothenburg 1974: *Kejsarna och porcelinet*. Kinesiska 1700-talsakvareller ur Universitetsbibliotekets i Lund samlingar.
3. "en Bok in folio ... bestående af sköna Chinesiska målningar, som föreställa hela Porcelene tillwårkningen, hwilken blifwit inropt på en Auction i Göteborg". Lund University Library: LUA, Kansliet A I 57 p. 411.
4. See also Christian Callmer: *Johan Corylander och universitetsbiblioteket i Lund*. Nordisk tidskrift för bok- och biblioteksväsen 1981, p. 5.
5. Förteckning öfwer framledne ... välborne herr Colin Campbells Bok-Samling"...
6. See Eva Gerle, *Lunds universitetsbiblioteks historia fram till år 1968*, Lund 1984, p. 66 et seq.
7. See the article by Gunilla Eriksson "Från Jingdezhen till Kanton", p. 152, in *Apans år. Årsbok om Kina*. Stockholm 1980.
8. On the Swedish East India Company, see the study by Christian Koninckx, *The first and second charters of the Swedish East India Company*, Kortrijk 1980.
9. Op.cit., p. 221.
10. The Manifest. A newsletter to the associates of the James Ford Bell Library, Wilson Library, University of Minnesota. June 1985.
11. Translated from: Walter A. Staehelin, *Das Buch von Porzellan*, Bern 1965.
12. Op.cit., p. 4 et seq.
13. The figure in parenthesis is the number Folke Dahl wrote on the back of the watercolour in question. In the description of the pictures, I more or less follow Folke Dahl.
14. The ship's flag is like a Dutch municipal flag, "Pavillon de Vlieland", reproduced in Whitney Smith, *Flags throughout the ages and across the world*, New York & London 1975, p. 160.
15. See *Description of Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*, p. 7.
16. Op.cit. p. 9
17. Op.cit. p. 13.
18. Op.cit. p. 22.
19. Op.cit. p. 24.
20. Op.cit. p. 25.
21. Op.cit. p. 26.
22. Op.cit. p. 27.

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