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Introduction

With the forced opening of China, Japan and Korea by the so-called Western Powers from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, an international market in East Asian artefacts rapidly developed that resulted in thousands of objects entering collections worldwide. China in particular fell victim to the most intensive spate of collecting on the part of both private collectors and museum institutions particularly after 1911, when, with the fall of the last imperial dynasty, the country was in political, social and economic turmoil.[1] British Museum Keeper of the Department of Oriental Antiquities, R.L. Hobson, summed up the situation perfectly when he wrote that "the Western collector has profited by the unhappy conditions which have prevailed in China since the revolution in 1912".[2] Writing in 1915, Hobson was already anticipating the exodus of Chinese material culture of all types and periods (from tomb excavations to collections formerly owned by members of China's old élite), that would occur during the 1910s, 1920s and 1930s.

This period also witnessed the opportunity to study China's past through its material culture as both legal, but more often, illegal excavations of Neolithic and Bronze-Age objects revealed a deeper understanding of China's ancient civilisation beyond the textual record. Sinology became a nascent profession within academe and specialist groups and societies emerged, largely as a vehicle for examining specimens and publishing new research.[3] The collecting of and research into new finds also applied to Korean and

1 The fall of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) was followed by a weak Nationalist government, civil war and war with Japan.

2 R.L. Hobson, *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain: an account of the potter's art in China from primitive times to the present day* (London: Cassell, 1915), Introduction, xx.

3 The Oriental Ceramic Society in London, formed of a group of wealthy collectors and museums professionals, was just such an organisation. Founded in 1921, from 1923 it issued the *Society's Transactions*, as a means of disseminating its members' findings. It also sponsored exhibitions. Expanding its membership after 1931, it (through its membership) took a leading role in the International Exhibition of Chinese Art in 1935-36. For a brief history, see Frances Wood, Towards a New History of the Oriental Ceramic Society: Narrative and Chronology, in *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society,* 76 (2011-12), 95-116.

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Japanese material culture as it too became part of the international market in artefacts, although Japan as an imperial power quickly became a demand country on the Western model.[4] The growth in museum acquisition was part-and-parcel of these developments with supply being met by dealers in Europe, North America and Japan who were now specialising in East Asian art and archaeology and who had networks of local dealers and agents on the ground who supplied them.[5]

The current international debates around the trading in and acquisition of objects that found their way into museum collections during the colonial period present new challenges for collecting history and provenance research. This includes the re-evaluation of historical contexts, the reconstruction of looted and displaced collections from East Asia during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the layout of a legal or ethical framework to address these issues. This calls for a dialogue and cooperation with colleagues from China, Japan and Korea. In the past twenty years, the movement of objects and the circumstances of their often uncontrolled and indiscriminate translocation have been increasingly the focus of curators and scholars investigating purchases related to the politics and market mechanisms under the National Socialist regime. Despite research and numerous projects, we still do not know enough about the destiny of significant private collections dispersed between 1933 and 1945, the acquisition policies of museums at this time and the key actors and institutions involved in the art market for East Asian art in the first half of the twentieth century.

Since 2017, German scholars and museum professionals have been meeting annually in Berlin in order to discuss challenges in researching the provenance of objects originating from East Asia, present current projects and discover similarities in collecting practices and object biographies. In 2019, it was decided to mount a workshop in a way that would open up the discussion to international colleagues with the aim of creating a platform for the exchange of ongoing research in the field and connect colleagues from around the world in a sustainable network. The result was the workshop “Provenance Research on East Asian Art”, which took place at the Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin on 8th-9th November with scholars attending from Austria, China (P.R.), Great Britain, France, Korea, the Netherlands, the US, Switzerland and Germany.

The two-day event was divided into two parts: the international workshop consisting of five sections (“Tracing Loot from the Yuanmingyuan”, “Effects of Looting”, “Collecting and Dealing with Chinese Porcelain”, “Negotiating East Asian Art in America” and “Focus Korea”), with fourteen papers in total. A German Networking Meeting offering insights into current provenance research projects followed with four papers. Ten of the papers

4 On Sinology in Japan cf. Stefan Tanaka, Japan’s Orient – Rendering Pasts into Histories. (Berkeley: University of California Press 1995), and on Korean Studies in Japan, cf. Hyung Il Pai, Heritage Management in Korea and Japan – the Politics of Antiquity & Identity, (Seattle: University of Washington Press 2013).

5 The role of dealers and their agents in China, Japan and Korea is an ongoing area of research, but the best-known first-hand account of collecting in China during the 1930s is provided by Orvar Karlbeck’s Treasure Seeker in China (London: Cresset Pres, 1957).

presented at the workshop are included in this issue, advancing from the previous *Journal for Art Market Studies* issue in September 2018 on Asian Art: Markets, Provenance, History.[6] The present papers divide into four main sections: the translocation of artefacts from China, in this case the tracing and effects of looting (papers deriving from panel 1 and 2 of the workshop); the collecting of Chinese porcelain in France and the Netherlands (panel 3); the growth of collecting and the market for East Asian art in America (panel 4) and some recent provenance projects relating to looted Asian art during the National Socialist period (papers from the German Networking Meeting). Although the workshop included a focus on Korea for the first time, this aspect unfortunately could not be included in this publication.

The workshop's keynote paper, given by Nick Pearce and presented at the beginning of this issue, set the scene for examining Western collecting practices in China during the first decades of the twentiethth century with the example of adventurer Frits Holm's attempt to remove the famous Nestorian Monument documenting the arrival of Christianity in China in the early seventh century from its site of discovery just outside Xi'an. Expecting to take the Monument back to the British Museum for safekeeping and for the benefit of scientific enquiry, Holm had to satisfy himself with a replica which he had made from the same stone as the original, but which, in its making, transgressed the Western artistic concept of originality. The paper points up the then current sense of privilege on the part of collectors operating in a colonial or, in the case of China, semi-colonial, situation and the notion of originality in different cultural contexts.

Tracing Loot - Effects of Looting

The papers in this first section address aspects of the aftermath of looting during conflict: in this case the sacking and looting of Yuanmingyuan in 1860 and the occupation of the Forbidden City following the Boxer Rebellion in 1900.

Haoyang Zhao uses the *Huangchao Liqi Tushi* (an illustrated album of Qing imperial ritual paraphernalia, commissioned by the Qianlong Emperor), as a case study to argue that while the methods of provenance and art historical research may travel discrete pathways to answer a distinct set of questions, they are not independent of each other. Through his examination and interrogation of a large collection of pages of *Huangchao Liqi Tushi*, which was potentially looted from Yuanmingyuan in 1860 by Anglo-French troops and whose pages are now dispersed across institutions in Britain, Ireland and Canada, he argues that a holistic approach is required to document an object where little external evidence survives as to its integrity as a single album or its provenance, but which may hold visible clues revealed only by physical examination.

Kate Hill provides an insight into the early market in Britain for looted objects from the Second China War, evidencing sales mounted between 1861 and 1866 and reception history as documented in catalogues, purchase records, newspaper reports and photo-

6 https://fokum-jams.org/index.php/jams/issue/view/9.

graphs of the time. She analyses the response to artefacts not seen in Europe before and argues that the material opened up an entirely new area of connoisseurship and display.

Niklas Leverenz traces the scattering of the artworks from the Ziguang Ge (Hall of Imperial Splendor) in the imperial garden Zhongnanhai in Beijing during the "Boxer Rebellion" of 1900. The area was given over to the Germans as headquarters. Leverenz illuminates the German role in the looting of Beijing in 1900/1901 by linking contemporary reports on the perception of the artworks and their treatment as property by the German army members with their current presence in German museum collections.

Collecting and Dealing Chinese Porcelain

In her paper, Lucie Chopard discusses a relatively unknown collector of Chinese porcelain in the second half of the nineteenth century, Ernest Grandidier (1833-1912), and the gift of his collection of over six thousand items to the Louvre in 1894 (now in the Musée Guimet), making it the largest collection of Chinese porcelains in France. Utilising archival material, she reveals the relationship of Grandidier to the group of dealers from whom he purchased, the type of material then available on the Parisian art market and the extraordinary position that he occupied as sole keeper of his collection at the Louvre during his lifetime. It raises questions concerning the central role that both dealers and private collectors occupied in the early formation of East Asian collections within Europe's national museums.

Eline van den Berg's contribution on the provenance of Chinese ceramics in the holdings of the Princessehof Museum in Leeuwarden presents a timely case study of colonial collecting not in China proper but in Indonesia (the former Dutch East Indies). Focusing on the activities of two Dutch collectors active in the colonial period she highlights their differing motivations, means and networks for acquisition as well as the functions of their respective collections in the wider context of Dutch constructions of knowledge about Indonesian and Chinese culture as well as the shifting evaluations and perceptions of Chinese trade ceramics for the Asian market.

Negotiating East Asian Art in America

Noelle Giuffrida's in-depth analysis of interactions between the museum professional and eminent scholar of Asian art Sherman E. Lee and the art dealer Walter Höchstädter provides a fascinating glimpse into the ways in which key agents shaped the taste and the market for Chinese paintings in the US during the turbulent 1950s, a crucial time in the formation of American museum collections of Asian art. Based on a wealth of archival material, her contribution sheds light on the scholarly and commercial networks around Lee and Höchstädter and their rivals, and the expanding field of provenance studies on Asian art in the United States. Her article underlines both the importance of provenance information as well as its potential for the contextualisation of art works and art markets.

Najiba Choudhury highlights a little-known downside to the art market under wartime conditions. Her article draws attention to the fate of the American branches of prominent Japanese-owned dealers in Asian art, Yamanaka Co. Inc, during WW II. Declared an enemy alien, stock, properties and eventually real estate of this company were seized and sold off to benefit the US war effort under the Trading with the Enemy Act, legislation which is still active and might still be invoked even today.

Tracing Provenance in Germany: Insights into Current Projects

This section provides an insight into ongoing provenance research projects in Germany. Both projects are initiatives taken by the descendants of former persecuted persons to reconstruct the art collections of their ancestors that were confiscated and scattered during the Third Reich. Both projects are financed by the German Lost Art Foundation (Project Funding: Cultural Assets Seized Through Nazi Persecution).[7]

Adam Ganz and Nathalie Neumann discuss the diversity of methodological approaches in their provenance research project on the art collection of Felix Ganz (1869-1944), a German businessman from Mainz who was persecuted by the Nazis as a Jew and died in Auschwitz. Little is known about the scope and character of the Ganz collection that was dispersed after the seizure of his home. In their essay, the authors provide an in-depth insight into the practical challenges and possibilities of its reconstruction and current localisation.

Ulrich Weitz gives an insight into the fate of the persecuted Socialist and author Eduard Fuchs (1870-1940) during the Third Reich and describes his ongoing research into the dispersal and remaining part of Fuchs' extensive art collection. Weitz sets a special focus on Fuchs's large collection of Asian art (around 1,000 objects) which remained almost unknown until today. He provides detailed insights into his successful searches for a group of Chinese roofriders (ridge tiles) from the collection, which he was able to track down in close cooperation with German and Austrian colleagues in today's museum collections.

We hope that this issue will be the beginning of a series that will present further research on collectors and dealers of East Asian art, their networks and the market mechanisms in which they operated in the past and in which they operate today. Our thanks go to the authors of the papers and to Susanne Meyer-Abich, Managing Editor of the Journal, who provided her usual excellent support and uncomplicated and pragmatic approach. We would also like to acknowledge the work of our peer reviewers, who contributed their time, expertise and invaluable advice, of which we have all been the beneficiaries. Last, but not least, we gratefully acknowledge the support of the sponsors of the workshop on which the articles in this issue are based: Arbeitskreis Provenienzforschung e.V., Deutsche Gesellschaft für Ostasiatische Kunst e.V., Sir Percival David Foundation Trust.

7 https://www.kulturgutverluste.de/Webs/EN/ResearchFunding/ProjectFunding-Nazi-confiscated-art/Index.html.