

Chinese Porcelain Preserved in Interiors of Hungarian Aristocratic and Upper Middle Class from the 18th Century to the 19th Century

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Abstract: *In the 18th and 19th centuries, the Hungarian aristocracy, as well as the upper middle class, began to collect Chinese art in large quantities, trying to decorate their estates with the most unusual Chinese objects. Expensive and exquisite Chinese and Japanese porcelain however became a symbol of status and wealth from then on. Chinese porcelains appeared in the interior of the Hungarian aristocracy and upper middle-class, integrated with the popular decorative styles of the same period, were an extremely important part of the collections in the 18th and 19th centuries. The study of them is therefore of great importance for the research of the domestic environment and daily life of these wealthy people in Hungary of the period. In this essay, I will rely on documentary and artifacts to illustrate Chinese porcelain collected by the Hungarian upper classes in the 18th and 19th centuries, to introduce its important role in interior decoration, and to analyse how the attitudes of European collectors toward Chinese art and society changed during this time.*

Keywords: *Chinese porcelain collection, Hungarian aristocracy, Upper middle-class*

1. Introduction

In the 17th century, through the Dutch East India Company (Dutch abbreviation: V.O.C., *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie*), a large number of Chinese porcelain flowed into Europe from Low Countries, setting off a wave of "Chinoiserie" in Europe. From then on, the European nobles began to use silk, lacquer, and all kinds of exquisite porcelain from China to decorate their interior environment.

Compared to other European countries, Hungary was a bit slow in the clash of Eastern and Western civilizations in the 17th century. Only after Hungary had driven the Turkish invaders from their homeland, that is to say until around the 18th century, did the Hungarian nobility begin to collect a large variety of rare collectibles from China - roughly a century later than the rest of the European nobility.[1] They sought to decorate their estates with the most unusual Chinese objects. The expensive and exquisite Chinese and Japanese porcelain, however, has since become a symbol of status and wealth.[1] In the 19th century, many European bourgeoisie also began to collect Chinese porcelain, so that in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, many upper bourgeoisie collections of Chinese porcelain appeared in the exhibition.

These porcelains, to some extent, reflect the kinds of porcelain exported from China to Europe during the same period, and also reflect the changes in European demand for Chinese goods. In fact, we can analyse the change in the European perception of Chinese society by looking at the attitude of the European market towards Chinese goods. In this article, I would like to introduce the collection of Chinese porcelain by the Hungarian aristocracy and upper middle class in the 18th and 19th centuries, and explain their attitudes toward Chinese society and culture in the 18th and 19th centuries from the changes in their taste for Chinese porcelain.

2. Export of China's Porcelain during the Ming and Qing Dynasties

Although porcelain has been a major Chinese export since the Tang Dynasty, the real porcelain trade is inextricably linked to capitalist colonisation.

After the great discovery of world geography, numerous western merchants were attracted by the rich and mysterious East, and soon, a large number of Europeans descended on the area.

It was the Portuguese who first brought Chinese porcelain to Europe. In 1514, Portuguese caravans

arrived in Guangdong, China. In 1543, the Portuguese established their commercial base in Macau, which became the first trading centre between Asia and Europe.[1] From then on, Portuguese merchant ships continued to carry Chinese silk, tea, porcelain, lacquerware and spices to Lisbon, making the city a hub for selling Oriental treasures in Europe.

In the second half of 16, the Spanish arrived in the Philippines, where they traded with caravans from China and carried Chinese goods to Europe. By the end of the 16th century, the Spanish had replaced the Portuguese as the main link between east and West.[1]

At the end of the 16th century, The Netherlands, with a highly developed shipbuilding industry, was also attracted by the huge profits to be made from East Asian goods, and Dutch caravans began to travel to Asia. In 1595, the Dutch crossed the Cape of Good Hope and reached the island of Java. From then on, several Dutch companies were established with a focus on East Indian trade, which later merged under the Dutch government in 1602 to become the Dutch East India Company (V.O.C.). After the V.O.C. was established, it began to suppress the Portuguese caravans. In 1604, the Dutch East India Company raided the Portuguese Carrack "Catharina" and took her cargo to Amsterdam for auction. T. Volker recorded this scene in his book:

"Among her cargo was an 'untold mass of porcelain of all kinds,' as the story goes, near to 30 lasts. It was sold at auction at Amsterdam. Buyers came from all over Western Europe. The French king, Henri IV, acquired a 'dinner set of porcelain of the very best quality' on the advice of his ambassador, and chosen for him by Louise de Coligny." [2]

The 17th century was a high point for the export of Chinese porcelain. One immediate reason for this was the rapid development of Chinese folk kilns, which supplied a large number of goods for the European market. In the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, a long period of warfare brought the royal porcelain kilns in Jingdezhen largely out of production, while a large number of excellent craftsmen entered the private kilns, which allowed the level of porcelain-making in the private sector to develop rapidly. At the same time, the early Qing dynasty stipulated that craftsmen were no longer required to complete unpaid feudal corvée obligations. This regulation improved the working enthusiasm of craftsmen, and also promoted the innovation and development of porcelain making technology, which undoubtedly injected vitality into the development of folk kiln factories. The development of private kilns in turn directly contributed to the export of Chinese porcelain.

According to statistics, in the 17th century, Chinese porcelains mainly flowed into Europe through Low Countries, most of which were blue-and-white porcelains, mainly in the form of tableware (plates and bowls). The typical patterns on these pieces provided the template and inspiration for the Delft Porcelain factory.[1]

In 1619, the VOC attacked Batavia (today's Jakarta) and established its headquarters there. As its colonial power continued to expand, the V.O.C. gradually monopolised trade between Europe and East Asia. The Netherlands, through its East India Company, collected a large number of Far Eastern collections (some 4.5 million pieces of porcelain entered Europe through the Dutch East India Company before 1734)[3], which laid the foundation for the large quantities of Chinese porcelain appearing in Dutch upholstery at the end of the 17th century.

In addition to the Netherlands, the British East India Company (E.I.C.), founded in 1600, also shipped large quantities of Chinese porcelain to Europe. Competition between the EIC and the V.O.C. intensified after Portugal and Spain gradually lost their dominant position in East Asian trade, which was one of the key causes of the Anglo-Dutch Wars in the 17th and 18th centuries. After several wars at sea, the E.I.C. succeeded in monopolising all types of trade in the region, including, of course, the Chinese porcelain trade. Moreover, this monopoly of the E.I.C. remained unbroken until the early 20th century.

At the same time, there was a shift in the type of porcelain that China sold to Europe in the 18th century. In the 18th century, after a century of export, Chinese porcelain flooded into the European market, which also led to the price of porcelain began to fall. At that time, the popularity of tea culture in Europe undoubtedly saved the declining European porcelain market, and the fate of China's export porcelain was closely linked with tea. On the one hand, the popularity of tea culture in Europe has boosted the demand of Europeans for porcelain drinking utensils. All kinds of porcelain drinking sets came into being, especially complete sets of tea sets are very popular. From the middle and late Qing Dynasty, due to the gradual popularity of porcelain in Europe, the European demand for fine Chinese porcelain declined, while the market for crude porcelain gradually developed. Chinese porcelain also began to move from being a luxury item that could only be purchased by the aristocracy to becoming more commonplace in Europe, becoming popular in the daily lives of Europeans. On the other hand, although

tea became China's most important export commodity in the mid-eighteenth century, its light weight led to shallow draught and easy capsizing of the ships carrying it, while porcelain served as just the right cargo for ballast, and as a result, with the export of tea, export sales of Chinese porcelain in the mid-eighteenth century were also high.

But none of this could fundamentally change the loss of the European market for Chinese porcelain, which accounted for only 0.59 percent of Guangzhou's exports in 1792.[4] This was due to the fact that, in the late 18th century, the European porcelain industry continued to grow, while the Chinese porcelain industry suffered from a decline in the quality of Chinese porcelain and a lack of capital inflows throughout the industry due to its traditional mode of production by hand workshops. All these factors led to the gradual withdrawal of Chinese porcelain from the European market.

Several Aristocratic Estates with Large Collections of Chinese Porcelain in the 18th and 19th Centuries

Chinese porcelains were always to be found in the estates or villas of Hungarian magnates in the 18th and 19th centuries. Sometimes they were displayed in rooms dedicated to oriental collections, sometimes on the mantelpieces of magnificent salons, or next to the wall of spacious corridors... In most cases, the Hungarian magnates did not collect these porcelains for use, but to show off their status and wealth.

"Versailles in Hungary" - Chinese Porcelain in Eszterháza

Eszterháza in Fertőd is known as the Versailles of Hungary, and although the castle was damaged during the Second World War, but the former lavish decorations of the castle can still be seen in the travelogues and photographs of former visitors, among them a large amount of fine and expensive porcelain. The majority of these figurines come from Vienna and Meissen, while the large containers are mostly from China and Japan, and most of them were displayed in various halls where guests were received.[5]

In the 18th century, when Chinese decoration was sweeping through the Hungarian upper classes, the owner of the castle, Esterházy I. Miklos, the richest nobleman of his time, also built a porcelain cabinet in his castle. This cabinet is located in an octagonal room in the right wing of the castle near the courtyard side.[6] The earliest known written description of this porcelain room appears in a travelogue by Rotenstein (vöröskői gróf Pálffy János) published in 1783.[1] Rotenstein first visited this castle in 1763, so his account is of how the castle looked between 1763 and the early 1880s.[7]

In addition, the bookseller Johann Matthias Korabinsky (1740-1811) and Vályi K. András (1764-1801) both recorded the furnishings in the porcelain exhibition room on the estate.[1] According to the visitors, the porcelain house contained 14 open chests in the mid-to-late 1700s.¹ The tables and chests were filled with hundreds of pieces of expensive porcelain of all kinds, including "blue and white porcelains, Dehua white porcelains and white-glazed vases decorated with overglaze coloured painting..."[8]

In addition to the porcelain room, Chinese porcelain could be found both in the salon where guests were received and in private living spaces. For example, in the description of Rotenstein, in Sala Terrena, "there is a semicircular niche in the middle of each of the two opposite walls, facing each other, ... On either side of the niches are two large wall mirrors with candle holders; in front of the wall mirrors were white marble tables, which were decorated with a large group of porcelain and 6 porcelain sculptures on every other table. Next to the niches, there were red and white, richly gilded Chinese vases on postaments on the wall. In each corner of the room was a white marble table with large porcelain sculpture groups." [9] He also mentioned that in the Duke's suit, there was a room with 10 "Japanese" black lacquered panels on the walls, which were beautifully painted with golden lines. In fact, these lacquered wood panels come from China, but in the 18th century, Europeans generally used the word Japan to refer to lacquerware and China to refer to porcelain, so in many travel notes, the authors described these wood panels as Japanese black lacquered panels. And in each corner of this room there are rather large Chinese vases.[7]

The furnishings in this room were also mentioned in "Beschreibung des hochfürstlichen Schlosses Esterháss im Königreiche Ungern", a work dating back to 1784, whose author is believed to be Primitivius Niemitz, who mentioned that there were quite a few of porcelain, in addition to the four huge Chinese vases in the corners, he also mentioned some porcelain Chinese pagodas placed on pedestals.[7]

Hercegi levéltáros Hárích János also wrote about the castle's history and interior in 1944, and his description also mentioned this room in the prince's suit, known as the Chinese Room. While

¹ "There are 13 cabinets in the inventories and 14 in Rotenstein's description." (Dávid 2002: 315)

documenting those Chinese lacquered wood panels, he also mentioned the Chinese porcelain in the room.[7] Besides Fertődi Eszterháza, there is also a lot of beautiful porcelain in the Esterházy family's villa in Cseklész, Kismarton.[9]

Count János Pálffy (1829–1908) and His Chinese Art Treasures

As one of Hungary's richest magnates, Count János Pálffy filled his castles, manors and villas in Vienna, Pozsony (Bratislava, Slovakia), Budapest, Bajmóc (Bojnice, Slovakia), Bazin (Pezinok, Slovakia) and Királyfa (Kráľová pri Senci, Slovakia) with a wealth of valuable works of art. His reason for doing so, it seems, was not just to satisfy his own preferences, but to bring these artistic masterpieces back to Hungary to inspire its artistic development.[10]

In his palace of Királyfa, we could find a large number of porcelain objects from the East. But Hilda Horváth believed that Count János Pálffy did not seem to have been interested in oriental culture. And the reason why he collected these oriental works of art may simply be due to the fashion of the time - throughout 18th century Europe, decorative objects from the East were an indispensable part of the nobility's palaces.[11]

Most of the Chinese porcelain in the Count János Pálffy collection was blue-and-white.[11] This kind of porcelain, beautifully painted with cobalt oxide under a transparent glaze, was one of the most popular varieties of Chinese ceramics among the Hungarian nobility during this period. In the Pálffy Palace of Királyfa, the Count's collection of porcelain was divided into two main categories, one being items that he used in his daily life, such as porcelain tableware. The other type of porcelain was intended only for decoration, and the original function of these porcelains was replaced by their appreciative value, such as those used for decorative plates and vases of great size.[12] Jenő Radisics mentioned in his article that Count János Pálffy had the taste of his time for porcelain from China - he liked the large blue-and-white ornamental vessels, buckets and large dishes with chrysanthemum motifs.[10]

The large porcelain pieces could be seen in the long corridors of the palace, where huge porcelain goldfish bowls were placed on the floor against the walls and various vases were placed on the table tops. In the room, huge porcelain vases were usually placed in corners, next to walls, or in relatively spacious areas (as in the mirror salon, red salon, blue salon in the Pálffy Palace of Királyfa). Some small porcelain pieces were usually placed above the furnace chamber of fireplaces to decorate the walls around the fireplace. In the mirror salon, blue salon and yellow salon of the palace, for example, small, delicate porcelain pieces could be found placed on mantelpieces. It is worth noting that in the yellow salon a mirror could be seen placed above the fireplace and below it, on the mantelpiece, some oriental porcelain was displayed. The use of mirrors allows for a visual extension of the space, while the porcelain from the East brings an exotic touch to the space. This combination of French decorative inspiration and porcelain from the East first appeared in the Orangerie of the Summer Palace in Honselaarsdijk, which belonged to the Dutch royal family of Orange.[1] In some rooms of the palace, however, instead of a mirror hanging above the fireplace, a rather large portrait or painting is used instead.

The small porcelain pieces on console tables, cabinets and on mantelpieces were generally found in a combination. "Among the ornamental pieces put on the mantelpieces or console tables, sets or groups of five or more items (lidded and cylindrical) were most popular. The most regular example for such sets consisted of three lidded vases or of a ginger holder and two cylindrical (or double-gourd-shaped) vases. As a rule, porcelains were arranged mirror symmetrically,..." - Györgyi Fajcsák Summed it up this way.[1] Such a characteristic of placement could be confirmed by interior photographs of the Pálffy Palace of Királyfa, as was evident in the mirror salon, the blue salon and the yellow salon: the placement of the small porcelain pieces on the mantelpiece was essentially mirror symmetrical to the left and right on the central axis of the fireplace. The arrangement of porcelain on the table in the palace corridor also followed the principle of mirror symmetry. In fact, not only porcelains, but also other ornaments placed on the mantelpiece or table top were often arranged in this way. For example, in the bedroom with a Boulle clock on the mantelpiece, a pair of sculptures on the mantelpiece were symmetrical to each other, as were a pair of candlesticks placed on the table next to the fireplace. This phenomenon could also be seen in other aristocratic castles and villas of the same period.

Many porcelain pieces with European metal mounts could also be found in this palace. In the 18th century, the metal mounts were mainly sculpted by French craftsmen to decorate the expensive oriental porcelain: "A separate group was made up of objects such as incense burners that had been gilded with bronze mounts in 18th-century Europe. Before the discovery of European porcelain, mainly French masters adorned the esteemed oriental porcelain with gilded bronze mounts." [11] The artisans made a mount for the porcelain through different techniques, allowing them to be combined with different metals (such as gold, silver, copper), gemstones and so on. In this way the appearance of the porcelain and its

original function were altered to conform to European usage and aesthetics.

In addition to porcelain, there were a large number of Japanese and Chinese enamel vessels,[11][10] a Chinese silk tapestry was preserved in the green salon, and of course, lacquerware popular in that era also appeared in the palace.[11]

Throughout the palace, a large collection was placed in the living and working areas. Collection became the ornament of life, and together with furniture formed a strong sense of artistic life atmosphere. The porcelains with strong Oriental characteristics are either placed in their original form or decorated by European metal mount, combined with European furniture, paintings and walls. Different styles and colours set off each other, where Eastern and Western skills collided and blended, blooming a unique aesthetic feeling.

In other estates of Pálffy János, collections from China also appeared. For example, there were Chinese and Japanese enamelled ornamental vessels in his manor in Bojmóc (Bojnice), and many popular Chinese celadons could also be found in his manor in Pozsony (Bratislava).[10][1]

In addition to the Esterházy and Pálffy families, the Zichy and Pulszky families' collections also contain a large number of porcelains from China.

There were many objective factors that led European aristocrats to collect Chinese porcelain during this period, the most important of which was that in the eighteenth century porcelain was a symbol of aristocratic property and status. At this stage, China's export porcelain was mainly the daily goods of the upper society. Although the European porcelain manufacturing industry gradually developed as the German Meissen kiln took the lead in mastering the early technology of hard porcelain in 1710, in the 18th century, the production quantity of these European porcelain institutions was limited, and the quality could not be compared with Chinese porcelain. As a result, Chinese porcelain continued to command high prices on the European market and became a powerful tool for the aristocracy to demonstrate their wealth and social status, so that in the eighteenth century they were keen to collect porcelain, lacquer and other Chinese works of art. In the 19th century, although the price of Chinese porcelain gradually dropped and could no longer be collected as exclusive luxury goods of aristocrats, many aristocrats in the 19th century inherited Chinese art from their families, so there were also quite a few aristocrats who collected Chinese art in the 19th century. (Such as Jenő Zichy and Agos Zichy, whose collection of Chinese porcelain was exhibited at the 1880 exhibition.[1])

In addition, collecting porcelain and using it for interior decoration was the fashion of aristocrats during this period. In the process of the Renaissance, Chinese culture was regarded by French historians as an ancient advanced civilization, which was sought after by Europeans. This style of using oriental porcelain as interior decoration first appeared in the aforementioned Orangerie of the Summer Palace in Honselaarsdijk, which belonged to the Dutch royal family of Orange. Subsequently, with the marriage of this family to other European royal families, this fashion was brought to all parts of Europe, and various Chinese-inspired decorations and works of art from China occupied the interiors of European aristocrats, and a number of porcelain rooms, lacquer rooms and other rooms dedicated to Chinese art were created. In 17-18th century books on architectural and interior design principles, sample rooms for Chinese objects were recorded, which also contributed to the popularity of this style of decoration. For example, the German architect and decorative designer Paul Decker (1677-1713) designed such a room in his book. In his plan, this room, which also adjoins the bedroom, has lacquered wood panels hanging along the walls and doors, mirrors hanging in the middle of the windows, and the walls and corners around the mirror are decorated with Far Eastern porcelains.[13] The design is very similar to that of the lacquerware room in Eszterháza, and it is likely that Esterházy I. Miklós was introduced to interiors decorated with oriental objects during his youthful travels, when he visited some of the famous European estates.[13] After all, the 18th century Rococo decorative style is full of chinoiserie

3. The Hungarian Upper Middle Class Who Collected Chinese Porcelain in the 19th Century

In the early 19th century, Chinese culture was still regarded as an advanced civilization in Europe, and Chinese administration, taxation, and ancestor worship were also regarded as models.[8] After 1852, the appearance of the World's Fair gave more and more Hungarian upper middle class the opportunity to learn about Chinese porcelain. At the same time, the further development of transport gave more European merchants and collectors the opportunity to travel to China to purchase Chinese porcelain. Even without the opportunity to travel to Asia, other upper middle classes in Hungary could buy Chinese porcelain in Europe, because at this time there was quite a lot of Chinese porcelain on the market in

Europe and it was very easy to buy. (In addition to those porcelains exported from China to Europe after centuries of trade, from the second half of the 19th century onwards, due to the war, a large number of Chinese artifacts from the Manchu imperial collection went to the private market, and porcelain from the Yuanmingyuan and other royal gardens in China was brought to Europe by the British, French, Austrian and other countries, hence the extremely large number of Chinese porcelains on the European market at this time.) Thus, during this period, porcelain collecting was no longer the exclusive act of the aristocracy, many Hungarian upper middle class also had the opportunity to learn about Chinese porcelain, and they also became involved in the ranks of porcelain collectors.

In the mid to late 19th century, the Chinese porcelain industry experienced the devastating blows of war and although it was still able to resume production, the quality declined significantly. This also led to the gradual loss of Chinese export porcelain to the European market, with only a few kinds of imitations of antique porcelains remaining in demand by Western collectors, as evidenced by the variety of Chinese porcelain collected by Europeans during this period - they are mostly painted porcelain from the Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong periods and their imitations.[14] (In fact, this is also directly related to the European perception of Chinese porcelain and aesthetic interests - the World Expos and the exhibitions of applied arts, the development of archaeological activity within China, and subjective factors such as specific professions[15] and personal preferences all influenced the European's choice of Oriental collections. (At this time Europeans generally considered Chinese art produced in the 17th and 18th centuries to be representative of the highest level of Chinese art, and they were particularly fond of the porcelain, bronze and lacquer wares produced in China during this period.) Another factor that saved the market for Chinese porcelain in Europe was linked to the gradual acceptance of Japanese culture in Europe. Japanese porcelain and lacquerware gradually became the most popular Oriental art in Europe. However, the price of Japanese art was much more expensive. Therefore, European collectors liked to buy Japanese style art copied in China, which could save them a lot of money[8], and this helped to promote the sales of Chinese art in Europe.

3.1. Ferenc Hopp and His Oriental Artworks

Ferenc Hopp (Fulnek, 28 april 1833 - Budapest, 9 september 1919) was one of the wealthiest Hungarian merchants of the 19th century and one of the most famous Hungarian collectors of the period. In his lifetime, he travelled around the world five times (between 1883-1914), three of which reached China. In the course of his travels, he purchased countless works of art from all over the world. In 1911, Jenő Radisics (the first Director-General of the Museum of Applied Arts) wrote an article entitled "*Hopp Ferencz gyűjteménye*", which was published in the weekly newspaper *Vasárnapi Újság*. [16] This was also the first article about the collection of Ferenc Hopp. The article mentions two enamel vases from China, which are extremely exquisite. It is said to have been an ornament in a Chinese imperial garden.²

Zoltán Felvinczi Takács also described the Ferenc Hopp collection in his article entitled "*Hopp Ferenc gyűjteménye*", published in 1914. According to Zoltán Felvinczi Takács, Ferenc Hopp bought a wide variety of artworks, but above all, they meet his own aesthetic needs, or rather, they directly impress him. The East Asian artworks in the Hopp Collection are mainly industrial artifacts, or artifacts and decorative objects that are meaningful from an ethnographic and cultural history point of view.

The art collection of Ferenc Hopp is diverse. According to statistics, among the collection of Hopp Ferenc, more than 900 pieces are from China.[1] In addition to porcelain, he also collected a number of Chinese bronze sculptures, including a pair of bronze lions that once adorned Chinese royal palaces.³ They came into the possession of a Hungarian admiral during the Boxer Rebellion and passed on from his estate to Ferenc Hopp.[17] In addition to this, his passion for geography was also reflected in his collection - he purchased a variety of stones and minerals on his travels around the world and donated them to museums and other research institutions in Hungary.[18] He also had a great fondness for sculptures of jade and jadeite, so-called semi-precious stones that were valued quite highly in China. But there are not many Japanese and Chinese paintings in his collection, as he believed that there were many forgeries in this field which had little meaningful impact on the researcher.[17]

Ferenc Hopp's collection includes more than 200 pieces of Chinese porcelain. The porcelain, most of which he bought in China during his travels around the world, includes a variety of tableware, vases, ceramic sculptures, snuff bottles and building materials for porcelain.[1] A large part of Ferenc Hopp's collection is blue and white porcelain, which was also the most popular type of Chinese porcelain in

² It should be the Yuanmingyuan

³ It should be the Yuanmingyuan

Europe at that time. Zoltan Felvinczi Takacs wrote about a blue and white porcelain vase in his article,[17] which has only a dragon painted on it. He believed that this is the most beautiful piece of blue and white porcelain in Hopp's collection. The 31.2cm tall vase has a white body and a wide mouth with cobalt blue handles on the left and right sides. The bottom of the bottle is also glazed and has six Chinese characters written in cobalt oxide: (Daqing Kangxi Nianzhi, it means that the bottle was made during the reign of the Kangxi Emperor in the Qing Dynasty). So the bottle must have been produced between 1662 and 1772.⁴ However, the oldest blue and white porcelain vase in Hopp's collection dates back to the 15th century. According to the Chinese characters on the vase, it was produced between 1426 and 1435.⁵

He bought a number of earthenware figures in Guangdong (or possibly in Hong Kong), which were produced by Shiwan manufacture. Many of these humanoid ceramic dolls are images of Chinese opera actors⁶ and some appear to be figures from Chinese mythology.⁷ These figures are covered in coloured glazes, except for the face, hands and feet, due to the fact that the natural colour of the clay more closely resembles yellow skin tones and has the texture of bare skin, making the skin of the figures appear more realistic.[19] In addition to human figurines, Ferenc Hopp also purchased ceramic sculptures in animal form, such as fo-lions of enormous size.

Out of his interest in architecture, he collected many porcelain building materials. *“He also took great interest in architectural ceramics: his collection incorporates, among others, ceramic roof units (in the shape of dragons) and figural theatre scenes meant to decorate cornices.”*[1] In 1888 Hopp Ferenc asked the architect Géza Györgyi (1851-1934) to design and build a Chinese style moon gate in the courtyard. The roof tiles, embellishments, stone sheeting, and stone lions used in the construction of the gate were all ordered from China by Ferenc Hopp. Notably, the gate is embellished with ceramic - there is a figurative ceramic frieze directly below the roof which depicts theatrical scenes. The earthenware figures on this ceramic frieze come in various shapes, richly dressed, and stand on intricately carved buildings. The back of the sculptural group is a pottery slab with carved garlands. The glazes used both on the obverse and reverse side are similar. From the characteristics of these porcelain sculptures, it is clear that they were also produced in Shiwan, China.

In the last year of his life, he donated his villa on Andrásy Road in Budapest and its courtyard, as well as a total of over 4,000 oriental works of art in the villa, to the Hungarian government. The villa, which later became the current Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, provides a wealth of research material for scholars of Oriental culture.

3.2. Other Upper Middle Class Hungarians with Oriental Collections

In addition to Ferenc Hopp, there were also many upper-middle class Hungarians willing to buy Chinese porcelain during this period. Some of them went to China, such as Emil Delmár (1876-1959). But most had never been to China, and the Chinese porcelain they bought was mostly Chinese exported to Europe.

At the suggestion of Jenő Radics, the Budapest exhibition of amateur collectors was held in 1907, and a large number of oriental collections appeared in this exhibition. The participants included Ferenc Hopp, Emil Delmar, Farago Odon (1869-1935), Kalman Giergl (1863-1954), Jozsef Keszler (1844-1927) etc. In addition to monochrome porcelain, their collection also included the porcelain popular in China at the same time — porcelain with overglaze coloured painting, such as Famille verte Porcelain. Among Kalman Giergl's collections is a pair of famille verte ornamental vessels.[1]

In 1929, a similar exhibition - the Exhibition of Oriental Art was arranged by the Association of Hungarian Collectors and Connoisseurs in the Museum of Applied Arts (Budapest). The aim of this exhibition also reflects the intentions of most collectors of the period - to collect objects that reflect the cultural values of each country and to use them to enhance the public's taste and promote the development of art in their own country. As a result, the focus of collectors was not on expensive and rare pieces, but on acquiring a more diverse and representative range of artworks for a reasonable amount of money, and therefore, many people collected reasonably priced samples during this period.[15] The exhibition also features a middle class of participants, such as Jozsef Csetenyi (A journalist, publisher of newspaper and

⁴ Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 599, Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/2.

⁵ Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 2446. Published: Fajcsák 2011.

⁶ e.g. Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 1003, 2013, 2123, 62.302, Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/3

⁷ e.g. Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 58.307 Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/3

economist, 1875 - the beginning of the 1950s?), Emil Delmara (owner of the Danube Shipping and Excavating Company, 1876-1959), Alfred Perlmuttera (lawyer and patent rights judge, 1867-1929), Mor Lipot Herzog (a banker, 1869-1934), Mor Kornfeldan (industrialist, banker and politician 1882-1967), Bertalan Hatvany (an Orientalist, publicist and translator 1900-1980).[15] A total of 419 pieces of Chinese art were on display, 40 percent of which were ceramics.[15] Due to the development of the archaeological discipline in the late 19th and early 20th century, a large number of ancient ceramics as well as ceramic funerary objects appeared in the porcelain collections of European collectors. Of course, Chinese blue and white porcelain and monochrome glazed porcelain from the 17th-18th centuries had also always been a favourite collection of Hungarian collectors and were presented in this exhibition. Many Chinese architectural porcelains of this period were also popular with the Hungarian middle and upper classes. In addition to the Chinese moon gate in Ferenc Hopp's courtyard mentioned above, Henrik Herz Sr. also exhibited his own collection of ornamental ridge-tiles with green glaze, depicting phoenixes,[15] at the 1929 exhibition.

4. Typical Types of Porcelain Exported from China to Europe in the 18th and 19th Centuries

While Europeans marvelled at the beauty of porcelain, Chinese porcelain manufacture had also reached the highest level of excellence. The development trend of Chinese porcelainmaking technology influenced the types of porcelain exported from China to a certain extent, and typical types of porcelain that represented the level of Chinese porcelainmaking during this period also appeared in Hungarian collections.

4.1. Types of Porcelain Exported in the Late 17th - Late 18th Centuries from Shipwreck Data

The remains of Chinese merchant ships from the late 17th and early 18th centuries have been found along the south-eastern coast of China and in Vietnamese waters. Shipwrecks of this period include the Wanjiao No. 1,⁸ as well as the wreck of the Vung Tau cargo.⁹

The porcelain on these two shipwrecks is mainly daily-use porcelain, including a large number of cups, pots, bowls, plates, jars, bottles, etc. Of course, there are also many decorative porcelain sculptures. In terms of porcelain varieties, blue and white porcelain predominates. The techniques and styles of production of these porcelains also reflect the characteristics of Chinese blue and white porcelain of the same period. However, there is no shortage of blue and white porcelain wares that reflect Western aesthetics and conform to Western everyday habits. In addition to blue and white porcelain, archaeologists have also found white glazed porcelain and other monochromatic glazed porcelain on the wreck, which was also popular in Europe at the time.

There is also a wealth of information on 18th century shipwrecks, such as the Swedish East India Company's merchant ship Götheborg of Sweden¹⁰, the Dutch East India Company's merchant ship Geldermalsen¹¹ and the British East India Company's merchant ship Griffin¹². The goods of these three ships are very similar: the majority of porcelain types are daily blue and white porcelain, including Chinese Ivan Li porcelain. The decoration of the blue and white porcelain is dominated by the traditional Chinese style of landscape scenes, flora and fauna, and figures.[4] But these patterns are monotonous compared with China's domestic porcelain, which should be the result of Chinese style catering to the European aesthetic. These porcelains range in shape from traditional Chinese tableware and drinking utensils to the usual European everyday porcelain, such as soup pots and milk jugs. There is no shortage of sets of porcelain with consistent colour and decoration. *"It is thought that such luxurious sets of tableware first became fashionable in France, and then soon influenced the Netherlands, England and other places and became popular."*[15]

From the middle and late Qing Dynasty, porcelain manufacturing flourished in South China. This was because the kiln factories in this area mainly produced rough porcelain, which coincided with the

⁸ Wanjiao No. 1 was an ancient Chinese merchant ship that sank off the coast of Pingtan County, Fujian Province, China. The wreck is 13.8 metres long, 3 metres wide and 1 metre deep. There are over 17,000 pieces of porcelain, including 10,000 pieces of blue and white porcelain dating back to the reign of the Kangxi Emperor (1654-1722) of the Qing Dynasty.

⁹ In June 1990, the sunken ship "Vung Tau cargo" was found about 15 km from Hon Cau Island. The recovered goods include more than 48,000 pieces of ceramics, mostly blue and white porcelain from the Kangxi period from Jingdezhen kilns, as well as impressive white porcelain.

¹⁰ Sunk in September 1745. Swedish: Ostindiefararen Götheborg

¹¹ Sunk in 1752

¹² Sunk in 1761

increasing demand for rough porcelain in Europe, and the geographical advantages of being close to foreign trade ports such as Xiamen and Guangdong, which promoted the rapid development of the porcelain industry in this area. The Zhangzhou and Dehua kilns were undoubtedly the two major centres of porcelain manufacture in southern China. According to archaeological investigations, the main product of the Zhangzhou kilns was blue and white porcelain, but they also produced multicoloured porcelain (“Wucui” porcelain) and monochrome glazed porcelain. The Zhangzhou kilns imitate Jingdezhen in their craftsmanship, but the products are significantly cruder, and the products were mainly used for export. The Dehua kilns were famous overseas for their white porcelain, which was shipped in large quantities to Europe in the late seventeenth century and was much loved by the European aristocracy. After the decline of the Zhangzhou kilns, Dehua blue and white porcelain took the place of Zhangzhou blue and white porcelain and flourished in the mid and late Qing dynasty.

The development of porcelain manufacturing in southern China is also evidenced by shipwrecks from this period, such as the British merchant ship *Diana*, which sank in 1817, and the *Taixing*, which sank in 1822. The porcelain on both wrecks is predominantly low to mid-range blue and white porcelain, with a large number of white and other monochrome glazed wares. Porcelain snuff bottles, porcelain sculptures and bespoke heraldic porcelain are also present. These porcelains were mainly produced at the Dehua kilns and the surrounding kilns.

Chinese porcelain was exported in large quantities during the 17th and 19th centuries. The quality and price of exported porcelain also decreased with the increase of the quantity of Chinese porcelain in foreign markets. Chinese porcelain gradually changed from the collection of European aristocrats to daily necessities, and more and more people had the opportunity and money to buy China's export porcelain.

This was also the case in Hungary in the 19th century - not only the aristocracy but also the Hungarian upper middle classes had the opportunity to buy and collect large quantities of Chinese porcelain. The vast majority of China's exported porcelain is blue and white porcelain, and some of which had patterns that were in keeping with European aesthetics and the European understanding of “Chinoiserie”. In addition, white porcelain was also sought after by Europeans and the Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts in Hungary has a large collection of white porcelain. At the same time various monochrome glazed porcelains, porcelain sculptures and snuff bottles are also included in the range of Chinese export porcelain.

4.2. Typical Types of Chinese Porcelain of the 18th and 19th Centuries and Existing Collections of Similar Porcelain in Hungary

In the 18th century, China's society was gradually stabilising, its population was growing, its economy was developing rapidly, and the country was entering the last heyday of feudal society - the Kang-Qian period. During this period the porcelain industry developed rapidly, reaching unprecedented heights in terms of both craftsmanship and quantity.

4.2.1. Blue and White Porcelain

In Europe between the 16th and 18th centuries, blue and white porcelain was the porcelain collection of choice for the European upper class. European aristocrats who loved Chinese porcelain were proud to own Chinese blue and white porcelain without exception. Most of the display porcelain and daily porcelain customised by churches in Western European countries in Jingdezhen kilns were blue and white porcelain, and most of the early heraldic porcelain customised by aristocrats were blue and white products, which all reflected the collection tendency of Europeans at that time. Blue and white porcelain was still favoured by the royal and folk in the Qing Dynasty. Qing emperors, especially Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong preferred blue and white porcelain.[20] Therefore, during the reign of these three emperors, the change and development of blue and white porcelain was particularly obvious.

The reign of Kangxi (1661-1722) was a golden period for the development of blue and white porcelain. During this period, the traditional Monotonic flat coating process was no longer applied to the cyan patterns on blue and white porcelain, as a result, the shades of cyan were no longer monotonous. With a distinction between darker and lighter shades, the painting became more refined. The artisans could use varying shades of cyan to show the angles of light and the layers of distance, which made the images on the porcelain more three-dimensional and made the cyan look like colourful paintings. In the collection of the Ferenc Hopp Museum, there are a number of blue and white porcelains that are clearly marked on the underside of the porcelain as having been made during the Kangxi period. For example, there is a

blue and white porcelain vase with birds and flowers painted on it.¹³ The feathers of the birds on the vase, although all blue, have changed shades and even the lines of the feathers on the bird's tail can be clearly seen.

In addition to landscapes, flowers and birds, Chinese poetry and prose appeared in the decoration of blue and white porcelain during the reign of Kangxi. There is one such collection that can be found in the Ferenc Hopp Museum's collection. For example, a small celadon cup used for drinking rice wine¹⁴ has a portion of the *Chibi Fu* written on the outside of the cup. Although the foot of the cup is inscribed "Da Ming Chenghua nianzhi" (Made during the reign of Chenghua in the Ming dynasty), however, this cup was actually made during the Qing dynasty. This type of porcelain, decorated with Chinese poetry, was mostly used by literati and scholars. (Most of this kind of porcelain is in the form of stationery or drinking vessels, e.g. brushpots, wine cups, teacups, etc.)

During the reign of Yongzheng (1722-1735), the production of blue and white porcelain was also very large, and the typical utensils of this period were mainly plates, cups, saucers and small furnishings.[21] Yongzheng pursued simplicity and elegance, so that during his reign, there was much white space on blue and white porcelain. Besides traditional dragon and phoenix decorations, the main decorations were plants and birds with good meaning. Many imitation porcelains of the blue and white porcelain of the Yongle and Xuande dynasties of the Ming Dynasty were produced during this period, which were highly skilled in imitation of shapes and patterns. The current collection of the Hopp Ferenc muzeum includes two blue and white bowls with clouds and dragons painted on both the interior and exterior of them.¹⁵ Written in regular script on the base of both bowls are the words "Da Qing Yongzheng nianzhi: Made in the reign of Yongzheng of the Qing dynasty".

During the reign of the Qianlong emperor, the craft of blue and white porcelain was highly sophisticated and the blue colour on the wares was basically bright blue. With the prosperity of the country and society, the shape of blue and white porcelain is more gorgeous, the decoration on the porcelain is unusually elaborate and complicated, but the structure of the painting is neat, the painting content has a variety of auspicious meaning. The Ferenc Hopp Museum's collection contains a number of blue and white porcelains from this period,¹⁶ all of which are characterised by their elaborate decoration but clear painting structure. The craft of blue and white porcelain reached its peak during the reign of the Qianlong emperor, and there were no greater innovations in the 19th century.

Blue and white porcelain accounted for a large proportion in the collections of the Ferenc Hopp Museum from the 18th to the 19th century, indicating that blue and white porcelain was very popular in the upper class of Hungarian society during this period.

4.2.2. Dehua Porcelains

White porcelain is another type of Chinese porcelain that was popular in Europe. When we talk about white porcelain, we have to mention the kiln in Dehua, Fujian Province, China, which started firing white porcelain in the late Ming Dynasty. This kind of white porcelain is also one of the representative kinds of white porcelain in China during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. The Dehua white porcelain appears ivory white in the light and has excellent light transmission. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, the white porcelain produced by Dehua was exported to Europe and was so popular that it became known as "*blanche de Chine*" (French "white porcelain") by the French. Dehua white porcelain can be divided into two main categories, one for statues and the other for wares. Most of the statues are Buddha statues and deities in Chinese Taoism. Such as Guanyin, Dharma, Maitreya Buddha, etc. As mentioned above, in the 18th century, Europeans classified Chinese culture as an ancient advanced civilization similar to the ancient Greek and Athenian cultures. For Europeans, Chinese traditional myths, religious beliefs and ancestral sacrificial ceremonies were particularly mysterious, which also attracted their interest.[8] Therefore, in the 18th century, European aristocrats preferred to collect Chinese bronze ritual vessels and various sculptures, and the Dehua white porcelain statues of Taoism and Buddhism undoubtedly provided a good choice for European collectors.

The most typical images of the Ferenc Hopp Museum's surviving Dehua white porcelain sculptures

¹³ Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 22, Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/2

¹⁴ Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 22, Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/2

¹⁵ Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 3692,3693, Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/2

¹⁶ E.g. Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 64.103, 50.685, 57.8, Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/2

are the statues of Guanyin and Maitreya Buddha, both of which are typical of the Dehua kilns. These Guanyin statues can be divided into two types: standing posture and sitting posture. Some of them have her companions standing on both sides,¹⁷ while others hold children in their hands¹⁸. The latter, known as “Songzi Guanyin”, is said to bless a woman giving birth to a boy. The Dehua kiln factory also produced a number of porcelain figures based on Europeans to cater for the European market.

In addition to the statues, the Dehua kilns also produced white porcelain wares, and these contained some porcelain vessels for consecration, such as candlesticks and incense burners. Most of the other vessels are everyday porcelain, such as teapots, teacups and bowls.

In the Ferenc Hopp Museum's collection there are also many white porcelains that were put in gilded bronze mounts, thus altering their original properties. “*e.g. porcelains were used as candleholders, cups were transformed into small baskets, vases were put into metal mounts and used as pitchers.*”[1]

4.2.3. Monochrome Ceramics and Yixing Ceramics

A variety of monochrome porcelain was also favoured by European aristocrats and upper middle class. In the 1929 Exhibition of Oriental Art, Géza Aladár Kármán (1871-1939) exhibited his own collection of Chinese monochrome-glazed porcelain. Among them were 16 pieces of green-glazed porcelain from China's Longquan kiln, including the green glazed (celadon) plates, bowls, and flower stands decorated with carvings. Others, produced by the Jingdezhen Imperial Porcelain Manufacture, include Cobalt Blue, Moon Light, Turquoise Blue porcelain vases. They were augmented with a metal mount or decorated with gold enamelling.[15]

Many monochrome glazed porcelains can be found in the Ferenc Hopp Museum's collection. These include cyan¹⁹ and black glazes²⁰ made by adjusting the iron oxide content of the glaze. There are also colour glazes fired at high temperatures: for example, copper-red glazes fired with copper as the colour rendering agent²¹, blue glazes of different shades fired by mixing cobalt oxide into the glaze²², and tea-powder colour glazed porcelain (*Chayemo*) fired with iron oxide as the colour rendering agent²³. In addition, colour-glazed porcelain fired at a low temperature remains in the Hopp Ferenc museum. For example, yellow-glazed porcelain²⁴ with iron and antimony as colouring agents, and peacock-green-glazed (*Kongquelan*) porcelain²⁵, which is fired secondarily with copper oxide as a colouring agent and lead oxide as a co-solvent, etc. In terms of ware forms, the monochromatic glazed porcelain collected by the Ferenc Hopp Museum is mainly a variety of vases. In addition, there are also cups, plates, bowls and other styles, and even porcelain furniture. For example, a red-glazed drum-shaped stool appears in the collection. This shape of stool²⁶ is often found in Chinese courtyards as a kind of traditional Chinese furniture.

In addition, the collection also preserves many Yixing ceramics (*Zisha*). The Yixing ceramics, which emerged in China after the mid-Ming period, is not porcelain in the full sense of the word, and although it has a dense structure, it does not have the characteristics of light transmission of porcelain. It is not glazed, so its colour is the original colour of the clay used after firing. The main types of Yixing ceramic utensils are tea set, wine set, stationery, flower pot, decoration, etc., among which the tea set is the most important type. Yixing ceramics were deeply loved by the European upper society, mainly benefited from the spread of tea culture in Europe. So they first became popular in the European countries where

¹⁷ E.g. Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 590,595, Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/4

¹⁸ E.g. Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 58.214, 51, 161, 591, 57.2.1-2 Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/4

¹⁹ E.g. Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 69.127 Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/1

²⁰ E.g. Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 51.417, 51.191,55.724 Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/1

²¹ E.g. Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 51.293, L. 584, ,51.318, 51.317,51.308, 51.309, 31.315, 51.312 Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/1

²² E.g. Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 2941, 51.326, 51.307 Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/1

²³ E.g. Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 87.40 Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/1

²⁴ E.g. Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 51. 399. 1-2, 372, 425 Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/1

²⁵ E.g. Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 51.311 Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/1

²⁶ E.g. Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 58.276 Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/1

tea culture was popular (such as the Netherlands, Britain, etc.), and gradually spread to the whole of Europe.[22]

As Yixing ceramics, in addition to the artistry of the ceramics process itself, are decorated with motifs that reflect the multiple cultures of traditional Chinese painting, seals, poetry, calligraphy and sculptures, it has always been a favourite of Chinese literati.

The vast majority of the surviving Yixing ceramic wares in the Ferenc Hopp Museum are teapots, but there are also tea jars²⁷ with lids and teacups²⁸, all of which are, of course, associated with tea culture.

5. Conclusion

Although the popularity of Chinese culture in Hungary was about a century later than in other European countries, many Chinese collections could already be found in the estates of the Hungarian aristocrats in the 18th century. Among them, those expensive porcelain is the embodiment of the wealth accumulation of aristocrats, appeared in the manor room everywhere. Larger porcelain was used to decorate corridors and corners, while smaller porcelain was used in combinations to decorate mantelpieces, table tops and even display cases and rooms dedicated to porcelain on some estates. After the 19th century, the World Expo made more upper middle classes in Europe know about Chinese porcelain. At that time, the quantity of Chinese porcelain in the European market kept rising, and the development of the European porcelain manufacturing industry led to the gradual reduction of the price of Chinese porcelain. In addition, due to factors such as perennial warfare and market demand in Europe, the quality of China's export porcelain is also declining, adjusting from high-end and delicate porcelain to coarse porcelain. All these reasons led to the fact that, in addition to the wealthy aristocracy, an increasing number of the upper middle classes in Hungary also became involved in the collection of Chinese porcelain during this period. One of the most famous of them was Ferenc Hopp, who arrived in China three times during his lifetime and collected countless Chinese works of art. His villa in Andrassy Road and its collection were donated to the Hungarian government and became the Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, which houses most of the Chinese collections of the Hungarian aristocracy. The porcelain in the collection is numerous and varied, and many of them are of high research value as they reflect the development of the Chinese porcelain industry and its exportation during the same period.

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²⁷ E.g. Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, Inv.nos. 2810.1-2. Published: Györgyi Fajcsák 2011, description of items in chapter III/5

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