THE HISTORIES OF MATERIAL CULTURE AND COLLECTING, 1700–1950

The Emergence of the Korean Art Collector and the Korean Art Market

CHARLOTTE HORLYCK

ROUTLEDGE

The Emergence of the Korean Art Collector and the Korean Art Market

Articulating the shifting interests in Korean art and offering new ways of conceiving the biases that initiated and impacted its collecting, this book traces the rise of the modern Korean art market from its formative period in the 1870s through to its peak and subsequent decline in the 1930s.

The discussion centres on the collecting of Koryŏ celadon ceramics as they formed the focal point of commercial exchanges of Korean artefacts and explores how their acquisition and ownership formed part of the complex power relationship that played out between the Koreans, Japanese, Americans, and Europeans. Drawing on a wide range of primary sources, the volume analyses collectors' acquisition practices, arguing that their fascination with ceramics from the Koryŏ kingdom (918–1392) was shaped not only by the aesthetic appeal of the objects but also by biased perceptions of the Korean peninsula, its history, and people.

The book will be of interest to scholars working in art history, social history, cultural history, Korean studies, collection studies, museum studies, Korean history, and Asian studies.

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The Romanisation follows the McCune-Reischauer system for Korean, the Hepburn system for Japanese, and pinyin for Chinese. For the sake of consistency, all Korean place names are Romanised using McCune-Reischauer and not the revised Romanisation system introduced by the Korean government in 2000 (e.g., Pusan and not Busan, as it is spelt today). The exception applies to well-known persons and places, which have been established as standard usage (e.g., Seoul, Pyongyang, and Kim Il Sung).

Korean and Japanese names appear with surnames listed first, except in the case of authors with publications in English. Since many Korean surnames are identical, Korean names appear in full in all footnotes.

Titles of newspapers, journals, and magazines published in Korean are provided in the original. The names of institutions and laws established in Korea during the Japanese colonial period are provided in English and Japanese (e.g., the Government-General Museum of Korea, J. *Chōsen Sōtokufu Hakubutsukan* 朝鮮総督府博物館).

All translations from Korean and Japanese are my own, except when noted otherwise.

Abbreviations

J. Japanese
K. Korean

Preface

This book explores why a specific type of Korean object was acquired and collected in North America and Britain around the turn of the twentieth century.[1] Research on the motivations behind art consumption suggests that owning objects serves as an extension of one's self, forging connections with others, and delineating group affiliations.[2] This was also the case of Korean artefacts as their consumption became a contributary element of social change. The book unravels the complex tapestry of shifting interests in Korean art, presenting novel perspectives on the conceptual modes that instigated and influenced the collection of Korean objects. In brief, it traces the trajectory of the modern Korean art market, navigating its formative stages in the 1870s, its zenith in the 1910s, and its decline in the 1930s.

The analysis unveils the various factors that generated interest in Korean art, revealing the complex web of connections among numerous individuals, from businessmen, diplomats and politicians to dealers, curators and scholars, whose lives intersected in diverse ways through their shared interest in art acquisition. The narrative draws on the extensive body of research on collecting practices that have investigated the ways in which the commercial and cultural value placed on certain artefacts is socially constructed.[3] Korea is a particularly illuminating example of this because of the convergence of unique social, political, and economic factors that initiated interest in specific types of objects over a relatively short span of time. I have also benefitted from the increasing number of studies which have examined the acquisition of Korean artefacts by specific collectors and museum institutions.[4] More recently, the pursuit of a contextual approach to Korean art collecting has initiated analysis of the flow of objects and their consumption.[5] This book furthers insights into the motivations behind Korean art acquisition by unravelling the web of interconnected aspects that in various ways led to the emergence of the Korean collectible and its consumption by private collectors and museums.

To understand the emergence of the Korean art market beyond East Asia, attention is directed at American and British collectors. They were among the first Westerners to actively seek out Korean artefacts for their collectible value, rather than as curiosities or ethnographic material. Their interest in ceramics, especially the green-glazed stonewares from the Koryŏ dynasty (918–1392), widely known as celadon, led to the formation of major private and public collections that in many cases rivalled those of their Japanese competitors. Moreover, American and British studies and exhibitions of Koryŏ ceramics significantly advanced understandings of them.

The chapters explore the ways in which the preference of Americans and Britons for Korean ceramics were shaped by various factors, including political and economic considerations, local cultural traditions, chance occurrences, among others. The American and British dominance in the acquisition of Korean ceramics can be attributed, in part, to

their political interests in the region. They were the first Westerners to formalise trade and diplomatic relations with the Chosŏn dynasty (1392–1910), and by the late 1800s, they formed the two largest groups of foreign residents in Korea.[6] The American and British interest in Korean ceramics formed part of a broader fascination with the "Orient" that at the time swept both sides of the Atlantic, resulting in the circulation of thousands of objects from Korea, China, and Japan on the art market. However, in contrast to the varied acquisitions of Chinese and Japanese objects, the emphasis on ceramics in Korean art collections prompts us to question the underlying reasons.

The book reveals that the relative obscurity of Korea and its art among Westerners in the mid to late 1800s played a significant role in directing collectors' attention towards certain types of objects while diverting it away from others. When Korean ceramics first appeared on the art market in America and Europe in the 1870s, little was known about Korea and its cultural traditions. In the 1880s, when Westerners could purchase objects on the peninsula as opposed to through dealers based in America, Europe, Japan, or China, they sought out those that seemed unmistakably "Korean." Unlike the Chosŏn elite, who valued calligraphy and ink paintings by Korean masters, Westerners tended to find such works too similar to Chinese ones and often expressed disappointment in their perceived inferior quality.[7] Instead they singled out ceramics from the Koryŏ dynasty as authentic Korean artworks, seeped in history and cultural value. They were not alone in valuing Koryŏ ceramics as suitable Korean collectibles. As detailed in the next section, the long-standing tradition in Japan of appreciating works by Korean potters played a significant role in bringing Westerners' attention to ceramics, highlighting the entanglement of Japanese and Western interests in Korea and its art.

The book contends that the acquisition and ownership of Koryŏ ceramics serve as a compelling lens through which to understand the intricate international power dynamics in East Asia, involving Koreans, Japanese, Americans, and Europeans. Notably, collectors' interest in Korean artefacts, the availability of them on the art market, and fluctuations in their prices were profoundly affected by the unfolding political events on the Korean peninsula and beyond during the late 1800s and early 1900s. The forced opening of Korea's ports by the Japanese and later the Americans and the British in the 1870s and early 1880s had particular impact, as did the onset of the Russo-Japanese War in 1904, and the subsequent annexation of the Korean peninsula by Japan in 1910. Additional factors contributing to the rise of the modern Korean art market were accidental discoveries of ceramics in tombs resulting from railway expansion, the establishment and development of archaeology on the peninsula by the Japanese colonial government, and the growth of tourism in Korea. The correlation of these developments with the colonisation of Korea adds nuanced layers of complexity to the study of the Korean art market.

Equally fascinating is the extraordinary rapidity with which the market for Koryŏ ceramics ascended and declined, setting it apart from the trajectories of the Japanese and Chinese art markets. In America and Europe, sales of ceramics, which were believed to be Korean (though in fact most likely made in Japan), began in the 1870s. During the 1880s and 1890s, collectors and museum curators actively sought out ceramics unearthed from Koryŏ tombs, often engaging in direct competition with Japanese collectors. By the early years of the 1900s, American and British collectors and curators had unequivocally declared Koryŏ ceramics to be the "best" antiques from the "best" period of Korean history.[8] In the 1910s and 1920s, many private collectors and museums in America and Britain proudly displayed their holdings of such objects and often exhibited them alongside early Chinese glazed stonewares that, by then, had begun to draw the

attention of collectors. However, already by the early 1930s the heyday of collecting was over as fewer Koryŏ celadon wares came on the market, and their price rose considerably. These obstacles forced dealers and collectors to diversify their interests in Korean art and turn to objects that until then had been of little interest to them, such as wooden and lacquered furniture from the Chosŏn dynasty.

In the 1870s, sales of Korean artefacts were a novelty in America and Europe, but in Seoul, shops sold paintings by Korean artists as well as other kinds of items, with the art market at Kwangt'ong Bridge being particularly well-known.[9] Indeed, neither art acquisition nor art markets were unfamiliar concepts to Korea in the late nineteenth century, yet conspicuous spending was frowned upon by the Chosŏn Confucian rulers, making art acquisition a moral dilemma for many. Some, such as the intellectual Yun Haeng-ŏm (1728–99), argued that attachment to worldly possessions would undermine righteous thinking. Yet many men of the elite *yangban* class and the lower-ranking *chungin* class (interpreters, scribes, and other highly-skilled men, who lived and worked alongside the elite in the capital) took pleasure in collecting books, paintings, calligraphy, and antiques. They proudly stored the artefacts in purpose-built pavilions and appreciated them in the company of friends. Aware of the critique directed against lavish spending on luxury goods, they defended their acquisition activities by arguing that enjoyment of special items was good for the soul and advanced the mind.[10]

Following in the tradition of Chinese literati, who for centuries had prized calligraphy and painting above all other art forms, Chosŏn art collectors coveted paintings and books by Korean and Chinese masters. The collection of Prince An'pyŏng (1418–53) is especially well-known for its thousands of books and large number of ancient Chinese calligraphy and paintings.[11] However, in contrast to members of the Chinese imperial family, who enjoyed collecting ceramics, bronzes, seals, and other objects, the Korean royal family appeared not to value ceramics as art, regarding them instead as functional objects.[12]

Nevertheless, the reluctance among the Confucian elite to acquire such objects did not dissuade other members of the *yangban* and *chungin* social classes from collecting ancient Chinese bronzes along with various types of Chinese ceramics and polychrome enamel wares. They purchased these items either locally or while on diplomatic missions in China.[13] Though typically seen as utilitarian items and therefore held in lower esteem than brushwork creations, their popularity in Korea may be attributed to their Chinese origins and their historical significance as ancient relics. The consumption of both books and Chinese antiques among the *yangban* literati and *chungin* intellectuals is suggested in *ch'aekkŏri* paintings (illustrations of "books and things" typically presented in the format of folding screens) where they are arranged on shelves, flanked by books, fruits, flowering plants, and various exotic foreign items, such as pocket watches (Figure 0.1).

In contrast to these Chosŏn collectors, the Japanese, Europeans, and Americans who arrived on the peninsula in the 1870s and 1880s brought a significantly different approach to art. To them, appreciation of antique ceramics had long formed part of their respective cultural traditions. In particular, the Japanese interest in Korean ceramics spanned several centuries, and as such, it was likely them who initiated the first commercial exchanges of Koryŏ vessels. The earliest recorded account of this may be that by Pierre Louis Jouy (1856–94) of the US National Museum (now the Smithsonian Institution) in Washington, DC, writing in 1888:

> On arriving in Fusan [Pusan], in the winter of 1883, my attention was early attracted to the subject of Korean pottery, and several pieces of a ware entirely different from

Figure 0.1 Yi Hyŏng-nok (dates unknown). *Ch'aekkŏri*. Chosŏn period, nineteenth century. Ink and colour on paper, 153 × 352 cm.

Source: National Museum of Korea (acc. no. Tŏksu 6004).

> the ordinary pottery of the country were brought to me for examination by Japanese residents. These pieces, to which a remote antiquity was ascribed, were held in high esteem by Japanese connoisseurs who delight in rare and curious objects. An extraordinary value was given to fine specimens and they were often sent to friends in Japan, and especially to Osaka, which port has long enjoyed direct communication with Korea.[14]

In Japan, the tradition of cherishing Korean ceramics stemmed back to the early sixteenth century with the practice of the tea ceremony and its accoutrements. So-called *Kōrai jawan* 高麗茶碗 (litt. Korean tea bowls) were especially coveted by Japanese tea practitioners who initially imported them from the peninsula.[15] When the Japanese warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉 (1537–98) invaded Korea in 1592 and 1597, many Korean potters were captured and forcibly resettled in villages in Japan to produce tea bowls for feudal lords.

Like their Japanese counterparts, Americans and Europeans were familiar with ceramic collecting as it had become an increasingly popular leisure activity during the nineteenth century.[16] Collections amassed by Albert Jacquemart (1808–75) in Paris, Augustus Wollaston Franks (1826–97) in London, and Charles A. Dana (1819–97) in New York, to mention but a few, furthered interest in the field of ceramic collecting, also when it came to that of Korean ceramics which all three collectors acquired. Their taste for antique Korean ceramics was not unusual. By the late nineteenth century, several volumes on ceramic collecting included mention of Korean ceramic manufacture, signifying the emergence of this new field.[17]

Thus, for art lovers in America and Europe, the opening of Korea's ports came at a fortuitous time as it coincided with the growth of the art market that saw an expanding number of art dealers and auction houses cater to the rising demand for East Asian objects, including ones from Korea. Their interest in art acquisition was triggered by a broader social trend, associated with Enlightenment ideals and values that centred on self-cultivation. Economic growth, disposable wealth, increased literacy, and more leisure time also

contributed to the boom in art collecting. Furthermore, the belief that art was essential to self-improvement resulted in the establishment of art galleries and museums, while private art clubs provided a privileged forum for the minted elite to pursue their hobby. Thus, in contrast to Chosŏn, where the Confucian establishment frowned upon conspicuous spending on art objects, in America and Europe, the acquisition and display of art were linked with learning and the gaining of useful knowledge, and for this reason encouraged.

The positive associations of art and its collecting is reflected in the following statement issued in the *Cosmopolitan Art Journal* – an American magazine focused on art criticism, art literature, and biography:

> Art, in America, begins to take tangible shape. Never had it so many devotees, never so many patrons. In the great centres of population we have Academies and Galleries to answer to the public want, and where the best works of the studio are brought forth for exhibition and criticism; we have private collections which would do honor alike to the munificence and to the cultivation of the American people. . . . Art-taste has touched the comparatively young States with its grace, and rendered itself an inmate of homes where only a life ago the rudeness of an advance civilization dwelt.[18]

Many art lovers in America and Britain developed a taste for ceramics. For the home decorator, they served a practical and aesthetic function within interior settings due to their limitless colours, shapes, and sizes.[19] Individuals with recently acquired fortunes, such as the American businessman Charles Lang Freer (1854–1919), utilised the acquisition of ceramics and other artefacts to amass cultural capital, enhance social status, broaden social networks, and secure a legacy. Collectors achieved the latter by donating their objects to renowned institutions or, as in Freer's case, founding their own museums. Exhibitions of East Asian ceramics held at World's Fairs, private galleries, and public museums in the mid to late nineteenth century also generated interest in the objects. Moreover, large-scale auction sales of renowned art collections, including that owned by Charles Dana, highlighted the commercial aspects of art collecting and its potential for financial investment and economic gain.

Women as well as men were encouraged to enjoy culture, visit museums, and learn from the exhibited objects. However, as the acquisition, curating, and study of East Asian art, including that of Korea, was dominated by men, regrettably this book makes little mention of women. Some women, such as Adaline Mapes Elder Peters (1859–1943) in New York, purchased Korean ceramics at art auctions, but the extent of their collecting activities is unknown. In contrast, their husbands' involvement in the Korean art market and their contributions to scholarship are better known. For example, Adaline's husband, Samuel Twyford Peters (1854–1921), collected early Korean and Chinese stonewares, and in 1914 he initiated with Freer a seminal exhibition of early East Asian ceramics. Peters also served as a trustee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. His activities highlight the many opportunities men had to enhance their understanding of their collections in contrast to those available to women. Men also had access to private members' clubs and similar exclusive settings where objects were examined, assessed, and valued in the company of (male) art experts, friends, and business associates.

In an era dominated by male museum curators, Dorothy Lilian Blair (1890–1989) distinguished herself as one of the few female curators of East Asian art. Serving as the Assistant Curator of Oriental Art at the Toledo Museum of Art from 1928 to her

retirement in 1952, Blair specialised in Japan, and her published works did not extend to Korean art.[20] On the other hand, Lorraine D'O Warner, née Lorraine d'Orémieulx Roosevelt (1887–1965), neither held a museum position nor gained fame as a collector, but her writings on Koryŏ ceramics and metalwares greatly furthered insights into Korean material culture. Married to Langdon Warner (1881–1955), a renowned specialist in East Asian art, the couple's frequent travels to East Asia enriched Lorraine's investigations into arts of the Koryŏ dynasty. However, her pioneering work also reflected the inescapable political contexts of art collecting during this period. She relied much on scholarship published by the Government-General of Korea and often made references to objects in collections formed by Japanese institutions and private individuals. In doing so, she inadvertently endorsed the Japanese control of Korea and its cultural heritage.

Indeed, the inherently political nature of Korean art acquisition and scholarship is a recurring theme in the book. Structured chronologically to address the rapid shifts in the Korean art market around the turn of the twentieth century, each chapter spans roughly a decade. The book commences with early sales of ceramics that were believed to be Korean. Sold at auctions in America in the 1870s, the artefacts signify the burgeoning interest in this nascent collecting sphere, shaped by European-led studies on Japan and Korea. The following chapter explores the ways in which the opening of Korea's ports to America and European nations in the 1880s impacted the art market as dealers and collectors began to acquire wares directly on the peninsula. American collectors were especially active in this regard. They often competed against collectors from Japan where the interest in Korean ceramics spanned several centuries.

The central chapters explore the ways in which American and later British collectors succeeded in building significant collections of Koryŏ ceramics between the 1890s and 1910s. Several of them were diplomats working in Seoul, where their acquisition choices were informed by their networks with the Korean and Japanese elite. Others were businessmen based in America, Britain, or Japan. Their shared ambition to advance understandings of Korean ceramics through scholarship and exhibitions considerably impacted the art market, inspiring other collectors to acquire these wares. The final chapter focuses on the 1920s and 1930s when public institutions in America and Britain significantly expanded their holdings of Korean art. Their activities coincided with Japan's increased control of Korean cultural heritage that was evidenced by its prohibition of exports of Korean archaeological artefacts, among other measures. In America and Britain, the scarcity of new Koryŏ ceramics on the market led to a dramatic increase in prices and to institutions acquiring other types of Korean artefacts. Meanwhile, in Korea, a new group of collectors of Korean descent asserted their claim to Korean heritage by challenging Japanese ownership of Korean artefacts and competitively outbidding Japanese buyers.

Notes

1 In the following, references to America denote the United States.
2 In his study of consumer desires, Russell W. Belk argues that "our accumulation of possessions provides a sense of past and tells us who we are, where we have come from, and perhaps where we are going." Russell W. Belk, "Possessions and the Extended Self," *Journal of Consumer Research* 15, no. 2 (September 1988): 160. For further discussion, see also Yu Chen, "Possession and Access: Consumer Desires and Value Perceptions Regarding Contemporary Art Collection and Exhibit Visits," *Journal of Consumer Research* 35, no. 6 (2009): 925.

3 Typically, studies on art collecting have focused on specific types of objects, collectors, or regions. Publications on acquisitions of Chinese and Japanese art are too numerous to list here. Those that have informed the book include: Constance J. S. Chen, "Merchants of Asianness: Japanese Art Dealers in the United States in the Early Twentieth Century," *Journal of American Studies* 44, no. 1 (February 2010): 19–46; Warren I. Cohen, *East Asian Art and American Culture: A Study in International Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992); Ching-Yi Huang, "John Sparks, the Art Dealer and Chinese Art in England, 1902–1936" (PhD diss., SOAS, University of London, 2012); Stacey Pierson, *Collectors, Collections and Museums: The Field of Chinese Ceramics in Britain, 1560–1960* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007).

4 For example, see Kim Brandt, "Objects of Desire: Japanese Collectors and Colonial Korea," *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 8, no. 3 (Winter 2000): 711–46; Pak Chŏng-ae, "Hwagi Kyŏmjae Chŏng Sŏn hoehwa ŭi mobang kwa pokche, yut'ong ŭi il tanmyŏn: Yŏngguk tosŏgwan sojangp'um ŭl chungshim ŭro" [The Copy and Circulation of Chŏng Sŏn's Paintings: Collections in the British Library], *Han'gukhak* 42, no. 4 (Winter 2019): 141–89; Pak Chŏng-hye et al., *Han'guk misul, segye wa mannada: kŭndaegi oegugin k'ŏllekt'ŏ yŏn'gu* [When Korean Art Meets the World: Foreign Collectors in the Early Twentieth Century Korea] (Seoul: Minsogwŏn, 2020); Liz Wilkinson, "Collecting Korean Art at the Victoria and Albert Museum 1888–1938," *Journal of the History of Collections* 15, no. 2 (November 2003): 241–55.

5 Among such studies are the following: Jihye Hong, "Collecting Korean Things: Actors in the Formation of Korean Collections in Britain (1876–1961)" (PhD diss., the Royal College of Art, 2021); Kim Sang-yŏp, *Misulp'um k'ŏllekt'ŏdŭl: Han'guk ŭi kŭndae sujangga wa sujip ŭi munhwasa* [Art Collectors: Korea's Modern Collectors and the Cultural History of Collecting] (Paju: Tolbegae, 2015); Kim Yun-jŏng, "Kŭndae Yŏngguk ŭi Han'guk toja k'ŏlleksyŏn ŭi hyŏngsŏng kwajŏng kwa kŭ ŭimi" [The Meaning of the Development of Korean Ceramics Collection in Modern Britain], *Munhwajae* 52, no. 4 (December 2019): 104–23; Son Yŏng-ok, *Misul sijang ŭi t'ansaeng* [The Birth of the Art Market] (Seoul: P'urŭn Yŏksa, 2020).

6 In 1897, there were 33 British heads of household in Korea – this included some Canadians and Australians – compared to 22 Americans, 17 Germans, and 8 French. James E. Hoare, "The Centenary of Korean-British Diplomatic Relations: Aspects of British Interest and Involvement in Korea 1600–1983," *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch* 58 (1983): 30.

7 See for example, H. S. Saunderson, "Notes on Corea and Its People," *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 24 (1895): 312; Edward Greey, *Hand-Book of a Unique Collection of Ancient and Modern Korean and Chinese Works of Art, Procured in Korea During 1883–1886 by Pierre L. Jouy of Washington D.C.* (New York: Edward Greey, 1888), 26.

8 For example, Randolph Iltyd Geare (1854–1917), who was Chief of the Division of Correspondence and Documents at the US National Museum in Washington, DC, argued that Koryŏ celadon were "the best examples of the ancient Koreans' art in pottery," while Francis Stewart Kershaw (1869–1930), Keeper in the Department of Chinese and Japanese art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, wrote that "we have in Korean pottery of the best period [Koryŏ] a distinctively Korean expression of taste and skill." Randolph I. Geare, "The Potter's Art in Korea," *The Craftsman* 7 (December 1904): 297; Francis Stewart Kershaw, "Korean Pottery," *Museum of Fine Arts Bulletin* 9, no. 54 (December 1911): 63.

9 Sunglim Kim, *Flowering Plums and Curio Cabinets: The Culture of Objects in Late Chosŏn Korean Art* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018), 112.

10 The *yangban* scholar Nam Kong-ch'ŏl (1760–1840) even claimed that appreciation of antiques made him simple and modest. Sunglim Kim, *Flowering Plums*, 59.

11 Unfortunately the collection has not survived. For a discussion of An'pyŏng's interest in calligraphy and painting, see for example An Hwi-jun, "An'pyŏng Taegun, Yi Yong (1418–1453) ŭi inmultoem kwa munhwajŏk kiyŏ" [Prince An'pyŏng (Yi Yong, 1418–1453), His Character and Cultural Contributions], *Misulsahak yŏn'gu* 300 (2018): 5–43.

12 Sunglim Kim, *Flowering Plums*, 198.

13 Sunglim Kim, *Flowering Plums*, 84, 112.

14 Pierre Louis Jouy, "The Collection of Korean Mortuary Pottery in the U.S. National Museum," in *Annual of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, Showing the Operation, Expenditure, and Condition of the Institution for the Year Ending June 30, 1888: Report of the*

U.S. National Museum, ed. Smithsonian Institution, Board of Regents, United States National Museum (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1890), 589.

15 The term *Kōrai jawan* first appeared in 1537. Takeshi Watanabe, "From Korea to Japan and Back Again: One Hundred Years of Japanese Tea Culture through Five Bowls, 1550–1650," *Yale University Art Gallery Bulletin* (2007): 84.

16 In America alone in the 1870s, collectors of ceramics were said to number in the thousands. William C. Prime, *Pottery and Porcelain of All Times and Nations: With Tables of Factory and Artists' Marks for the Use of Collectors* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1878), 5.

17 For example: Prime, *Pottery and Porcelain,* 255–56.

18 "The Cosmopolitan," *Cosmopolitan Art Journal* 1, no. 2 (November 1856): 29.

19 Curio [pseud.], "Ceramics: Artistic Decorative Pottery," *Art Amateur* 2, no. 1 (December 1879): 16. See also Pierson, *Collectors,* 66.

20 John H. Martin, "Dorothy Lilian Blair (September 10, 1890 – March 16, 1989)," *Journal of Glass Studies* 31 (1989): 124–25.

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1 The Search for Korean Masterpieces

Introduction

In March 1878, Birch's Art Gallery on Chestnut Street in Philadelphia held a sale of nearly 500 objects. Among the items up for auction, 13 ceramics were considered Korean. Ranging in shape from teapots to trays, bowls, jars, and bottles, the Korean vessels were labelled as either "old" or "ancient," while some were singled out as "rare" and "valuable."[1] The precise origins of the Korean artefacts remain unclear, but many of the sales items were said to have been acquired in China and Japan in the 1870s by the American art dealer James F. Sutton (1843–1915).[2] As none of the objects were illustrated and the descriptions of them are vague, it is challenging to ascertain whether those identified as Korean were indeed produced on the Korean peninsula. However, the auction is significant as it was one of the first public sales of objects assumed to be Korean that took place in America, signalling a growing interest in them among collectors.[3]

The cost of the Korean vessels ranged from $2 to $8.50 and was thus lower than that of cloisonné enamel wares from China and Japan, but similar to that of Chinese export blue-and-white porcelain (referred to as "Nankin porcelain" in the auction catalogue) and Japanese Seto, Arita, and Imari ware. The aesthetic, cultural, and monetary value of the Korean artefacts formed part of the socioeconomic matrix which shaped approaches to what was then known as "Oriental art" in North America and Europe in the late nineteenth century. The sale capitalised on the fascination with East Asia that swept both sides of the Atlantic and led to the formation of private and public collections of ceramics, prints, lacquerwares and other artefacts from the region. It is no coincidence that it was held in Philadelphia as two years earlier the city hosted the Centennial International Exhibition in celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. It was the first World's Fair to be held in America, and nearly 10 million visitors went in search of amusement, excitement, and exotic displays. At a time when only a select few had ventured to East Asia, the displays of objects from China and Japan were considered "curious and novel," and they elicited a huge interest in arts from the region.[4] Temple gateways, pagodas, and banners, alongside a multitude of ceramics and other objects, allowed for an immersive, if highly exoticised, experience of East Asian culture, and whet the appetite of new and established collectors. Six weeks into the Centennial Exhibition, nearly half of the displayed artefacts had been sold, signifying the craving for "Oriental art."[5]

Korea was not included in the exposition as the Chosŏn dynasty was yet to establish diplomatic relations with America and Europe, and its ports were closed to foreign trade. Lack of access to the peninsula constituted a considerable challenge for collectors who

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longed to add Korean artefacts to their collections of Chinese and Japanese objects. Since the Dutchman Hendrick Hamel's (1630–92) unintentional, but lengthy, stay in Korea in the 1600s, no Westerner had set foot on the peninsula. Rather, it was in Japan that Europeans and Americans first encountered Korean people, mostly castaways stranded in Nagasaki.[6] Korea's first official participation in an international exposition was not until 1893 when the Chosŏn government sent items to the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago though some Korean artefacts were displayed at the Foreign Exhibition in Boston in 1883.

Americans and Europeans frequently critiqued Korea's isolationist policy, which they found "peculiar."[7] In contrast, they welcomed China and Japan's participation in international fairs, as they felt it signalled their willingness, and even desire, "to enter into friendly communications with Western powers."[8] In 1873, when the Chinese government first authorised a display at an international exposition and sent objects to the World's Fair in Vienna, China was not unknown to Westerners who for centuries had been enthusiastic consumers of its goods.[9] By then Chinese porcelain had been acquired in large numbers, and major collections of Chinese artefacts had been established in Britain and elsewhere. These collections were matched by in-depth studies of Chinese art, such as that by the British physician and sinologist Stephen Wootton Bushell (1844–1908).[10]

While Europeans, particularly in Britain, took the lead in collecting Chinese art, especially ceramics, the realm of Japanese art was spearheaded by America. This was in part enabled by the US government hoping to revitalise contact between Japan and the West. Motivated by its geographic position and in anticipation of the economic advantages gained from establishing a port on the Pacific for its whaling fleet, America forced Japan to sign the Treaty of Kanagawa in March 1854, marking the end of Japanese isolationism. World's Fairs, such as that held in Philadelphia, promoted international relations by elevating Japan as the "bearer of the new order" in Asia and fuelled the growing desire for Japanese art.[11] One of the earliest large-scale sales of Japanese art held in America was that of 4,000 objects acquired by the British designer Christopher Dresser (1834–1904) in Japan in 1876. When the collection was sold the following year by Tiffany and Co. in New York, the auction was attended by many well-known collectors and dealers, signalling the rising fascination with all things Japanese, from prints to decorative arts.[12]

Collectors' interest in Korean art was born out of this environment. As the popularity of the art and culture of China and Japan grew, so too did that of Korea. Research on Japanese historical writings led by scholars in America and Europe highlighted the longstanding ties between Korea and Japan. As they were unable to access historical records and archaeological material from Korea, scholars' understanding of Korea was almost exclusively drawn from the Japanese sources, leading to a narrow focus on a few key areas of interest. By the 1870s often-repeated "facts" about the peninsula was that Korea transmitted Buddhism to Japan and that it played an instrumental role in initiating the production of ceramics and Buddhist sculpture, among other art forms, on the archipelago.[13] It also became well-known that the peninsula had been frequently overrun by foreign armies. The growing awareness of these points coincided with a rising number of artefacts identified as Korean which were sold on the art market in America and Europe. The objects generated a desire for reliable information on their date and method of manufacture, spurring research into Korean history and culture.

This chapter argues that early scholarly understandings of Korea and its place in East Asia had much impact on the types of Korean objects that collectors sought out. Focusing

on Korean Buddhist sculpture and ceramics, both being artefacts which Korean craftsmen were believed to have transmitted to Japan, the discussion accounts for the differing understandings of these art forms among collectors in America and Europe, as shaped by early interpretations of East Asia. The chapter traces how the formation of knowledge on Korea directed the interest of collectors towards specific types of objects, especially ceramics, and steered them away from others, such as Buddhist artefacts. In outlining the epistemological foundations for early insights into Korea and its art, it illustrates how an uncontested narrative of the Korean peninsula, formed by Japanologists, most of them American, dominated initial understandings and acquisitions of Korean art in the 1870s, and impacted future approaches to Korean cultural heritage.

It is not coincidental that many early scholars of Korean history and culture were Japanologists, as their interest in Korea was aroused by references to the peninsula in Japanese historical material. Among them was the American William Elliot Griffis (1843–1928) whose account of Korea was published in 1882 when the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between Korea and America was agreed.[14] Griffis is widely overlooked in contemporary scholarship, but his work is worthy of attention as not only was it influential in initiating understandings of Korea, the sources he relied on offer insight into how knowledge of Korea and its art was conceptualised at this time. His writings on Korea highlight how he and other scholars examined Korean history and culture in terms of national strengths and weaknesses. They pitted Korea against China and Japan, whose histories and cultural heritage were considerably better known to Americans and Europeans. Their interest in evolution and progress led them to assess the relationship between Korea and Japan, as the former was assumed to initially have been the culturally superior nation, only to be later overtaken by Japan.

Early Scholarship on Korea

The scholarship and collecting activities of Americans and Europeans in Japan in the nineteenth century had considerable impact on how Korea, its history and art, came to be understood. Enabled by their exclusive access to the Japanese archipelago during the Edo period (1603–1868), the Dutch took a leading role in initiating studies on Japan. However, in the decades following the arrival in Japanese waters of the American naval officer Commodore Matthew C. Perry's (1794–1858) "black ships" in 1853–54, the American influence in the region expanded. In 1882, when trade and diplomatic relations were formalised between America and Korea, many Americans had already taken up positions as teachers, technicians, and experts in Japan following education reforms launched by the Meiji government (1867–1912) in the late 1860s.[15] English-language scholarship on Korean art thus came to be led by a small group of Americans, who lived, worked, and travelled in Japan between the 1860s and 1880s. Some later took up positions in Korea in the early to mid-1880s.

As their entry point to East Asia and as their initial point of interest, Japan became the standard against which Korea, its history and culture, was compared.[16] In their writings on Korea, they relied on historical and contemporary Japanese sources, and Japanese aesthetic taste shaped their interests in Korean art. Through the historical writings they uncovered proof of Japan's social, political, and cultural progress and verified this by their own observations in the country. Those who later travelled to Korea noticed a significant difference between Japan's apparent advancement and Korea's perceived stagnation.

Several of the Americans who took up government positions in Korea in the 1880s had lived in Japan for varying lengths of time, among them Percival Lowell (1855–1916) and Pierre Louis Jouy (1856–94). Others, such as the Bostonian naturalist Edward Sylvester Morse (1838–1925), never visited Korea, but his collecting and scholarly activities significantly impacted understandings of Korean culture. He arrived in Japan in 1877, having accepted the role of Chair of Zoology at the newly established Tokyo Imperial University (now the University of Tokyo). A well-known scholar and collector of brachiopods,[17] his teaching focused on Darwinian evolutionary theory, and he applied this methodological framework also to his study of East Asian ceramics. Until his arrival in Japan, Morse had been little interested in the arts, but he soon turned his attention to ceramics, which he systematically began to acquire in large quantities.[18] He formed a collection of more than 5,000 pieces, among them a small number of Korean ceramics. In 1890 Morse lent his collection to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, where he was subsequently appointed Keeper of Pottery, but financial hardship forced him to sell it to the museum two years later.[19] When in Japan, Morse recommended his protégé Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908) for the post of professor of philosophy and political economy at the Tokyo Imperial University. Fenollosa studied philosophy and sociology at Harvard, but upon his arrival in Japan in 1878 turned his attention to art. Like Morse, Fenollosa did not visit Korea, but on his return to America in the 1880s, he considerably influenced understanding of East Asian art through his lectures, writings, and curatorial work at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.[20] Scholarship by Morse and Fenollosa, as well as the relations they forged with influential American collectors, such as the industrialist Charles Lang Freer, played an instrumental role in the formation of the Korean art market.

Like many other Americans, Morse's and Fennollosa's understanding of Korean art were framed by the ideas of Social Darwinism that pervaded many aspects of American society in the late nineteenth century, from business to politics and education. Scholars, driven by models of physical evolution, adopted theories of natural selection and applied them hierarchically to societies beyond America and Europe. This approach involved using non-Western material artefacts to categorise societies globally, emphasising progress and expansion, among other points. In their quest to identify technological advancement and cultural growth, scholars tended to prioritise masterpieces over other artefacts. This trend profoundly impacted early studies on Korean art, as the interest in East Asian collectibles necessitated the recognition of qualities specific to each nation's works of art. The American newspaper editor and art critic James Jackson Jarves (1818–88) summarised this challenge when he claimed,

> The decorative arts of China, Corea, and Japan, are so co-related that it is not easy always to distinguish them. In the outset there existed a certain similarity of conditions and motives tending to similar results. Besides these equalizing agencies, there must have been a regular exchange of products, perhaps of artisans, and many articles undoubtedly were made in all three countries after common models and patterns. But notwithstanding so many causes operating for the fusion of their national styles into one great homogenous one, or to their utter confusion, the latent principles and idiosyncrasies of the Japanese were ever getting uppermost.[21]

Published when Western scholarship of Japanese art was at an early stage, and little was known about Korea, the proclamation that the art of Japan was "better" than that of China and Korea had considerable impact. By promoting the superiority of Japanese art

in comparison to Chinese and Korean art, Jarves anticipated the theories of East Asian artistic standards formulated by Fenollosa in the late nineteenth century. Fenollosa outlined specific aesthetic principles and levels of artistic execution by which to judge East Asian artefacts, and his definitions of "high" and "low" epochs of art became highly influential.[22] For early collectors of Korean art, identification of such flows in art held much significance as it informed their purchasing decisions.

William Elliot Griffis played a significant role in shaping early understanding of Korea. Griffis's interest in East Asia was triggered by his encounter with the first Japanese Embassy to the United States when it visited his hometown of Philadelphia in 1860. On meeting members of the delegation, Griffis noted, "From the first, I took the Japanese seriously. In many respects our equals, in others they seemed to be our superiors."[23] Later, as a student at Rutgers, he befriended and tutored several of the first wave of Japanese students who arrived in the United States. Griffis left for Japan in 1870, and over the following four years he taught natural science, first in Fukui and later in Tokyo.[24] He was a prolific and much-respected writer who authored over 50 books on East Asia, mostly on Japan and Korea. He did not travel to Korea until 1927, but while living in Fukui, he became intrigued by the many local references to Korea, whether it be residents in Echizen who proudly announced their Korean heritage, geographical names that in some way connected with Korea, or other matters.

In 1878, he published one of the first articles on Korea ever written in English. Printed on the opening pages of *Frank Leslie's Sunday Magazine*, an American weekly illustrated literary and news publication, the text presented Griffis's initial insights into the "Hermit Nation," accompanied by illustrations of Korean people and other Korean scenes (Figure 1.1).[25] Four years later Griffis wrote one of the first English-language volumes on Korean history, traditions, and social customs. Titled *Corea: The Hermit Nation*, the book became extremely popular and turned Griffis into a much-lauded authority on Korea. Moreover, as a result of the success of the book, phrases such as "Hermit nation" and "Hermit kingdom" were regularly used to describe the peninsula. Griffis wrote most of the text between 1877 and 1880 after he returned to the United States to realise his goal of becoming a congregational minister.[26] As access to Korea was then impossible for Westerners, Griffis aimed to "open" Chosŏn by authoring a study on the "last of the hermit nations."[27]

To Griffis the significance of Korea lay not in its status as an independent, autonomous nation, but in its connections to China and Japan. He saw Korea as wedged between two great civilisations, likening its role in East Asia to that of Cyprus, positioned between Egypt and Greece. Arguing that "China, Corea, and Japan are as links in the same chain of civilization," he felt that studies of Korea could further understanding of the region, and more specifically its two main powers.[28] This accounts for why several chapters in *The Hermit Nation* focused on migration, invasion and transmission of culture. The first part of the volume included discussion of the north-eastern kingdom of Parhae, including the migration of its people to the Korean peninsula. Additionally, it examined the establishment of the Lelang commandery in the northern part of the peninsula in 108 BCE by the Chinese Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). Griffis also devoted a chapter to the invasions of the northern border by the Manchus in the early 1600s.[29] However, he directed most focus on the Japanese warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉 (1537–98) and in nine chapters detailed his invasions of the Korean peninsula in 1592 and 1597. Griffis noted that several daimyo brought to Japan Korean potters "who afterward brought fame and money to their masters." Among them was the daimyo Nabeshima Naoshige 鍋島直重

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COREA, THE LAST OF THE HERMIT NATIONS.

BY WILLIAM ELLIOT GRIFFIS.

"WHAT is there in Corea? It has no more of association to my mind than a sea-shell," said an intelligent American lady to the writer when the subject was mentioned.

Nor will the name suggest any more to the average reader, even though our country has had direct dealings with Corea. Americans have been often shipwrecked on the coast, kindly treated and safely returned to their Consuls. Shame to say it, American robbers and pirates have made thieving and body-snatching expeditions in steamers to rifle the graves of dead Corean kings, and to dig up their bones to hold as pawn for extortionate ransom. An American schooner named the *General Sherman*, perhaps half-pirate, half-trader, was stranded and burned and her crew killed to a man by the infuriated Coreans in 1866. American vessels have surveyed the coast; finally an expedition of United States men-of-war went to Corea in 1871, bombarded their forts, killed hundreds of the white-coats, and came away without making a treaty, and leaving a wound in the Corean mind hard to be cured. Nor do many Christians, even Roman Catholic Christians, know that in Corea, though shut up from the world like a sleeping tortoise in its shell, there has existed for over thirty years a Church of thousands of believers in Jesus Christ, with its confessors and martyrs. This tortoise-country—so worthy to be called such, both for its slowness, and for its hard-shell and shut-shell character—several nations have tried to open to trade: some with cannon, powder and ball; some by threats and diplomacy. Russia, France and the United States failed; Japan, however, so tickled the back of the tortoise in 1876, that at last it is slowly putting out its head and tail, and is actually beginning to move. Better than all, Japan won a "brain victory" over Corea, as Perry did over Japan, and secured a treaty without a drop of blood spilled. The illustration No. 7 shows the arrival of the Corean ambassador in Yokohama, Japan, to ratify the treaty made February 27th, 1876.

NO. 1. COREAN OFFICIAL AND SERVANT.

Corea is just about the size of Minnesota, that is, say 90,000 square miles in area. It is about the shape of Florida. It hangs down between the Sunrise Empire of the Mikado and the Middle Kingdom of China, in latitude between

Figure 1.1 Front page of *Corea, the Last of the Hermit Nations*, by William Elliot Griffis. Frank Leslie's Publishing House, New York.

Source: Collection of the Fenimore Art Museum Library, Cooperstown, New York.

Figure 1.2 Stoneware dish with Tokugawa crest design in overglaze gold enamel. Edo period, early eighteenth century. Length 17.78 cm. The British Museum (acc. no. Franks.1380).

Source: © The Trustees of the British Museum.

(1538–1618), who settled the captured potters in Satsuma where they, in Griffis's words, began production of "that delight of the aesthetic world, 'old Satsuma faience.' "[30] Griffis was referring to the colourful Satsuma *nishikide* 錦手 overglaze enamel stonewares, which were much coveted in Europe and America (Figure 1.2).[31]

Griffis's keenness to produce a scholarly text is reflected in his inclusion of a seven-page bibliography that listed close to 100 books, journal articles, newspaper columns, consular reports, and other writings on Korea. Among them were ancient Japanese historical texts, such as the *Kojiki* 古事記 (An Account of Ancient Matters) and *Nihon shoki* 日本書紀 (The Chronicles of Japan), which were compiled around the eighth century. Also included were European translations of important Japanese historical sources, such as the *Sangoku tsūran zusetsu* 三國通覧図説 (Illustrated Account of Three Countries), authored by Hayashi Shihei 林子平 (1738–93), that described the kingdoms of Chosŏn and Ryūkyū 琉球 (1429–1879), as well as Ezo 蝦夷 (present-day Hokkaidō) and the Ogasawara Islands 小笠原嶋 [*sic*] (also known as the Bonin Islands). The volume was published in Japan around 1786 and translated into French in 1832 by the German scholar Julius Klaproth (1783–1835).[32] In addition, Griffis consulted a wide range of American and European sources, from travelogues to scholarly studies, among them Hendrik Hamel's account of the 13 years he spent in Korea, having been shipwrecked on Cheju Island in 1653, as well as the British diplomat William George Aston's (1841–1911) study of Hideyoshi's invasions of Korea.[33]

Like many of his contemporaries, from scholars to collectors, Griffis also made extensive use of scholarship carried out by the German physician and scholar Philipp Franz von Siebold (1796–1866). Published between 1832 and 1852, Siebold's *Nippon: Archiv zur Beschreibung von Japan und dessen Neben- und Schutzländern: Jezo mit den südlichen Kurilen, Krafto, Koorai und den Liukiu-Inseln* (Nippon: Archive for the description of Japan and its neighbouring and protectorate countries, Jezo with the southern Kuriles, Krafto [Sakhalin], Koorai [Korea] and the Liukiu [Ryukyu] Islands; hereafter *Nippon*) was the first systematic description of Japan, its people, and its neighbouring regions undertaken by a non-Japanese scholar.[34] This monumental undertaking was published first in German in 1832, followed by editions in Dutch, Russian, and French, eventually turning into a five-volume work.[35] Siebold compiled the work, having lived for seven years in Dejima, the Dutch trading post in Nagasaki, in the position of resident physician, before settling in Leiden. His knowledge of Japan and neighbouring regions was based on his own observations, studies of Japanese documents and maps, and information provided by his Japanese students.[36] In Leiden, Siebold was assisted by Johann Joseph Hoffman (1805–78). Having met him by chance in 1830, Siebold appointed Hoffman to translate the Japanese documents referenced in *Nippon*. A German of birth, Hoffman had read classics in Würzburg before taking up a career as an opera singer. However, he turned out to be a skilled linguist whose scholarship was quoted as often as that by Siebold. In Leiden he was taught Japanese by Siebold, and Chinese by Siebold's assistant from China, and was later appointed professor of Japanese language at Leiden University.[37]

In *Nippon* Siebold and Hoffmann devoted 162 pages to Korea. The text was supplemented by a map of the Korean peninsula, a diagram of *han'gŭl* script and several drawings of Korean castaways whom Siebold met in Nagasaki (Figure 1.3). Siebold's insights into contemporary Korean life and customs were also informed by Japanese who had been in contact with Koreans on Tsushima Island and in Pusan, where Japan had a trading post. The only Korean historical text that Siebold used was the fifteenth-century Korean chronicle *Tongguk t'onggam* 東國通鑑 (Comprehensive Mirror of the Eastern Country). He was unable to consult it directly but found it quoted in the Japanese sources.[38]

Nippon included much mention of the transfer of culture from Korea to Japan, from the transmission of Chinese script to the arrival of Korean seamstresses and potters on the Japanese archipelago, with dates of when these events took place. In the chapter on religion, Siebold detailed the many Buddhist artefacts gifted by Korean kings to Japanese rulers, starting with a statue of Shakyamuni Buddha said to have been presented by King Sŏng 聖王 (r. 523–54) of the Paekche kingdom to Emperor Kinmei 欽明天皇 (r. 539–71) in 552 and enshrined in Zenkōji temple in Nagano.[39] He also discussed Hideyoshi's war campaigns in Korea as well as the supposed conquest of the peninsula by Empress Jingū of Yamato 神功皇后 (trad. 169–269 CE, r. 200–269).[40] According to the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, she invaded the Korean kingdom of Silla (trad. 57 BCE–668) in 200 CE with the divine support of multiple Shinto gods. Following the king's immediate surrender, she conquered the other kingdoms on the peninsula before returning to Japan. In the following decades, the Korean kings were said to have demonstrated their subordination to the empress by regularly sending tribute to Japan.[41]

As the first systematic description of Japan, its people, and its neighbouring regions published outside East Asia, *Nippon* became a much-quoted source that significantly shaped early understanding of the region.[42] *Nippon* remained largely unchallenged until the 1880s when scholars developed a more comprehensive understanding of East Asian history and adopted a more critical stance to the historical sources. Even Siebold himself seemed aware of the limitations of the Japanese texts but was unable to verify their accuracy.[43] In particular, the narrative of Jingū was questioned by Japanologists, though in

Figure 1.3 "A Korean merchant." From Siebold, *Nippon*, 2: 323.
Source: Courtesy of Wellcome Collection, London.

Japan her supposed conquest of Korea was deemed to be historically accurate. In 1881, she became the first woman to be featured on the one-yen Japanese banknote.[44] Griffis seemed to query only the date of her invasion of the peninsula, but others doubted her very existence. Among them were British Japanologists such as Basil Hall Chamberlain (1850–1935), who arrived in Japan in 1873 and stayed for the following 40 years, mostly in the position of professor of Japanese at the Tokyo Imperial University, and William Anderson (1842–1900), an influential collector of Japanese art, who taught anatomy and surgery in Tokyo during the 1870s. Anderson commented in *The Pictorial Arts of Japan*:

> The conquest of Korea by the Empress Jingō [*sic*], in the third century, which is almost universally accepted in good faith as a part of Japanese history, is now disputed by Mr. Chamberlain in his introduction to the translation of the *Kojiki*. He has pointed out that neither Chinese nor Korean history, so far as it is known to us, refers to any invasion of the kind, successful or unsuccessful; and setting aside the minor absurdities with which the supposed event is loaded.[45]

Nevertheless, Jingū's supposed rulership of the south-eastern part of the peninsula, whether truthful or not, furthered the belief that the Koreans were too weak to withstand foreign attacks, leading to the Korean peninsula being repeatedly overrun and conquered by foreign armies. Even when no mention was made of Jingū, the frequent references to

Hideyoshi's war campaigns and their destructive impact on the peninsula by Western writers framed the Koreans as weak and powerless. Siebold played a key role in initiating this narrative. In a volume on Japanese manners and customs, he claimed that "[Hideyoshi] subdued Corea, which had emancipated itself since its conquest by the Empress Sin-gou-kwo-gou [Jingū]."[46]

Western scholars were drawn to Hideyoshi due to his considerable impact on the political and cultural environment of premodern East Asia. The general fascination with Hideyoshi among scholars and the public in America and Europe may also be attributed to his military campaigns aimed at Chosŏn and Ming China (1368–1644) as they had parallels with territorial expansionist movements led by America and European nations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Griffis pronounced him a hero and credited him for being the only Japanese "captain" brave enough "to conquer or humble their mighty neighbor, to cross their slender swords of divine temper with the clumsy blades of the continental braves."[47] Hideyoshi was also of interest to collectors of Japanese ceramics, due to his practice of the tea ceremony and his interest in tea bowls.

In Europe and America, popular public perceptions of other nations were shaped by colonial fairs, Social Darwinism, and conquests of other nations, and thus focused on evolution and progress. Therefore, the association of Korea with weakness, powerlessness, and perhaps worst of all, stagnation, confirmed to many that the peninsula was nothing but an auxiliary to China and Japan. As Westerners equalled imperial expansion with political influence and economic growth, many blamed the isolationist policy pursued by the rulers of Chosŏn for the allegedly poor state of the country and its underdeveloped industry, among other problems.[48]

The initial refusal of the Chosŏn kingdom to engage in international politics and open its ports to foreign nations was believed to also have negatively impacted the arts. As Griffis noted, "Art in Corea to-day is indeed at a low ebb. By shutting out all of the world, the hermit nation has lost its cunning."[49] He reached this conclusion without having set foot in Korea, but as travel to Korea became possible, Griffis's views were confirmed by those who went there. In the words of William Anderson:

> The recent experience of those Japanese who have effected an entrance into the kingdom, points to a condition of poverty and ignorance that must form a painful contrast with the state of culture that existed in the days when Korea was the teacher and Japan the pupil.[50]

Whereas Griffis and Anderson relied on Japanese first hand reports on Korea, *Life in Corea* by William R. Carles (1848–1929) was widely commended as an authoritative account of the peninsula, mainly because he spent 18 months in Korea.[51] His first trip was in November 1882, followed by a lengthier stay between 1884 and 1885, when he served as the British Acting Vice-Consul in Seoul. Carles's account of his experiences in Korea confirmed Japanese views on the country. Having journeyed across the peninsula, he agreed that Chosŏn fell into ruin following Hideyoshi's invasions, resulting in a poor and backward nation:

> From time to time her land had been overrun by armies of invasion from China and Japan. . . . Of the utter wreck and ruin which resulted from these wars, the traces are strikingly evident at this day in the paucity of buildings, pictures, books, and porcelain, of an earlier date than even the last Japanese invasion, which took place at the end of the sixteenth century. . . . The completeness of the destruction which took place during that war is fully realised by any one travelling in the country.[52]

The ruin of Korea was felt even more acutely when pitted against the achievements of Japan. Thus, whereas Chosŏn kings were blamed for their inability to prevent the downfall of Korea, the Meiji ruler was credited with bringing progress to the archipelago. In the words of John Armor Bingham (1815–1900), who served as the United States Ambassador to Japan from 1873 to 1885:

> Japan's progress has been simply marvellous. When the present Emperor came to the throne . . . the country was governed and ground down by the Daimios [*sic*] . . . At one blow the Emperor swept away this Oriental counterpart of European mediævalism, and Japan leaped at a bound from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century.[53]

Collecting of Korean Buddhist Sculpture

Writings about East Asia published in America and Europe in the 1870s and 1880s suggest that there was considerable interest in Korea among collectors, scholars, and the general public. In their eagerness to learn more, scholars turned to the Japanese historical texts and found Korea described as the transmitter of Buddhism to Japan and the initiator of Buddhist sculpture, Satsuma ceramics, and other art forms. Yet Korea was also portrayed as a nation that was invaded repeatedly by foreign powers, including Japan. For Social Darwinists preoccupied by evolution and national superiority of one people over another, the past strengths of Korea were overshadowed, in this narrative, by its later ruin, caused by Hideyoshi's war campaigns.

This understanding shaped acquisitions of Korean artefacts as collectors sought to identify Korean cultural strengths and artistic developments. When determining the collectible value of the objects, they utilised a limited set of criteria based on the visual qualities and cultural significance of the items and compared them to Chinese and Japanese objects. In the 1870s and 1880s, publications of East Asian art sales frequently mentioned Korea, and they were instrumental in developing insights into Korean art. One of the earliest examples of this is a catalogue published by the auctioneer Field, Morris, Fenner & Co. in New York in June 1876 to coincide with a sale of "Japanese Art Treasures." Numbering close to 700 objects, spanning bronzes, ceramics, and cloisonné, some were intended for the Centennial International Exhibition in Philadelphia, while others belonged to the private collection of C. J. W. Pfoundes (1840–1907), a British sea captain, who acquired them in Japan in the 1860s and 1870s.[54] Due to Pfoundes's interest in Buddhism, the sale featured a variety of Buddhist works of art, including sculptures, shrines, and relics, and thus an explanation of Buddhism in Japan was included in the catalogue.

> The native accounts, ordinarily received as correct, relate that Buddhist doctrines, together with appertaining idols, descriptive books, etc., were introduced from Hakusai (Corea) [Paekche Kingdom] in the Winter of the year A.D. 552, being the thirteenth year of the reign of *Kin mei Tenno* [Kinmei], thirtieth of his line since the reign of *Jimmu* [legendary emperor of Japan].[55]

By the 1880s it was widely believed that in Japan the production of Buddhist sculpture and ceramics began with the immigration of Korean craftsmen. *Nippon* and other early writings on Japan played a significant role in this as scholars portrayed Korea as the initiator of Japanese art and credited Korean craftspeople for establishing the production of outstanding artefacts on the Japanese archipelago. Their portrayal of Korea indicated

Figure 1.4 Statue of Buddha presented by King Sŏng of the Paekche kingdom to Emperor Kinmei in AD 552. From Griffis, "Corean Origin," 227.

Source: © The British Library Board.

that superb artefacts of different materials could be found on the peninsula, and yet few collectors sought them out, preferring instead to focus only on ceramics.

Griffis was instrumental in shaping early understandings of Korean art. In an article titled "The Corean Origin of Japanese Art," he presented one of the first discussions of Korean art in English, accompanied by illustrations of significant historical events (Figure 1.4). He emphasised that "Japanese art is not original" and stressed that "at the outset, the [Korean] peninsula was the teacher, and the [Japanese] islands the pupil. . . . If China is the Egypt, and Japan the Greece of Eastern Asia, then Corea is the Cyprus, supplying the middle term of development between the two phases of art." He continued:

> Not until the ninth century was there any native art in Japan; it was all Corean or Chinese. There was an Imperial School of Painting (*We-dokoro*) having four chief painters and sixty sketchers or draughtsmen, whose main business it was to decorate the palace and public buildings; but these were all Coreans.[56]

Writings centred on Japanese art similarly emphasised the transmission of art from Korea to Japan, as suggested in Anderson's influential *The Pictorial Arts of Japan*. He claimed that

> the casting of some of the greatest Buddhist bronzes was effected under the superintendence of Korean workmen; brocade weaving was learned in the fifth century from a native of Korea; while in keramics, the well-known grey and white ware of the old Satsuma and Yatsushiro potters was made after the Korean fashion.[57]

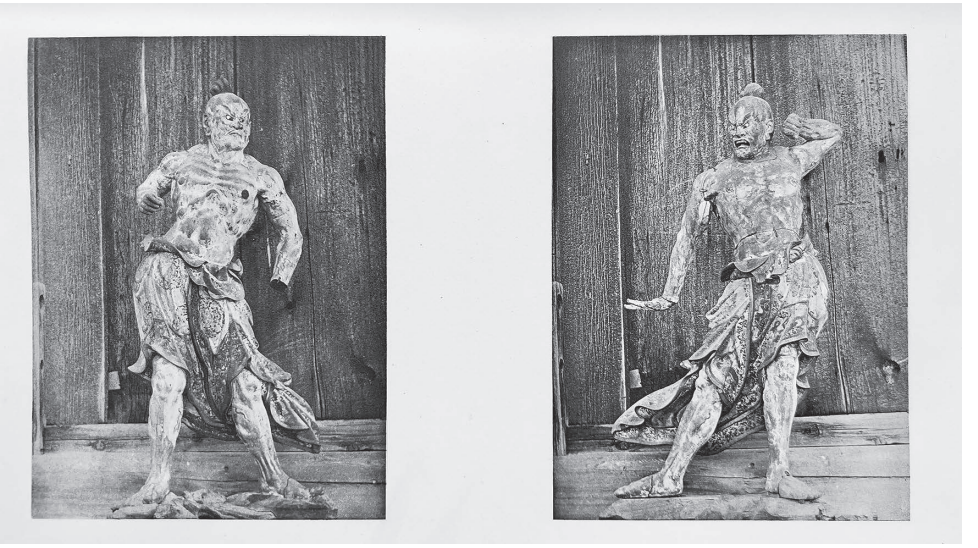

Figure 1.5 Vajrapāṇi. Early Kamakura period (1185–1333). Dry-lacquer on wood. Kōfukuji temple, Nara, Japan. From Anderson, *Pictorial Arts of Japan*, Plate 1.

Source: Courtesy of Special Collections, SOAS Library, University of London.

However, it was in the field of Buddhist art that Anderson reserved his highest praise. He credited Korean immigrant artists for the murals in the Kondō of Hōryūji temple as well as for two large standing figures of wood at Kōfukuji temple, claiming that the latter were "worthy of a sculptor of ancient Greece" (Figure 1.5).[58]

Anderson's statements highlight how pervasive the belief was in the transmission of art from Korea to Japan. Thus, at a time when little was known about Korea and Chosŏn was yet to open its ports, *Nippon* and other early scholarship on Japan and Korea portrayed the peninsula as having been once steeped in Buddhist tradition and rich in Buddhist art. However, in contrast to Korean ceramics, which were collected in increasing numbers in America and Europe, Buddhist artefacts from Korea were largely disregarded by collectors who instead focused on those from China and Japan.

Many early collectors of Chinese and Japanese Buddhist art were European, among them the Italian-born economist Henri (Enrico) Cernuschi (1821–96) and the French industrialist Émile Guimet (1836–1918). Travelling in China and Japan in the 1870s, when financial difficulties forced many Buddhist temples to sell their assets, Cernushi and Guimet were able to build extensive collections of Buddhist artefacts for relatively small sums.[59] The French art critic and collector Théodore Duret (1838–1927), who accompanied Cernushi to Japan in 1871, described how their trip presented an opportune moment for acquiring unique Buddhist works of art.

> We arrived at just the right moment for an unparalleled harvest. The political revolution led the daimios to get rid of their art objects, and the fall of the taicouns, who had been the most fervent supporters of Buddhism, brought the dispersion of a great number of objects once piously sequestered in the temples.[60]

It was on this trip that Cernuschi found the centrepiece of his collection: a seated bronze statue of Amitabha Buddha, dating to the 1700s. Located in the courtyard of the then derelict Banryūji temple, at the outskirts of Tokyo, it suited Cernuschi's preference for solid material and monumental dimensions, and a deal was quickly secured with the owner of the site. Duret described the transaction in his travelogue *Voyage en Asie*:

> We go in search of the owner of the site; he agrees to sell the Buddha, the deal is made; a hammer and wrenches are brought immediately, and the emphatically extended right hand of the Buddha is cut from the arm and given to us to carry away. It is already something to have the hand. It is late and we return to Tokyo.[61]

The absence of similar narratives from Korea is striking, especially when considering that in this country too temples were poor but similarly in possession of artworks that could be sold commercially. Yet there are no known accounts of Westerners travelling through the peninsula in search of Buddhist treasures. Rather, even though Korea was portrayed as the originator of Buddhism in Japan and its craftsmen were thought to have produced exemplary works of art for Japanese temples, Buddhist artefacts from Korea never became collectibles on par with those from China and Japan.

In the late nineteenth century, only a few Korean Buddhist artefacts were offered on the art market in America and Europe. The earliest sale of such objects was probably that curated by Edward Greey (1835–88) in New York in 1888, featuring objects acquired in Korea by Pierre Louis Jouy. Numbering 86 artefacts, they ranged from Buddhist bronze sculptures to inlaid iron work, paintings, and ceramics. Of British origin, Greey's first encounter with East Asia was during the second Opium War (1856–60) when he was stationed in China as a captain in the British Army.[62] In the 1860s, he worked at the British legation in Tokyo. Later he settled in New York where he opened an antique shop on 20 East 17th Street and established himself as a specialist of Japanese art and literature.[63] Greey met Jouy in 1881 on board the *City of Peking* on route from San Francisco to Yokohama and urged him to "secure specimens of ancient Korean bronze, pottery and porcelain; knowing that such objects would soon become exceedingly rare."[64] Greey was convinced that once access to the peninsula was made possible, the opportunity to acquire objects on the peninsula would heighten the desire for Korean artefacts. He expected strong competition for them, arguing that before too long "the Japanese curioman and the foreign collector, after draining the country of its treasures, would have their demands supplied by forgeries or unauthenticated examples."[65] Greey's foreboding came true, though only in the field of ceramics, and it was not until the 1930s that fakes constituted a considerable challenge to collectors.

Jouy was a long-time employee of the US National Museum in Washington, DC, with expertise in ornithology.[66] In 1881 he was selected to train American naval officers in scientific methods of collecting and gathering information for the museum. For this reason, he travelled to Japan but left the program early after five months.[67]

Jouy stayed in Japan to continue his ornithological collecting, but unexpected events later brought him to Korea. In spring 1883 he met Lucius H. Foote (1826–1913), who was en route to Korea to take up the position of the first US Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Korea.[68] As Foote's staff was small, Jouy was appointed Special Attaché and travelled with Foote to Seoul in May of that year.[69] Over the following two and a half years, Jouy built collections of fishes, birds, and photographs, which he donated to the US National Museum in the late 1880s. He also acquired a range of art objects, some of which entered the museum, while others were sold by Greey.[70]

Jouy acquired only a few Buddhist artefacts. Most of the ten Buddhist objects included in Greey's sale were in the form of small standing or seated Buddhist figures of bronze, that were estimated to be from the Three Kingdoms period (trad. 57 BCE– 668) and Koryŏ dynasty. Apart from a set of prayer beads and a wooden bell, all the items were said to have come from a monastery in the vicinity of Pusan on the south-eastern coast of the peninsula. It is likely that Jouy acquired them while living in the area. In the sales catalogue Greey offered one of the earliest English-language discussions of Korean Buddhist sculpture:

> [The Korean objects] show that many of the so-called Indian figures, treasured in Japanese temples, were probably made in Korea, for without doubt, as far back as the beginning of the Christian era, the Koreans were masters of the art of bronze casting, and during the eighth century, their priests introduced Buddhism and improved methods of working metals, etc., into Japan.[71]

Greey dated the ancient sculptures based on information obtained by Jouy in Korea and by comparing them stylistically with similar artefacts from India and Korea which he had seen in Japan. Greey found them exquisite and beautiful, with "admirably treated" details that in his view was comparable to Etruscan work. In contrast he discounted Buddhist metalwares of contemporary make as being of little merit. Greey compared the small size of the ancient sculptures with the large-scale Buddhist figures in Japan that were thought to have been produced by craftsmen of Korean descent, such as the well-known bronze sculptures of Bhaisajyaguru Buddha and Daibutsu (Great Buddha), both in Tōdaiji temple in Nara, and concluded that early Korean craftsmen seemed not to have cast "gigantic images" in their homeland.[72]

Greey's analysis of the manufacture of Buddhist sculptures in Korea exemplifies the great value dealers and collectors placed on progress, even in the realm of the arts. Like many others, Greey examined East Asian art objects in terms of their place on an evolutionary scale of art, taking into account factors such as advancement in manufacturing techniques, enhancement of aesthetic features, and improvement in artistic techniques. He saw little value in Chosŏn art, arguing that Hideyoshi's invasions led to a "degeneration of all forms of art."[73] In places he credited Korean craftsmen for having transmitted their knowledge to Japan, particularly in the case of lacquer and ceramic manufacture, but concluded that in Korea the making of Buddhist art had been left to decay, and bar a few exceptions "nothing is produced [today] in metal that we can term artistic."[74] Greey's assessment of Korean art is indicative of how artefacts on the lower ranks of the scale were of lesser relevance to collectors. For nineteenth-century collectors and scholars, China signified "the pure fountainhead of Asiatic culture," as argued by Fenollosa,[75] while Japan was associated with the development and maturation of art. In the words of Griffis, the genius of the Japanese was "not in invention, but in improvement, learned from their peninsular neighbors, the Coreans."[76]

This interpretative framework strongly impacted early approaches to Buddhist art. China was understood as the origins of Buddhist culture, and for this reason its Buddhist heritage held much significance. Korea, on the other hand, was neither regarded as the origins of Buddhist art, nor were Korean craftsmen believed to have produced masterpieces on the peninsula. In the words of Fenollosa, the "supremacy of Corean Art" was but a "temporary" phenomenon at the end of the sixth century.[77] The cultural significance of Korea lay not in its local production of Buddhist art but in its transmission of Buddhism and associated artefacts to Japan, where the art form supposedly evolved

and reached its highest level of maturity. Griffis accounted for this evolutionary process in analogical terms, stating that "the full sunrise and mid-day of oriental art belongs, indeed, to the islands, but the fountains of its first light lay in the near peninsula."[78]

The lack of interest in Korean Buddhist artefacts could also have been caused by Korea not being associated with religious spirituality, as opposed to Japan. Americans and Europeans who lived and travelled to Korea in the 1880s and 1890s found little evidence of Buddhist practice, affirming what Griffis described as the Korean "apathy towards Buddhism – or any other faith."[79] Many held the belief that Buddhism in Korea was corrupt, and they did not perceive the Koreans' adherence to Confucian teachings and their participation in Confucian ancestral rites as constituting organised religion.[80] Similarly, the Koreans' practice of shamanism was disregarded as superstition and a reflection of their childish imagination.[81]

In 1895, *The Cincinnati Enquirer* in Ohio published a lengthy article authored by the journalist and travel writer Frank Carpenter (1855–1924), detailing a recent trip to Korea. Echoing earlier scholarship on Buddhism in East Asia, Carpenter explained to readers that Korea introduced Buddhism to Japan when "a golden Buddha" was presented to the emperor. At a time when organised religion was an accelerating force connected to all aspects of private and public spheres in America, the seeming absence of religion in Korea was troubling to many, including Carpenter. He described Japan as "one of the greatest Buddhist countries of the world," contrasting it with Korea, which he argued had "sunk into barbarism. It is the land of infidels and superstitions. The Buddhist religion, which was so strong in the past, has fallen into disgrace."[82]

Whereas Korea offered little in terms of spiritual enlightenment for nineteenth-century travellers, Japan held much attraction as the mythical and spiritual Orient that many were looking for, with some, such as Fenollosa, even converting to Buddhism.[83] Those who visited Japan wrote in awe of the "the gate of the East, a land, as we discovered, stranger and more wonderful even than we had dreamed," as described in an article published in 1890 by *The Decorator and Furnisher*, an American magazine of interior decoration.[84] In Tokyo, Nara, and other regions of Japan, Westerners saw large temples with rich holdings of art that could be purchased relatively inexpensively, thus furthering their interest in Japanese Buddhist art.[85]

Interest in Korean Ceramics

Since Americans and Europeans found neither Buddhist awakening, nor masterpieces of Buddhist art in Korea, Korean Buddhist artefacts never carried the allure of their Japanese and Chinese counterparts. As a result, collectors did not seek them out, preferring instead other types of objects, typically ceramics.

The interest in Korean ceramics among collectors in America and Europe may in large part be attributed to their ongoing fascination with Japan. To further their knowledge of the region, they avidly studied the Japanese historical sources where they encountered numerous references to Korean artistic traditions. This included the seminal role Korean potters played in the establishment of ceramic manufacture in Japan.[86] Writings by Siebold's colleague Hoffmann were particularly instrumental to furthering understandings of the impact of Korean potters in Japan. In 1856 Hoffman translated into French a chapter on Japanese ceramics included in the *Nihon sankai meisan zue* 日本山海名産圖會 (Illustrations of noted products of the mountains and the sea of Japan). This popular

volume was first printed in Osaka in 1799 by Kimura Kōkyō 木村孔恭 (also known as Kimura Kenkadō 木村蒹葭堂; 1736–1802) and illustrated by Shitomi Kangetsu 蒔関月 (1747–97).[87] It covered the technology and industry of various local Japanese products, from beekeeping to textile manufacture. Hoffman translated the chapter titled "Hizen Imari yakimono" 肥前伊萬利陶器 [*sic*] (Imari porcelain from Hizen), which described ceramic production in Arita on the island of Kyūshū. It also stated that in 27 BCE a prince from the Silla kingdom migrated to Japan where he initiated the beginnings of Japanese ceramic production.

In their keenness to understand the development of Japanese ceramic manufacture, this information held much interest to Western collectors.[88] Hoffman's translation of the *Nihon sankai meisan zue* was included as an addendum to *Histoire et Fabrication de la Porcelaine Chinoise* by the French sinologist Stanislas Julien (1797–1873) published in 1856.[89] The volume was a translation into French of the *Jingdezhen taolu* 景德鎮陶錄 (Records of Jingdezhen ceramics), which was first printed in 1815 in Jiangxi Province, China. As the first-ever scholarly study on porcelain manufactured by the Chinese imperial kilns at Jingdezhen, the *Jingdezhen taolu* became an important reference work for scholars and collectors in East Asia, America, and Europe, and it was translated from Chinese into several languages.[90]

The *Jingdezhen taolu* had much impact on understandings of Korean ceramics as it also included mention of the *Xuanhe fengshi Gaoli tujing* 宣和奉使高麗圖經 (Illustrated Account of the Embassy to Koryŏ in the Xuanhe Era; hereafter *Gaoli tujing*) written by the Song Chinese envoy Xu Jing 徐兢 (1091–1153).[91] Having visited the Koryŏ capital of Kaesŏng in 1123 as a member of an official mission sent by the Song court, Xu Jing compiled a report of his stay in which he described in detail ceramics and other objects he saw in Korea. In Korea, Chosŏn scholars had studied the text from the late 1700s, but until the publishing of Julien's volume, it was little known outside East Asia.[92] Still, few collectors and scholars in America and Europe took serious notice of it since the ceramics sold as Korean on the art market in America and Europe did not resemble the vessels mentioned by Xu Jing, who wrote as follows:

> There is a ceramic ware made in Korea of green color, which is called by the natives of the country "kingfisher green." In these latter years the pieces have been more skillfully fashioned, and the color of the glaze has also been much improved. There are wine-pots moulded in the shape of melons, with small lids at the top surmounted by ducks squatting in the midst of lotus-flowers. The Koreans are clever also in the making of bowls and dishes, wine-cups and teacups, flowervases, and hot-water vessels for tea-drinkers, which are all, generally speaking, copied from the forms of the Ting-chou [Ding] wares (of China), so that I need only allude to them and not illustrate them by figures, only giving the wine-pots, as being of novel and original design.
>
> In Korea the table vessels used at entertainments for eating and drinking are usually made of gilded metal or of silver, although they esteem green porcelain ware more highly than either of these two materials. They have incense-burners shaped like lions, which are also of "kingfisher-green" color, the four-footed monster being represented seated upon a lotus-leaf with tilted margin, which forms the stand of the urn. This is one of the most ingenious and striking of their ceramic designs; the other forms are for the most part modeled after the shapes of the ancient imperial porcelain of Yueh-chou [Yue ware], or from the modern productions of the kilns of Ju-chou [Ru ware].[93]

Figure 1.6 "Corean Teapot Decorated with the Japanese Kiri-mon." From Jacquemart, *History of the Ceramic Art*, 107.

Source: Courtesy of Special Collections, SOAS Library, University of London.

The French art historian Albert Jacquemart (1808–75) was among first scholars outside East Asia to discuss Korean ceramics.[94] In the early 1860s he published in French, followed by an English-language edition in 1873, one of the earliest and most well-known studies on ceramics.[95] The lengthy tome of nearly 700 pages covered the histories of ceramic production from Europe, Egypt, the Near and Middle East, India, and East Asia and was generously illustrated with line drawings produced by Jacquemart's son Jules. Whereas the French edition made no mention of Korea, the English-language volume included a chapter on Korean ceramics, reflecting the rising interest in Korea's contribution to East Asian ceramic history. In contrast to the lengthy discussions on Chinese and Japanese ceramics, the chapter spanned only five pages. The text featured images of Korean "porcelains" from the author's collection, highlighting their availability on the European market at that time and reflecting Jacquemart's personal interest in them (Figure 1.6). Perhaps Jacquemart drew on his own experiences in acquiring Korean ceramics, when posing the question of how to define and distinguish them from imitations.[96] To him, "incontestable Corean" characteristics in ceramics were

> a paste particularly white, without gloss, and with glaze less vitreous than used in China and Japan; enamelled decoration in soft and few colours, with mixed subjects,

> sometimes Japanese sometimes Chinese and sometimes uniting emblems borrowed from both nationalities, forming an aspect so peculiar that the eye cannot be deceived between the original and the copy, when fully penetrated with its true archaic character.[97]

Although the accuracy of Jacquemart's scholarship on East Asian ceramics was questioned already at the time of publication, in the 1860s and early 1870s he was widely regarded as a "learned writer . . . and a collector of taste and discrimination."[98] His writings spurred the growing fascination with ceramics as an independent art form, and collectors, such as Freer, included his volumes in their personal libraries.[99] Jacquemart also influenced later ceramic scholars, such as the American Jennie J. Young.[100]

In *The Ceramic Art: A Compendium of the History and Manufacture of Pottery and Porcelain*, Young included a chapter on Korean ceramics supplemented by illustrations of Korean wares in American collections. Among them was a vase previously owned by Jacquemart and originally illustrated in his volume (Figure 1.7).[101] It now belonged to William Loring Andrews (1837–1920), an influential American collector of book manuscripts

Figure 1.7 "Corean Porcelain; Persian Decoration." From Young, *Ceramic Art*, 155.
Source: Courtesy of Special Collections, SOAS Library, University of London.

and Chinese porcelains, who served as a trustee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The change in ownership of the vase signals the growing interest in Korean ceramics among American collectors. Yet the shape and decoration of the vase bear no resemblance to Korean ceramics as they are understood today, suggesting the continuous challenges collectors faced when it came to identification of Korean artefacts. Indeed, in 1917, Bernard Rackham (1876–1964), Keeper of Ceramics in the Victoria and Albert Museum (hereafter V&A), heavily criticised Jacquemart's scholarship arguing that it "retarded almost as much as it advanced the progress of the study by its confusion of Chinese and Japanese porcelains, and its fantastic attribution of certain types to Persia, India and Corea."[102]

The impact of early Japanese writings on Western collectors' understanding on Japanese and Korean ceramic manufacture is further reflected in Jacquemart's reliance on Hoffman's work in his discussion on early Japanese pottery:

> Thanks to the laborious researches of Orientalists, and particularly of Dr. Hoffman, of Leyden, we know this: In the spring of the year B.C. 27 a Corean vessel landed in the province of Halima. The chief of the expedition, pretending he was the son of the king of Sin-ra [Silla], settled in the province of Omi, upon the great island of Nippon, where the men of his suite established a corporation of porcelain potters.[103]

In contrast, Jacquemart placed little trust in the *Jingdezhen taolu* and Julien's translation of it, describing it as a "curious" book that did not "inspire confidence."[104]

In a catalogue that accompanied an exhibition of his extensive collection of East Asian ceramics which opened at the Bethnal Green Museum in London in 1876, the British curator Augustus Wollaston Franks (1826–97), too, relied on Siebold's *Nippon* as well as Hoffman's translation of the *Nihon sankai meisan zue*. Franks held the post of Keeper of Antiquities at the British Museum and was a respected authority on East Asian ceramics, which he acquired in large numbers, alongside other artefacts. He thought that six of the 1,500 ceramics in his collection were Korean. The challenge associated with the correct identification of them is reflected in Franks emphasising that one of the pieces, was "sent from Pekin as an undoubted specimen of Corean fabric."[105] Two other wares were listed as having been sent from Japan as Korean, while one was "sent from Japan as made in Corea by the Japanese, but it is not probable that the Japanese founded any potteries in that country." Among the six "Korean" ceramics, only the vessel from Beijing is currently believed to be of Korean manufacture. Described by Franks as a coarse stoneware in the shape of a globular pot, it entered the collection of the British Museum in 1889 (Figure 1.8).[106] The remaining Korean vessels were later reattributed as either Chinese or Japanese.[107]

Franks's catalogue is significant for its attempt to categorise East Asian ceramics according to type and region.[108] Moreover, his discussion of Korean ceramic manufacture is pioneering in its candid assessment of earlier scholarship on the topic and its effort at linking information from historical writings with surviving ceramics. In particular, he dismissed "as idle tales all that M. Jacquemart has written about Corean porcelain."[109] Franks did not question the accuracy of the historical Japanese texts referenced by Siebold and Hoffman, but in contrast to other scholars, he also paid attention to Chinese historical sources, notably the *Jingdezhen taolu* and its mention of the *Gaoli tujing*.[110] Quoting the latter, Franks explained that Korean pottery

> is extremely thin and has a glaze like that of King-te-chen [Jingdezhen]; some are of a pale blue, like those of Long-tsuen [Longquan], and others with little flowers. The author [Xu Jing] praises the guard-shaped vases, and those in the form of lions.[111]

Figure 1.8 Stoneware bowl. Chosŏn period, nineteenth century. Height 7.6 cm. The British Museum (acc. no. Franks.938).

Source: © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Yet as Franks had seen no ceramics that matched Xu Jing's description, he questioned the accuracy of the *Gaoli tujing*, concluding that "the obscurity in which the subject is enveloped can only be better dissipated by a better acquaintance with Corea and its inhabitants."[112] Rather, like his peers, he found Japanese writings more reliable in providing insight into Korean ceramic manufacture.[113]

Included in Franks's collection were several Satsuma wares, which were among the earliest type of Japanese ceramics to attract the attention of Western collectors. In principle, the term "Satsuma ware" denoted all ceramics produced in the domain of Satsuma in Kyūshū in the southern part of the Japanese archipelago, but more often than not it was used in reference to the popular overglaze enamelled stonewares, now known as Satsuma *nishikide*.[114] The desire for enamelled Satsuma wares was heightened by large-scale displays of them at World's Fairs and other exhibitions where their beautiful colours and ornate decorations were showcased (Figure 1.9).[115] In March 1876, when the Manchester-based auctioneers Capes, Dunn, and Pilcher sold a valuable collection of Japanese ceramics, several pairs of Satsuma vases were singled out as the principal sales items. Among them were two large vases, "elaborately decorated with bold masses of flowers," which were said to be among the first examples of Satsuma ware decorated with flowers to have come to Britain. They sold for £52 10s, while a pair of Satsuma vases believed to be 200 years old fetched £102 18s.[116] The cost of the vessels is suggestive of the desire for so-called "old Satsuma" wares that were thought to have been made in the province of Satsuma, in contrast to their modern reproductions that were made in Tokyo and other regions of Japan for the European and American market.[117]

As enamelled Satsuma wares became increasingly sought after in America and Europe, scholarship on their origins and history of manufacture expanded.[118] The desire for Satsuma directed collectors' focus on Korean potters since they were believed to have begun

Figure 1.9 Display of Japanese ceramics in the main building of the Centennial International Exhibition in Philadelphia, 1876.

Source: Courtesy of the Free Library of Philadelphia, Print and Picture Collection.

the production of ceramics in Satsuma, having been brought to Japan during Hideyoshi's invasions of Korea. An article by the British scholar and diplomat Ernest Satow (1843–1929) played a key role in furthering interest in this topic. Satow identified by name influential potters of Korean descent who were brought to Japan in 1598, noting that they kept their Korean surnames and lived in Korean communities.[119] Also, Franks agreed that the manufacture of "the famous Satsuma ware, so much prized by collectors" was initiated by Korean potters in the late 1500s.[120]

However, in the 1880s the desire for Satsuma wares lessened as collectors in America and Europe became more knowledgeable of Japanese ceramic manufacture and turned to different kinds of vessels. Travel to Japan and the influx of Japanese ceramics on the art market enabled a more nuanced understanding of Japanese ceramic traditions, while dealers of Japanese descent in America and Paris steered collectors to vessels that aligned with elite Japanese taste, such as tea bowls.[121] Moreover, it was discovered that Satsuma *nishikide* wares were of contemporary make, while ceramics categorised as "old Satsuma" were unlikely to be over 90 years old. Morse was among the first to confirm this and criticised those who bought Satsuma with "pretentious decoration and gaudy colours, associated with a desire for grimy antiquity" for having "vulgar taste."[122]

Collectors' interest in different types of Japanese ceramics coincided with impoverished Japanese samurai families selling off their personal possessions, among them tea bowls. It led to an increasing number of Raku ware and other tea bowls being offered on the arts market. In 1882, Griffis was among the first to comment on this, stating that "dark glazed bowls and cups now bring absurdly large prices."[123] The shift in interest from Satsuma to Raku ware brought more awareness of Korean ceramic heritage as it was believed that Raku too was produced by potters of Korean descent.[124] Moreover, it

became well-known that the vessels had been sought after by the upper echelons of Japanese society since Hideyoshi's time. The historical and elitist connotations of tea bowls significantly enhanced their appeal on the art market. For collectors like Freer, the vessels presented the opportunity to acquire artefacts that were not only reflective of Japanese culture and history but also representative of Japanese taste, and he began purchasing them in the 1890s.

The change in taste from Satsuma to other types of ceramics among Western consumers of Japanese ceramics coincided with Americans and Europeans gaining access to the Korean peninsula. In Seoul they discovered green-glazed celadon-coloured vessels that were unlike the colourful Satsuma wares and the roughly potted Raku tea bowls that until then had been associated with Korean ceramic manufacture. As collectors, scholars, and art dealers became aware of Korean celadon ceramics, a significant shift happened in terms of how they understood the Japanese and Chinese historical sources. Most importantly, the newly discovered vessels validated the accuracy of the ancient Chinese written records, in particular the *Gaoli tujing*. Stephen Bushell played an instrumental role in this when he published a ten-volume work on East Asian ceramics. Dismissing Japanese historical texts as unreliable, Bushell stated that "the only certain information that we have about old Korean porcelain is derived from Chinese sources."[125] He was the first to translate into English the full passage on Koryŏ ceramics included in the *Gaoli tujing*, quoted earlier.[126]

Whereas Franks dismissed the *Gaoli tujing* on the grounds that he had not seen any Korean vessels that matched Xu Jing's descriptions, Bushell was advantaged by the gradual influx of Korean celadon vessels in Europe and America. He was the first to link specific ceramics in Western collections with the *Gaoli tujing*, arguing that "the most ancient Korean porcelain of which we have any certain knowledge is really a celadon monochrome of the characteristic tint of this beautiful variety of jadeite."[127] He singled out a bowl owned by Charles A. Dana (1819–97) in New York and two bowls presented by King Kojong (r. 1864–1907) to President Carnot (1837–94) of France in 1889 and preserved in the collection of the Sèvres Museum (now the Sèvres National Manufactory and Museum) in France, all of which were known to have been acquired in Korea itself, rather than in China or Japan (Figure 1.10).[128]

Conclusion

The interest in Korean art took root in the 1870s when the fascination with East Asian art and the collecting of artefacts from this region swept America and Europe. As the number of collectors grew over the course of the late nineteenth century, so did the competition for high-quality objects that elevated the status and reputation of their owners, transitioning from amateur collectors to elite art experts. Some opened private museums, while others solidified their legacy through donations to museums in London, New York, Boston, and other cities. Their discerning taste prompted the need for scholarly studies, ranging from detailed examinations of specific artefacts to broader-spanning, often cross-regional, discussions on specific objects, such as ceramics, paintings, and Buddhist art. At a time when access to the peninsula was impossible for Westerners, knowledge about Korea and its cultural heritage was shaped largely by scholars and collectors of Japanese art. Drawing on past and contemporary Japanese sources, most of which were accepted as truthful, Europeans and Americans formed a fixed narrative of Korea and its past that not only shaped present approaches to the peninsula, but also significantly impacted

Figure 1.10 Celadon bowl with moulded decoration. Koryŏ period, twelfth century. Height 7 cm, width 9.3 cm. Sèvres, Manufacture Et Musée Nationaux (acc. no. MNC8662).

Source: Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Sèvres—Manufacture et musée nationaux)/Martine Beck-Coppola.

future relations between Korea, America, and Europe. Korea was largely seen as a nation with a bygone glorious past that had fallen into decline following a succession of invasions, the most destructive being that led by Hideyoshi.

Scholarship on Korean history and art played a crucial role in guiding collectors' interest towards certain types of artefacts and diverting their attention from others, as reflected in the fields of ceramics and Buddhist art. Among all the Korean objects collected by Americans and Europeans during this time, Buddhist artefacts were the least sought after. This raises the question why, especially considering the strong interest many had in Chinese and Japanese Buddhist artefacts. The answer is multilayered and comprises several converging narratives. Writings by Siebold and other scholars identified Korea as the transmitter of Buddhism to Japan, and they believed that Korean craftsmen initiated the production of Buddhist artefacts, among other works of art, in Japan. They argued that on the Korean peninsula the heyday of the manufacture of Buddhist art was short-lived, spanning only the fourth to the sixth centuries. Thus, they regarded the manufacture of great Buddhist art in Korea as a temporary phenomenon, whereas in Japan they saw a successful development of artistic skills. As Korea was understood as neither the origins nor as the peak of Buddhist art, scholars of the late nineteenth century, preoccupied by Darwinian evolutionary paradigms, gravitated towards Chinese and Japanese Buddhist artefacts. As the mere transmitter of Buddhist teachings and art, Korea held relatively little interest for collectors in search of original works of art and masterpieces.

In contrast, Korea's contribution to the manufacture of ceramics in Japan was interpreted along a different trajectory that resulted in Korean ceramics being valued considerably higher. As in the case of Buddhist art, Korea was believed to have initiated pottery

production in Japan through the transmission of technology, such as the potter's wheel, as well as the immigration, whether willing or not, of potters. In contrast to Buddhist craftsmen, Korean potters were recognised for their continuous contribution to ceramic manufacture in Japan, with several well-known contemporary potters being singled out for their Korean lineage. In this way, Korean potters in Japan were associated with the production of both original Satsuma wares and contemporary masterpieces.

The interest in Korean ceramics continued even after buyers in America and Europe shunned Satsuma in favour of other types of Japanese ceramics such as Raku tea bowls. By then Westerners were gaining access to the Korean peninsula where they discovered a new type of ceramics that began to be unearthed from tombs. In shape and colour they were similar to those described in the *Gaoli tujing*, thus confirming to scholars the accuracy of the Chinese source. The vessels were soon identified as dating to the Koryŏ dynasty and were by the mid-1880s singled out as attractive collectibles. In the process, ceramics identified as "Korean" came to be firmly associated with the peninsula, rather than with Korean potters living in Japan.

These events did not follow a linear process but emerged through the convergence of chance encounters, the advancement of scholarship on Korea, and the arrival in Seoul of Americans and Europeans. In Korea, Westerners formed personal friendships with each other and the Korean elite, while expanding their political networks. The following chapter examines the impact of these developments on the Korean art market in America and Britain during the concluding decades of the nineteenth century.

Notes

1 Thomas Birch and Son, *A Highly Important Collection of Ancient and Modern Chinese and Japanese Keramics, Cloisonne Enamels, Jade Stone, Bronzes* . . . (Philadelphia, PA: Thomas Birch and Son, 1878), 5–9, 12–13, 15, 24, 27.

2 Thomas Birch and Son, *Highly Important Collection*, 3. Described in the sales catalogue as "a gentleman of high knowledge in matters of Oriental Curios and Bric-à-Brac," Sutton was a dealer and expert in East Asian art. In 1883, he joined Thomas E. Kirby (1846–1924) and R. Austin Robertson (1829–91) to operate the American Art Association, the first auction house in the United States. "Sutton, James F., 1843–1915," Archives Directory for the History of Collecting in America, the Frick Collection, accessed May 3, 2023, https://research.frick.org/directory/detail/1474.

3 The earliest sale of Korean ceramics in America may have been that organised by H. W. Snowden & Co., an auctioneer in Baltimore, Maryland. In December 1877, the company offered for sale "an assortment of Curios and Porcelains" from Korea alongside cloisonné, Satsuma, and Kaga wares from Japan. "Auction Sales," *The Baltimore Sun* (MD), December 21, 1877. In the 1870s, the term "porcelain" was used in fluid ways to describe various kinds of East Asian ceramic vessels, whether of a type now known as earthenwares, stonewares, or porcelain. For a discussion of how Chinese ceramics were described before 1900, see Stacey Pierson, *Collectors, Collections and Museums: The Field of Chinese Ceramics in Britain, 1560–1960* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007), 11–12.

4 The Chinese and Japanese displays were detailed in United States Centennial Commission, *International Exhibition. 1876 Official Catalogue: Part I. Main Building and Annexes* . . ., rev. ed. (Philadelphia, PA: John R. Nagle, 1876), 241–49. For a discussion of the Chinese and Japanese exhibits, see "Centennial Letter. China and Japan at the Exposition—How Their Progress in Art Compare," *Weekly Star* (Plymouth, PA), July 19, 1876.

5 The buying frenzy in Philadelphia followed on from that of the 1873 World's Fair in Vienna when institutions as well as private collectors from Europe and America competed to purchase the displayed items. Jennifer Pitman, "China's Presence at the Centennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1876," *Studies in the Decorative Arts* 10, no. 1 (2002): 41, 47.

6 For a representative view of Korea in the early 1880s, see "The Hermit Nation," *The Pacific Bee* (Sacramento, CA), December 22, 1883. The article was printed in several newspapers published across America around this time.
7 "Corea's Isolation," *Watertown News* (WI), August 2, 1882.
8 "The Chinese Court in the Vienna Exhibition," *The Times* (UK), November 4, 1876. Quoted in Pitman, "China's Presence," 41.
9 For discussion of British consumption of Chinese porcelain, see Pierson, *Collectors*. For early American interest in Chinese art, see Warren I. Cohen, "Art Collecting as International Relations: Chinese Art and American Culture," *Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 1, no. 4 (1992): 409–34.
10 K. Ian Shin, "The Chinese Art 'Arms Race': Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism in Chinese Art Collecting and Scholarship Between the United States and Europe, 1900–1920," *Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 23, no. 3 (2016): 233–35. Early volumes on East Asian art authored by Bushell include *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain before the Present Dynasty* (Peking, 1886); *Oriental Ceramic Art: Illustrated by Examples from the Collection of W. T. Walters* (New York: D. Appleton, 1897) and the text edition (New York: D. Appleton, 1899). For discussion on Bushell's work, see Pierson, *Collectors*, 74, 83, 126.
11 Constance Jing Shue Chen, "From Passion to Discipline: East Asian Art and Culture of Modernity in the United States, 1876–1945" (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2000), 1–2. For early American interests in Japanese art, see also Julia Meech, "The Other Havemeyer Passion: Collecting Asian Art," in *Splendid Legacy: The Havemeyer Collection* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991), 130.
12 "Sale of Japanese Goods," *The New York Times*, June 19, 1877. See also Meech, "Havemeyer Passion," 131.
13 For example, an article on Korea published in *The Pacific Bee* newspaper argued that "many of [Japan's] arts, as well as literature and religion, were originally learned from Corea." "The Hermit Nation," *The Pacific Bee* (Sacramento, CA), December 22, 1883.
14 William Elliot Griffis, *Corea: The Hermit Nation* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1882).
15 An estimated 3,000 to 4,000 foreign specialists were employed by the Japanese government in the first two decades of the Meiji period under the slogan of "knowledge be sought throughout the world." Edward R. Beauchamp, "Griffis in Japan: The Fukui Interlude, 1871," *Monumenta Nipponica* 30, no. 4 (1975): 423.
16 For example, Percival Lowell argued, "If the art of the peninsula had not received the check we have mentioned, and had not been hindered from other sources, there seems no reason why it should not have rivalled that of Japan." Lowell applied the same comparative approach to his assessment of Korean music, stating that whereas music had remained unchanged in Korea, in Japan it changed for the better. Percival Lowell, *Chosön: The Land of Morning Calm; A Sketch of Korea* (Boston, MA: Ticknor, 1885), 191.
17 Brachiopods are marine invertebrates.
18 During the three years Morse spent in Japan, he built his extensive collection of ceramics gathered from kiln sites throughout the archipelago. Meech, "Havemeyer Passion," 132.
19 For discussion on Morse, see Francis Stewart Kershaw, "Edward Sylvester Morse," *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts* 24, no. 141 (February 1926): 12; Tung Wu, "A Brief History of the Korean Art Collection at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston," in *Korean Art Collection at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston*, ed. Kungnip munhwajae yŏn'guso [National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage] (Daejeon: Kungnip munhwajae yŏn'guso, 2004), 27; Jane Portal, "The History of the Korean Collection at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston," in *Arts of Korea: Histories, Challenges, and Perspectives*, ed. Jason Steuber and Allysa B. Peyton (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2018), 121; Warren I. Cohen, *East Asian Art and American Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 23–29.
20 Chen, "Passion to Discipline," 72–73.
21 James Jackson Jarves, *A Glimpse at the Art of Japan* (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1876), 175. Having not travelled to Japan, Jarves compiled the volume by relying on works available in Europe, including prints by the famous Edo print maker Katsushika Hokusai 葛飾北斎 (1760–1849). See also, Cohen, *East Asian Art*, 20.
22 Ernest F. Fenollosa, *Epochs of Chinese & Japanese Art: An Outline History of East Asiatic Design*, ed. Mary McNeil Fenollosa, 2 vols., rev. ed. (New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1913). For discussion of the standards Fenollosa advocated for, see Chen, "Passion to Discipline," 77–78.

23 Beauchamp, "Griffis in Japan," 424.
24 Beauchamp, "Griffis in Japan," 425–26, 452. See also "William Elliot Griffis Collection," Rutgers University Libraries, accessed May 9, 2023, www.libraries.rutgers.edu/new-brunswick/visit-study/locations/special-collections-university-archives/divisions-collections/manuscripts/william-elliot-griffis-collection.
25 William Elliot Griffis, "Corea, the Last of the Hermit Nations," *Frank Leslie's Sunday Magazine* 3, no. 5 (May 1878): 513–19.
26 Griffis, *Corea*, vi–vii (see n. 14).
27 Griffis, *Corea*, v–vi. Griffis also collected articles, pictures and artefacts related to Korea. For further discussion, see Yang Sang-hyŏn, "Kŭrip'isŭ k'ŏlleksyŏn e sojang toeŏ innŭn Han'guk kŭndae sajin charyo ŭi haksulchŏk kach'i e taehan koch'al" [The Significance of Korean Photos in the William Elliot Griffis Collection at Rutgers University], *Han'guk kŭnhyŏndaesa yŏngu* 71 (2014): 7–50.
28 Griffis, *Corea*, viii–ix.
29 Parhae was a kingdom in northeast Asia which according to current scholarship existed from around 700 to early 900 CE, though Griffis placed its formation much earlier.
30 Griffis, *Corea*, 146.
31 *Nishiki* means brocade. The popularity of Satsuma ware in the 1800s is explored by Clare Pollard, "Gorgeous with Glitter and Gold: Miyagawa Kōzan and the Role of Satsuma Export Ware in the Early Meiji Ceramic Industry," in *Challenging Past and Present: The Metamorphosis of Nineteenth-Century Japanese Art*, ed. Ellen P. Conant (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 138.
32 Hyman Kublin, "The Discovery of the Bonin Islands: A Reexamination," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 43, no. 1 (March 1953): 36.
33 Aston served in the British consular service in Japan before being appointed the British Consul-General in Korea in 1884 as the first European diplomat to reside in the country. William G. Aston, "Hideyoshi's Invasion of Korea," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* 6 (1878): 227–45; 9 (1881): 87–93, 213–22; 11 (1883): 117–25.
34 The first edition of Nippon was titled *Nippon. Archiv zur Beschreibung von Japan und dessen Neben- und Schutzländern: Jezo mit den südlichen Kurilen, Krafto, Koorai und den Liukiu-Inseln, nach japanischen und europäischen Schriften und eigenen Beobachtungen*. It was printed by J. G. La Lau in Leiden in 1832 and distributed by Siebold. For further discussion of early editions of Nippon, see Herbert Plutschow, *Philipp Franz Von Siebold and the Opening of Japan: A Re-evaluation* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).
35 Plutschow, *Philipp Franz Von Siebold*, 27–29.
36 Plutschow, *Philipp Franz Von Siebold*, 29; Boudewijn Walraven, "Korean Studies in Early-Nineteenth Century Leiden," *Korean Histories* 2, no. 2 (2010): 76.
37 In 1856, Hoffman became the first person to be appointed professor of Japanese language at Leiden University. For a discussion of Hoffman's contributions to the field of Japanese studies in Leiden, see Cynthia Vialle, "Japanese Studies in the Netherlands," *New Trends in Japanese Studies* (2013): 117–26.
38 Walraven, "Korean Studies," 77.
39 Siebold, *Nippon* (repr., Würzburg and Leipzig, 1897), 2: 87–88.
40 On Empress Jingū, see Siebold, *Nippon* (repr., Würzburg and Leipzig, 1897), 1: 60.
41 The chapter in the *Nihon shoki* detailing Jingū's rulership was first translated into English by Aston. William G. Aston, trans., *Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1896), 1: 224–53.
42 Plutschow, *Philipp Franz Von Siebold*, 27–29. For a discussion and translation of the sections related to Korea, see Walraven, "Korean Studies"; Walraven and Frits Vos, trans., "Notes on Kooraï: From Contact with Some Koraaians Stranded on the Japanese Coast," in Walraven, "Korean Studies," 79–85.
43 Walraven, "Korean Studies," 77.
44 Griffis noticed this saying that the Japanese adorned "their greenback paper money with pictures of her foreign exploits," Griffis, *Corea,* 55. For a discussion of the image of Empress Jingū on Japanese banknotes, see Melanie Trede, "Banknote Design as a Battlefield of Gender Politics and National Representation in Meiji Japan," in *Performing "Nation": Gender Politics in Literature, Theater, and the Visual Arts of China and Japan, 1880–1940*, ed. Doris Croissant, Catherine Vance Yeh, and Joshua S. Mostow (Brill: Leiden, 2008), 55–104. During the colonial period, the Government-General of Korea further promoted her alleged achievements

by mentioning her in Korean school textbooks. See Sang-hoon Jang, "A Representation of Nationhood: The National Museum of Korea" (PhD diss., University of Leicester, 2015), 47.

45 William Anderson, *The Pictorial Arts of Japan: With a Brief Historical Sketch of the Associated Arts, and Some Remarks Upon the Pictorial Art of the Chinese and Koreans* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, and Rivington, 1886), 5.

46 Philipp Franz von Siebold, *Manners and Customs of the Japanese, in the Nineteenth Century. From Recent Dutch Visitors of Japan, and the German of Dr. Ph. Fr. von Siebold* (London: John Murray, 1841), 368.

47 Griffis, *Corea*, 88.

48 James E. Hoare, "The Centenary of Korean-British Diplomatic Relations: Aspects of British Interest and Involvement in Korea 1600–1983," *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch* 58 (1983): 8.

49 William Elliot Griffis, "The Corean Origin of Japanese Art," *Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* 25, no. 2 (December 1882): 229.

50 Anderson, *Pictorial Arts of Japan,* 266.

51 William R. Carles, *Life in Corea* (London: Macmillan, 1888), vi.

52 Carles, *Life in Corea*, 8–9.

53 "Japan To-day, Ex-minister Bingham's Account of the Condition of Affairs in the Empire," *The Sun* (New York), August 23, 1885.

54 Before being offered for sale, the objects were exhibited at the old Chickering Hall on East Fourteenth Street. Field, Morris, Fenner and Co., *Catalogue of Japanese Art Treasures: An Exhibition at Chickering (Old) Hall . . .* (New York: E. O'Keefe, 1876), 3. Pfoundes lived in Japan between 1863 and 1876. For a discussion on his life and collecting interests, see "Captain C J W Pfoundes," the British Museum, accessed June 4, 2022, www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG127170. It seems that the sale generated a considerable profit, though not enough for Pfoundes to retire on. See Brian Bocking, "Flagging up Buddhism: Charles Pfoundes (Omoie Tetzunostzuke) among the International Congresses and Expositions, 1893–1905," in *A Buddhist Crossroads: Pioneer Western Buddhists and Asian Networks 1860–1960*, ed. Brian Bocking, Phibul Choompolpaisal, Laurence Cox, and Alicia Marie Turner (London: Routledge, 2014), 16–36.

55 Field, Morris, Fenner and Co., *Catalogue of Japanese Art Treasures*, 69.

56 Griffis, "Corean Origin," 224–26.

57 Anderson, *Pictorial Arts of Japan,* 266.

58 Anderson, *Pictorial Arts of Japan,* 266. The figures are now believed to be early thirteenth century works attributed to the Japanese sculptor Jōkei 定慶 (dates unknown). See Hiroyuki Suzuki, "The Buddha of Kamakura and the "Modernization" of Buddhist Statuary in the Meiji Period," *Journal of Transcultural Studies* 2, no. 1 (2011): 151–52.

59 For discussion on the financial constraints suffered by Japanese temples around this time, see Patricia J. Graham, *Faith and Power in Japanese Buddhist Art, 1600–2005* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 196, 208.

60 Théodore Duret, *Voyage en Asie* (Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1874), 21. Quoted in Ting Chang, "Collecting Asia: Théodore Duret's *Voyage En Asie* and Henri Cernuschi's Museum," *Oxford Art Journal* 25, no. 1 (2002): 24.

61 Duret, *Voyage en Asie,* 22. Quoted in Chang, "Collecting Asia," 23.

62 "Suicide of Edward Greey," *The New York Times*, October 2, 1888.

63 Gregory L. Rohe, "Travel Guides, Travelers and Guides: Meiji Period Globetrotters and the Visualization of Japan," *Interpreting and Translation Studies* 15 (2015): 84–86.

64 Edward Greey, *Hand-Book of a Unique Collection of Ancient and Modern Korean and Chinese Works of Art, Procured in Korea During 1883–1886 by Pierre L. Jouy of Washington D.C* (New York: Edward Greey, 1888), 6.

65 Greey, *Hand-Book,* 7.

66 "Notes and News," *The Auk* 11, no. 3 (July 1894): 262.

67 Robert Oppenheim, *An Asian Frontier: American Anthropology and Korea, 1882–1945* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016), 66–67.

68 Foote's appointment was interim, without congressional approval. When congress did approve it in 1884, the post was downgraded to Minister Resident and Consul-General. Foote subsequently declined the post and his tenure ended in 1885. Email correspondence with James E. Hoare (British Charge d'Affaires in Pyongyang, 2001–2002), November 20, 2023.

69 It seems that Jouy did not receive a salary for this position. Greey, *Hand-Book,* 6.
70 Chang-su Cho Houchins, *An Ethnography of the Hermit Kingdom: The J. B. Bernadou Korean Collection 1884–1885* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2004), 18.
71 Greey, *Hand-Book,* 8.
72 Greey, *Hand-Book,* 8–9.
73 Greey, *Hand-Book,* 26.
74 Greey, *Hand-Book,* 8.
75 Ernest F. Fenollosa, "An Outline of Japanese Art," *Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* 56, no. 1 (May 1898): 67.
76 William Elliot Griffis, "Satsuma Faïence," Ceramics, *Art Amateur* 2, no. 3 (February 1880): 53.
77 Fenollosa, *Epochs*, 51.
78 Griffis, "Corean Origin," 225.
79 Greey, *Hand-Book,* 8.
80 Following his stay in Seoul in 1884, Percival Lowell stated that "We have [in Korea] a community without a religion . . . – a community in which the morality of Confucius for the upper classes, and the remains of old superstitions for the lower, take its place." To him the worship of ancestors was "only a communion with the dead. It is in no sense a religion, nor a part of one." Lowell, *Chosön,* 135, 186.
81 Griffis summed up well Western approaches to Korean shamanism when he characterised shaman worship as "delirium tremens of paganism." Griffis, *Corea*, 306.
82 "Night. With Buddhist Monks," *The Cincinnati Enquirer* (OH), February 10, 1895. The perceived Korean disinterest in Buddhism may account for why the collection of Korean artefacts in the US National Museum in Washington, DC, numbered less than a handful of Buddhist artefacts, ranging from prayer beads to Sanskrit texts. A catalogue of the artefacts was authored by the curator Walter Hough (1859–1935) and published in 1893. Having consulted with American diplomats who had served in Korea as well as with Koreans who resided in America, Hough concluded that "among other inheritances from China Confucianism has effectively permeated Korea. Buddhism seems not to have gained much of a foothold in Korea and is almost entirely under ban at present. It has often been observed that Koreans have little religious sentiment." Walter Hough, *The Bernadou, Allen and Jouy Corean Collections in the United States National Museum* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1893), 431.
83 For a discussion on the spiritual and psychological attraction of East Asia, see Meech, "Havemeyer Passion," 141. On Fenollosa converting to Buddhism, see Graham, *Faith and Power*, 204.
84 "A Tourist's Idea of Japan," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 17, no. 3 (1890): 104.
85 Meech, "Havemeyer Passion," 140.
86 For example, see Anderson, *Pictorial Arts of Japan,* 10–11.
87 Annick Horiuchi, "Introduction générale" [General Introduction], in *Guide illustré des produits renommés des monts et mers du Japon* [Famous Products of Japan from Mountains and Seas: An Illustrated Guide Nippon sankai meisan zue], ed. Annick Horiuchi, Daniel Struve, and Charlotte von Verschuer (Paris: Collège de France, 2020), 6–7, 15–19.
88 Johann J. Hoffmann, "Mémoire sur les Principales Fabriques de Porcelaine au Japon" [Memory on the Main Porcelain Factories in Japan], in Julien, *Histoire et Fabrication,* 278 (full citation in n. 89).
89 Stanislas Julien, trans., *Histoire et Fabrication de la Porcelaine Chinoise* [History and Manufacturing of Chinese Porcelain] (Paris: Mallet-Bachelier, 1856).
90 Ellen C. Huang, "From the Imperial Court to the International Art Market: Jingdezhen Porcelain Production as Global Visual Culture," *Journal of World History* 23, no. 1 (2012): 137–38.
91 Julien, *Histoire et Fabrication*, 35.
92 For a discussion of Chosŏn scholars' studies of the *Gaoli tujing*, see Chang Nam-wŏn, "Koryŏ ch'ŏngja e taehan sahoejŏk kiŏk ŭi hyŏngsŏng kwajŏng ŭro pon Chosŏn hugi ŭi chŏnghwang" [The Establishment of Social Memory of Koryŏ Celadon in the Late Chosŏn Period], *Misulsa nondan* 29 (2009): 163. See also, Charlotte Horlyck, "The Eternal Link: Grave Goods of the Koryŏ Kingdom (918–1392 CE)," *Ars Orientalis* 44 (2014): 157–58. For a discussion of early studies of the *Gaoli tujing* by Western scholars and collectors of Korean ceramics, see Kim Yun-jŏng, "Kŭndae sŏgu ŭi sisŏn ŭro pon Koryŏ togyŏng kwa Koryŏ ch'ŏngja" [The Study of *Gaoli tujing* and Koryŏ Celadon in the West in Modern Times], *Han'guksa hakbo* 77 (2019): 239–70.

93 Modified translation by Stephen W. Bushell, in *Oriental Ceramic Art,* text edition, 679 (see n. 10).
94 Having studied drawing at the École des Beaux Arts, Jacquemart's early work centered on botany. However, having developed a fascination for ceramics, which he began collecting in the 1850s, in the 1860s he wrote the first of several volumes on ceramics. He worked at the French Ministry of Finance from 1826 till retirement but was also instrumental in organising several exhibitions in the 1860s. "Obituary," *Art Journal* 2 (1876): 63. See also Pauline d'Abrigeon, "Albert Jacquemart (1808–1875) and his Work on Chinese Ceramics," *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* 83 (2018–19): 81–96.
95 Albert Jacquemart and Edmond Le Blant, *Histoire Artistique, Industrielle et Commerciale de la Porcelaine* (Paris: J. Techener, 1862); Albert Jacquemart, *History of the Ceramic Art: A Descriptive and Philosophical Study of the Pottery of All Ages and All Nations,* trans. Mrs. Bury Pallister (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Low, and Searle, 1873).
96 Jacquemart, *History of the Ceramic Art*, 105.
97 Jacquemart, *History of the Ceramic Art*, 108.
98 "Jacquemart's 'History of Ceramic Art,' " unsigned review, *Scribner's Monthly: An Illustrated Magazine for the People* 15, no. 2 (December 1877): 280. However, in Jacquemart's obituary it was noted that "some of his Oriental classifications have been considered open to criticism." "Obituary," *Art Journal*, 63.
99 Email correspondence with Mike Smith (Librarian, National Museum of Asian Art Library), August 10–14, 2019.
100 Jennie J. Young, *The Ceramic Art: A Compendium of the History and Manufacture of Pottery and Porcelain* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1878).
101 Jacquemart, *History of the Ceramic Art*, 106.
102 Bernard Rackham, "The Literature of Chinese Pottery: A Brief Survey and Review," *Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 30, no. 167 (February 1917): 45.
103 Jacquemart, *History of the Ceramic Art*, 83.
104 Jacquemart, *History of the Ceramic Art*, 45, 167.
105 Augustus. W. Franks, ed., *Catalogue of a Collection of Oriental Porcelain and Pottery: Lent for Exhibition by A. W. Franks*, 2nd ed. (London: Printed by G. E. Eyre and W. Spottiswoode for H. M. Stationery Office; Bethnal Green Branch Museum, 1878), 144.
106 Franks, *Collection of Oriental Porcelain,* 144.
107 Kim Yun-jŏng, "Kŭndae Yŏngguk ŭi Han'guk toja k'ŏlleksyŏn ŭi hyŏngsŏng kwajŏng kwa kŭ ŭimi" [The Meaning of the Development of Korean Ceramics Collection in Modern Britain], *Munhwajae* 52, no. 4 (December 2019): 105–6. In 1889 Franks donated his extensive collection of East Asian ceramics to the British Museum. Jane Portal, "Korean Ceramics in the British Museum—A Century of Collecting," *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* 60 (1995–96): 52.
108 For discussion on the ceramic categories created by Franks, see Pierson, *Collectors,* 73–75 (see n. 3).
109 Franks, *Collection of Oriental Porcelain*, 143.
110 Franks emphasised interactions between early Korean and Japanese makers and consumers of pottery, starting from 27 BCE. He also mentioned Empress Jingū's invasions of the peninsula in 200 CE and Hideyoshi's war campaigns in the sixteenth century. Franks, *Collection of Oriental Porcelain,* 84, 141–43.
111 Franks, *Collection of Oriental Porcelain*, 143.
112 Franks, *Collection of Oriental Porcelain*, 143.
113 Franks, *Collection of Oriental Porcelain*, 141.
114 Pollard, "Gorgeous with Glitter," 138 (see n. 31).
115 Pollard, "Gorgeous with Glitter," 139.
116 "Important Sale of Satsuma Ware, Manchester," *The Guardian* (UK), April 13, 1876.
117 For further discussion of the production of Satsuma, see Pollard, "Gorgeous with Glitter," 139–40.
118 Morse described the interest in Satsuma as follows: "The word Satsuma is nearly as familiar to us as the word Japan, and this has become familiarized to us . . . solely for a peculiar type of pottery or faience known as Satsuma." Edward Sylvester Morse, "Old Satsuma," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 77 (June–November 1888): 522. For an early discussion of Satsuma ware see, "My Note Book," *Art Amateur* 20, no. 6 (May 1889): 123.

119 Ernest Satow, "The Korean Potters in Satsuma," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* 6, no. 2 (1878): 193–202. For an appraisal of Satow's article, see Morse, "Old Satsuma," 516, 523. It is worth noting that both authors contrasted the achievements of Korean potters in Satsuma with the perceived poor state of contemporary Korea. Satow wrote in "Korean Potters," 193: "There appears to be good ground for believing that Korea once enjoyed a much higher degree of material civilisation than, as we learn from recent sources of information, is the case in the present day, and when we consider the extent of the ruin wrought in the peninsula by the Japanese armies in the end of the sixteenth century." Morse argued in "Old Satsuma," 515: "After the devastating invasion of Korea by the famous Japanese General Hideyoshi, at the end of the sixteenth century (an invasion from which Korea has never fully recovered) . . . the feudal chief of Satsuma . . . robbed the country of some of its skilled potters."
120 Franks, *Collection of Oriental Porcelain*, 86.
121 Pollard, "Gorgeous with Glitter," 143–44.
122 Morse, "Old Satsuma," 524.
123 Griffis, "Corean Origin," 226.
124 George Ashdown Audsley and James Lord Bowes, *Keramic Art of Japan* (Liverpool: Published for the subscribers by the author, 1875), 202; Franks, *Collection of Oriental Porcelain*, 85–86, 142.
125 Bushell, *Oriental Ceramic Art,* text edition, 678.
126 Bushell, *Oriental Ceramic Art,* text edition, 679.
127 Bushell, *Oriental Ceramic Art,* text edition, 680.
128 Bushell, *Oriental Ceramic Art,* text edition, 680. The American monthly art journal *Art Amateur* claimed that not even the Kojong knew with certainty the date of the bowls he gifted to Carnot. "The Gallery," *Art Amateur* 21, no. 4 (September 1889): 71. The donation of the bowls formed part of a larger exchange of French and Korean ceramics mediated in part by the chief French diplomat in Seoul Victor Collin de Plancy (1853–1924). Oppenheim, *Asian Frontier*, 76.

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2 From Curios to Collectibles

Introduction

The late nineteenth century was a complex period for the Chosŏn dynasty. On the one hand, the political and social order adhered to Confucian practices; on the other, new ways of seeing and understanding the world began to take root. The forced opening of Korea's ports by the Japanese and later the Americans in 1876 and 1882, respectively, brought an end to Chosŏn's isolationist policy and led to the arrival of the Japanese, Americans, and Europeans on the peninsula. It was a fraught and violent time of conflict and war, starting with the Kapshin Coup in 1884, when members of the Enlightenment Party (K. *Kaehwadang* 開化黨), supported by the Japanese minister in Seoul, attempted to seize power. In 1894, the Tonghak Rebellion broke out, followed by the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–95) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904–5). For the Chosŏn ruling elite the challenge lay in how to ensure the independence and success of the nation, while negotiating Korea's position within an increasingly volatile region.

The discovery of green glazed celadon ceramics from tombs dating to the Koryŏ dynasty coincided with these events. In the 1880s and 1890s growing numbers of them were looted from sites by Koreans and Japanese, while most locally-based collectors belonged to the small, elitist group of diplomats and servicemen in Seoul, whose privileged position enabled them unique access to newly unearthed finds. As awareness of the wares grew and their availability increased, their acquisition became part of the political matrix, dominated by Americans and Japanese in Korea.

In 1876, the Japanese state coerced the Chosŏn government to sign the Kanghwa Treaty, effectively ending Korea's policy of isolationism. In the 1880s, similar treaties were established with Western nations, beginning with the United States in 1882 and Britain in 1883. Whereas Regent Hŭngsŏn Taewŏn'gun 興宣大院君 (1820–98) was a resolute conservative who vehemently opposed foreign contact, his son, King Kojong 高宗 (r. 1864–1907), attempted to modernise Korea. Keen to learn about Western ideas and institutions, Kojong despatched a delegation of more than 20 high-ranking government officials to Japan in 1881 to make detailed observations of its modern institutions, such as the Supreme Court, post offices, prisons, and police headquarters. The Korean Courtiers' Observation Mission (K. *chosa sich'al dan* 朝士視察團; also known as *sinsa yuram dan* 紳士遊覽團) stayed in Japan for four months, where they met with high-ranking politicians and bureaucrats and toured selected sites and institutions.[1] The trip coincided with the opening of the Second National Industrial Exhibition (J. *Dai Nikai Naikoku Kangyō Hakurankai* 第二回内國勧業博覧會) in Ueno Park in Tokyo (Figure 2.1). Established with the aim to develop local industry and

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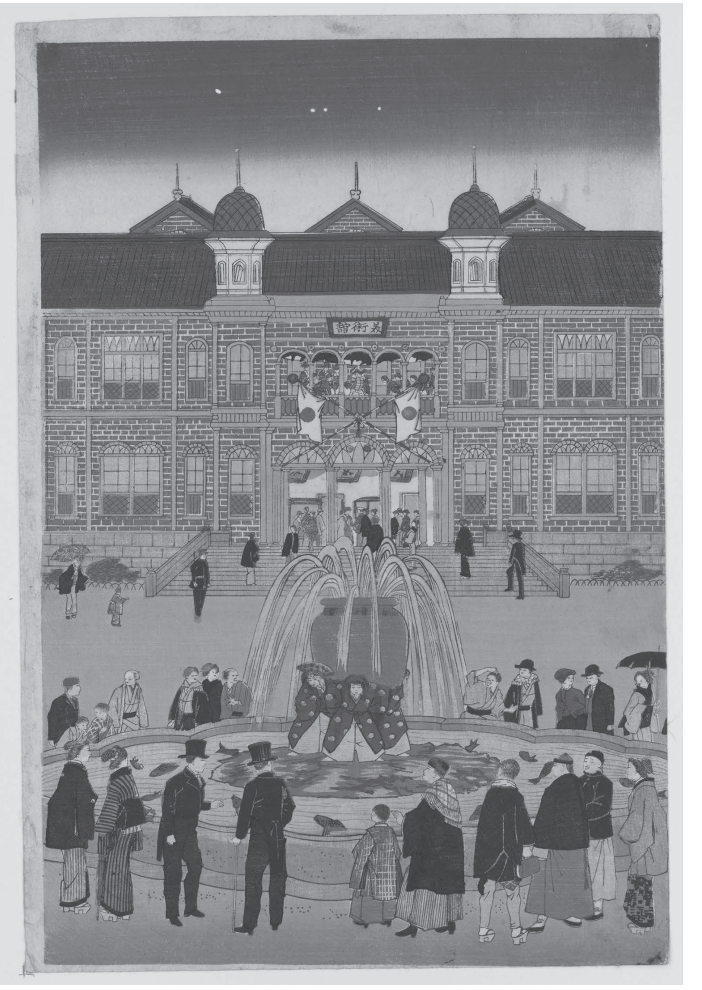

Figure 2.1 Utagawa Hiroshige III (1842–94). *Ueno Kōen Naikoku Kangyō Daini Hakurankai Bijutsukan narabi Shōjō Funsuiki no zu* [The Fine Arts Museum and the Shōjō Fountain at the Second National Industrial Exposition in Ueno Park]. Edo period. Woodblock print, central part of triptych.

Source: Chadbourne collection of Japanese prints, Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division (LC-DIG-ppmsca-57454).

to identify objects for export, the exhibition was closely modelled on World's Fairs in America and Europe that Japan had participated in since the late 1860s.[2] Two years after the Korean Courtiers' Observation Mission to Japan, Kojong confirmed his special interest in forging close relations with America by despatching the Chosŏn Special Mission (K. *Chosŏn pobingsa* 朝鮮報聘使) to Boston and Washington, DC, and by sending Korean ceramics, among other artefacts, to the Foreign Exhibition in Boston, which opened in October 1883. A Korean legation opened in Washington, DC, in early 1888.

The opening of Korea's ports and Kojong's despatch of courtiers to Japan and America mark the onset of significant political and social changes in Chosŏn that had lasting

impact on the understanding and valuation of Korean art both within the peninsula and beyond. The formalisation of diplomatic relations between the Chosŏn dynasty and America and European nations coincided with the growing interest in the peninsula and its cultural heritage, further advancing this burgeoning field.

Though ceramics identified as Korean had been sold and publicly displayed in America and Britain prior to the early 1880s, lack of reliable information on the peninsula and its artistic traditions posed considerable challenges for collectors. Direct access to the peninsula was therefore keenly anticipated by collectors, curators, and scholars eager to further their knowledge and holdings of Korean art, in particular ceramics. This coincided with findings in Seoul of glazed stonewares with bluish-green hues, widely known as "celadon" among Western ceramic experts.[3] They were markedly different from other Korean ceramics sold on the art market in America and Europe in the 1870s, sparking a shift in Korean ceramic collecting. Their increased availability on the art market enabled nuanced appraisals of them and led to a highly selective approach to Korean art. The convergence of these factors resulted in the birth of the Korean collectible – a type of artefact that was deemed desirable by collectors due to its aesthetic, cultural, and historical associations.

This chapter traces the beginnings of this development as it examines changing interpretations of Korean cultural heritage within and outside Korea in the 1880s and 1890s. The new direction in Korean art collecting was led by a small group of individuals, most of them Americans, whose acquisition activities significantly shaped future understandings of Korean cultural heritage. Some worked in Korea for varying lengths of time as diplomats, missionaries, doctors, businessmen, or servicemen, among other professions. They included Pierre Louis Jouy (1856–94), John Baptiste Bernadou (1858–1908), and Horace Newton Allen (1858–1932) from America; Paul Georg von Möllendorf (1848–1901) from Germany; and Thomas Watters (1840–1901), William George Aston (1841–1911), and William R. Carles (1848–1929) from Britain. When acquiring Korean objects, they collaborated with dealers and collectors in Korea, many of them of Japanese descent, as well as with art experts in America, including Edward Sylvester Morse, Edward Greey, and Thomas E. Waggaman (1839–1906). In their studies on Korean culture, they typically relied on a small number of writings on Korean art, authored by individuals whose work and collecting activities mostly centred on Japan, such as William Elliot Griffis, who wrote the acclaimed *Corea: The Hermit Nation* in 1882, and Percival Lowell, who authored *Chosön, The Land of Morning Calm* in 1885.

The Chosŏn Special Mission

With the signing of the Shufeldt Treaty in 1882, America became the first nation outside East Asia to negotiate a Treaty of Amity and Commerce with the Chosŏn dynasty. The following year, Lucius H. Foote was despatched to the peninsula as the first US Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary (Figure 2.2). Official relations between Chosŏn and the United States continued until 1905 when Korea was made a protectorate of Japan and lost its rights as a sovereign nation.[4] Between 1882 and 1905, the American influence in Korea was considerable with Horace Allen wryly noting that the British may have been in the lead elsewhere in the world, but "in Korea everything seemed to be American."[5] It was Americans who built Korea's first steam railway (it was later sold to Japan), and they were involved in the construction of a waterworks and an electronic plant. Moreover, several Americans worked closely with the Chosŏn royal family and

Figure 2.2 Lucius and Rose Foote and their American Legation Staff. Seoul, circa 1883–4.
Source: Photograph by George C. Foulk. Courtesy of Samuel Hawley.

became advisors to King Kojong. Among them were William Dye (1831–99), who took up the position as military advisor under contract to the court of King Kojong,[6] and Owen Nickerson Denny (1838–1900) was an attorney and county judge from Oregon who served as legal advisor to Kojong between 1886 and 1890.[7] Arguably the most influential American in Korea was Horace Allen, who was a Presbyterian medical-missionary, who arrived in Seoul in September 1884. He soon won the trust of Kojong, while his wife became a close confidante to Queen Min. The relationship between Allen and Kojong further strengthened when Allen was appointed Secretary of Legation to the American legation in Seoul in 1889, eventually rising to the rank of Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary. In 1905, when the treaty between the US and Chosŏn was abrogated, Allen was recalled, and five months later the legation was closed by his successor Edwin Vernon Morgan (1865–1934) (Figure 2.3).[8] American protestant missionaries who arrived in Korea in the 1880s, such as Horace Underwood (1859–1916) and Homer Hulbert (1863–1949), were instrumental in implementing educational and medical work that had long-term impact on the peninsula.

Foote's arrival in Korea in May 1883 was eagerly anticipated by Kojong, who frequently sought his advice on political matters.[9] Upon Foote's suggestion, Kojong decided to send a goodwill mission to the United States and his selected group of eight courtiers departed from the port of Chemulpo (now Inch'ŏn) in July 1883.[10] The main aim of the Chosŏn Special Mission was to strengthen political and financial ties with the US, while on a practical level Kojong hoped to appoint American advisors and instructors to key positions within Korean military, agricultural, and educational divisions. As in the case of the Korean Courtier's Observation Mission to Japan, the mission planned to inspect American government agencies and visit local industries and institutions. To this end, a visit to the Foreign Exhibition in Boston was therefore included in the tour.

The Chosŏn Special Mission was led by Min Yŏng-ik (1860–1914), Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary. He was joined by Vice Minister Hong Yŏng-sik

Figure 2.3 American diplomats Horace Allen (*third from left*), Durham Stevens (*fourth from left*), and Gordon Paddock (*far right*) with other dignitaries after a dinner at Kyŏngbok Palace. Seoul, circa 1904. Horace Newton Allen papers.

Source: Manuscripts and Archives Division, the New York Public Library. Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations.

(1855–84), who participated in the Korean Courtiers' Observation Mission to Japan, Sŏ Kwang-bŏm (1859–97), who served as Secretary, and the following five attachés: Yu Kil-chun (1856–1914), Ch'oe Kyŏng-sŏk (?–1886), Pyŏn Su (1861–91), Ko Yŏng-ch'ŏl (dates unknown), and Hyŏn Hŭng-t'aek (dates unknown).[11] Two interpreters of Chinese and Japanese nationality respectively accompanied the group though communication with the Americans proved to be cumbersome as English was translated first into Japanese and then Korean only for this process to be reversed when the Korean side spoke.[12] En route to San Francisco, the Mission stopped in Japan where Percival Lowell joined the group in the role of Foreign Secretary (Figure 2.4). Lowell had no experience in diplomacy, but he had a good level of fluency in Japanese, having arrived in Japan in spring 1883 to travel and study.[13] According to his letter of appointment, Lowell's role was "to assist . . . in the transactions of all the affairs concerning the mission, whether by way of giving advice or by way of assistance in the execution thereof."[14]

In America the group met twice with President Chester Arthur, who in his address to Min Yŏng-ik and Hong Yŏng-sik on September 18, 1883, announced that the US would seek "no dominion or control" over Korea but hoped "to give and receive the benefits of friendly relations and of a reciprocal and honest commerce."[15] Trade was a crucial component of the US-Korea Treaty. Since America benefitted much from trade with China

Figure 2.4 George Clayton Foulk (photographer). Min Yŏng-ik (*front row, second from left*), Percival Lowell (*front row, first from right*), and other members of the Chosŏn Special Mission, 1883.

Source: University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries, World Digital Library.

and especially Japan, it was expected that it would gain too from the establishment of commercial relations with the Chosŏn dynasty.[16] In the words of *The Gazette* newspaper:

> This Treaty . . . practically opens to general commerce the ports of a rich country long isolated from the commercial world, and is undoubtedly the forerunner of extended business relations of that country with the other great Powers. The value of the treaty to the American traders should be very great, and its provisions will be carefully scanned by those who are directly or indirectly interested in the commerce of China and Japan.[17]

However, by the time the Americans arrived on the peninsula, the economic system of Chosŏn had fallen apart and the political stability of the country was threatened.[18] Public confidence in Korea's trade prospects was further reduced when the American press reported that the Chosŏn Mission was unable to fund its return to Korea and needed financial support from the US Department of State.[19] Indeed, from the 1880s onwards American trade in Korea remained distinctly low, and protecting it was therefore not a priority for the US government.[20]

The courtiers appeared to gain much individually from the mission as suggested by Min Yŏng-ik's comments to Foote upon his return to Seoul on June 2, 1884: "I was born in the dark; I went out in the light, and now I have returned to the dark again."[21] Yet, as suggested in Min's comment, it is debatable to which extent the visit impacted on the future of Korea.[22] In the latter half of 1884, the Chosŏn government embarked on a series of reform measures, but they were short-lived. In part this may be attributed to the failed Kapshin Coup of December 4, 1884, when leading reformers, including

Hong Yŏng-sik, attempted a coup d'état. It led to all members of the Mission, except Min Yŏng-ik, being removed from positions that could influence the king.[23] Min Yŏng-ik was seriously injured in the coup, having been targeted by members of the Enlightenment Party who viewed him as an obstacle for reform.[24] However, he survived having received treatment from Horace Allen.[25]

The coup and the attempted assassination of Min Yŏng-ik had significant implications for the future of Korea. It led to China asserting its influence in Korea, ultimately sparking the First Sino-Japanese War as both nations vied for supremacy on the Korean peninsula. China's defeat paved the way for Japan to strengthen its influence in the region, culminating in its annexation of Korea. In terms of art collecting, Allen's meticulous care of Min prompted Kojong to present him with a ceramic bowl as a gesture of appreciation. As detailed in Chapter 3, the bowl played a crucial role in sparking Allen's interest in ceramic collecting, leading to the establishment of one of the best collections of Koryŏ ceramics of the late nineteenth century.[26]

One aim of the Chosŏn Special Mission was to visit the Foreign Exhibition in Boston, which opened on September 5, 1883, and ran until January 13, 1884.[27] It displayed more than 4,000 exhibits from 49 countries and had by November 1883 attracted 250,000 visitors.[28] The fair was organised by the newly established Foreign Exhibition Association, which aimed to improve "manufacturing and mechanical interests of the United States, by means of holding worthy and adequate exhibitions of foreign manufacturing, artistic, and industrial productions."[29] Korea did not officially participate in the fair, but according to the exhibition catalogue, objects were sent by "the [Korean] government."[30] As the *Boston Morning Journal* noted, "There is no regular Corean exhibit, yet several samples of the work done by the natives and exhibits of the resources of the country have been sent."[31] The exhibition catalogue offered few details on the numbers and types of Korean objects noting only that "porcelain and china vases, jugs, etc." were displayed on the third floor in an area assigned to Korea, next to displays from Guatemala, San Salvador, and Japan.[32] Press coverage of the Korean display was scant, and it seems that the artefacts drew limited attention from visitors and did little to generate interest in Korean industry. Instead, local newspapers such as the *Boston Morning Journal* drew much attention to the "peculiar" outfits of the Korean delegates who spent much time at the fair and reportedly took a keen interest in the exhibits, in particular the samples of American raw cotton and cotton seeds displayed in the Mechanics Hall.[33]

The limited mention in the catalogue of the Korean objects contrasted with the detailed lists of items sent by other countries. This may be attributed to the timing of the signing of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between the United States and Korea. In March 1883 the US government agreed to support the Foreign Exhibition, and the Department of State was instructed to inform American consulates of the fair so that they could give publicity to the programme and support exhibitors.[34] However, at this time, America had no representative in Korea. Lucius Foote, the US Minister, did not arrive in Seoul until May 12, 1883, and discussions on the Korean exhibits would not have commenced until then.[35]

The visit to the Foreign Exhibition in Boston seems to have made the Korean delegation aware of the broader impact of public displays of artefacts, not only as a means of learning, but as a political tool that could strengthen international relations. In October 1883, following his visit to Boston in September, Min Yŏng-ik approached the US Department of State with a proposal to open an exhibition or museum in Seoul with the aim to facilitate trade and develop "the commercial and industrial resources of the kingdom of Corea."[36] It was envisaged that the exhibition would display "exposed samples and models of articles of foreign export, such as machinery, mining, agricultural

implements, [and] geological instruments."[37] Upon gaining support from the US Department of State, Min requested that Everett Frazar (1834–1901), the incoming US Consul-General for Korea, contact interested exhibitors and advise them on shipping arrangements.[38]

Frazar was much invested in the exhibition, which garnered considerable interest from the American press. He was regarded as an "energetic champion of the Corean Embassy, and of the Coreans, in general," though at times critiqued for viewing "the future of Corea through spectacles of the most roseate tint."[39] In March 1884 he purchased and shipped to Korea $500,000 of "the best American productions in art, machinery, notions and staples."[40] At the time it was the largest and most expensive cargo ever to be freighted from America to East Asia.[41] However, in Shanghai the goods were held up. Foote told the government official Yun Ch'i-ho (1865–1945): "It is absolutely up to the Korean government whether to purchase the products which are stocked in Shanghai now. American merchants sent them not for their profit, but for helping the Korean government expand Korean people's knowledge."[42] Yet it seems that financial difficulties and the Kapshin Coup made it impossible for the Chosŏn government to proceed with the exhibition plans. Despite such setbacks, Kojong continued to promote Korea's participation in World's Fairs and in 1893 sent objects to the Columbian Exposition in Chicago on the encouragement of Horace Allen. For Kojong the incentive behind Korea's participation lay in the opportunity to establish close relations with America.[43] Yet World's Fairs, such as that held in Chicago, were never aimed at fostering equal relations between nations. Rather, they enabled Western nations to showcase the progressive advancements of their civilised and modern societies for the benefit of other, supposedly less developed nations.[44] Even Kojong's adviser Möllendorf supported this trope, arguing that the American exhibition in Seoul was "likely to prove of interest and benefit to a population of 12,000,000 souls emerging from a most primitive state."[45]

Collecting for Museums

In the nineteenth century, World's Fairs and international expositions were gigantic spectacles that celebrated progress and advancement of civilised nations juxtaposed with displays of exotica from regions outside Europe and America. Their establishment coincided with the birth of ethnographic collections that similarly aimed to document and display tangible records of so-called primitive cultures. Huge numbers of objects were collected, classified, and catalogued using methods developed from the new academic disciplines of ethnography, anthropology, and archaeology. To confirm the scholarly value of such collections, much emphasis was placed on the scientific processes involved in their formation. In 1891, in an address to the Anthropological Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, the German-born philologist and "Orientalist" F. Max Müller (1823–1900) confirmed this, when he stated that

> [T]he study of man in every part of the world has ceased to be a subject of curiosity only. It has been raised to the dignity, but also to the responsibility of a real science, and it is now guided by the principles as strict and as rigorous as any other science.[46]

To this end, in the 1880s several museums in America and Europe tasked individuals in Korea with collecting objects that in type and medium were deemed representative of Korean life and culture. Möllendorf was particularly active in this regard. He was not only the first, but also the highest-ranking Westerner to be employed by the Chosŏn court. Originally from Zehdenick in Germany, between 1874 and 1882, he served as

interpreter and consul at the German consulate in Tianjin and Shanghai. It was there that he met Li Hongzhang 李鴻章 (1823–1901), a powerful businessman and politician with considerable influence on China's relations with Korea.[47] Li hoped that by sending his confidante Möllendorf to Korea as an advisor to the king, China could strengthen its position in Korea and prevent Japan from gaining further control in the region. Thus, in September 1882, when Kojong asked Li to recommend a foreign advisor, the latter suggested Möllendorf. In December 1882, Möllendorf arrived in Korea to take up the post of First Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs.[48] He remained in Korea until December 1885, when he returned to Tianjin, having fallen out of favour with Kojong and stripped of his position.[49]

Möllendorf's collecting activities coincided with the despatch of the Chosŏn Special Mission to America and may have impacted Kojong's decision to send objects to the Foreign Exhibition in Boston. In 1883, when Germany and Korea negotiated a treaty of trade and diplomacy, the Leipzig Museum of Ethnography sought Möllendorf's assistance in building a collection of Korean artefacts and sent instructions on which types he should acquire. The museum requested items that represented "daily life," including cooking utensils, weapons, games, stationary items, and furniture.[50] Möllendorf's motivations for agreeing to the task are unclear, but he funded the purchase of the near to 300 objects, and in August 1883 sent five crates to Leipzig, followed by a second despatch in 1884.[51] Considering his views on the proposed exhibition of American goods in Seoul, he seems to have regarded himself as a benefactor of the so-called uncivilised Korean people in need of reform and progress and may have relished the opportunity to use his unique position at the Chosŏn court to further understanding of Korea.

In January 1883 Möllendorf briefly returned to Tianjin to tend to his pregnant wife, who had stayed in China when he left for Seoul, and to recruit staff needed for the newly established Korean customs service. Accompanied by Min Yŏng-ik, in February Möllendorf travelled to Shanghai where they were introduced to Morse, who was on his third trip to Asia.[52] Having been appointed Director of the Peabody Academy of Sciences (now Peabody Essex Museum) in Salem, Massachusetts in 1880, Morse hoped to expand the museum's East Asian holdings. To this end he asked Möllendorf to acquire Korean objects for the museum for the sum of $150 and gave him a brief list of desirable objects.[53] In January 1884 four crates arrived in Salem filled with objects that were similar in nature to those Möllendorf despatched to Leipzig.[54] It led to 225 artefacts being accessioned by Morse with the assistance of Yu Kil-chun. Yu was a member of the Chosŏn Special Mission but chose not to return to Korea. Instead, he opted to further his education under the tutelage of Morse, whom he first met in Japan en route to America.[55] However, the Kapshin Coup of 1884 cut his stay in America short. Concerned that the volatile situation in Korea would jeopardise his financial support, Yu left for Seoul the following year.[56] In March 1884 the Peabody Academy of Sciences opened a display of the Korean artefacts, and a visitor's guide to Salem, published in the 1890s, proudly noted that the collection was the largest from Korea in any museum in America.[57]

Morse never visited Korea but gained knowledge of the peninsula through meetings with Koreans in China, Japan, and America.[58] Despite his friendship with Yu Kil-chun, his views on the state of contemporary Korea were decidedly negative. Like many others whose knowledge of Korea was formed in Japan and shaped by Japanese viewpoints, Morse felt the Koreans lacking in many areas, certainly when compared to the Japanese, whom he viewed as "far more advanced people."[59] In Morse's eyes, Chosŏn was a

degraded nation led by ruthless and unfit nobles for which it only had itself to blame. Of the objects he acquired for the museum, he wrote the following:

> An examination of Korean objects of manufacture, as exhibited in the United States National Museum, and in the Museum of the Peabody Academy of Science in Salem, will convince one of the degraded condition of the people. The rude musical instruments, rude pottery, rough work generally, and the almost complete absence of all industrial art handwork, testify to the alarming decay of the nation.[60]

Thus, as was typically the case of ethnographic collections acquired by museums in the late nineteenth century, the aim of the Korean items was not to demonstrate advancements of Korean society nor the greatness of the Korean people. Rather, they drew attention to points of difference and perpetuated the idea of Western superiority.

The US National Museum in Washington, DC, also quickly seized the opportunity to acquire Korean artefacts on the peninsula once access became possible. Around six months after the establishment of the Shufeldt treaty, the museum appointed the US Navy officer John Baptiste Bernadou to the position of Smithsonian Attaché and trained him in methods of collecting museum specimens in preparation for duty in Korea.[61] Bernadou arrived on the peninsula in early 1883 and over the following two years he acquired 156 items, ranging from ceramics to paintings, furniture, books, and maps, among other types of artefacts. In contrast to Lowell and Jouy, whose knowledge of Korea was informed by lengthy stays in Japan and studies of Japanese history, Bernadou was not a Japanologist. Rather, his understanding of Korean history and culture developed from his experiences on the peninsula and the social networks he formed there. In Seoul, he became close to Allen and George Clayton Foulk (1856–93), the US Naval Attaché to the American legation and later US Acting Chargé d'Affaires. He also met Min Yŏng-ik and other high-ranking members of the Chosŏn government.[62]

Tasked with focusing on items of "ethnological interest," most of the objects Bernadou acquired were of contemporary manufacture. He singled out wood carving, brass work, and furniture as "good" but was less positive about paintings, stating that "there appears to be no living artist of note in Corea."[63] It is telling that the only antique objects that Bernadou purchased in Korea were ceramics. His acquisitions were likely guided by Allen and Foulk, who around this time began to acquire green-glazed celadon stonewares from the Koryŏ dynasty.[64] Like other Westerners of his time, Bernadou felt that Koryŏ ceramics were the only Korean artefacts that evidenced the existence of past excellence in arts manufacture. In a letter to Spencer Fullerton Baird (1823–87), Director of the US National Museum, he wrote, "I have succeeded in getting some pieces of old Corean porcelain, sufficiently good to satisfy myself that once very beautiful articles were once made here."[65] Yet the objects were challenging to find and expensive:

> Old pottery, though rare and commanding high prices, is obtainable. . . . The pottery here known as old dates from six hundred to three hundred years back; that of [*sic*] kingdom of Korai – over five hundred years – is the most esteemed. I have obtained one small piece of the Korai period, and fragments of a later date.[66]

Bernadou managed to acquire six vessels which he attributed to the Koryŏ dynasty. He singled out a white porcelain dish, as being "of the best period of the Songdo [Kaesŏng]

Figure 2.5 "Korean Pottery of the Koriu [Koryŏ] Period." The dish Bernadou acquired is *front row, first from right*. The bowl Allen received from Kojong is *front row, third from right*. From Hough, *Bernadou, Allen and Jouy*, plate XII.

Source: Courtesy of Special Collections, SOAS Library, University of London.

potteries, about five hundred years ago. Pieces of this character are extremely rare."[67] In contrast, he described a thickly potted shallow dish with a dull greenish-grey glaze as being of a "very low grade found near Songdo."[68]

Bernadou succeeded in selecting artefacts that to others presented a comprehensive insight into the peninsula. Otis Tufton Mason (1838–1908), curator of the newly established Division of Ethnology at the US National Museum, noted that the collection verified the accuracy of Percival Lowell's account of Korea, arguing that "the chief charm [of the collection] lies in the assurance . . . that the writer is telling the truth."[69] Otis was referring to *Chosön – The Land of Morning Calm*, which Lowell published in 1885 upon his return to America.[70] The artefacts that Bernadou acquired in Korea were included in a catalogue of the Korean collection in the US National Museum authored Walter Hough (1859–1935) and published in 1893 (Figure 2.5).[71] When compiling the work, Hough relied on the expertise of resident Koreans in Washington, DC, as well as Americans with first hand experience of Korea, indicating how knowledge of the peninsula expanded during this period. The former included Sŏ Kwang-bŏm and Pyŏn Su, who first visited America in 1883 as members of the Chosŏn Special Mission, but later lived in exile in Washington, DC, following their involvement in the Kapshin Coup. Among the latter were Allen, Jouy, Griffis, and the diplomat William Woodville Rockhill (1854–1914). Hough also consulted with Sŏ Chae-p'il (1864–1951),[72] who was a medical student at George Washington University in Washington, DC.[73]

Sales and Displays of Korean Ceramics

Institutional efforts to build ethnographic collections of Korean material culture coincided with the interest in East Asian art. As discussed in Chapter 1, for historical and cultural reasons ceramics were singled out as artefacts of choice for amateur as well as serious collectors. As *the Chicago Tribune* commented in 1883: "Half the world [have] gone mad on the subject of ceramics, Satsuma, Gubbio, Castel Durante, Kioto, Urbino, and Kaga having become household words."[74] During the 1870s and 1880s, the American and British public had access to an ever-increasing range of ceramic displays, many of them led by major museums and featuring artefacts that were acquired in East Asia. For example, in January 1883, at the opening of the Art Institute of Chicago a large number of East Asian ceramics were exhibited, having been donated to the museum by an unnamed woman, who had lived in China and Japan and was said to have spent several years building the collection.[75] It numbered at least two Korean ceramics, including a small teapot that was deemed particularly attractive due to the soft and creamy colour of its glaze and the spattered patch of olive green that ran down the side of the vessel. Another Korean vessel was described as having been made of the "rudest clay," though its design was felt to be expressive.[76]

The opening of Korea's ports enabled collectors to acquire ceramics directly from the Korean peninsula rather than in China and Japan. The opportunity to do so was much anticipated as it was believed it would address the ongoing challenge of how to identify Korean ceramics. Until the 1880s all ceramics sold as Korean on the art market in America and Europe were acquired in China or Japan, leading to doubts as to the origins of their manufacture. This problem was exacerbated by the small numbers of Korean wares available on the market that made any attempt at comparing and classifying them impossible. As the Japanese art dealer Hayashi Tadamasa 林忠正 (1853–1906) stated in 1888 in *The Art Amateur*, "If there is any question about Corean [pottery] it is about a particular piece, set down as Corean in a particular collection, and a piece so set down must be considered open to question."[77] The problem was felt also in Britain, where William Anderson similarly questioned the authenticity of vessels sold as Korean in London. He urged that "it may be necessary to point out that the keramic [*sic*] pottery recently advertised as 'Korean' in London shops is Japanese ware of indifferent quality, and that nothing of the kind has ever been produced in a Korean fabrique."[78]

Yet many feared that access to the peninsula would intensify competition for Korean artefacts, resulting in elevated prices and the manufacture of fakes. In America these concerns were raised when in spring 1886 the US National Museum opened its first display of Korean objects, among them items acquired by Bernadou. For example, the *Santa Maria Times* wrote as follows:

> The collection which has been sent to the museum by Ensign Bernadon [*sic*] is considered especially valuable, as it has been secured while the field is new. After awhile Corean [ceramic] ware will be manufactured for the museum trade, as Chinese and Japanese wares are now, and doubt will be thrown upon all collections offered to the public.[79]

In New York, the British-born art dealer Edward Greey played a leading role in introducing Korean artefacts to American collectors. In December 1885, he offered for sale Captain Francis Brinkley's (1841–1912) extensive collection of ceramics from Korea, China, and Japan.[80] Brinkley was an Anglo-Irish newspaper owner who arrived in Japan in 1867 as

a Royal Artillery officer attached to the British legation. Later he became the owner and editor-in-chief of *the Japan Weekly Mail*. Brinkley published widely on Japanese culture and history and became known as an authority of Japanese art, in particular ceramics. Much of the text in the sales catalogue, which was co-authored by Brinkley and Greey, was drawn from the former's forthcoming volume *History of Japanese Keramics*. In its detailed explanations of key types of Japanese ceramics, the catalogue was a pioneering scholarly work, confirming Brinkley's status as a knowledgeable collector with discerning taste.[81]

Of the 800 ceramics offered for sale, most of them Japanese, 22 were identified as Korean and dated from 1100 to 1685. As the catalogue was not illustrated, it is challenging to assess whether the evaluation of the Korean vessels is accurate. Two of them (nos. 778 and 779) may be celadon wares from the Koryŏ dynasty, while the remainder are probably porcelain vessels from the Chosŏn dynasty and enamelled wares made in Japan. Also listed under the category of Korean ceramics were six objects which Brinkley believed were made by Japanese potters in Korea between 1596 and 1685, signifying the blurred perceptions of what constituted "Korean" ceramic manufacture in the 1870s and 1880s. The catalogue provided no details on where Brinkley obtained the Korean vessels. However, *The Boston Globe* stated that Brinkley purchased objects from "curio-dealers" in Japan who had sourced them from impoverished Japanese elite families forced to sell their possessions.[82]

In early 1888 Greey also played an instrumental role in the exhibition of Thomas E. Waggaman's extensive collection of nearly 400 Korean, Chinese, and Japanese ceramics. Additionally, he authored the first-ever catalogue of these objects.[83] Waggaman was an American businessman and the treasurer of the Catholic University of America, based in Washington, DC. In April 1888 he formally opened a gallery in the Georgetown neighbourhood of the city and arranged the vessels in cherry cabinets placed below European and American oil paintings and water colours – a display that was noted as being original and unusual.[84] Waggaman modelled himself on the American businessman and collector William Thompson Walters (1819–94), who was the first to create a large private collection of East Asian ceramics in America.[85] In 1884, Walters opened a private art gallery at his residence on Mount Vernon Place in Baltimore, and his collection of around 22,000 European paintings and East Asian works of art was said to be one of the best in America.[86] It seems that Waggaman reached his aim of building a collection that matched that of Walters. When the inaugural exhibition opened in Georgetown in April 1888, it received much press coverage, and it was judged to be excellent. The collection of ceramics was said to be "much smaller but more complex than that in the British Museum,"[87] while the Japanese ceramics were singled out as "the finest collection in the world."[88]

Taking inspiration from Walters's approach, Waggaman too aimed "to make a collection of beautiful art objects . . . in strict accordance with Oriental tastes, rather than the quaint and curious."[89] Thus, in keeping with trends of his time, Waggaman sought out artefacts from collections formed in Japan, including Brinkley's, where the largest proportion of his ceramics, including the Korean vessels, originated. Greey affirmed the quality of Brinkley's objects by aligning Brinkley's expertise and taste with those of elite Japanese collectors. In the introduction to the catalogue, he stated that Brinkley developed in-depth knowledge of ceramics through studying them with Japanese collectors, fostering close friendships in the process.[90] To further stress this point, Greey stated that 13 of Waggaman's Korean bowls were "treasured by Japanese connoisseurs."[91]

Waggaman also acquired Korean vessels from other American collectors, such as Jouy, J. Pierpoint Morgan (1837–1913), and De Jong (dates unknown), pointing to the way in which Americans at this time built collections by purchasing from each other. Like other pioneering collectors of his time, Waggaman also took advantage of travel to Korea

being possible, and through a Japanese dealer in 1886 he acquired two bowls from Seoul, signifying how access to the peninsula presented new opportunities for dealers and art collectors. Some years later he obtained from John Hite Lee Holcombe (1856–1906), a lieutenant in the US Navy, a large lidded celadon box. Holcombe purchased it in Korea in 1885 and claimed it was unearthed from a grave "some 15 miles from Chamulpo [now Inch'ŏn]."[92] Given the description and size of the box, it is likely to have originated from one of the many royal and aristocratic graves from the Koryŏ dynasty located on Kanghwa Island.[93] Greey dated Waggaman's Korean ceramics to 800–1590, but it is difficult to assess the accuracy of this given the lack of illustrations in the catalogue.[94]

A comparison between Greey's catalogue of Waggaman's collection and one published eight years later reveals the evolving understandings of Korean ceramics. Advancements in Korean ceramic scholarship was enabled by their growing numbers on the art market as this made access to the objects and studies of them easier. Equally important was the growth in nuanced scholarship on East Asian ceramics, such as that published by Morse and Bushell.[95] Following Greey's untimely death in autumn 1888, Waggaman turned to Edward Morse and the Japanese art expert Shugio Hiromichi 執行弘道 (1853–1927) for advice and help to obtain rare artefacts, and the latter authored subsequent catalogues of his collection.[96] Shugio arrived in New York in the 1880s where he became Director of the First Japan Manufacturing and Trading Co. In the late 1890s the Meiji government appointed him one of three Imperial Commissioners to the Exposition Universelle in Paris of 1900. He also oversaw the representation of Japan at the St. Louis Exposition of 1904, the Japan-British Exhibition of 1910 in London, and the Panama–Pacific International Exposition of 1915 in San Francisco.[97]

Writing at a time when several questioned the existence of ceramic production in Korea and were yet to arrive at conclusions, Greey's descriptions of Waggaman's Korean vessels were vague and often confused with Japanese ceramic manufacture.[98] He labelled several objects loosely as "Korean pottery," while others he identified as "Korean faience" in keeping with earlier scholarship on the production of enamelled Satsuma *nishikide* wares.[99] In contrast, Shugio's volume of Waggaman's collection, published in 1896, offered a more precise understanding of Korean ceramics and their dates of manufacture. He classified all Waggaman's Korean ceramics as "stoneware" and placed their manufacture between 900 and 1800, corresponding to the Koryŏ and Chosŏn dynasties.[100] Moreover, he identified none of the products from Satsuma and other Japanese kilns as Korean. Clearly, to him "Korean ceramics" denoted only those produced on the peninsula by Korean potters.

Waggaman became known as an enthusiastic and energetic collector, and his collection grew rapidly from around 400 to more than 2,000 works of art.[101] However, when his real estate and investment businesses failed, he was forced to declare bankruptcy, and his entire estate was sold by court order in 1905.[102] Managed by the American Art Association in New York, the sale ran for nine afternoons and two evenings in January and February.[103] The numbers of objects sold, not to mention their high artistic value attracted much attention from the press and the public, and close to 1,000 people visited Waggaman's home to preview the sales items.[104] Several buyers arrived from China and Japan, signifying the increasingly international nature of the East Asian antiques market in the early twentieth century.[105] However, despite the interest in the objects, the sale was not a commercial success. Waggaman believed his collection would bring between $800,000 and $1,100,000, but it fetched only $341,538. In part this may have been caused by the Japanese art objects, which constituted the main bulk of the collection, selling at lower-than-expected prices, despite the strong interest in them among Chinese and Japanese buyers.[106]

By the time of the sale, Waggaman's collection of Korean ceramics had grown and now numbered more than 20 pieces, most of them glazed stonewares from around 1100 to 1600. They were sold on the fourth afternoon of the sale, alongside Chinese ceramics and Japanese and Chinese cloisonné, and the 208 lots sold that day fetched a total of $44,809.50.[107] Thomas B. Clarke (1848–1931), a collector of porcelain and American art based in New York, purchased two of the Korean stonewares for $140 and $180. Seeing that the previous day a Song vase with a pale blue glaze sold for $200 and a globular Han vase fetched $230, it seems that the price of the Korean celadon vessels was close to that of Chinese glazed stonewares.[108] The ongoing popularity of colourful porcelains and enamelled wares from the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) dynasties among Western buyers is reflected in them achieving the highest prices. For example, on the fourth afternoon of the sale, Clarke purchased two enamelled Kangxi vases for $475 and $1,000, respectively, though the highest priced lot that day was a "beaker-shaped" Kangxi vase which sold for $2,500 to Mr. W. Williams.[109]

In contrast to collectors in America who in the late nineteenth century had increasing opportunity to acquire Korean ceramics either through local sales or directly from Korea, the Korean art market in Britain was considerably less active. The reason why British collectors were comparatively late in developing an interest in Korean art may be attributed to Britain's lack of engagement with Korea. Diplomatic links between Britain and Chosŏn were formalised in 1884, but while other nations, notably America, Russia, and Japan, competed for influence and commercial opportunities in Korea, the British were less invested in the peninsula.[110] The Treasury in London was reluctant to set up diplomatic and consular establishments in Korea, and until the late 1890s British consular staff in China or Japan was tasked with overseeing Korean affairs.[111] Moreover, though British goods reached Korea, trade was largely in the hands of the Chinese and later the Japanese. It seems that British merchants were little inclined to change this, despite the demands for a stronger British presence in Korea among some British citizens in Seoul, such as the influential traveller and writer Isabella Bird Bishop (1831–1904).[112] By the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War (1904–5), Britain had, in the words of James E. Hoare, British Chargé d'Affaires in Pyongyang from 2001 to 2002, "come to believe that its interests in Korea were so slight that they were not worth a struggle."[113] In 1905, when Korea was made a protectorate of Japan, Britain renewed the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902, thus officially recognising Japan's claim to the peninsula.[114]

Nevertheless, in England, as in America, some dealers were quick to act upon the opportunity to purchase objects in Korea. Among them was John Burton (1839–1907), who owned the Old Curiosity Shop in Falmouth, Cornwall, in southwest England. A large and well-established business, it advertised as specialising in "curiosities from every region under the sun," ranging from large-sized Satsuma and Nanking vases to Burmese religious statues, bamboo fishing poles, and second hand books.[115] In 1882 Burton commissioned a representative in Japan to travel to the peninsula and search for items, resulting in the arrival in England of 60 boxes, filled mostly with ceramics and "wood-carving," the latter being probably furniture and chests.[116] Later, Burton sent several of the objects to New York to be sold there, suggesting that the market for Korean objects was significantly stronger in America than in Britain.[117] In 1887 Madeline Anne Wallace-Dunlop (1824?–1914?) published a lengthy article on Burton's Korean ceramics in *Magazine of Art*, an illustrated monthly British journal. Her interest in Burton's collection likely stemmed from her own acquisitions of Korean ceramics, and she presented a detailed examination of Burton's newly acquired vessels, focusing on their glazes, shapes, and designs.[118] Burton was told that the ceramics came from Kyŏnggi province near Seoul, but judging from the illustrations, they seem to be Satsuma ware and, if so, were

Figure 2.6 Korean "Grey Ware." From Wallace-Dunlop, "Korean Ware," 265.
Source: © The British Library Board.

probably acquired in Japan rather than in Korea (Figure 2.6).[119] In fact, Burton's collection appeared to confirm Anderson's earlier-mentioned belief that in London, objects sold as Korean were likely to be Japanese.

Discoveries of Koryŏ Tomb Goods

As the desire for celadon ceramics grew, hundreds of tombs were looted on the peninsula and the grave goods sold, mostly to buyers of Japanese, American, and European descent. American and British collectors typically attributed the plunder of grave sites to instability, conflict, and war on the Korean peninsula, thus absolving themselves of any responsibility. Allen surmised that the search for Koryŏ ceramics began around the time of the Kapshin Coup but accelerated during the First Sino-Japanese War, while others blamed the plunder on the Russo-Japanese War.[120]

Most likely, tombs with ceramics were first unearthed by chance but later deliberately targeted by grave robbers as there was a ripe market for the loot. One of the earliest mentions of grave robbery is that authored by the scholar Yi Yu-wŏn (1814–88) who wrote in the *Imha p'ilgi* 林下筆記 (Jottings by Imha) about a man from Kaesŏng who plundered a Koryŏ royal tomb and sold the loot of a jade belt and several celadon ceramics for 700 *kŭm*.[121] The exact date of this incident is unclear, but it is possible that the vessels formed part of a set of 36 ceramics, some of which Carles, the British Acting Vice-Consul in Korea,

Figure 2.7 Koryŏ celadon ceramics purchased by William R. Carles in 1884. From Carles, *Life in Corea*, 141.

Source: Courtesy of Special Collections, SOAS Library, University of London.

acquired in 1884. In *Life in Corea*, Carles describes his purchase of nine celadon ceramics as being from "a set of thirty-six, which were said to have been taken out of some large grave near Song-do [Kaesŏng]" (Figure 2.7).[122]

It soon became known that the best quality celadon ceramics originated from tombs built for members of the Koryŏ royal family and high-ranking aristocrats in the mountains surrounding Kaesŏng, the capital of Koryŏ. The graves were in the form of small stone chambers covered with a soil mound that was encircled by a stone banister and marked by granite figures and a stone epitaph. Being situated at ground level, the structure was relatively easy to penetrate, as indicated in a diagram of the tomb of King Myŏngjong (1131–1202) and his wife, Queen Ŭijŏng (dates unknown) (Figure 2.8). Published in an extensive survey of Koryŏ royal tombs, undertaken by Japanese archaeologists in 1916, the drawing clearly shows that grave robbers entered the chamber by breaking through the upper part of the stone wall. It also illustrates ceramic vessels scattered on the tomb floor that robbers may have left behind unintentionally.[123]

Low-ranking aristocrats and local strongmen (*hojok*) were interred in shallow pit graves that were dug into the hillsides. In emulating the funeral customs of the elite ruling class, they too were buried with a range of artefacts, typically in the form of ceramics and metalwares, though of a lower quality of manufacture.[124] It was more challenging for tomb robbers to find pit tombs as their original mounds had long disappeared, and they were not marked in other ways.[125] The most detailed account in English of how such graves were discovered is that authored by John Platt (1864–1942), a New York–based collector of Korean and Chinese celadon ceramics. Born in Gloucester, England, Platt later

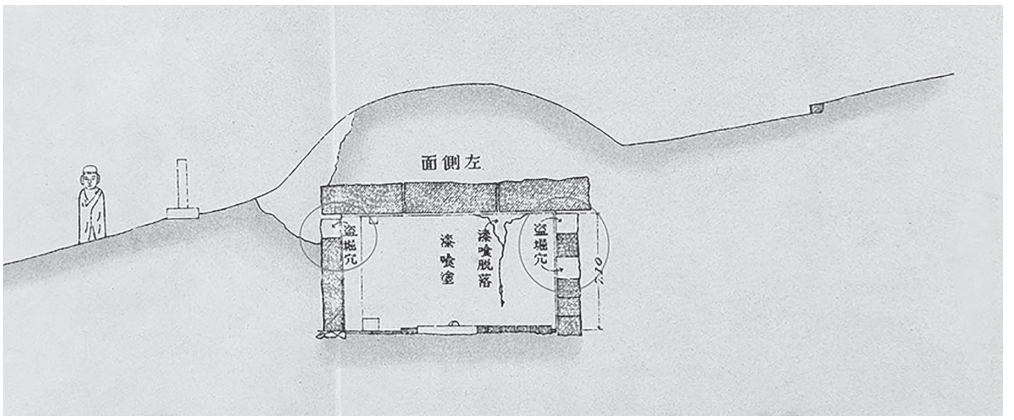

Figure 2.8 Interior of the tomb of King Myŏngjong (r. 1170–97), located near Kaesŏng. Tomb robbers' entry points are circled in red. From Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Taishō 5-nendo*, 507.

Source: Courtesy of Special Collections, SOAS Library, University of London.

moved to New York where he established an engineering firm. By the early 1910s, his collection of Koryŏ wares numbered several choice examples, and he was much invested in furthering knowledge on them, in part as he believed it could aid understanding of early Chinese ware.[126] It seems that Platt purchased his objects from local dealers, and it is probably them who informed him of the circumstances of their excavation. Like other American collectors of his time, Platt was likely a client of Yamanaka and Company, the most influential art dealership of Asian art in America.[127] Yamanaka Sadajirō 山中定次郎 (1866–1936), the founder of the company, was as invested in educating his customers, his staff, and himself about Asian arts and crafts, as he was in developing his business. The company frequently contributed to exhibitions, funded publications, and disseminated scholarship on Asian art to clients.[128] Ushikubo Daijirō 牛窪第二郎 ("D.J.R. Ushikubo") (dates unknown), the manager of the New York branch of Yamanaka, regularly provided his clients with translations of Japanese studies on Korean history and art. In 1909, he sent to Charles Freer a report titled "The City of Kaijo (Yung-ju) [Kaesŏng] and Its Vicinity" (see Figure 3.12), which explained that "seven ri from Kaijo stand small hills. It is from these hills that the unique and interesting excavations come to surface to please us."[129] It is not known if also Platt read the report, but he detailed the unearthing of ceramics from tombs as follows:

> In order to locate the tombs heavy sticks and pointed iron rods were used. By knocking on the ground it was often possible to tell that there was a hollow place beneath, and when the pointed iron rod was bored into the ground and went through into space it was known that a tomb would be found in this spot. In this manner many of the most valuable and beautiful specimens were broken, some of the thin pieces having small holes punched in the side.[130]

The expansion of the railway network led to further ceramic finds. In the late nineteenth century, Japan acquired the partially completed Seoul-Sinŭiju and Seoul-Inch'ŏn lines from French and American constructors as a strategic means to enhance its stronghold on

the peninsula. Linking the south-eastern coast with the northern border, the Seoul-Pusan and Seoul-Sinŭiju lines were completed in 1905. During their construction large numbers of tombs were disturbed and the contents unearthed, in part since the Seoul-Sinŭiju line ran through Kaesŏng.[131] Findings of ceramics confirmed the mistaken belief that they were manufactured in the city, resulting in Koryŏ celadon initially being referred to as "Songdo [Kaesŏng] pottery."[132] In reality, the Koryŏ royal kilns were located in the south-western tip of the peninsula, but that only came to light in the following decades when Japanese archaeologists carried out excavations of the sites.[133]

Once it became known that Koryŏ tombs contained large quantities of ceramics, they were targeted by grave robbers. Between 1897 and 1909, 33 cases relating to the robbery of cultural objects on the Korean peninsula were reported. 27 of them were carried out by Japanese residents.[134] American, European, and Japanese collectors were aware that the desecration of tombs was considered one of the most serious crimes in the Chosŏn penal code. According to Confucian philosophy, the upkeep of grave sites and the preservation of ancestral remains were crucial as they reinforced the sacred bond between individuals and their ancestors.[135] Platt and other Westerners knew that the plundering of tombs was illegal, though it did not deter them from purchasing the loot.[136] In fact, it became so well-known that celadon wares were dug up from graves that they were commonly referred to as "tomb" or "mortuary wares" in English writings in the early twentieth century.[137] Collectors claimed their right to the grave loot by arguing that the Koreans had a strong religious dislike of using objects that were buried with the dead and for this reason placed no great value on them.[138]

Collectors blamed the looting on the Koreans and the Japanese with Horace Allen asserting that "this Korai [Koryŏ] ware became so very valuable in Japan, that graves were opened in Korea to obtain a supply."[139] In contrast to the majority of American and British collectors who chose to stay silent on the matter of owning plundered grave goods, Allen openly addressed the issues involved:

> As to the question of the propriety of my owning property from such a source [Koryŏ royal tombs], I can only say that I have repeatedly shown it to Korean officials including the Minister for Foreign Affairs, with whom I have discussed the probability of its having been looted, and I have reluctantly offered to give it up, if desired, on full payment.[140]

However, Allen's offer was not accepted, and he was assured of his right to keep his extensive collection of Koryŏ ceramics. Allen's claim to the stolen goods suggests that whereas the desecration of grave sites was widely known to be illegal, the possession of looted items was a lesser defined legal issue, made even more challenging by the elite status of the individuals involved in their acquisition, from diplomats to members of the Chosŏn royal family.

From as early as 1884, celadon ceramics retrieved from the royal graves near Kaesŏng were presented as gifts from members of the royal household to foreigners residing in Seoul. One of the earliest instances of this dates to December 1884, when Kojong offered Allen a celadon bowl in gratitude for his medical treatment of Min Yŏng-ik, as mentioned earlier.[141] Kojong also gave a celadon bowl to Percival Lowell when he arrived in Seoul with members of the Chosŏn Special Mission in 1884 (Figure 2.9).[142] Min Yŏng-ik too gifted Koryŏ ceramics to favourite individuals. Sometime between 1885 and 1891, he presented to Judge Denny a melon-shaped celadon ewer which was said to have been

Figure 2.9 Celadon bowl with inlaid decoration. Koryŏ period, fourteenth century. Height 5 cm. MFA Boston, Morse Collection, Gift of Percival Lowell (acc. no. 01.8151).

Source: Photograph © 2024, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

taken from a royal grave near Kaesŏng.[143] Min's act of gifting an illegally unearthed artefact to a high-ranking member of the Korean judiciary is indicative of the legal uncertainties surrounding the ownership of tomb loot.

Over the course of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the approach to looted goods changed considerably on the peninsula. In the 1880s and 1890s, tomb robbers would quickly sell their loot to dealers in the fear of being discovered and penalised.[144] However, by the early twentieth century, art dealers openly traded in tomb loot and their transactions were widely acknowledged as being highly lucrative. In 1904, Yoshikura Ōsei 吉倉汪聖 (1868–1930; also known as Yoshikura Bonnō 吉倉凡農), a Japanese reporter who worked for media outlets on the peninsula, wrote a guide for setting up business in Korea. He, too, saw the antiques trade as good business, explaining that good quality Koryŏ ceramics could be bought cheaply in Korea for around 10 won but sold in America or Europe for several hundred won. He recommended aspiring entrepreneurs to utilise the opportunities available for making money, either by hiring a Korean to dig up graves or to do it directly. In his view, the latter could be achieved easily by buying land in the countryside, as it was cheap and was guaranteed to yield tombs.[145]

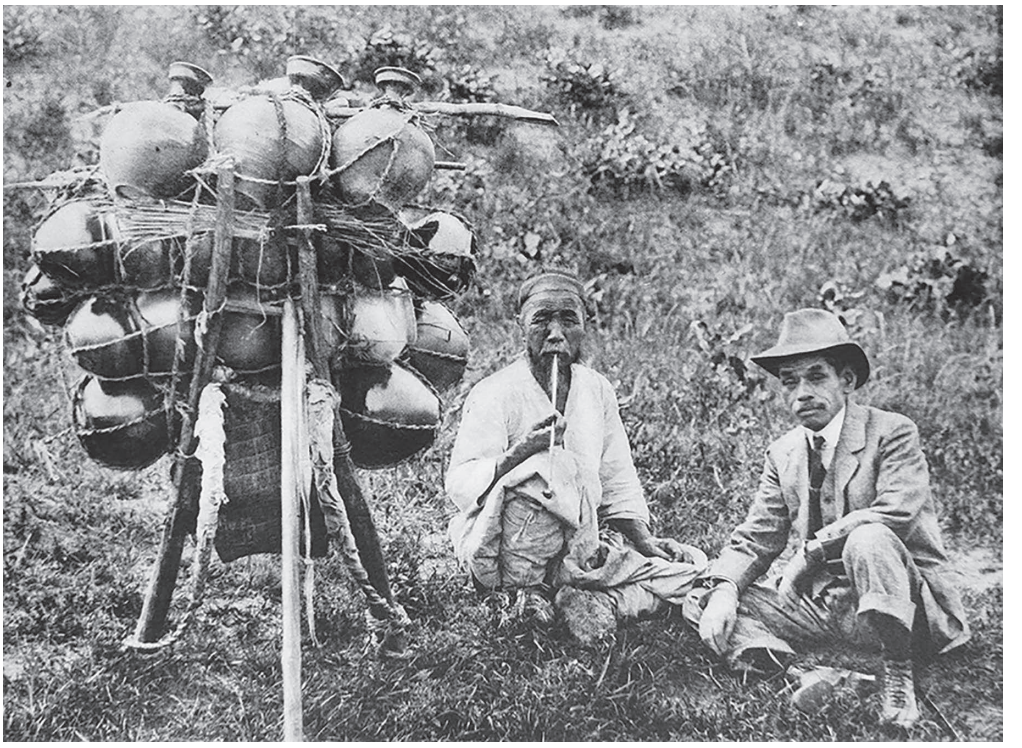

Figure 2.10 Yamanaka Sadajirō and a Korean peddler. Vicinity of Kaesŏng, 1912.
Source: Anonymous source.

Yoshikura's prediction of a lucrative antiques market in Korea came to be true. In the 1880s and 1890s the illicit trade in looted artefacts took place at night to avoid those involved being caught by the police, but in the following decades the growing demand for Koryŏ ceramics led to a more overt approach though the looting of tombs remained illegal.[146] Around 1906 Kondō Sagorō 近藤佐五郎 (1867–?) established the first antiques shop in central Seoul that openly traded in Koryŏ ceramics and over the following decades several other Japanese antique dealers followed in his footsteps.[147] The Yamanaka art dealership neither opened a branch nor an office in Korea.[148] However, according to the Japanese art dealer Sasaki Chōji 佐々木兆治 (1869–?), who was active in Korea around this time, the company exported large numbers of objects from Kaesŏng to America and Europe in the 1910s.[149] Yamanaka Sadajirō had a wide spanning global network of dealers who found objects for him on the receipt of a ten percent commission. It is likely that he operated in this way in Korea too.[150] He also frequently travelled to inspect potential sales items and in 1912 he visited Kaesŏng (Figure 2.10).

Kondō was neither a collector nor an art expert. Rather, like many other Japanese at this time, it seems that he arrived in Korea with the aim to seek out business opportunities. A pharmacist of training, Kondō settled in Pusan in 1892, where he worked for the public hospital. In 1897 he attempted to open a pharmacy business in Seoul but failed,

whereafter he turned to the antique market, no doubt lured by the profit that could be gained from doing so.[151] By the 1910s the material gains had from selling grave loot seemingly outweighed the risk of punishment. Writing in 1912, Platt summed up the situation in Korea as follows:

> Any desecration of the tombs being a capital offence, and always accomplished at much risk, very few specimens were obtained in this manner, the great scarcity of fine early examples [of Koryŏ celadon] continuing till we come to the time of the Russo-Japanese war, when the Japanese army made its headquarters in Korea. This was too good an opportunity to be lost, and Japanese and Koreans, who knew what was likely to be found in the tombs, systematically robbed them and obtained a large number of most valuable specimens. The most important excavations were made in the vicinity of Song-do [Kaesŏng] where the graves of the early kings and nobility of the Koryu [Koryŏ] dynasty were to be found. To-day most of the graves in this neighborhood have been plundered.[152]

Conclusion

The early acquisition histories of Koryŏ ceramics formed part of a complex and layered narrative associated with empire building, economic networks, and public displays of societal advancement that shaped the global landscape of the late nineteenth century. The Chosŏn dynasty was a nation in flux as Kojong sought to ascertain the independence of the peninsula within a rapidly changing region dominated by competing imperial powers. Having reached out to America, his attempts to secure political support ultimately failed, in part as the peninsula was seen to yield few, if any, lucrative opportunities for trade. Yet for collectors and museum institutions the forced opening of Korea's ports offered the chance to expand knowledge and collections of Korean artefacts. In keeping with nineteenth-century scientific practices, museums of ethnography in America and Europe quickly grasped the chance to collect artefacts that offered insight into Korean civilisation. Collectors and scholars of East Asian ceramics also greatly anticipated the advantages that direct access to the Korean peninsula could offer. Some dealers, such as Burton in England, foresaw the rise of a lucrative market and immediately despatched representatives to Korea to purchase sellable works of art.

Most of the items that were shipped to the West during these years were sold by dealers based on the East Coast of America, where several influential buyers of Korean ceramics lived, among them Greey, Waggaman, Pierpoint Morgan, De Jong, and Clarke. Their interest in Korean ceramics may be attributed to a broader fascination with the peninsula among the American public, fuelled by the American government's efforts to formalise relations with Chosŏn. The publication of books and articles on Korea by American authors, such as Griffis, Lowell, and Morse, also drew interest in Korea. However, uncertainties concerning the types and dates of Korean ceramic production constituted a significant challenge for collectors, and many doubted the authenticity of artefacts sold as Korean. Therein lay the appeal of ceramics acquired in Korea, particularly those unearthed from tombs, as it was believed they were of "undoubted" local manufacture. This shift coincided with the discovery of green-glazed celadon stonewares from Koryŏ tombs that steered collectors' attention away from Satsuma

and Raku wares that until then had frequently been categorised as "Korean" due to the belief that they were made by Korean potters in Japan. As a growing number of Koryŏ ceramic wares was unearthed on the peninsula, and they were traded and acquired by collectors based in Korea, Japan, America, and Europe, the term "Korean ceramics" was exclusively applied to those obtained on the peninsula. Collectors vied for the best pieces at the cheapest prices, and acquisitions of them therefore became associated with cultural privilege, financial acumen, and access to elite political and personal networks.

Notes

1 Donghyun Huh and Vladimir Tikhonov, "The Korean Courtiers' Observation Mission's Views on Meiji Japan and Projects of Modern State Building," *Korean Studies* 29 (2005): 35–37.
2 In 1867 Japan officially participated in its first international exposition when it sent artefacts to the Exposition Universelle in Paris. For a discussion of Japan's participation in world fairs in the 1800s, see Chelsea Foxwell, "Japan as Museum? Encapsulating Change and Loss in Late-Nineteenth-Century Japan," *Getty Research Journal* 1 (2009): 39–52.
3 Celadon is a term used for ceramics with a translucent, pale green glaze. One of the first explanations of the term was provided by *The Art Amateur* in 1880: "Celadon is a French word signifying "sea-green." Originally the term was applied to Oriental porcelain, of which the decoration was peculiar in having a pale sea-green color mixed with the paste before firing." "Correspondence," *Art Amateur* 2, no. 6 (May 1880): 132.
4 Young Ick Lew, "The Perception of the United States during the Enlightenment Period," in *Korean Perceptions of the United States: A History of Their Origins and Formation*, ed. Young Ick Lew, Byong-kie Song, Ho-min Yang, and Hy-sop Lim (Seoul: Jimoondang, 2006): 105.
5 Horace Newton Allen, *Things Korean: A Collection of Sketches and Anecdotes, Missionary and Diplomatic* (London: Fleming H. Revell, 1908), 218.
6 Donald M. Bishop, "Shared Failure: American Military Advisors in Korea, 1888–1896," *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch* 58 (1983): 53–76.
7 Robert Ray Swartout, Jr., "Owen Nickerson Denny and the International Rivalries in Korea, 1885–1890" (PhD diss., Washington State University, 1978), v–vi.
8 Allen's involvement in Korean affairs spanned nearly two decades. In 1884, he arrived as a missionary. Then in 1887, the Chosŏn government decided to establish a legation in the US and Allen was appointed its first Secretary. He subsequently left Korea to take up the post but in 1889, he was recalled to Korea to resume his mission activities. However, the following year he was appointed Secretary of the American legation in Seoul. In 1897 he was promoted to United States Minister Resident and Consul-General. When the post was upgraded in 1901 to Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, Allen was appointed and held it until 1905. Email correspondence with James E. Hoare (British Chargé d'Affaires in Pyongyang, 2001–2002), November 20, 2023. See also In-sok Yeo and Do Heum Yoon, "Allen (Horace N. Allen, 安連, 1858–1932)," *Yonsei Medical Journal* 58, no. 4 (July 2017): 685–88.
9 George M. McCune and John A Harrison, introduction to *Korean-American Relations: Documents Pertaining to the Far Eastern Diplomacy of the United States, Vol. 1, The Initial Period, 1883–1886*, ed. George M. McCune and John A Harrison (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951), 5–6.
10 Gary D. Walter, "The Korean Special Mission to the United States of America in 1883," *Journal of Korean Studies* 1, no. 1 (July–December 1969): 100.
11 Chŏng Ho-gyŏng, "Han'guk kŭndaegi misul yongŏ ŭi toip kwa kŭ chedojŏk inshik kaehanggi pangnamhoe kyŏnghŏm ŭl chungshim ŭro" [Introduction of the Term *Fine Art* and Its Social and Historical Cognition in Korean Modern Period: Focus on the Experiences of World Exhibitions During the Open-Port Period], *Hyŏndae misulsa yŏn'gu* 26 (2009): 12.
12 "The Coreans Entertained," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (New York), October 4, 1883.
13 Abbott Lawrence Lowell, *Biography of Percival Lowell* (New York: Macmillan, 1935), 8–12.
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22 Walter, "Korean Special Mission," 115.
23 Hong Yŏng-sik was sentenced to suicide by poison. Sŏ Kwang-bŏm and Pyŏn Su fled into exile, first to Japan and later to the United States.
24 Noble, "Korean Mission," 18–19.
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30 Norton, *Official Catalogue,* 315.
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36 "The Exhibition in Corea," *The New York Times*, December 16, 1883.
37 "Foreign Summary, Various Items," *Boston Evening Transcript*, October 25, 1883.
38 "Goods for the Corean Exhibition," *The New York Times*, March 13, 1884. See also "The Exhibition in Corea," *The New York Times*; "An Exhibition in Corea – American Manufacturers Invited to Participate," *The Honolulu Advertiser* (HI), March 12, 1884. For further discussion of the exhibition, see Yong-sin Park, "The Chosŏn Industrial Exposition of 1915" (PhD diss., Binghamton University, 2019), 50–52.

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49 Nelson, *Korea and the Old Orders*, 172–73. See also Frederic A. Sharf, "Edward Sylvester Morse: An American Abroad, 1882–1883," in *The Korean Collection of the Peabody Essex Museum*, ed. Peabody Essex Museum Collections (Salem, MA: Peabody Essex Museum, 1997), 39.
50 Möllendorf to GRASSI Museum für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig, August 15, 1883, in *Korean Art Collection: GRASSI Museum für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig Germany,* ed. Kungnip munhwajae yŏn'guso [National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage] (Daejeon: Kungnip munhwajae yŏn'guso, 2013), 644–45. See also Dietmar Grundmann, "Die Koreasamlung des Grassi Museums für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig" [The Korean Collection of the Grassi Museum of Ethnography Leipzig], in *Entdeckung Korea!: Schätze aus deutschen Museen* [Korea Rediscovered!: Treasures from German Museums], ed. The Korea Foundation and Linden Museum Stuttgart (Seoul: Korea Foundation, 2011), 127–31.
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52 Sharf, "Edward Sylvester Morse," 33–35, 37.
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141 In a diary entry dated December 26, 1884, Allen describes the many gifts, including the bowl, he received from Kojong in return for his medical treatment of Min Yŏng-ik. Reprinted in Kim Wŏn-mo, *Allen ŭi ilgi* [Allen's diary] (Seoul: Tan'guk taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu, 1991), 419.

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144 Warner, "Kōrai Celadon in America," 67.

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151 Son Yŏng-ok, *Misul sijang ŭi t'ansaeng*, 130.

152 Platt, "Ancient Korean Tomb Wares," 229.

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3 Early American Collectors of Korean Ceramics

Introduction

By the 1890s, Korea was no longer the unknown "other." An increasing number of Americans and Europeans, particularly British individuals, worked in Seoul and elsewhere on the peninsula. Additionally, travellers began to arrive from America and Europe. With the opening of Korea's ports, it became possible to purchase antiques in Korea, and over the following decades a rising number of artefacts were acquired by a close-knit group of diplomats, missionaries, and others who resided on the peninsula during this time. Their collections and writings on Korean art significantly advanced the field. In contrast to collectors of the 1870s and 1880s, whose acquisitions of Korean art varied in type and quality, by the early twentieth century a growing number of individuals turned to finely potted, glazed ceramics from the Koryŏ dynasty that came on the market in increasing numbers. This shift resulted in the formation of substantial collections of such types of ceramics that furthered later understandings of the history and cultural heritage of the peninsula.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, American collectors took a leading interest in Korean art, rivalled only by their Japanese counterparts. Noteworthy among them were Charles Freer, Thomas E. Waggaman, Thomas B. Clarke, Samuel Twyford Peters (1854–1921), and Rufus E. Moore (1840–1918). Their collecting activities and knowledge of the objects built on those of earlier American collectors, such as Horace Allen in Seoul and Charles A. Dana in New York, who were among the first to actively seek out Koryŏ ceramics when they first became available on the art market. This new group of collectors were wealthy businessmen whose acquisition activities significantly impacted the Korean art market and influenced early exhibitions and scholarship of Korean ceramics. Freer is particularly interesting as not only was he one of the first collectors in America to build a substantial collection of Korean art, he was also the most ambitious in doing so. Formed when large numbers of Koryŏ ceramics became available for purchase, Freer established a collection that by the time of his death was impossible for others to emulate in quality and size. In the same way in which Allen and Dana set the standard in Korean ceramic collecting in the late nineteenth century, Freer's purchases shaped the Korean art market in America in the early twentieth century.

The objects that Freer donated in his name to the American nation and the archive that he left behind demonstrate how his taste in Korean art changed from rustic tea wares, favoured by Japanese tea drinkers, to glossy green-glazed stonewares from the Koryŏ dynasty. Freer was also a meticulous record-keeper. In his archive are invoices and sales vouchers from dealers, as well as letters, pocket diaries, draft inventories, and other

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documents related to his collecting activities. They evidence that Freer spent increasing sums on choice vessels, which he selected according to widely established criteria based on various assumptions on their glaze colour and glossiness, shapes, and designs. Through his networks of dealers, collectors, and scholars, he also enabled groundbreaking scholarship of them. As he carefully and deliberately chose artefacts that would ensure his legacy as a leading expert of Koryŏ ceramics, his acquisition activities offer important insights into the growth of this increasingly competitive field of collecting.

This chapter focuses on the collecting activities of Allen, Dana, and Freer, whose lives and acquisition activities intersected in various ways, giving rise to the formation of some of the best private collections of Korean ceramics outside Korea and Japan. Their pioneering acquisitions were determined by the availability of wares, art market prices and scholarship, resulting in collections that encapsulate emerging trends in the Korean art market. Their taste for Koryŏ "tomb wares" reflects how the discoveries of such wares on the peninsula coincided with increasingly nuanced understandings of East Asian ceramics resulting in a growing number of collectors turning their interest to glazed stonewares from Korea and China.

The Collecting Activities of Horace N. Allen

The dominance of American collectors on the Korean art market can be attributed to the US government's interest in the peninsula. In 1882, America was the second foreign nation to successfully negotiate a treaty of trade and commerce with the Chosŏn government. Though the American government gradually became less invested in Korea mainly due to disappointing trade prospects, to the American people "Uncle Sam [held] the key of fate" of the Korean peninsula, as claimed by the *Pittsburgh Dispatch* in 1890.[1] It was well-known that the king of Korea was supported by advisors from America, among them William Dye, Owen Nickerson Denny, and Horace Allen, as mentioned in Chapter 2. Popular volumes on Korea by American authors, such as William Elliot Griffis and Percival Lowell, brought additional attention to the peninsula.[2] Similarly, American museums were quick to despatch staff to Seoul, who were tasked with acquiring Korean objects that could present comprehensive insight into Korean life, heritage, and social customs. America was also the destination of Korea's first formal visit to a Western nation, and the Foreign Exhibition in Boston became the first World's Fair to include a display of Korean artefacts, as discussed in Chapter 1.

In the late nineteenth century, Seoul emerged as the hub of an international network of Americans, Europeans, and Japanese, all competing for influence and dominance on the peninsula. Art became an integral component of the political landscape as individuals asserted their position in Korea through the acquisition and ownership of artefacts, including Koryŏ ceramics. Some collected art for personal reasons, while others acquired artefacts for museums as a way to enhance public awareness of Korea. Meanwhile, Kojong and other elite members of the royal household sent gifts of ceramics, screens, and other items to diplomats in the hope of forging alliances.

Horace Allen stands out for his tenacious efforts to form a substantial collection of Koryŏ ceramics enabled by his privileged position in Korea. Over a period of 14 years, Allen's high social standing and political connections gave him unique access to the best examples of recently unearthed wares, enabling him to secure a collection which he proclaimed Japanese experts "pronounced . . . to be the best they have seen."[3] Allen also

played a leading role in introducing Koryŏ ceramics to America through his involvement in the display of Korean artefacts at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago and the US National Museum in the early 1890s.[4] In his aim to build a collection that rivalled those formed by Japanese collectors, Allen's focus was different from other Western diplomats who acquired objects when stationed in Seoul in the late nineteenth century. Among them was the German diplomat Paul Georg von Möllendorf, who served as First Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs in the early 1880s. In contrast to Allen, Möllendorf did not present himself as an expert of Korean art. Instead, he focused on contemporary objects that reflected the everyday lives of Korean people and acquired large numbers of such items for the Leipzig Museum of Ethnography in Germany and the Peabody Academy of Sciences in Salem, Massachusetts, as explored in Chapter 2. British diplomats who served in Korea in the 1880s, such as Thomas Watters (1840–1901), William George Aston (1841–1911), and William R. Carles (1848–1929), neither aimed to form personal art collections, nor did they collect for specific museum institutions. Rather, they purchased a broad range of artefacts, most of them of contemporary manufacture, which they either sold or donated to institutions in Britain, including the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge and the British Museum and the V&A Museum in London.[5]

Having arrived in Seoul in the winter of 1884, Allen soon learnt that Koryŏ ceramics were valued highly and realised there was much competition for choice examples. Shortly after his arrival, he had the opportunity to buy a number of Koryŏ vessels for "a mere nominal sum."[6] However, being unaware of their worth, he did not make the purchase, and they were instead acquired by an unnamed buyer who later sent them to Tiffany & Co. in New York. When visiting New York in 1893, Allen went to the shop in the hope of buying at least one of the vessels and claimed he was willing to pay $500 gold for it, but they were not to be found.[7] By then Allen had begun to build a collection of Koryŏ ceramics, having been offered a celadon bowl by Kojong in December 1884 in appreciation of his medical treatment of Min Yŏng-ik, who was injured in the Kapshin Coup (Figure 2.5).[8] That Allen at the time knew little of ancient Korean ceramics is evident from his initial reaction to the object:

> It was understood I would receive a costly gift. I received a high decoration and a little gray green bowl, carefully wrapped up and encased in a lacquered box. I thought it must be a joke until informed by the then U.S. Minister [Lucius H. Foote] that it was of this priceless Korai [Koryŏ] ware.[9]

Spurred on by Kojong's gift, Allen began to acquire Koryŏ ceramics in a systematic and ambitious manner. He built the main part of his collection between 1884 and 1898, when, according to Allen, social unrest and growing competition for newly unearthed wares increased their availability on the art market.[10] Particularly fortuitous was a call from the Police Department in Seoul, sometime between 1894 and 1897, requesting Allen to value a collection of ceramics that had been seized from some Japanese who had been caught plundering one of the royal tombs near Kaesŏng. It seems that Allen did not acquire the wares as they were all broken. However, following this incident Allen started obtaining vessels directly from a Japanese vendor, giving him the advantage of selecting the best objects before others.[11] As mentioned in Chapter 2, Allen was clearly aware that the vessels were looted from tombs but was not deterred by this. Rather, he regretted not having taken advantage of the availability of Koryŏ ceramics sooner, acknowledging that doing so would have enhanced his position as a collector.

By 1901 Allen owned at least 75 Koryŏ ceramics and proclaimed to "have the reputation of knowing [the collection] well."[12] Yet Allen was different to Dana and Freer, who took much pleasure in examining their vessels and arranging them in new and interesting ways, often in the company of friends and business associates. No reports exist of Allen having played with his pieces in this way. Rather, he seems to have been driven largely by monetary gain and the opportunity to create a personal legacy. He placed his acumen as a collector on par with that of the Japanese elite by proudly announcing that experts from Japan travelled to Seoul to see his collection.[13]

Knowing that wealthy collectors, such as Dana, were willing to pay large sums for choice examples, in 1901 he prepared to sell the collection. The increasingly unstable situation in Korea appears also to have been an impetus behind this decision. In July that year, in a letter to his friend Jacob Sloat Fassett (1853–1924), an American businessman and politician, Allen voiced his concerns of keeping the vessels in Seoul, stating that the city was "such an insecure place." Korea was still recovering from the First Sino-Japanese War, and Allen anticipated further trouble ahead:

> There is going to be a rather difficult time here sooner or later. The Koreans are getting the idea that they are being robbed by foreigners and there are foreigners enough here to foment such ideas – people have nothing to lose and much to gain from disorder.[14]

A few months earlier, Allen had informed a select group of friends and colleagues, all of whom collected various kinds of artefacts, that his ceramics were for sale. To the American diplomat William Woodville Rockhill (1854–1914), he wrote the following:

> I am going to make some money now too. I have the finest collection of white and celadon Korean pottery of the period prior to the 14th century, that has been made. I was surprised by receiving an offer of $10,000 for it. This has made me "cockey" and I am having an illustrated list made of it and am going to send it to some of the collectors at home, with the hopes of getting more. I will send you a copy when it is ready.[15]

He subsequently compiled a 15-page report in which he described the vessels and detailed how he had acquired them. A few weeks later, he sent the manuscript to Rockhill, saying "probably I will let it go as it is too valuable to keep in this frail legation [in Seoul]. They are absolutely not to be had anymore for any price."[16] However, Rockhill seems to not have been interested as the sale did not materialise. In late March, Allen wrote to Sir William Van Horne (1843–1915), an American-born Canadian railway industrialist and collector of Western and Asian art in Montreal, saying that the collection was for sale.[17] He sent identical letters to Baron Speck von Sternburg (1852–1908), then Consul-General of Germany in Calcutta and a well-known collector of Western and Asian art;[18] the diplomat John C. Bancroft (1822–1907), who was a collector of paintings by the American painter James McNeill Whistler (1834–1903) in Boston; Jeptha Homer Wade II (1857–1926), a prominent industrialist and collector in Cleveland; and a fourth individual in Boston, who appears to be John G. Johnson (1841–1917), who was a lawyer and collector of mainly European paintings.[19] Yet by July, Allen was still without a buyer though he confided to Fassett that an agent had approached him, with the offer of selling the collection for $12,000, including a $2,000 commission fee. However, that too was unsuccessful, and on his wife's advice, he decided to keep the collection in anticipation of its value increasing.[20]

In part, the lack of buyers may have been due to Allen's aim to sell the collection intact rather than piecemeal. Moreover, Allen seems to have targeted only potential buyers in America and Europe, all of whom were of high social standing. In his correspondence, Allen makes no mention of offering the collection to Japanese buyers, though he knew that many Japanese residents in Korea acquired ceramics as actively as himself. Among them was the diplomat Yamayoshi Moriyoshi 山吉盛義 (1859–1912), who worked in the Japanese legation in Seoul between 1896 and 1899.[21] In 1899, Yamayoshi opened in Tokyo the first-ever exhibition of ceramics from pre-Koryŏ and Koryŏ times selected from his own collection. The following year, he published a catalogue of the artefacts, marking one of the earliest studies on Korean ceramics.[22] It is challenging to account for Allen's seeming reluctance to sell to Japanese buyers, but it may be attributed to his personal alliances with the Korean royal family at a time when the Japanese were gaining political influence on the peninsula.

Korean Ceramics on the American Art Market

Viewed in context of the Korean art market of this time, Allen's assessment of the cultural and monetary value of his collection was accurate. He correctly ascertained that there was no comparable collection in either private or public ownership in America and Europe. At this time, most American collections of Korean ceramics included an array of objects of questionable Korean manufacture. Few of them were glossy, celadon ceramics from the Koryŏ dynasty of the kind that Allen owned and which were beginning to attract the attention of collectors such as Dana, Waggaman, and Freer. At a time when many struggled with correctly identifying Korean ceramics, Allen's insistence that his vessels were all unearthed from tombs on the peninsula alleviated doubts as to their Korean manufacture and made the collection even more attractive. Its price was reasonable too. Averaging $133 per vessel, it was even cheap when considering that a few years earlier, leading collectors in New York had paid up to $350 for Korean vessels previously belonging to Dana. Similarly, at the sale of Waggaman's collection in 1905, Koryŏ celadon wares sold for as much as $180, as discussed in Chapter 2.

Allen may not have been familiar with these sales, seeing that he lived in Seoul. However, he was aware that American collectors were willing to pay high prices for Koryŏ wares, among them Dana, whom he met at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. Having been appointed Honorary Commissioner to the fair by Kojong, Allen oversaw the Korean exhibit and among the objects he brought to Chicago was a Koryŏ celadon bowl.[23] It was singled out in the official catalogue as "belonging to the king, and more than 500 years old, of a greenish color, delicate texture, and richly polished and decorated on the outside."[24] According to Allen, when Dana saw the celadon bowl, he "gladly paid $25 gold for it," despite it being broken.[25]

Dana was known to be one of America's leading collectors of ceramics. In depth and quality his collection was argued to be comparable to that of Augustus Wollaston Franks in London—which was later acquired by the British Museum—the Grandidier collection at the Louvre in Paris, and the Johanneum collection in Dresden, Germany.[26] During the American Civil War, Charles Dana served as Assistant Secretary of War, but it was when he took up the post as editor and part-owner of *The Sun* newspaper, published in New York, that he made his fortune. Dana was, in the auctioneer Thomas Ellis Kirby's (1846–1924) words, "one of many intelligent men who found relief from the worry of affairs in a hobby and was able to afford expensive ones."[27] Ceramic collecting was Dana's main hobby, though he also acquired European paintings by Gainsborough, Daubigny,

Millet, and Rousseau, among other artists. Like many of his contemporaries, he seems to have bought most of his East Asian artefacts from dealers and auctions in America. For example, he purchased ceramics from Brinkley's collection, when it was sold by Greey in New York.[28]

Dana earned respect for his meticulous and persistent approach to acquiring vessels, establishing himself as one of the most knowledgeable collectors of ceramics of his time.[29] Similar to Freer, he derived great pleasure from his objects and dedicated considerable time to showcasing them in various ways.[30] In the words of his friend and biographer James Harrison Wilson (1837–1925):

> [Dana] loved to play with these beautiful things, to rearrange them, to make new combinations and color schemes, and to discover new beauties and unsuspected harmonies, as a happy child loves to play with flowers; and no person could see him in the bright morning light handling and caressing his treasures without becoming interested in them as well as in their fascinated owner, or leave them without the conviction that his love for them was as simple and unaffected as it was deep and abiding.[31]

Dana's ceramic acquisitions were wide spanning and reflected his interest in developing a comprehensive collection of East Asian ceramics, the like of which in America was only matched by that of William Thompson Walters (1819–94) in Baltimore.[32] Dana's keenness to understand the development and spread of ceramics across regions, particularly in relation to the Maritime Silk Route that connected China, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, the Arabian Peninsula, and parts of Africa, led to purchases of early pottery from the Malabar Coast and the east coast of Africa.[33] However his main interest lay in Chinese ceramics. Like other Western collectors of his time, he acquired porcelains from the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1912) dynasties, such as enamelled and blue and white wares, which were fashionable in the nineteenth century.[34] Yet he is also noteworthy for his pioneering interest in early glazed stonewares, when they were yet to gain attention from Western collectors. It led to a collection that was especially rich in celadon wares, with examples of thickly glazed vessels being said to be among Dana's favourite objects.[35] No doubt it was this interest that drove him to augment the collection with Koryŏ ceramics. Having met Allen at the Columbian Exposition and knowing that such pieces were unearthed on the peninsula, Dana asked Allen to negotiate a collection for him.[36] In Seoul Allen did occasionally purchase ceramics and other artefacts on behalf of friends and colleagues, but he makes no mention of having agreed to Dana's request.[37]

In 1898, a year after his death, Dana's estate was put up for auction by the American Art Association in New York. The sale of his art collection brought close to $195,000, with the bidding and high prices making the auction a huge sensation.[38] At the time it was celebrated as "one of the most successful art sales of the world" and was noted for attracting collectors from abroad and all parts of America.[39] Among them were the American businessman and newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst (1863–1951), the New York–based art dealer Knoedler & Co., and the collector and dealer of Islamic art, Dikran Kelekian (1867–1951). As was typical of this time, Chinese imperial blue and white, and famille rose from the Kangxi and Qianlong reigns fetched the highest prices of $3,000–$5,000, signifying their continuing popularity among Western collectors.

Thirteen ceramics in the sale were sold as Korean. Judging from the descriptions alone, it is challenging to assess whether they were indeed made in Korea or not, as it was still common to label wares made in Japan by potters of Korean descent as "Korean." Nor is it

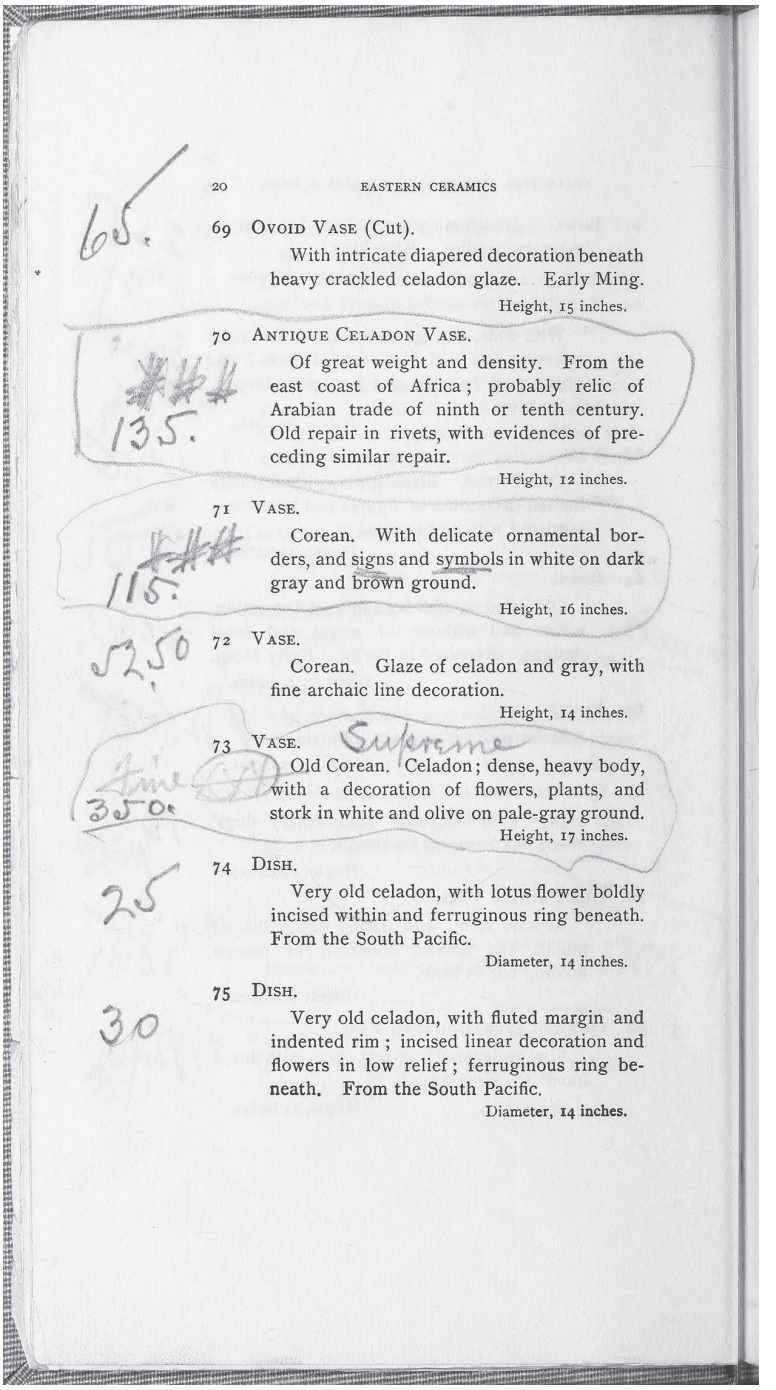
known if any of them were glazed stonewares from the Koryŏ dynasty, though several were described as celadon and appear to have been decorated with typical Koryŏ motifs such as plants and storks. The cost of the Korean ceramics was like that of the Chinese and Japanese stonewares and ranged from $15 to $350, with the highest-priced lot being a dense and heavy-bodied celadon vase "with a decoration of flowers, plants, and stork in white and olive on pale-gray ground."[40] It was purchased by the art dealer Rufus E. Moore, who is best known for having established the American Art Gallery with James F. Sutton (1843–1915).[41] At $115, the second-highest-priced Korean ware was a celadon vase "with signs and symbols in white on dark gray and brown ground," which was acquired by Louisine Havemeyer (1855–1929).[42] She was the wife of Henry Osborne Havemeyer (1847–1907), who was president of the American Sugar Refining Company. The couple were avid collectors of European and Asian art, amassing a collection that included 2,000 objects from Korea, Japan, and China across various mediums.[43]

In a world dominated by male collectors, the auction is noteworthy for having attracted several female bidders, among them Louisine's younger sister Adaline Mapes Elder Peters. She bought one Korean celadon vase at the price of $52.50.[44] Adaline was married to Samuel Twyford Peters, who made his fortune in coal. A trustee of the Metropolitan Museum and a keen collector of Chinese jades and ceramics from China and Korea, in the 1910s he lent and donated large parts of his collection to the Met.[45] In 1915 alone he presented 54 Korean vessels to the museum.[46] Peters was a close friend of Freer, and they shared an interest in Korean art centred on Koryŏ celadon. Other buyers of Dana's Korean ceramics included Hearst, the British stained-glass company Cottier & Co., as well as Thomas B. Clarke and Charles W. Gould (1849–1931), who were collectors based in New York.

Freer attended both the preview and the sale and took a keen interest in the Korean ceramics. His annotated copy of the sales catalogue suggests that he closely examined several of them and judged them to be good, fine, very fine, or even "supreme," as in the case of the above-mentioned vase bought by Moore (Figure 3.1).[47] Freer purchased 18 ceramics at the auction, including five vessels identified as Korean. Among them was a stoneware cup with copper pigment under a clear glaze. Sold as "Old Corean" and described in the sales catalogue as having an "archaic decoration in faint gray enamels," Freer felt it was "very fine" and bought it for $27 (Figure 3.2).[48] However, as was frequently the case of the Korean ceramics that Freer purchased around this time, its place of manufacture was later reassessed. It was identified as Japanese Seto ware when it was displayed in an exhibition organised by the Japan Society in New York in 1914.[49] Later, Morse admitted that he had "no idea where it was made-can't tell what it is."[50] Conversely, a small stoneware bowl identified as "early Japanese," which Freer bought for $9, Morse later believed was Korean though it is unclear why. It entered Freer's collection as early Iga ware from Japan but is now thought to be of Chinese manufacture from the Sui dynasty (581–618).[51]

Freer's Collecting of Korean Art in the 1890s

Freer's acquisitions of Dana's Korean vessels signal his growing interest in early East Asian glazed stonewares that was to dominate his ceramic acquisitions. He was among the first Western collectors to take an active interest in Korean art, and by the time of his death he had amassed nearly 500 artefacts, including approximately 130 Koryŏ and 80 Chosŏn ceramics.[52] In terms of when, what, and from whom he made his purchases,



20 EASTERN CERAMICS

65.

69 OVOID VASE (Cut).
With intricate diapered decoration beneath heavy crackled celadon glaze. Early Ming.
Height, 15 inches.

70 ANTIQUE CELADON VASE.
Of great weight and density. From the east coast of Africa; probably relic of Arabian trade of ninth or tenth century. Old repair in rivets, with evidences of preceding similar repair.
Height, 12 inches.

135.

71 VASE.
Corean. With delicate ornamental borders, and signs and symbols in white on dark gray and brown ground.
Height, 16 inches.

115.

250

72 VASE.
Corean. Glaze of celadon and gray, with fine archaic line decoration.
Height, 14 inches.

73 VASE.
Old Corean. Celadon; dense, heavy body, with a decoration of flowers, plants, and stork in white and olive on pale-gray ground.
Height, 17 inches.

350.

74 DISH.
Very old celadon, with lotus flower boldly incised within and ferruginous ring beneath. From the South Pacific.
Diameter, 14 inches.

25

75 DISH.
Very old celadon, with fluted margin and indented rim; incised linear decoration and flowers in low relief; ferruginous ring beneath. From the South Pacific.
Diameter, 14 inches.

30

Figure 3.1 Charles Freer's annotated copy of *Eastern Ceramics*, by American Art Association, p. 20.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art Library, Freer Sackler Main Collection, Smithsonian Libraries (Auction 011).

Figure 3.2 Stoneware cup with copper decoration. Edo period, seventeenth to eighteenth century.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Collection, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1898.39.

Freer's acquisitions mirrored broader trends in the Korean art market. His initial purchases were steered by Japanese collectors' interests in Korean tea bowls but hindered by the general lack of in-depth knowledge of Korean ceramic heritage. However, in the early years of the twentieth century, he turned towards glossy celadon wares of the Koryŏ dynasty that by then had begun to attract the attention of Japanese as well as Western collectors, among them his friends and acquaintances in New York, such as Mr. and Mrs. Samuel T. Peters and Mr. and Mrs. Havemeyer. Always ahead of his rivals, he sought out artefacts that would enhance his collection and build his reputation as an arbiter of taste. As the competition for good Korean ceramics grew concurrently with Freer's ambition to build the best Korean collection in existence, his spending on choice

artefacts increased. Between 1896, when he bought his first Korean bowl, and until 1918, when he made his last Korean acquisitions, Freer spent $14,450.75 on Korean ceramics.[53]

Born in Kingston, New York, in 1854, Freer left school at the age of 14 to begin work in a cement factory. At the age of 18 he took up a position as clerk and later paymaster at Ulster and Delaware Railroad company, where Colonel Frank Hecker (1846–1927) was superintendent. His encounter with Hecker was to be extremely fortuitous as the two later became business partners and succeeded in building a successful company that manufactured railroad rolling stock. Having amassed a considerable fortune, Freer retired already in 1898, whereafter he devoted himself to his art collection. Hecker, who retired from the company in the same year, continued to work closely with Freer as his business partner, mentor, and friend.[54]

Freer's venture into art collecting began in the 1880s with European and American prints. To this he added etchings by Whistler, having been introduced to the artist's work by Howard Mansfield (1887–1938), an American collector and lawyer based in New York. Freer's meeting with Whistler in London in 1890 and the close friendship they established steered his attention to East Asian, and especially Japanese, art. His interest in Korean ceramics likely evolved from this. His studies on Japanese art would have alerted him to the seminal role that Korean artists were thought to have played in the establishment of pottery manufacture and other art forms in Japan. Art dealers of Japanese descent who frequently supplied Freer with artefacts also encouraged his acquisitions of Korean ceramics, especially tea wares, which had been prized in Japan for decades.

Freer became fascinated by Japanese tea bowls during his first trip to Japan in 1895.[55] On this four-month journey, he was introduced to the *chanoyu*, or what he called the "old time tea ceremony," and it left a lasting impression. In Kyoto, Freer found the Ginkakuji temple, including the Dōjinsai tearoom in the Tōgudō, "very very interesting," as suggested by the notes he made in his guidebook. In the book, Freer circled the explanation of the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa 足利義政 (1436–90) having practiced the tea ceremony at the temple, and on another page he drew a sketch of the tearoom.[56] He also attended a performance of the tea ceremony, led by the 16-year-old daughter of a "leading citizen of Yamada." An enthralled Freer wrote to Hecker that "the room specially built for the purpose, the artistic implements used, the Kakemonos hung – and the costume of the girl filled the place with an air of refinement and solemnity too charming and too reverent for my pen."[57]

It seems that Freer did not engage in an in-depth study of the tea ceremony, its history, and ritual practice, but he developed a fascination for the glaze colours and textures of tea-related ceramics.[58] Upon returning to Detroit, he began to acquire tea bowls in increasing numbers, the first being a red Raku glazed ware which he bought from Takayanagi Tōzō 高柳陶造 (dates unknown) in New York in October 1895.[59] Takayanagi was a small-scale dealer of Japanese art from whom Freer acquired a range of artefacts, predominantly ceramics, between 1887 and 1902.[60] However, Freer's lengthy stay in Japan spurred a want for in-depth knowledge of Japanese art, and he increasingly turned to well connected and more respected dealers, such Matsuki Bunkyō 松木文恭 (1867–1940) in Boston and Yamanaka and Co. in New York for advice and guidance.[61] In October 1896, Freer wrote to Matsuki: "I wish I knew more of the potter's art. Its fascination steadily increases, and then of course comes the desire for knowledge."[62] Freer purchased his first pieces from Matsuki in 1896.[63] By then the 29-year-old Matsuki had already established himself as an expert dealer of Japanese art in America. A few years earlier the Japanese Government appointed him principal advisor for the selection of commercial and fine art artefacts to

be exhibited in 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition, and in the "commercial world of New England, Matsuki had a reputation as a clever salesman, successful businessman and immaculate dresser."[64]

However, it was the Yamanaka art dealership that exerted most influence on his collecting of East Asian art. Founded in New York in January 1895 by the Osaka-born Yamanaka Sadajirō, who arrived in America a few months prior, the company became a major source through which Freer acquired his Asian artefacts, including most of his Korean pieces. Established on Twenty-seventh Street near Broadway but later moved to Fifth Avenue, the New York branch was managed by Ushikubo Daijirō, with whom Freer developed a close friendship.[65] Extending beyond a business relationship, they would at times exchange gifts, and Ushikubo often sent Freer catalogues and translations of recent research on East Asian art, including Korean ceramics. In October 1895, Freer made his first purchase from Yamanaka's New York branch when he bought a group of Japanese prints for $558.[66] It was also Yamanaka and Co. that in December 1896 sold Freer his first "Korean" objects: a flower-patterned stoneware bowl and a white stoneware bowl with a clear glaze priced at $5 and $15, respectively (Figure 3.3).[67] When he acquired them, Freer's East Asian pottery collection numbered around 45 vessels, most of them Japanese.[68] Freer felt that the white bowl was "good – but not first class." Yamanaka and Co. did not identify its date of manufacture, but it is now believed to be from the mid to late 1500s.[69] The flower-patterned bowl was sometime later attributed to Japan, though it is currently thought to be from the Qing dynasty.[70]

Figure 3.3 Bowl, sold as Korean, later re-attributed as Qing period. Cizhou-type ware, eighteenth to nineteenth century. 6.9 × 15.8 cm.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Collection, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1896.57.

The bowls signal Freer's burgeoning interest in East Asian ceramics that was to become a lifelong fascination. In a letter to Rufus Moore, Freer wrote, "Your reference to the delights to be found in the domain of the potter's art have been as yet only partially realized by me, but I must agree with you that there are few mediums surpassing it in fascination."[71] Freer was mainly drawn to the colour and overall aesthetic appeal of the wares, as reflected in his detailed and frequently edited descriptions of them in the Pottery List, the original inventory of Freer's ceramic collection. In the case of the Qing bowl, he felt that "pinkish grey" was insufficient and replaced it with "pinkish yellow glaze," believing this to be a more accurate description of the object.[72]

In 1897 Freer purchased from Yamanaka ten tea bowls at the price of $50 for each. They were said to have been in the possession of the "Prince of Kaga," presumably a reference to the head of the influential Maeda clan of Kaga in Kanazawa, one of the most powerful samurai families of the Edo period (1603–1868).[73] Eight of the bowls were sold as Korean and the remaining two as Hagi ware (Japanese ceramics that resemble Korean ones) (Figure 3.4). Such bowls had been popular in Japan since the early Chosŏn dynasty, and it is no coincidence that it was dealers of Japanese descent, such as Yamanaka and Matsuki, who directed Freer's attention to them. In Japan, such bowls had been referred to as *Kōrai jawan* 高麗茶碗 (litt. Korean tea bowls) since the early sixteenth century.[74] It is now known that initially they were made on the peninsula at provincial kilns as tableware for Korean consumers, but from the late 1500s they were produced by order for

Figure 3.4 Porcelain bowl ("Katade" type). Chosŏn period, late sixteenth to early seventeenth century. 8.5 × 17.1 cm.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Collection, F1897.88.

Japanese *chanoyu* practitioners who used them as tea bowls. Two of the most common types of *Kōrai jawan* were in Japan known by the terms Mishima and Ido.[75] Mishima (now better known by their Korean term *punch'ŏng*) are stonewares decorated with white slip, while Ido were made of clay containing kaolin. Until the 1880s collectors in America and Europe knew little about the place and date of manufacture of *Kōrai jawan* and often confused them with other types of Korean and Japanese ceramics. They typically identified *Kōrai jawan* as "old Satsuma" in reference to ceramics made by Korean potters in Japan. The term "old Satsuma" was also applied to early examples of Satsuma *nishikide* wares, these being stonewares or porcelains decorated with gilded and polychrome enamelled designs. As in the case of *Kōrai jawan*, they were believed to have been made by Korean potters around the late 1500s and 1600s. However, in the late 1880s, Morse was among the first scholars to point out that they were in fact of contemporary make.[76]

Freer shunned the public fascination with Satsuma *nishikide*, and instead he focused on ceramics that well-known Japanese experts singled out for their aesthetic and tactile qualities, such as tea bowls. In this he was likely guided by dealers of Japanese descent as well as Morse, who associated Satsuma with bad taste.[77] Freer also adopted Japanese terms for Korean modes of decoration, such as Katade ("hard type"), Kohiki (white slip applied by dipping), and Unkaku (white and black inlays under a celadon glaze), signalling his keenness to immerse himself in Japanese understandings of art. Also, Morse was much invested in Mishima tea bowls and acquired several for his own collection and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Among them was the bowl which Percival Lowell received from Kojong (Figure 2.9).[78]

Freer's Purchase of Allen's Collection

In the early twentieth century, Freer's acquisitions of Korean ceramics increasingly turned to celadon wares from the Koryŏ dynasty that began to be available on the American art market through dealers such as Yamanaka. His purchase of a celadon cupstand from Yamanaka in New York in December 1904 marked his first acquisition of a Koryŏ celadon ware.[79] Priced at $35, the cupstand is decorated with an inlaid floral pattern and covered with a glossy even-coloured glaze (Figure 3.5). Its shape, decoration, and glaze quality are characteristic of vessels unearthed from the Koryŏ royal tombs near Kaesŏng, though the sales voucher offers no details of where it was found. There is little doubt that Yamanaka and his staff knew that Koryŏ ceramics were much coveted by Japanese collectors in Korea and Japan, and it was likely them who encouraged Freer to purchase the stand. Freer may also have read the article titled "The Potter's Art in Korea" by Randolph Iltyd Geare (1854–1917), Chief of the Division of Correspondence and Documents at the US National Museum. Published in December 1904, it was the first-ever English-language journal article on Koryŏ ceramic traditions. Like others, Geare lamented the poor quality of contemporary Korean ceramics, contrasting them with the fine specimens of "mortuary pottery" unearthed from tombs. In his view, the latter were the "best examples of the ancient Koreans' art in pottery."[80] Freer's interest in Koryŏ ceramics may have been further piqued by Geare's suggestion that their manufacture was likely linked to the ancient Islamic world:

> It is probable that Persia and Arabia contributed to the high standard of art which was reached by the ancient inhabitants of the "Land of Morning Calm," and, in turn, it cannot be doubted that those countries derived a certain inspiration from the artists of Korea.[81]

Figure 3.5 Inlaid celadon cupstand. Koryŏ period, twelfth century. 5.1 × 16.9 cm.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Collection, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1904.325.

As discussed later in this chapter, Freer was much invested in identifying cultural synergies between European and Asian art, and his acquisitions of Korean ceramics enabled him to further develop this theory. The displays of Korean ceramics which he later curated in his home suggest that he saw them as a "points of contacts" within an interconnected Asian cultural sphere.[82]

Keen on securing choice pieces that furthered the overall standard of his collection, Freer took advice from leading scholars, curators, and dealers. In this he was not unusual. Collectors of Freer's calibre typically relied on a trusted circle of friends and acquaintances whose activities straddled scholarly, commercial, and curatorial activities. The blurring of boundaries between seemingly conflicting areas of interest was common, a case in point being Morse, who was appointed curator by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, when the museum borrowed and later purchased his collection. Some friends, such as Fenollosa, not only provided Freer with scholarly advice and published on his collection, they also acted as dealers. Nor was it uncommon for collectors to buy objects from each other. For example, in 1898 Freer purchased from Rufus Moore a jar made by the Japanese potter Ogata Kenzan 尾形乾山 (1663–1743).[83]

Freer became close friends with Morse and Fenollosa, whom he first met in the 1890s and 1901, respectively.[84] Freer often sought Morse's advice and judgement on ceramics,

and he consulted with Fenollosa on his purchases of Japanese art. Freer and Fenollosa shared a passion for unlocking seemingly unrelated artistic movements to evidence the connectedness of art across regions and time. In their view, the study and display of objects could reveal the interrelationship between the arts of Europe and Asia as manifested in the tonalities, lines, and manufacturing techniques of artefacts from different periods and regions. Freer's collection was crucial to this endeavour as it, in Fenollosa's words, presented a "fertile and final union [of] the two great streams of European and Asiatic practice, held apart for so many thousand years."[85] Yet not all Asian art held equal value. As discussed in Chapter 1, Fenollosa was a strong advocator for the supremacy of Japanese art. To him, it was Japan that facilitated the joining of Eastern and Western cultural traditions when it despatched the first ambassadorial delegation to the US. In his typical self-assured manner, he argued:

> The future historian will look back at the year 1860 as a nodule, a starting point of the whole subsequent course in the world's art. It was about then that Japanese art, recently revealed to the West, began its course of freeing our Western practice from a narrow realism of long tradition.[86]

Freer frequently invited Morse and Fenollosa to his home in Detroit to study his collection, and he helped secure public lecture engagements for them. In turn the Japanese artefacts that Freer bought from Fenollosa significantly enhanced his collection, especially in the field of Japanese painting.[87] Yet in as much as Freer habitually sought the opinion of his mentors, he did not accept their advice uncritically, as reflected in his notes in the inventory lists.[88] Over time Freer's growing expertise in East Asian art led to increasingly informed judgements on the objects which dealers sent him, and that he, more often than not, returned for being sub-standard.[89] As for his knowledge of ceramics, Fenollosa argued that Freer was "probably the greatest living expert," and the owner of "the most comprehensive and aesthetically valuable collection anywhere known of all the ancient glazed pottery of the world."[90]

Freer's investment in his art collection took on a new purpose when in 1906 the US National Museum's board formally accepted his collection alongside funds to construct a museum in his name. His inventory included near to 2,500 objects, consisting of three main groups: works by Whistler, Asian ceramics, and Chinese and Japanese paintings.[91] Included in the Deed of Gift was the agreement that the museum would be erected on the National Mall in Washington, DC, and that it would house nothing but his artefacts.[92] The board's decision was supported by President Theodore Roosevelt, who sent a telegram to Freer stating, "I need not say how pleased I am at what has been done."[93]

In the years leading up to the signing of the deed, Freer carefully evaluated each of his artefacts to determine which were suitable for a national museum and he compiled inventories of them. By December 1905, Freer had selected for the museum 83 ceramics from Korea, in addition to 91 from China, 680 from Japan, and 95 from Central Asia, Egypt, and Greece.[94] Following the acceptance of his gift, Freer increased efforts to maintain his reputation as a perceptive and judicious collector who, according to Fenollosa, made it "a cardinal point to acquire only specimens of highest and most characteristic beauty."[95] This led to further reassessments of the inventory and culling of objects.

In the case of the Korean ceramics listed in the 1905 inventory, 12 were later re-attributed to China and 13 to Japan.[96] Among them is a tall stoneware bottle with a creamy white glaze and green splashes, which Yamanaka in New York sold to Freer for $270. According to an undated note in the inventory written by Freer, it was found in Korea, and it was therefore believed to be Korean. However, he later questioned this and subsequently placed its manufacture to the Song dynasty (Figure 3.6).[97] Typically Freer arrived at such conclusions through close observation of the visual qualities of the artefacts, in particular their glaze tonalities, oftentimes followed by a rigorous process of comparing objects of different dates and manufacture.

Figure 3.6 Stoneware bottle with copper-green splashes. Cizhou ware. Northern Song period, late tenth to eleventh century. 33.1 × 15.4 cm.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Collection, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1905.79.

In 1907, Freer embarked on his second trip to Japan. In contrast to his first visit 12 years earlier, he was feted as an expert collector of Asian art, and influential collectors, dealers, and scholars flocked to meet him.[98] In Tokyo, Freer made one of his most important purchases of Korean ceramics. On May 3, he received news from Hecker that Allen was selling his collection. Hecker forwarded to Freer a series of letters sent by Allen's nephew Frederick J. Flagg, and they included Allen's description of the collection and a photograph of the objects (Figure 3.7). Flagg was alerted to Freer's interest in Korean ceramics by John Howard Webster (1846–1933?), who was President of the Variety Iron and Steel Works Company in Cleveland, Ohio.[99] Like Freer, Webster was a large-scale collector of East Asian art, and he had suggested to Flagg that he and Freer might divide the collection between them.[100] However, a few days later, Flagg stressed that "the Metropolitan Museum of New York (Sir Purdom [*sic*] Clarke)[101] are anxious to buy 35 of the pieces but Dr. Allen wants to sell the whole collection intact and *his price is $5000.00*."[102] Allen's refusal of Clarke's offer may stem from his earlier keenness to preserve the collection in its entirety. From Tokyo, Freer replied to Hecker with great enthusiasm:

> I have just found time to carefully examine the Horace N. Allen catalogue of Korean Pottery, which came to me a few days ago and am now wiring you: Please buy Allen Collection Corean Pottery – sidecut.[103]

Seeing that in August that year, Freer rejected the opportunity to purchase from Yamanaka a rare wooden Buddhist sculpture from Hōryūji temple, stating tersely that "I make it a rule never to buy an object *unseen*," it is curious that he did exactly that when it came to the Allen collection.[104] Freer's letter to Hecker offers some clues as to why. He seems to have trusted Allen's detailed discussion of the pieces and took at face value Allen's self-proclaimed expertise in the field:

> I have long been considered an authority on this ware and this collection represents most careful study and investigation during my twenty one years residence in Seoul, Korea. There can be no doubt as to the genuineness of each and every piece. The only expert on this ware in America, has shown himself most enthusiastic over the collection.[105] Japanese enthusiasts have made a six days journey from Japan to Seoul to view and study the collection. Their enthusiasm never abated when studying the pieces carefully.[106]

Allen's offer presented a unique opportunity for Freer to elevate the standard of his collection and gain a foothold in the competitive new field of "Korean tomb wares."

> From the descriptions given in the catalogue, I am sure that a large number of the specimens are extremely rare and interesting – some probably unique. The better ones added to the pieces I already have, will place my collection of Corean pottery along with the best in existence.[107]

Freer's letters do not reveal if he took advice from collectors and dealers in Japan prior to purchasing Allen's collection, but no doubt he was acutely aware of the competition for so-called "old Corean" ceramics as well as their market price. Several of the collectors that Freer met on the trip to Japan also acquired Korean ceramics, including Hara Tomitarō

Figure 3.7 Annotated photograph of Horace Allen's ceramic collection of Koryŏ ceramics. 1907.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Charles Lang Freer Papers, FSA_A.01_06.5.2.1907.05.03.01.

原富太郎 (1868–1939), Nezu Kaichirō 根津嘉一郎 (1860–1940), and Masuda Takashi 益田孝 (1848–1938). In particular, Hara was a close friend, and during the trip Freer stayed at his country residence, *Sankeien* 三溪園, for nearly two weeks.[108] A few years later both Hara and Nezu lent objects to a seminal exhibition on Koryŏ ceramics which opened in Tokyo, as discussed in Chapter 4.

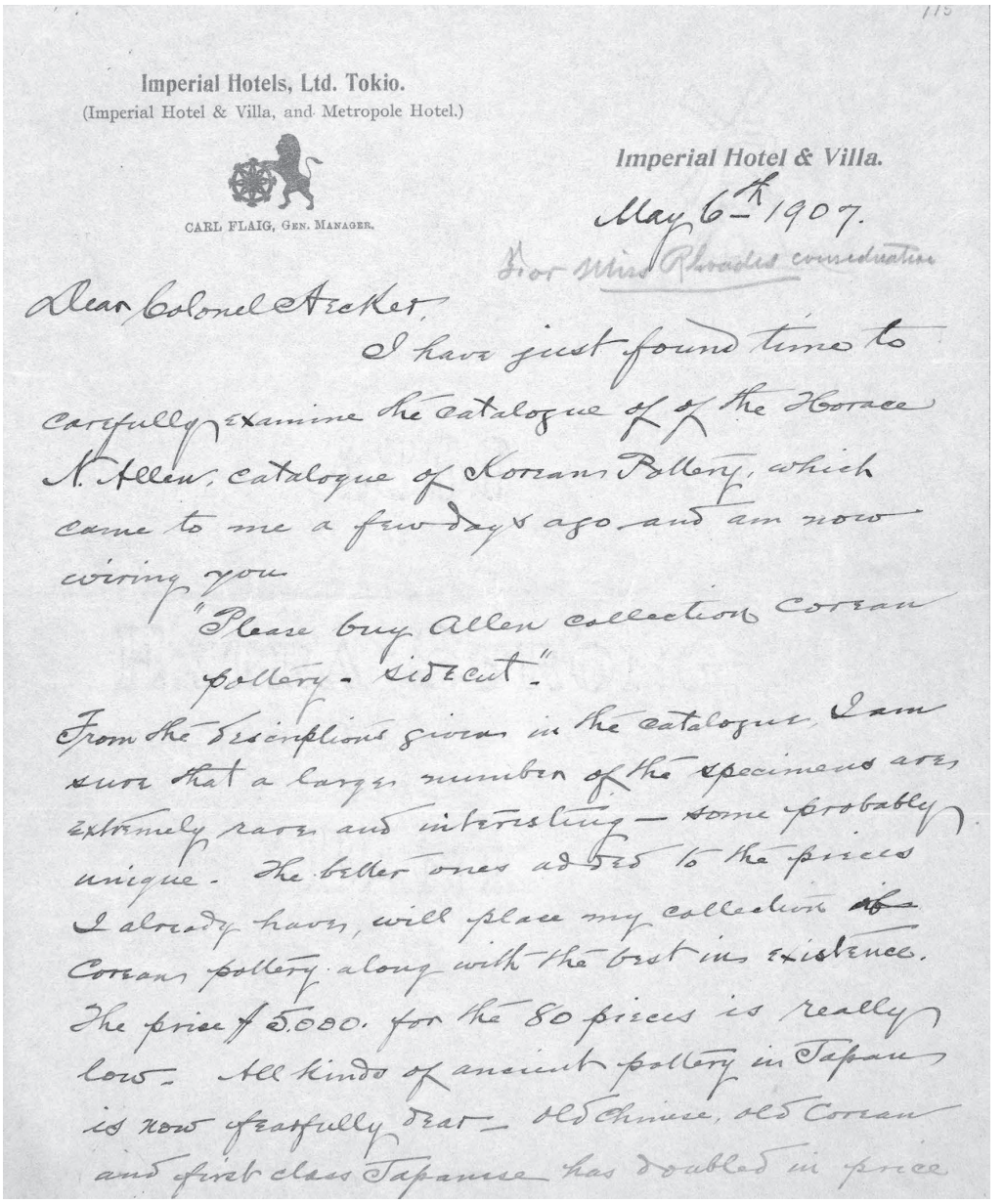
Freer knew that Allen's collection was a bargain. By this time, his collection of Korean ceramics numbered around 85 wares, totalling circa $4,000. Their quality varied considerably. Most were roughly potted tea bowls while glossy celadon stonewares akin to those offered by Allen numbered less than ten.[109] While in Japan, he spent $32,000 on bronzes, lacquerwares, wood carvings, screens, hanging scrolls, and ceramics. Among them were five ceramics sold as Korean and two that were thought to be of possible Korean manufacture. They ranged in price from $25 to $100, except for a celadon vase with inlaid chrysanthemum design which at $900 was the most expensive object he purchased in Japan (Figure 3.8).[110]

Freer wrote to Hecker:

> The price $5,000 for the 80 pieces is really low. All kinds of ancient pottery in Japan are now fearfully dear – old Chinese, old Corean and first class Japanese has doubled in price within twelve months. Everything else of thoroughly fine quality in the Fine Arts soars accordingly. I hope my cablegram will reach you in time to secure the collection (Figure 3.9).[111]

Figure 3.8 Inlaid celadon vase. Koryŏ period, late thirteenth to early fourteenth century. 35.6 × 19.8 cm.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Collection, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1907.76.



Imperial Hotels, Ltd. Tokio.
(Imperial Hotel & Villa, and Metropole Hotel.)

CARL FLAIG, GEN. MANAGER.

Imperial Hotel & Villa.

May 6th 1907.

Dear Mrs Rhoades consideration

Dear Colonel Hecker,

I have just found time to carefully examine the catalogue of the Horace N. Allen, catalogue of Korean Pottery, which came to me a few days ago and am now wiring you

"Please buy Allen collection Corean pottery - sixteen."

From the descriptions given in the catalogue, I am sure that a large number of the specimens are extremely rare and interesting — some probably unique. The better ones add to the pieces I already have, will place my collection of Corean pottery along with the best in existence. The price of 5.000. for the 80 pieces is really low. All kinds of ancient pottery in Japan is now fearfully dear — old Chinese, old Corean and first class Japanese has doubled in price

Figure 3.9 Letter from Freer to Hecker. May 6, 1907.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Charles Lang Freer Papers, FSA_A.01_02.1Hecker502.

That Freer secured the collection at a much lower price was Hecker's doing as implied in Freer's letter to Hecker sent on May 30, 1907:

> My dear Colonel, I have your kind cablegram telling me of having purchased the Corean pottery collection for three thousand dollars – (a price far below what

> I expected to pay, as similar single specimens here fetch hundreds and some over a thousand dollars. I had expected to pay five thousand dollars, the price named in one of the letters. But, I am simply again reminded of your old habit of always getting rock bottom prices). How shall I thank you?[112]

In his dealings with Allen, Hecker must have been extremely persuasive, since Allen initially aimed to sell the collection for more than three times that amount. However, as discussed later, Allen likely considered Freer to be the ideal custodian of his collection, and this may have compensated for any loss of earnings.

In the summer of 1907 Freer arrived home, but a trip to Europe between late September and early October prevented him from undertaking a detailed study of Allen's collection until November when Fenollosa stayed with him for a week.[113] Fenollosa's visit offered the opportunity to closely examine the Korean pieces and compare them to the existing collection, much to Freer's satisfaction. Notes taken by Fenollosa suggest that their analysis was steered by their shared interest in cross-regional flows of motifs, manufacturing methods, and aesthetic practices. They identified differences between Chinese and Korean glaze colours and found similarities between Koryŏ and Persian ceramics with Freer arguing that the grey-green hues of Koryŏ celadon glazes may have had its roots in Persian artistic traditions.[114] To Flagg, Freer concluded that he was "delighted with the quality of many of the pieces and interested in all."[115] Freer's letter to Flagg reveals the curious business arrangement that Hecker and Allen forged in the spring when Freer purchased the Allen collection. As Freer explained to Flagg:

> Colonel Hecker has kindly told me of the negotiations had with yourself and Dr Allen, and says that it was understood between yourselves that after I had seen the Collection, if I felt it of sufficient importance, I was to consider increasing the price of the Collection from $3,000, the amount paid, to $3,500.[116]

Having informed Flagg of how pleased he was with the collection, he agreed to pay the additional sum:

> I have tried to view the Collection both from its aesthetic side and a financial one. And in view of the fine quality of several of the rarer pieces, I am quite willing to pay the $500 addition, and enclose herewith, my check for the same.

That he only a month later paid $650 for a large Koryŏ celadon jar and stand indicates that Freer was more than willing to pay hundreds of dollars for Korean objects (Figure 3.10).[117]

Freer was eager to purchase the remainder of Allen's collection but Allen refused. Undeterred and eager to learn more about the tombs from which the pieces were taken and to help him determine their dates of manufacture, Freer arranged to visit Allen in Toledo.[118] In Allen's home, he was especially taken by a large white vessel which Allen identified as a "painter's mixing bowl" due to its unglazed rim, which Allen believed was for "painters to wipe their brushes against."[119] Current scholarship suggests that the bowl is not of Koryŏ manufacture but a Qingbai ware, and the unglazed rim was caused by its firing in a saggar.[120]

The following year Freer manifested his ahistorical and transcultural interpretation of the Allen collection in a display of ceramics in the Peacock Room in his home in Detroit.

Figure 3.10 Bowl and stand exhibited at the Chinese, Corean and Japanese Potteries exhibition organised by the Japan Society, New York, 1914.

Source: From Japan Society et al., *Chinese*, *Corean*, *and Japanese Potteries*, no. 147.

The room was originally designed and painted by Whistler for the British industrialist Frederick Leyland (1831–92). Following Leyland's death, the room was offered for sale by the British fine art dealer Obach & Co. in 1904, enabling Freer to purchase it.[121] In London Leyland displayed Chinese blue-and-white porcelain on the gilt wooden shelving that lined the walls of the room. In Detroit Freer opted for an arrangement of Asian ceramics that centred on glaze colours and textures, reflecting his interest in creating a harmonious union of Asian and European art. Placed in the centre of the West wall, the shapes and glaze tonalities of Allen's celadon vessels complemented those of the Chinese and Mesopotamian wares that surrounded them (Figure 3.11).[122]

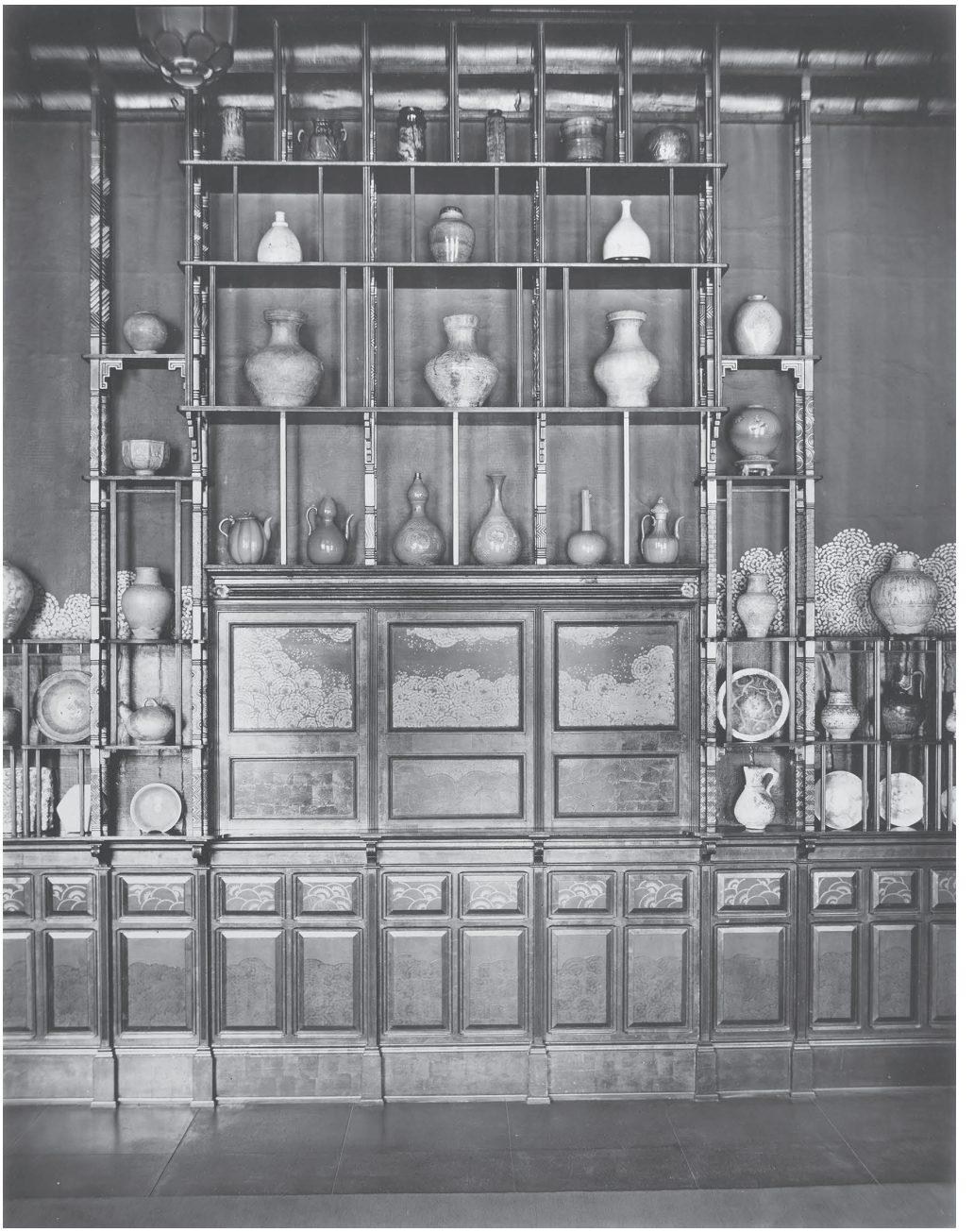


Figure 3.11 West wall of the Peacock Room installed with a group of Korean celadon wares in the centre. Displayed in Freer's home in Detroit, 1908.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Charles Lang Freer Paper, FSA_A.01_12.02.3.3.05.

In the following years Freer continued to expand the Korean collection, and he was frequently singled out as a potential buyer of new shipments from Korea. In February 1909, Ushikubo Daijirō, who in 1904 assumed the position of manager of the New York branch of Yamanaka and Co., alerted Freer to the availability of a large group of "old Corean pottery":

> The Corean collection which we have been expecting from some time, arrived safely two days ago. Among the things, I find some exquisite and interesting specimens and feel sure that they will please you. It is my wish to show you the collection complete. May I not expect a visit from you shortly?[123]

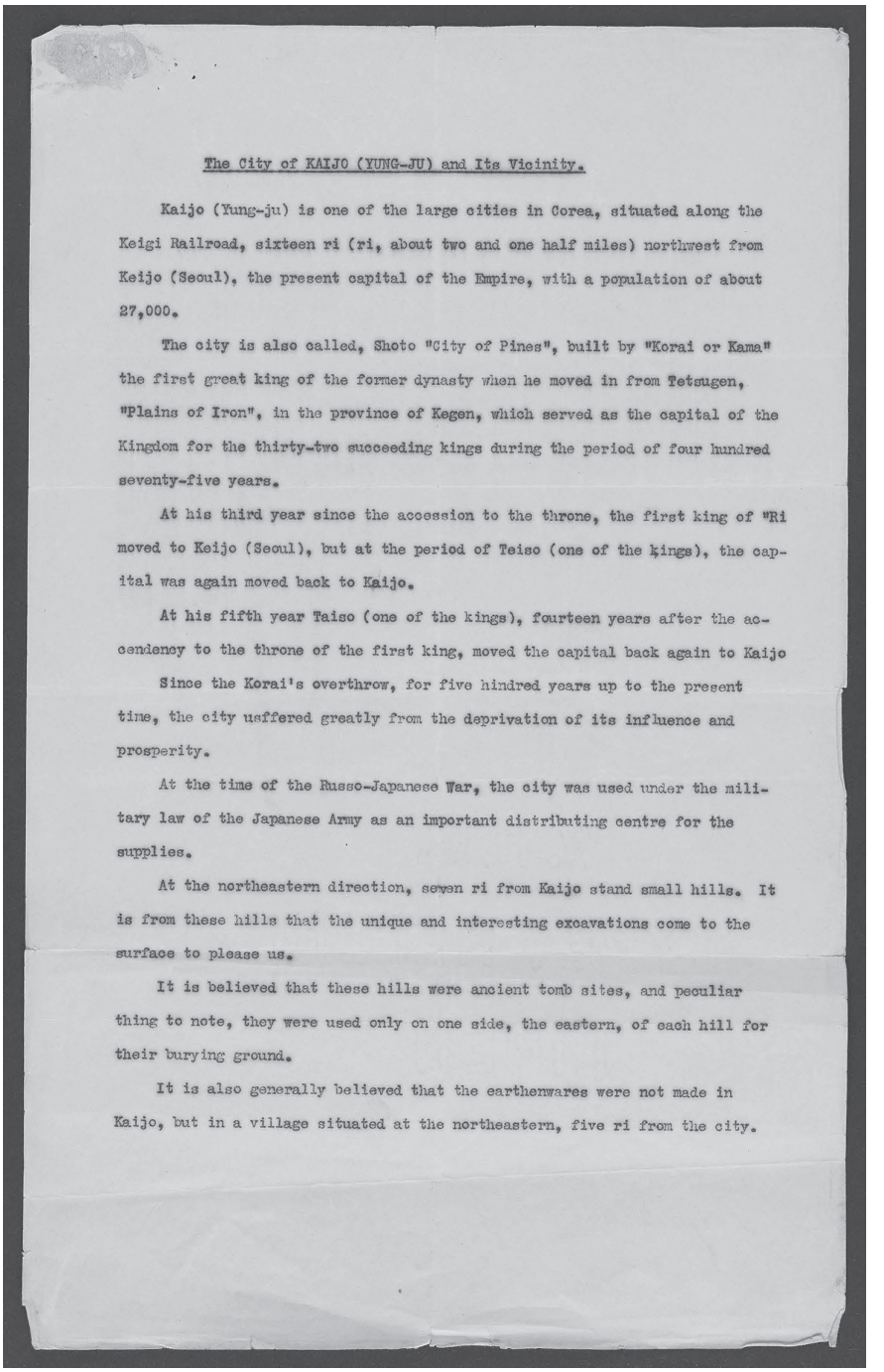
Aware of Freer's keenness to learn more about Korean art, Ushikubo included in his letter a brief history of Kaesŏng, that was probably a translation of a published Japanese text. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the one-page document detailed the historical significance of the so-called "City of Pines" from its inception as the capital of the Koryŏ dynasty to its strategic position during the Russo-Japanese War when it became an important distribution centre for military supplies (Figure 3.12). The text also included discussion of the tomb sites that yielded glazed stonewares, and it repeated the widespread, but mistaken, assumption that the vessels were made near the city:

> At the northeastern direction, seven ri from Kaijo [Kaesŏng] stand small hills. It is from these hills that the unique and interesting excavations come to the surface to please us. It is believed that these hills were ancient tombs sites, and peculiar thing to note, they were used only on one side, the eastern, of each hill for their burying ground. It is also generally believed that the earthenwares [Koryŏ glazed stonewares] were not made in Kaijo, but in a village situated at the northeastern, five ri from the city.[124]

Freer left his home the same day and on February 6 visited the Yamanaka gallery on 254 Fifth Avenue in New York, where he purchased the group of 32 Koryŏ ceramics for $2,215.[125] A shallow olive-green bowl, now believed to date from early Koryŏ dynasty, was the cheapest at $15, while a melon-shaped ewer with inlaid floral patterns was the most expensive at $250 (Figure 3.13).[126] Freer's handwritten notes on the sales voucher and in the Pottery List reflect his keen interest in their shapes and surface decorations, leading to his suggestion that several of the *meibyŏng* ("galipot") vessels would make an "interesting" display when exhibited with ceramics of varying designs and glaze colours (Figure 3.14).[127]

Conclusion

The late 1880s and 1890s witnessed a marked shift in approaches to Korean art generated by the social and political changes that swept the peninsula during these decades. With access to Korea came a better understanding of Korean cultural heritage and how it should be defined. As the borders of Chosŏn opened for trade and diplomacy, definitions of what constituted "Korean" objects narrowed and became more firmly associated with the Korean peninsula. In the 1890s ceramics identified as Korean constituted a broad range of vessels associated with Korean potters. Dealers tended to label them as either "old



The City of KAIJO (YUNG-JU) and Its Vicinity.

Kaijo (Yung-ju) is one of the large cities in Corea, situated along the Keigi Railroad, sixteen ri (ri, about two and one half miles) northwest from Keijo (Seoul), the present capital of the Empire, with a population of about 27,000.

The city is also called, Shoto "City of Pines", built by "Korai or Kama" the first great king of the former dynasty when he moved in from Tetsugen, "Plains of Iron", in the province of Kegen, which served as the capital of the Kingdom for the thirty-two succeeding kings during the period of four hundred seventy-five years.

At his third year since the accession to the throne, the first king of "Ri moved to Keijo (Seoul), but at the period of Teiso (one of the kings), the capital was again moved back to Kaijo.

At his fifth year Taiso (one of the kings), fourteen years after the accendency to the throne of the first king, moved the capital back again to Kaijo

Since the Korai's overthrow, for five hindred years up to the present time, the city usffered greatly from the deprivation of its influence and prosperity.

At the time of the Russo-Japanese War, the city was used under the military law of the Japanese Army as an important distributing centre for the supplies.

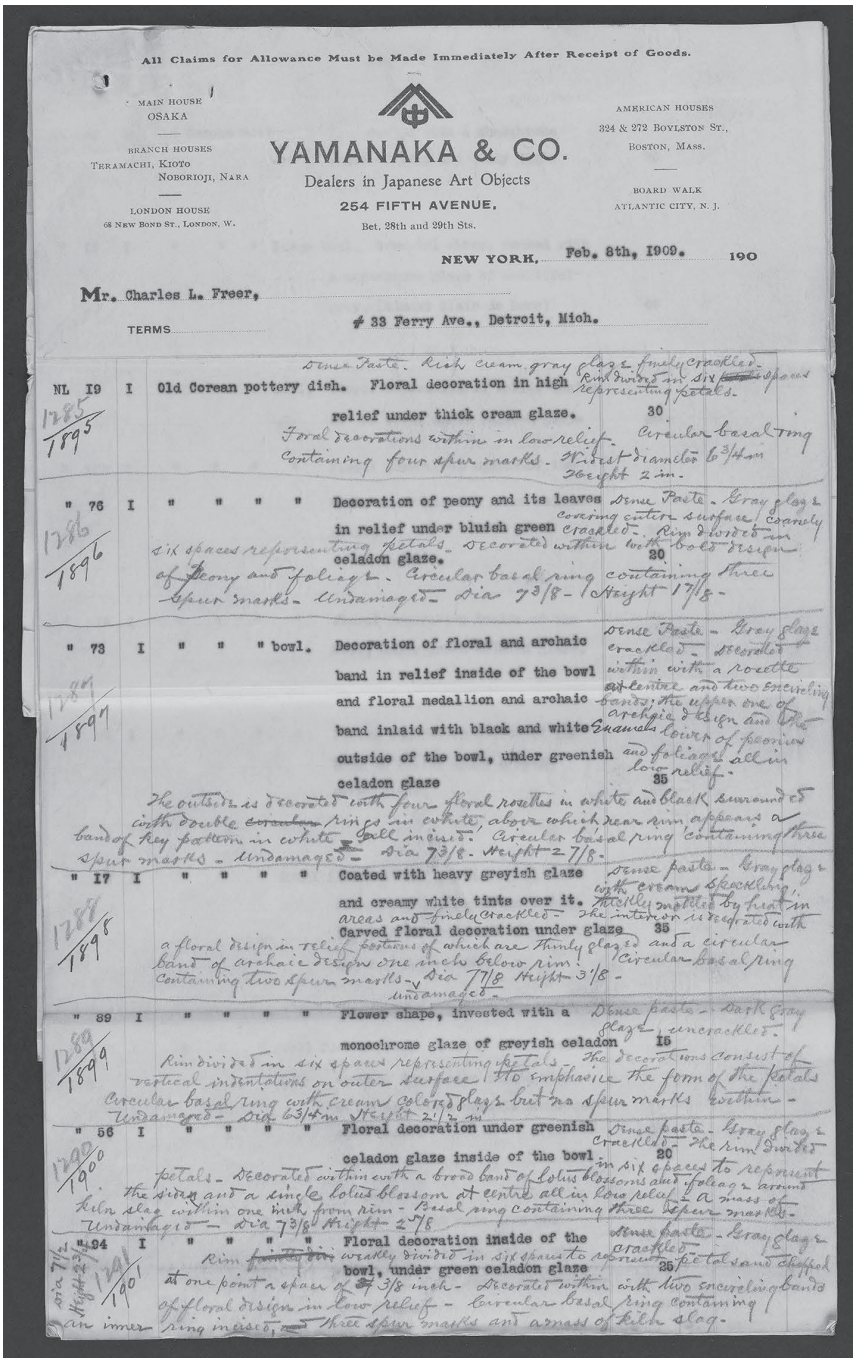
At the northeastern direction, seven ri from Kaijo stand small hills. It is from these hills that the unique and interesting excavations come to the surface to please us.

It is believed that these hills were ancient tomb sites, and peculiar thing to note, they were used only on one side, the eastern, of each hill for their burying ground.

It is also generally believed that the earthenwares were not made in Kaijo, but in a village situated at the northeastern, five ri from the city.

Figure 3.12 "The City of KAIJO (YUNG-JU) and its Vicinity." Included in letter from Ushikubo to Freer, February 3, 1909.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, Charles Lang Freer Papers, FSA_A.01_02.1Yamanaka.016.



All Claims for Allowance Must be Made Immediately After Receipt of Goods.

MAIN HOUSE
OSAKA

BRANCH HOUSES
TERAMACHI, KIOTO
NOBORIOJI, NARA

LONDON HOUSE
68 NEW BOND ST., LONDON, W.

YAMANAKA & CO.
Dealers in Japanese Art Objects
254 FIFTH AVENUE,
Bet. 28th and 29th Sts.

AMERICAN HOUSES
324 & 272 BOYLSTON ST.,
BOSTON, MASS.

BOARD WALK
ATLANTIC CITY, N. J.

NEW YORK, Feb. 8th, 1909. 190

Mr. Charles L. Freer,

TERMS

33 Ferry Ave., Detroit, Mich.

Dense Paste. Rich cream gray glaze finely crackled. Rim divided in six spaces representing petals.

NL I9 I Old Corean pottery dish. Floral decoration in high relief under thick cream glaze. 30

1895

Foral decorations within in low relief. Circular basal ring containing four spur marks. Widest diameter 6 3/4 in Height 2 in.

" 76 I " " " " Decoration of peony and its leaves in relief under bluish green celadon glaze. 30

1896

Dense Paste. Gray glaze covering entire surface, finely crackled. Rim divided in six spaces representing petals. Decorated within with bold design of peony and foliage. Circular basal ring containing three spur marks. Undamaged. Dia 7 3/8. Height 1 7/8.

" 73 I " " " bowl. Decoration of floral and archaic band in relief inside of the bowl and floral medallion and archaic band inlaid with black and white outside of the bowl, under greenish celadon glaze 35

1897

Dense Paste. Gray glaze crackled. Decorated within with a rosette of Chinese and two encircling bands, the upper one of archaic design and the lower of peonies and foliage, all in low relief.

The outside is decorated with four floral rosettes in white and black surrounded with double ~~circular~~ rings in white, above which near rim appears a band of key pattern in white. Shallow incised. Circular basal ring containing three spur marks. Undamaged. Dia 7 3/8. Height 2 7/8.

" I7 I " " " " Coated with heavy greyish glaze and creamy white tints over it. Carved floral decoration under glaze 35

1898

Dense paste. Gray glaze with cream speckling, mottled by heat in areas and finely crackled. The interior is decorated with a floral design in relief, portions of which are thinly glazed and a circular band of archaic design one inch below rim. Circular basal ring containing two spur marks. Dia 7 7/8 Height 3 1/8. Undamaged.

" 89 I " " " " Flower shape, invested with a monochrome glaze of greyish celadon 15

1899

Dense paste. Dark gray glaze, encrackled. Rim divided in six spaces representing petals. The decorations consist of vertical indentations on outer surface to emphasize the form of the petals. Circular basal ring with cream celadon glaze but no spur marks within. Undamaged. Dia 6 3/4 in Height 2 1/2 in.

" 56 I " " " " Floral decoration under greenish celadon glaze inside of the bowl 20

1900

Dense paste. Gray glaze crackled. The rim divided in six spaces to represent petals. Decorated within with a broad band of lotus blossoms and foliage, various the size and a single lotus blossom at centre all in low relief. A mass of kiln slag within one inch from rim. Basal ring containing three spur marks. Undamaged. Dia 7 3/8 Height 2 7/8

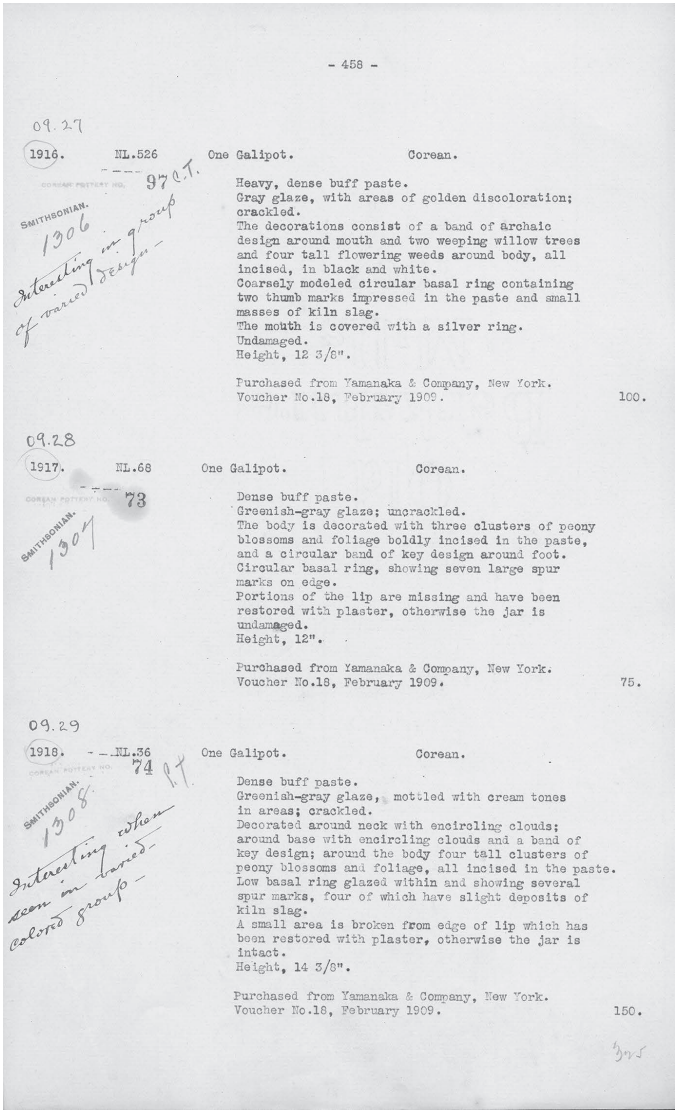
" 94 I " " " " Floral decoration inside of the bowl, under green celadon glaze 25

1901

Dense paste. Gray glaze crackled. ~~Rim finely divided~~ weakly divided in six spaces to represent petals and chipped at one point a span of 3/8 inch. Decorated within with two encircling bands of floral design in low relief. Circular basal ring containing an inner ring incised. Three spur marks and a mass of kiln slag.

Figure 3.13 The olive-green bowl is the fifth object from the top. Purchase receipt from Yamanaka & Co., annotated by Freer. Sales voucher no. 18, February 1909, Box 116, Subseries 6.5.2: Art Vouchers.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, Charles Lang Freer Papers, FSA_A.01_06.5.2.1909.03.08.02.



- 458 -

09.27
1916. NL.526 One Galipot. Corean.
97 C.T.
SMITHSONIAN. 1906
Interesting in group of varied design —

Heavy, dense buff paste.
Gray glaze, with areas of golden discoloration; crackled.
The decorations consist of a band of archaic design around mouth and two weeping willow trees and four tall flowering weeds around body, all incised, in black and white.
Coarsely modeled circular basal ring containing two thumb marks impressed in the paste and small masses of kiln slag.
The mouth is covered with a silver ring.
Undamaged.
Height, 12 3/8".

Purchased from Yamanaka & Company, New York.
Voucher No.18, February 1909. 100.

09.28
1917. NL.68 One Galipot. Corean.
73
SMITHSONIAN. 1906

Dense buff paste.
Greenish-gray glaze; uncrackled.
The body is decorated with three clusters of peony blossoms and foliage boldly incised in the paste, and a circular band of key design around foot.
Circular basal ring, showing seven large spur marks on edge.
Portions of the lip are missing and have been restored with plaster, otherwise the jar is undamaged.
Height, 12".

Purchased from Yamanaka & Company, New York.
Voucher No.18, February 1909. 75.

09.29
1918. NL.36 One Galipot. Corean.
74 C.T.
SMITHSONIAN. 1908
Interesting color seen in boxed-colored group —

Dense buff paste.
Greenish-gray glaze, mottled with cream tones in areas; crackled.
Decorated around neck with encircling clouds; around base with encircling clouds and a band of key design; around the body four tall clusters of peony blossoms and foliage, all incised in the paste.
Low basal ring glazed within and showing several spur marks, four of which have slight deposits of kiln slag.
A small area is broken from edge of lip which has been restored with plaster, otherwise the jar is intact.
Height, 14 3/8".

Purchased from Yamanaka & Company, New York.
Voucher No.18, February 1909. 150.

395

Figure 3.14 Pottery List 4 of 6, p. 458, Box 70, Subseries 5.6: Pottery-Oriental.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Charles Lang Freer Papers, FSA-2023–000287.

Corean" or "Corean." It is possible that the former included *Kōrai jawan* and Koryŏ tomb wares, while the latter were associated with Satsuma and other types of ceramics that were believed to have been made by Korean potters in Japan and their descendants. Lack of knowledge of Korean ceramics made the identification of the various types of wares challenging for dealers and collectors, as reflected in the sale of Dana's objects. Some of the vessels sold as "Corean" may have been Koryŏ celadon ceramics, such as that purchased by Moore, but the remainder were likely those made in Japan by Korean potters.

In the early twentieth century, the opening of Korea's ports and the arrival of Koryŏ "tomb wares" on the Korean art market led to a reassessment of how Korean ceramics should be identified and understood. Increasingly ceramics labelled as Korean no longer included those produced in Japan by Korean potters, but only implied vessels made on the peninsula. This is reflected in the sale of Waggaman's collection discussed in Chapter 2, as well as in Freer's ongoing valuation of his Korean ceramics. For example, Freer initially described a bowl bought at the Dana sale as "Corean Unkaku with rich heavy glaze," but later amended this to "Hagi? Japanese" in the belief that it was made in Japan.[128] The disassociation of Korean ceramics from the Japanese archipelago had long-lasting impact on the art market. Until then, the scholarship and collecting of Korean ceramics had been led by collectors and scholars of Japanese art, whose interest in Satsuma and other types of so-called "Korean" wares steered their attention towards the peninsula. However, the newly discovered tomb wares paved the way for a new group of consumers, keen on acquiring "old Corean" ceramics obtained directly in Korea. In the following decades, such vessels became increasingly popular, leading to an increase in their price as well as in scholarship and public displays of them.

The acquisitions activities and interconnected histories of Allen and Freer offer further insights into the Korean art market around the turn of the twentieth century. Like other collectors of his time, Freer's purchases of Korean ceramics were initially linked to his interest in Japanese art and aesthetic interests. Guided by Japanese dealers and scholars with knowledge of Japanese art, such as Morse and Fenollosa, he acquired tea bowls made by Korean potters. When Japanese collectors discovered Koryŏ ceramics, Freer followed suit, supported by Yamanaka and Co., which supplied him with wares. Allen's sale of the collection he formed in Korea was therefore timely. His political position and close connections to the royal family made him one of the most influential Westerners in Korean society. This offered him unprecedented access to tomb wares and placed him ahead of many Japanese collectors.

Having built the collection mainly as a financial investment, Allen initially priced the collection at $133 per vessel. That Hecker managed to secure it for only $45 per vessel may have been due to Allen's changing priorities. When Allen contacted Freer, the American legation in Seoul had closed, as Japan took charge of Korean foreign affairs on November 17, 1905, when Korea was made a protectorate of Japan. Allen disagreed with the US government's recognition of Japan's control of Korea and was subsequently withdrawn in June that year and replaced by Edwin V. Morgan (1865–1934). With his political influence weakened, the collection became Allen's main means to build a legacy of his position in Korea. When Flagg contacted Hecker, Freer's gift had been accepted by the Smithsonian Institution, making Freer one of the few collectors who could fulfil Allen's aim. Thus, in the same way in which Freer controlled his reputation as an expert collector with refined taste through the objects he carefully selected for the museum carrying his name, Allen secured his name and reputation by selling his collection to Freer.

The shift in Freer's collecting patterns coincided with Japan's expanding influence on the Korean peninsula. Yet there is no indication that Freer was concerned by the political subtexts of his acquisition activities, nor was he deterred by the fact that Allen's ceramics were tomb loot. In this he was not alone. Over the following decade Freer not only continued to purchase choice examples of Koryŏ celadon, like many other collectors of his time, he expanded his knowledge of Koryŏ art by acquiring bronze vessels and other metal wares unearthed from graves alongside ceramics. These changes in Freer's

collecting activities were mirrored by other American and British collectors who became competitors on the Korean art market in the 1910s and shaped future acquisition patterns, as discussed in the following chapter.

Notes

1 "The Corean Muddle," *Pittsburgh Dispatch* (PA), January 11, 1890.
2 William Elliot Griffis, *Corea: The Hermit Nation* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1882); Percival Lowell, *Chosön: The Land of Morning Calm; A Sketch of Korea* (Boston, MA: Ticknor, 1885). For reviews of these volumes, see for example, "Literature," *Chicago Tribune*, November 11, 1882; "Boston Days," *The Times-Democrat* (New Orleans), January 10, 1886.
3 Horace Newton Allen, *Copy of a Certified Catalogue of a Collection of Ancient Korean Pottery: Purchased and Owned by Horace N. Allen. U.S. Minister, Seoul, Korea* (Nak Tong: Seoul Press, 1901), 6.
4 The artefacts that Allen lent to the US National Museum are listed in Walter Hough, *The Bernadou, Allen and Jouy Corean Collections in the United States National Museum* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1893).
5 For a discussion of the collecting activities of Watters, Aston and Carles, see Liz Wilkinson, "Collecting Korean Art at the Victoria and Albert Museum 1888–1938," *Journal of the History of Collections* 15, no. 2 (2003): 243–44.
6 Allen, *Collection of Ancient Korean Pottery,* 5.
7 "Description of some 'Korai' or Korean pottery, in the Collection of Horace N. Allen, U.S. Minister, Korea," p. 4. Included in "Certified Catatogue [*sic*] of a Collection of Ancient Korean Pottery Purchased and Owned by Horace N. Allen, U.S. Minister, to Korea." Box 9, Subseries 2.1: Charles Lang Freer Correspondence, Charles Lang Freer Papers, FSA A.01, National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution (hereafter cited as Charles Lang Freer Papers).
8 Allen, *Collection of Ancient Korean Pottery*, 4–5.
9 Note that Allen erroneously claims that the coup happened in 1887. Allen, *Collection of Ancient Korean* Pottery, 4.
10 Allen, *Collection of Ancient Korean Pottery,* 7.
11 Allen, *Collection of Ancient Korean Pottery,* 6.
12 Allen, *Collection of Ancient Korean Pottery,* 5. 75 Koryŏ ceramics pieces are catalogued in this volume, though it seems that Allen's collection was larger than this.
13 Horace Newton Allen, "Regarding my collection of 82 pieces of ancient Korean pottery," March 15, 1907, Box 9, Subseries 2.1: Charles Lang Freer Correspondence, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
14 Allen to Fassett, July 20, 1901, Horace Newton Allen Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, the New York Public Library (hereafter cited as Horace Newton Allen Papers).
15 Allen to Rockhill, February 28, 1901, Box 1, Series 1: Correspondence and other papers, William Woodville Rockhill Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University (hereafter cited as William Woodville Rockhill Papers). In the early 1890s Rockhill collected Korean anthropological artefacts on behalf of the US National Museum. Robert Oppenheim, *An Asian Frontier: American Anthropology and Korea, 1882–1945* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016), 42.
16 Allen to Rockhill, March 13, 1901, William Woodville Rockhill Papers. For a discussion of the report compiled by Allen, see Oppenheim, *Asian Frontier*, 74.
17 Allen to Van Horne, March 28, 1901, Horace Newton Allen Papers. For a study of Van Horne's painting collection, see Janet M. Brooke, ed., *Discerning Tastes: Montreal Collectors, 1880–1920* (Montreal: Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1989). Van Horne's Japanese ceramic collection is discussed by Akiko Takesue, "From Japan to Canadian Museum Storage: Continuous History of Objects from the Japanese Ceramic Collection of William C. Van Horne (1843–1915)" (PhD diss., York University, Toronto, 2016).
18 Speck was a diplomat as well as a well-known art collector. The year after he died, the American Art Association managed the sale of his estate. *Illustrated Catalogue of the Important Collection of Art Treasures Formed by His Excellency the Late Baron Speck von Sternburg, German Ambassador to the United States* [. . .] (New York: American Art Association, 1909).

19 Allen to Van Horne, March 28, 1901, Horace Newton Allen Papers.
20 Allen to Fassett, July 20, 1901, Horace Newton Allen Papers. No further details on the agent are included in the letter, nor in other correspondence sent by Allen.
21 Katayama Mabi, "19segi mal 20segi ch'o ŭi Ilbonin kwa Koryŏ ch'ŏngja: Yamayoshi Moriyoshi rŭl chungshum ŭro" [A Study on the Japanese and Koryŏ Celadon from the Late 19th Century to the Early 20th Century: Focus on Yamayoshi Moriyoshi], *Munmul* 6 (2016): 179–80.
22 Yamayoshi Moriyoshi, *Kokōrai bikon* [Vestige of Beauty from old Koryŏ] (Tokyo: Gahōsha, 1900).
23 Andrea Yun Kwon, "Providence and Politics: Horace N. Allen and the Early US-Korea Encounter, 1884–1894" (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2012), 121.
24 Hubert Howe Bancroft, *The Book of the Fair: An Historical and Descriptive Presentation of the World's Science, Art and Industry, as Viewed through the Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893* (Chicago, IL: Bancroft, 1893), 2: 219.
25 Allen, *Collection of Ancient Korean Pottery*, 6. Bushell mistakenly believed that Dana's bowl was that which Allen received from Kojong. Stephen Wootton Bushell, *Oriental Ceramic Art: Collection of W. T. Walters; Text Edition to Accompany the Complete Work* (New York: D. Appleton, 1899), 680. There is no mention of this bowl in the sale of Dana's collection. American Art Association, *Eastern Ceramics and Other Objects of Art: Belonging to the Estate of the Late Charles A. Dana* [. . .] (New York: American Art Association, 1898).
26 American Art Association, *Eastern Ceramics*, 5–6. It is not known who authored the sales catalogue of the Dana collection of East Asian ceramics. Given that the objects were listed seemingly at random, rather than according to region and type, which by then had become the standard way in which to present ceramic collections, it seems that well-known experts of East Asian art, such as Shugio, Morse, Fenollosa, and Satow, were not consulted.
27 Charles A. Dana: Eastern Ceramics Objects of Art (February 24–26, 1898) 1898, no page number. Box 16, Subseries 9.6: Auction Records 1884–1911, Thomas Ellis Kirby Personal Papers, American Art Association Records, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution (hereafter cited as Thomas Ellis Kirby Papers).
28 Charles A. Dana, Box 16, Thomas Ellis Kirby Papers.
29 James Harrison Wilson, *The life of Charles A. Dana* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1907), 506.
30 "Mr. Dana's Porcelains," *The Critic: A Weekly Review of Literature and the Arts* 29, no. 836 (1898): 147.
31 Wilson, *Charles A. Dana,* 506.
32 Wilson, *Charles A. Dana*, 504.
33 "Mr. Dana's Porcelains," *The Critic*, 147.
34 Stacey Pierson, *Collectors, Collections and Museums: The Field of Chinese Ceramics in Britain, 1560–1960* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007), 62–80; "Mr. Dana's Porcelains," *The Critic*, 147.
35 "Mr. Dana's Porcelains," *The Critic*, 147; Wilson, *Charles A. Dana,* 506; "Dana Ceramic Sale," *The New York Times*, February 17, 1898.
36 Allen, *Collection of Ancient Korean Pottery*, 6.
37 For example, in the mid-1890s Allen bought a number of "very common Korai with one good vase" for John M. B. Sill (1831–1901), who served as Minister Resident and Consul General in Korea from 1894 to 1897. Allen, *Collection of Ancient Korean Pottery*, 6.
38 The sale of the 600 Asian ceramics amounted to $114,820, the European oil paintings fetched $79,700, and a small number of teak wood stands and covers for ceramics sold for $309.50, resulting in a total sum of $194,829.50. For details of the prices, see "Dana Collection Sale. Lively Bidding for Rare Oriental Ceramics," *The Sun* (New York), February 25, 1898; "Fine Pictures at Auction," *The Sun* (New York), February 26, 1898; "Mr. Dana's Ceramics Sold," *The Sun* (New York), February 27, 1898. See also Wilson, *Charles A. Dana*, 506.
39 "Successful Art Sale," *The Los Angeles Times*, February 27, 1898.
40 "Dana Collection Sale," *The Sun* (New York). American Art Association, *Eastern Ceramics*, lot 73.
41 A year after Moore's death, the American Art Association put up his collection for sale and the 1,453 lots fetched a total of $142,015. "R. E. Moore Art Brought $142,015," *The New York Times*, February 5, 1919.
42 "Dana Collection Sale," *The Sun* (New York). American Art Association, *Eastern Ceramics*, lot 71.

43 Julia Meech, "The Other Havemeyer Passion: Collecting Asian Art," in *Splendid Legacy: The Havemeyer Collection*, ed. Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, Gary Tinterow, Susan Alyson Stein, and Gretchen Wold (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991), 129.
44 "Dana Collection Sale," *The Sun* (New York). American Art Association, *Eastern Ceramics*, lot 72. Other women who purchased artefacts at the sale were Miss S. M. Phipps, Mrs. E. W. Bass, Mrs. C. B. Alexander, Mrs. E. C. Bodman, Mrs. C. H. Wood, Mrs. S. D. Tucker, Mrs. E. N. Herzog, Mrs. A. J. Richardson, Miss E. S. Hamilton and Mrs. D. D. McBean. See also "Fine Pictures at Auction," *The Sun* (New York), February 26, 1898; "Mr. Dana's Ceramics Sold," *The Sun* (New York), February 27, 1898.
45 Peters, Samuel T. – 1914–15, 1919, 1921, Office of the Secretary Records, the Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.
46 "Accessions by Gift," *Annual Report of the Trustees of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 46 (1915): 56.
47 Lot 73 in American Art Association, *Eastern Ceramics*, annotated by Charles Lang Freer. Accessed in the National Museum of Asian Art Library, National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution.
48 L.308, Pottery List 1 of 5, p. 63, Box 71, Subseries 5.6: Pottery-Oriental, Charles Lang Freer Papers. Freer compiled several inventories of his collection and repeatedly updated them. Freer's archive holds two main inventories of his ceramics, both titled "Pottery Lists." A handwritten, undated note in Box 70 states that the original Pottery List numbers six lists, while the second numbers only five. Both inventories are typed and annotated with handwritten comments by Freer, Morse, and others. As the ceramics entered the collection, they were numbered sequentially and given the prefix L. Those selected for his museum were also given Smithsonian Institution numbers with the prefix SI. The Pottery Lists include cross-references to the sales vouchers. The inventories evidence that Freer acquired many more objects than those he presented to the nation. Between 1906, when the US government officially accepted his gift, and until his death, Freer repeatedly re-assessed the collection with friends and specialists, culling pieces that were deemed unsuitable for the museum collection. The Pottery Lists include handwritten notes on when and to whom objects were sold or gifted. Rejected pieces were sometimes offered to family and friends as wedding presents and Christmas gifts, while others were donated to art museums in America, in particular college museums, such as Oberlin, Smith, and Williams. A few objects were sold on to Mrs. Hecker and other friends.
49 Japan Society et al. *Chinese, Corean and Japanese Potteries: Descriptive Catalogue of Loan Exhibition of Selected Examples* (New York: Japan Society, 1914), catalogue number 27.
50 Note by E. S. Morse, dated 1921, in inventory record for F1898.39 in The Museum System, which is the Smithsonian Institution's electronic database (hereafter cited as TMS). The database has been an invaluable tool in my research on Freer's collecting patterns. I am grateful to Louise Cort (Curator Emerita of the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, the Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art) for her advice and guidance in using TMS.
51 L.311 (F1898.42), Pottery List 1 of 5, p. 64, Box 71, Subseries 5.6: Pottery-Oriental, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
52 "Collections: Korean," National Museum of Asian Art, accessed October 19, 2023, https://asia-archive.si.edu/collections-area/korean/.
53 In January 1920, a list of Freer's Korean ceramic wares with their original price and insurance valuations was sent to Frank Gair Macomber, the founder of a successful insurance company based in Boston. "List of Corean Pottery. Cost Prices and Insurance Valuations," Box 73, Subseries 5.6: Pottery-Oriental, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
54 Helen Nebeker Tomlinson, "Charles Lang Freer: Pioneer Collector of Oriental Art" (PhD diss., Case Western Reserve University, 1979), 49, 189.
55 For a discussion of how the trip impacted Freer's collecting of Japanese art, see Louise Allison Cort, "Charles Lang Freer and Japanese Ceramics," *Impressions* 39 (Part One of double issue) (2018): 131–63.
56 Annotated copy of Basil Hall Chamberlain and W. B. Mason, *A Handbook for Travellers in Japan* (London: John Murray, 1891), 254, 312. The National Museum of Asian Art Library, National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution.
57 Freer to Hecker, May 27, 1895, Subseries 2.1: Charles Lang Freer Correspondence, Charles Lang Freer Papers.

58 Cort, "Charles Lang Freer," 143–44.
59 Accession number F1895.1. According to TMS, the bowl is signed by the Kyoto potter Kyuraku.
60 According to TMS, Freer acquired 25 pieces from Takayanagi Tōzō, 21 of them ceramics. However, it is important to note that TMS only records the objects that Freer included in the collection that entered the Freer Gallery of Art (now the National Museum of Asian Art). In the 1890s Takayanagi's business was notable enough for it to be mentioned in *The Collector*, a journal for American art collectors: "Mr. Tozo Takayanagi announces the removal of his Art Rooms to 160 Fifth Avenue. His collection is now especially rich in the finest possible specimens of Japanese bronze, shakudo, porcelain and the like, most of them of an especially valuable decorative character." See "Forecasts of the Fall Season," *The Collector* 3, no. 18 (August 1892): 275.
61 Cort, "Charles Lang Freer," 140–42.
62 Freer to Matsuki, October 16, 1896, Box 39, Subseries 2.2: Charles Lang Freer Letterpress Books, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
63 According to TMS, Freer acquired 285 artefacts from Matsuki between 1896 and 1909. Most of them are ceramics and screens from the Edo period, though he also bought a few Chinese objects, but no Korean ones.
64 Matsuki remained active in Boston until 1919, though Freer seems not to have purchased any pieces from him after 1909. For information on Matsuki Bunkyō, see Joseph L. Anderson, *Enter a Samurai: Kawakami Otojirō and Japanese Theater in the West* (Tucson, AZ: Wheatmark, 2011), 190–91.
65 Thomas Lawton, "Yamanaka Sadajirō: Advocate for Asian Art," *Orientations* 26, no. 1 (January 1995): 80–81. For further discussion, see Kuchiki Yuriko, *Hausu Obu Yamanaka: Tōyō no shihō o ōbei ni utta bijutsushō* [The House of Yamanaka: The Art Dealer Who Sold Oriental Treasures to the West] (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 2011).
66 To mark their first transaction with Freer, the company offered a discount of 15% for the set. Yamanaka and Co. to Freer, October 28, 1895, Box 36, Subseries 2.1: Charles Lang Freer Correspondence, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
67 The accession numbers of the bowls are F1896.57 (flower-patterned bowl) and F1896.87 (white bowl).
68 According to TMS, at this time the collection numbered 39 ceramics identified as Japanese and six as Chinese.
69 F1896.87, TMS record.
70 F1896.57, TMS record.
71 Freer to Moore, October 31, 1896, Box 39, Subseries 2.2: Charles Lang Freer Letterpress Books, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
72 L.471, Pottery List 1 of 5, p. 77, Box 71, Subseries 5.6: Pottery-Oriental, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
73 L.683 to L.692 (F1897.81 to F1897.90), Pottery List 2 of 6, pp. 136–38, Box 70, Subseries 5.6: Pottery-Oriental, Charles Lang Freer Papers. In the sales voucher, the bowls are listed as Ten Bowls in Cabinet, with the added note in pencil: From Prince of Kaga. Sales voucher no. 42, December 1897, Box 109, Subseries 6.5.2: Art vouchers, Charles Lang Freer Papers. Louise Cort has suggested that the bowls may have belonged to Maeda Yoshiyasu 前田慶寧 (1830–74), fourteenth head of the main Maeda family based in Kanazawa. F1897.88, TMS record.
74 Takeshi Watanabe, "From Korea to Japan and Back Again: One Hundred Years of Japanese Tea Culture through Five Bowls, 1550–1650," *Yale University Art Gallery Bulletin* (2007): 84.
75 Katayama Mabi, "Korean Tea Bowls and the Tea Ceremony," in *Korean Art in the Freer and Sackler Galleries*, ed. Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2012), 25–26.
76 Edward Sylvester Morse, "Old Satsuma," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 77 (June–November 1888): 512–29. See also Chapter 1.
77 Morse, "Old Satsuma," 524.
78 Morse, "Old Satsuma," 513, 517–18.
79 Sales voucher no. 61, December 1904, Box 114, Subseries 6.5.2: Art vouchers, Charles Lang Freer Papers.

80 Randolph I. Geare, "The Potter's Art in Korea," *The Craftsman* 7 (December 1904): 294, 297.
81 Geare, "Potter's Art," 298.
82 For discussion of Freer's interest in "points of contacts," see Cort, "Charles Lang Freer," 132–34.
83 L. 32, Pottery List 1 of 6, p. 7, Box 70, Subseries 5.6: Pottery-Oriental, Charles Lang Freer Papers. Accession number F1896.45a-b.
84 Cort, "Charles Lang Freer," 145, 155.
85 Ernest F. Fenollosa, "The Collection of Mr. Charles L. Freer," *Pacific Era* 1, no. 2 (November 1907): 59.
86 Fenollosa, "Collection," 59.
87 For a discussion of Freer's purchases from Fenollosa, see Tomlinson, "Freer: Pioneer Collector," 361–71.
88 For differences in opinion between Morse and Freer, see Cort, "Charles Lang Freer," 156.
89 Tomlinson, "Freer: Pioneer Collector," 370–71.
90 Fenollosa, "Collection," 59, 66.
91 Fenollosa, "Collection," 58–59.
92 "Mr. Freer's Offer," *New-York Tribune*, November 26, 1906.
93 Lee Glazer, *Charles Lang Freer: A Cosmopolitan Life* (Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 2017), 98–99.
94 Charles Lang Freer, *An Inventory of the Collections of Charles L. Freer: Presented to the Smithsonian Institution, or to the United States Government, under the Terms of His Letter to the President, Dated December 14, 1905* (Detroit: Printed Privately, 1906), 91–191.
95 Fenollosa, "Collection," 64–65.
96 Charles Lang Freer, annotated copy of *Inventory of the Collections of Charles L. Freer*, 111–20, the National Museum of Asian Art Library, National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution.
97 The object was priced at $300 but Freer received a 10% discount. Sales voucher no. 31, March 1905, Box 113, Subseries 6.5.2: Art vouchers, Charles Lang Freer Papers; See also L.1377, Pottery List 3 of 6, p. 310, Box 70, Subseries 5.6: Pottery-Oriental, Charles Lang Freer Papers. The object is also included in Freer, *Inventory of the Collections of Charles L. Freer*, 119.
98 Tomlinson, "Freer: Pioneer Collector," 491, 495.
99 Webster is listed in *Progressive Men of Northern Ohio* (Cleveland: Plain Dealer Publishing Co., 1906). In 1913 Webster's art collection was sold by the Anderson Galleries in New York. The catalogue states that Webster purchased pieces that had belonged to Charles Dana, Thomas Waggaman, and other major American collectors, illustrating how objects circulated from one collection to another during this time. His extensive collection included a small number of Korean ceramics. Anderson Galleries, *The John H. Webster Collection: Part I. Crystal, Jade and Other Hard Stones, Porcelains, Potteries, Lacquers, Bronzes, Carvings, Swords* (New York: Metropolitan Art Association, 1913), 29.
100 Flagg to Freer, March 13, 1907, Box 9, Subseries 2.1: Charles Lang Freer Correspondence, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
101 Following the death of Luigi Palma di Cresnola (1832–1904), the Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, J. Pierpont Morgan (1837–1913) assumed duties as President of the museum. In 1905 he hired Clarke (1846–1911) to be the Second Director, a position Clarke held until 1910. *Dictionary of Art Historians*, s.v. "Clarke, Caspar Purdon, Sir," by Lee Sorensen, accessed August 10, 2019, http://arthistorians.info/clarkec.
102 Flagg to Hecker, March 21, 1907, Box 9, Subseries 2.1: Charles Lang Freer Correspondence, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
103 Freer to Hecker, May 6, 1907, Box 9, Subseries 2.1: Charles Lang Freer Correspondence, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
104 Freer to Nomura, August 16, 1907, Box 48, Subseries 2.2: Charles Lang Freer Letterpress Books, Charles Lang Freer Papers. See also Tomlinson, "Freer: Pioneer Collector," 515.
105 Allen does not detail whom this "expert" is.

106 Allen, "82 pieces of ancient Korean pottery," Charles Lang Freer Papers (see n. 13).
107 Freer to Hecker, May 6, 1907, Subseries 2.1: Charles Lang Freer Correspondence, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
108 Freer stayed at the house in April 1907. Tomlinson, "Freer: Pioneer Collector," 496–503.
109 "List of Corean Pottery. Cost Prices and Insurance Valuations," November 1, 1920, Box 73, Subseries 5.6: Pottery-Oriental, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
110 "Summary of Purchases Made During Oriental Trip, Year 1906/1907, From Sums Charged 'Foreign Travels,'" December 1907, Box 114, Subseries 6.5.2: Art vouchers, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
111 Freer to Hecker, May 6, 1907 (see n. 107).
112 Freer to Hecker, May 30, 1907, Subseries 2.1: Charles Lang Freer Correspondence, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
113 In London Freer was informed of the Hanna Collection of "Indo-Persian" paintings, and in a letter to Hecker compared its significance to Allen's collection: "The Hanna collection far surpasses in importance in all directions, my deepest hopes. I amazed that it should have been on the market nearly twenty years without finding a buyer! It is doubtless unique in the world. Another like the Corean!" Freer to Hecker, September 26, 1907, Subseries 2.1: Charles Lang Freer Correspondence, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
114 "Ernest Fenollosa's Notes Taken Before Mr. Freer's Collection in Detroit, November 4–11, 1907," no page number, Box 56, Subseries 4.1: Ernest Fenollosa Materials, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
115 Freer to Flagg, November 13, 1907, Box 49, Subseries 2.2: Charles Lang Freer Letterpress Books, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
116 Freer to Flagg, November 13, 1907.
117 Accession numbers F1907.367 (jar) and F1907.794 (stand). The jar and stand were bought as a set from Yamanaka and Co. Sales voucher no. 36, December 1907, Box 114, Subseries 6.5.2: Art vouchers, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
118 Freer to Flagg, November 13, 1907; Allen to Freer, December 4, 1907, Box 9, Subseries 2.1: Charles Lang Freer Correspondence, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
119 "Description of Korean Pottery Pieces in the Collection of the Fine Arts Gallery of San Diego. Korean Pottery: Collection of Dr. Horace N. Allen," no date (circa 1928), page 2. The San Diego Museum of Art Archives.
120 A saggar is a boxlike container used during the firing process to enclose or protect the ware.
121 Freer paid £8,400 for the room. Sales voucher, May 16, 1904, Box 112, Subseries 6.5.2: Art vouchers, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
122 Photographs of the Peacock room in Freer's house in Detroit, 1908, Box 266, Subseries 12.2.4: Peacock Room, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
123 Ushikubo to Freer, February 3, 1909, Box 36, Subseries 2.1: Charles Lang Freer Correspondence, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
124 "The City of Kaijo (Yung-ju) and its Vicinity," paper included in a letter from Ushikubo to Freer, February 3, 1909 (see n. 123).
125 The group included a large porcelain jar with a clear glaze and mottled discoloration, while the remaining pieces were glazed celadon stonewares: a water dropper, a covered box, a lidded jar, two dishes, eleven bowls, five oil bottles, two bottles, five *meibyŏng* prunus vases (sold as galipot vases) and three ewers. Sales voucher no. 18, February 1909, Box 116, Subseries 6.5.2: Art vouchers, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
126 The accession number of the bowl is F1909.10. An inventory record in TMS for the melon-shaped ewer (F1909.33a) states that it was sold with a lid, but later this was believed to not belong to the vessel.
127 L.1916 and L.1918, Pottery List 4 of 6, p. 458, Box 70, Subseries 5.6: Pottery-Oriental, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
128 No. 198, in Freer, annotated copy of *Inventory of the Collections of Charles L. Freer*, 112 (see n. 94 and 96). See also L.313 (F1898.48), Pottery List 1 of 6, p. 64, Box 70, Subseries 5.6: Pottery-Oriental, Charles Lang Freer Papers. Currently the bowl is thought to have been made in Korea for Japanese customers in the late 1600s.

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4 New Consumers of Korean Ceramics

Introduction

In the 1910s the Korean art market expanded considerably. As an increasing number of Koryŏ ceramics became available for sale and scholarship on them advanced, more buyers developed an interest in the wares. In contrast to the late nineteenth century, when acquisitions of Korean ceramics centred on those which were thought to have been made by Korean potters in Japan, in the early twentieth century, collectors turned to early glazed stonewares from the Korean peninsula and the Chinese mainland. Scholarship and exhibitions drew attention to their shared aesthetics and methods of production, encouraging collectors to acquire both types of wares. Exhibitions of Koryŏ ceramics held in Seoul, Tokyo, London, Boston, and New York confirmed their desirability and their association with the moneyed elite who often lent their artefacts to the organising institutions.

It is not coincidental that the growth of the art market coincided with the Japanese colonisation of the Korean peninsula. When Japan formally annexed Korea in August 1910, neither America nor Britain raised objections but viewed Japan's rulership as an inevitable outcome of Korea's supposed inability to govern itself.[1] Few, if any, collectors lamented Korea's loss of independence. Rather, the surge in the availability of Koryŏ wares was credited to the Japanese takeover of the peninsula, and as a result, it was met with approval.[2] The colonial trope of Korea being backward and unable to progress confirmed understandings of Koryŏ ceramics as representing the pinnacle of Korean ceramic production. As Francis Stewart Kershaw (1869–1930), Keeper in the Department of Chinese and Japanese Art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, surmised in 1911:

> Korean pottery is the one great product of art in Korea that has come down to us. Like Korean painting, sculpture, and architecture, [Korean pottery] had its source in China and passed on its tradition to Japan; but unlike those greater arts, pottery making in Korea developed in its own way, growing into something rich and quite different from anything produced in China, and teaching Japan everything but its own beauty.[3]

In London, Bernard Rackham (1876–1964), Keeper of Ceramics at the V&A Museum, supported Kershaw's view when he stated that "all the best pottery found in Corea dates from the period of the Kōrai dynasty."[4] Moreover, in the subdued colour palette and restrained designs of Koryŏ ceramics, collectors and curators saw a quintessential Korean product that aligned with the widespread understanding of the Korean people as being calm and unaggressive.[5] In the words of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York: "The soft green color, the faint, fine decoration . . . fulfil perfectly the established ideas of what a production of the Hermit Kingdom should be."[6]

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This chapter examines the growth in the Korean art market and the factors that enabled it. It argues that Koryŏ ceramics came to be understood as culturally meaningful objects that not only offered important insights into Korean artistic and historic heritage but contributed to broader understandings of East Asian art. It takes as its starting point exhibitions of Korean cultural heritage initiated by Japan to promote its positive impact on the peninsula. The first took place in London and formed part of the Japan-British Exhibition held in London in 1910. Meanwhile in Seoul, the Office of the Resident-General of Korea (replaced by the Government-General of Korea in 1910) initiated the opening of the first public museum on the Korean peninsula. This was soon followed by the inauguration of a larger and grander museum named after the colonial government. In both institutions, Koryŏ ceramics took centre place and confirmed to the Korean public their Japanese ownership. The second theme of the chapter concerns collectors' new interest in early glazed stonewares from China and Korea that became a significant impetus behind their collecting of Koryŏ ceramics. It accounts for the emergence of the new wave of Chinese art collectors that began to seek out Korean vessels, resulting in an increasingly crowded art market. Charles Freer continued to lead the field, but others such as Desmond Fitzgerald (1846–1926) in Boston and Aubrey Le Blond (1869–1951) in London followed closely behind.

Colonial Control Over Korean Heritage

In May 1910, the Japan-British Exhibition opened at the "Great White City" in Shepherd's Bush, London. Initiated to strengthen the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902, for Japan it presented the opportunity to enhance its image in Britain. Japan's unexpected victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5 received mixed responses among the British public with some expressing suspicion of Japan's growing influence in East Asia. It was therefore felt important to emphasise the positive aspects of Japan's rulership over its colonies, which at this time numbered Taiwan, the Kwangtung Leased Territory in the Liaodong Peninsula and Korea, the latter being its most recent possession. At the exposition, a building titled "The Palace of the Orient" was devoted to these regions and included displays of locally manufactured objects, examples of natural resources, and photographs that evidenced the positive impact of the colonial rule.[7]

The Korean exhibits comprised items that were typically singled out as unique to the peninsula, such as woven mats, wooden cabinets, paper fans, pipes, and straw shoes, all of contemporary make. It is telling that the only display devoted to antique artefacts was a cabinet with around 20 celadon and bronze wares from the Koryŏ dynasty that were displayed alongside three stoneware vessels from the Three Kingdoms period (Figure 4.1). None of the Koryŏ ceramics were broken or repaired, as was otherwise often the case due to the circumstances under which they were unearthed. Rather, they represented the highest quality of vessels available on the Korean art market and were similar to those sought after by Freer, Samuel T. Peters, and other collectors. When the exhibition ended, around 45 of the Korean artefacts were gifted to the British Museum by Ogita Etsuzo 荻田悦造 (1878–1943), who served as "Secretary of the Imperial Chosŏn Government, Office of the Japanese Commission."[8] Ogita's donation added to the museum's small but growing collection of nearly 200 Korean artefacts, thus exceeding the Korean collection at the V&A Museum, which numbered only around 50 objects.[9]

None of the exhibited artefacts from the Koryŏ dynasty were donated to the British Museum. They may have formed part of the newly formed collection of the Imperial

Figure 4.1 Korean ceramics exhibited at the Japan-British Exhibition. White City, London, 1910. From Tōkanfu, *Nichiei Hakurankai*, no page number.

Source: Courtesy of National Library of Korea, Seoul.

Household Museum in Seoul (J. *Teishitsu Hakubutsukan* 帝室博物館; in 1910 renamed the Prince Yi Household Museum, J. *Ri Ōke Hakubutsukan* 李王家博物館), which opened to the public in November 1909, having been established the year prior (Figure 4.2).[10] The colonial government promoted the museum to evidence Japan's sympathetic treatment of the Koreans through schemes that aimed to educate the Korean population and preserve Korean heritage. The museum was conceptualised by Komiya Mihomatsu 小宮三保松 (1859–1935), possibly following direct orders from Itō Hirobumi 伊藤博文 (1841–1909), the first Resident-General of Korea. Komiya served as Vice Minister to the Ministry of the Imperial household from 1907 to 1911, and as Vice Minister to the Yi household until 1917. Both Itō and Komiya were keen collectors of Koryŏ ceramics.[11] Like

Figure 4.2 Postcard of the Prince Yi Household Museum inside Ch'anggyŏng Palace in Seoul. Date unknown.

Source: Courtesy of Pusan Museum (Pusan kwangyŏng shirip pangmulgwan/emyujiŏm).

others, Komiya saw them as manifestations of the rise and decline of Korean art, arguing that the dire situation in Korea could be remedied through Japanese guardianship.[12]

Contrary to its name, the museum owned only few artefacts from the royal collections.[13] Many of the paintings and written documents in court ownership had either been lost or were kept in various royal libraries, while ceramics and many other locally manufactured objects had not been valued as collectible artefacts by the Chosŏn elite.[14] In 1908, museum staff, all of whom were Japanese, began to build the collection, mostly through purchases from local art dealers.[15] Over a period of two years they acquired 3,533 objects, mostly through art dealers in Korea.[16] Among them was Kondō Sagorō, who supplied around 20 objects to the museum. One of the first objects he sold was an elaborate celadon ewer with a matching basin, both decorated with an inlaid pattern and painted with underglaze copper-red pigment. The set was priced at 950 won – a huge sum at this time. For comparison, in the same year Kondō sold an inlaid bottle to the museum for 150 won.[17] By 1917, museum staff had purchased 10,122 artefacts comprising various kinds of secular and religious objects.[18] Among those, much focus was placed on Koryŏ artefacts as suggested by the following record, published by the museum in 1944:

> From January 1908, preparations for establishing the museum began and all the efforts for securing collections were made. Just in time, many celadon, metal and stone works, from which are enough to understand the brilliant culture of the Koryŏ dynasty, have been excavated from tombs, and are actively being traded in Seoul. We tried to collect those artefacts. Besides, we have purchased many excellent Buddha statues of the Three Kingdoms and Unified Silla periods, and paintings, craftworks, historical and folklore artefacts of the Chosŏn period.[19]

In December 1915, the colonial government further emphasised its investment in Korean culture when it opened the Government-General Museum of Korea (J. *Chōsen Sōtokufu Hakubutsukan* 朝鮮総督府博物館). Located within the precincts of Kyŏngbok Palace, in a building originally constructed for the Industrial Exhibition (J. *Shisei Gonen Kinen Chōsen Bussan Kyōshinkai* 始政五年記念朝鮮物産共進會) in commemoration of the fifth year of the colonial rule, the museum replaced the Prince Yi Household Museum as the most significant cultural institution within Korea. From its inception, it became the official home for artefacts excavated by Japanese archaeologists over the course of the colonial period, and its collection therefore quickly grew larger than that of the Prince Yi Household Museum. As in the case of other government-run educational and cultural institutions in Korea, only a handful of Koreans were employed at the museum between 1915 and 1945. Similarly, all excavations were led by Japanese archaeologists supported by Korean manual laborers.[20]

The government emphasised its dominance on the peninsula by positioning the new museum within the main palace in Seoul, thereby turning the previous locus of Chosŏn governance into a secular site for public consumption. The Japanese control over the narrative context of Korean art was further evident in the imposing size of the museum building and its neoclassical architecture. The colonial investment in the institution is also evident in the design of the exhibition rooms, where the artefacts were displayed inside ornately carved wooden cabinets that contrasted significantly with the simple glass cases used at the Prince Yi Household Museum (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3 Display of Koryŏ ceramics inside the Government-General Museum. Seoul, date unknown.

Source: National Museum of Korea, dryplate 025769.

The two museums significantly changed local approaches to Korean archaeological remains. Not only did they offer the Korean public access to local exemplars of cultural heritage, but they also highlighted the broader impact of cultural treasures as tangible manifestations of a shared past. Prior to annexation, when Korea was politically dominated by Japan and had little prospect of achieving autonomous status, the displayed objects were believed to symbolise the collective strength of the Korean people and, most importantly, their national spirit. In defiance of political subjugation, *Taehan maeil sinbo* newspaper encouraged its readers to find strength in the displays of Koryŏ ceramics at the newly opened Prince Yi Household Museum, writing "Bear Up! May the brightness glow our nation."[21] Yet it did not go unnoticed that the museums presented a colonial narrative of Korean history, and much critique was directed at the Japanese, who were blamed for taking physical and intellectual ownership of Korean artefacts. In 1909, *Hwangsŏng sinmun* newspaper lamented that a lecture on Korean crafts was given by the Japanese scholar Sekino Tadashi 関野貞 (1868–1935), saying,

> It is horrible to hear that a Japanese scholar gave a lecture . . . Koreans can find no objects buried in the ground, while the Japanese find, study and give lectures on them. Indeed, I do not know why this has happened. I am dying of grief.[22]

The year after *Taehan maeil sinbo* newspaper wrote:

> Those Japanese who strut along with long whips in our country . . . touch treasures of our country. I am afraid that all the national treasures would be goods to display in Tokyo or antique shops in Osaka in Japan. Is it not sorrowful? . . . I desperately hope that our brethren will pay attention to preserving our national treasures in order to preserve the glory of the country and cultivate the country's spirit.[23]

In many respects the call for Korean control of local heritage came too late. Following the annexation of Korea, the colonial government forced the discontinuation of Korean nationalist newspapers and thus effectively silenced critique of Japanese agendas.[24] Moreover, by the time the two museums opened, the art market was already dominated by politically influential and wealthy Japanese, American, and European collectors, leaving limited opportunities for Korean collectors to compete against them. When Koryŏ ceramics first entered the art market, few Koreans acquired them, in part due to their long-standing Confucian beliefs in the sacredness of grave sites and the social taboos surrounding ownership of tomb goods.[25] By the 1910s, when displays of tombs goods in the Prince Yi Household Museum and Government-General Museum of Korea challenged social conventions concerning mortuary material, the price of ceramics had increased significantly, and only few Koreans had the economic means and social networks to purchase them. As discussed in Chapter 5, it was not until the 1930s that Koreans began to actively compete against the Japanese on the art market by taking up membership of the Seoul Arts Club (J. *Keijō Bijutsu Kurabu* 京城美術倶楽部), which was established by Japanese art dealers in 1921 for selling, buying, and appreciating Korean antiques.[26]

The privileged access Japanese collectors and dealers had to Korean tomb loot is evident in an exhibition of Koryŏ ceramics that opened in 1909 in the Ginza district of Tokyo, curated by Nishimura Shōtarō 西村庄太郎 (dates unknown) and Itō Yasaburō 伊藤彌三郎 (dates unknown). Nishimura and Itō were art dealers whose incentive behind the exhibition was likely driven by financial gain. No doubt they hoped that it would

generate further interest in Korean ceramics, leading to more business. In the 1910s Nishimura was the proprietor of a successful antique shop in the upmarket Kyōbashi area of Tokyo that sold Korean, Chinese, and Japanese objects.[27] Itō Yasaburō owned an art dealership in Tokyo called Itō Yasaburō & Co. whose clients included the Saint Louis Art Museum in Missouri.[28]

The Koryŏ Ceramic Exhibition (J. *Kōraiyaki Tenrankai* 高麗焼展覧会) displayed around 100 ceramics from 26 Japanese collectors residing in Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka, and Seoul, including the curators themselves. Due to the success of the exhibition, the following year a catalogue was issued that listed the names of the exhibitors accompanied by photographs of their objects.[29] The exhibition became well-known among collectors due to its pioneering content and contributions from influential collectors.[30] At least five of the exhibitors were high-ranking politicians of aristocratic lineage, among them Matsukata Masayoshi 松方正義 (1835–1924), who served as Prime Minister of Japan from 1891 to 1892 and 1896 to 1898. Others were art dealers, businessmen and academics, among them Nezu Kaichirō, Hara Tomitarō, Kondō Sagorō, and the historian and poet Ayukai Fusanoshin 鮎貝房之進 (1864–1946). Advantaged by their privileged positions, they had the social networks and economic means to acquire the best wares. Their success as collectors is reflected in the objects illustrated in the catalogue. Particularly striking are the many sets of celadon vessels, such as ewers with matching basins. Typically, such sets were dispersed either by grave robbers or art dealers and were therefore rarely preserved intact. Only those with direct access to newly unearthed remains could have obtained the type of ceramics displayed in the exhibition.[31]

One of the most intricate sets belonged to Takahashi Korekiyo 高橋是清 (1854–1936), who later served as Prime Minister of Japan from 1921 to 1922. Consisting of a lidded box inside which nestled a squat bottle and five smaller-sized lidded boxes, the catalogue identified the objects as "sweet meat boxes in an oblong box" (Figure 4.4).[32] Another elaborate set was owned by the entrepreneur Ōkura Kihachirō 大倉喜八郎 (1837–1928), who established Japan's first private museum, the Ōkura Shūkokan 大倉集古館 in 1917. It consisted of a remarkably well-preserved dragon-headed ewer with a lotus-shaped stopper that was positioned in a matching lotus-shaped bowl (Figure 4.5). The ewer was flanked by an animal-shaped vessel that appears to be a Chosŏn ritual funerary ware from the 1500s or 1600s. The catalogue offers no clues as to whether the curators placed its date of manufacture to the Koryŏ or Chosŏn dynasties.

The catalogue text not only presents important insights into the burgeoning field of Korean ceramic scholarship, it highlights how understandings of Koryŏ ceramic traditions were shaped by the Japanese colonial narrative. In keeping with the colonial trope, Nishimura and Itō argued that no objects made prior to the Koryŏ dynasty could be classed as art.[33] Arguing for Japan's benevolent and positive influence on the peninsula, they stated,

> In the bleak and wretched order of the present [Korea], foreigners seeing Koryŏ celadon ceramics wonder how the ancestors of the philistine people could possess such refined artistry. We believe it is our duty to introduce this unknown great art to the world.[34]

The catalogue also catered to the growing interest in comparative studies of early Chinese and Korean glazed stonewares. The curators devoted several pages to this topic and among other points explained that "Chinese celadon are vivid and lucid but

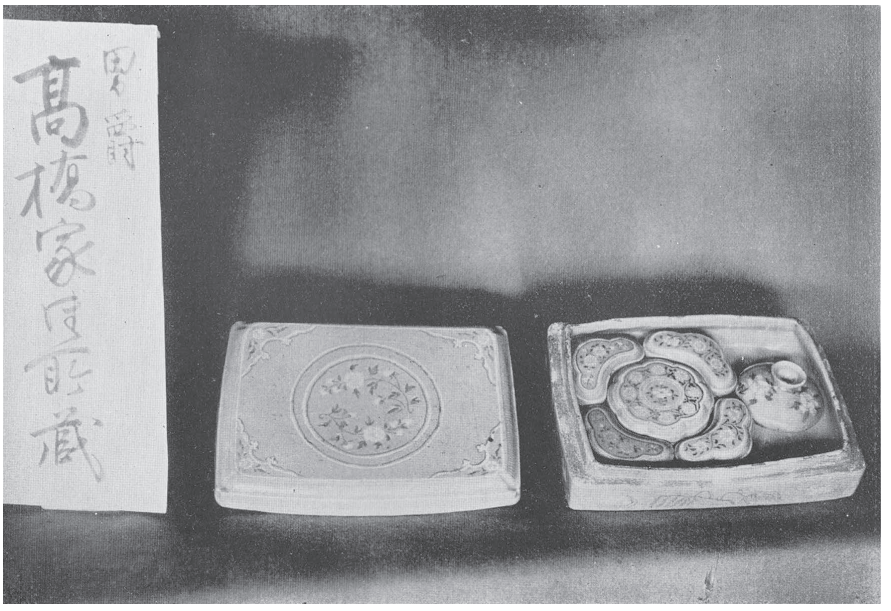

Figure 4.4 A celadon oil bottle and celadon boxes with inlaid designs in the collection of Baron Takahashi. Koryŏ period, late twelfth to mid thirteenth century. From Itō and Nishimura, *Kōraiyaki*, no page number.

Source: Courtesy of Special Collections, SOAS Library, University of London.

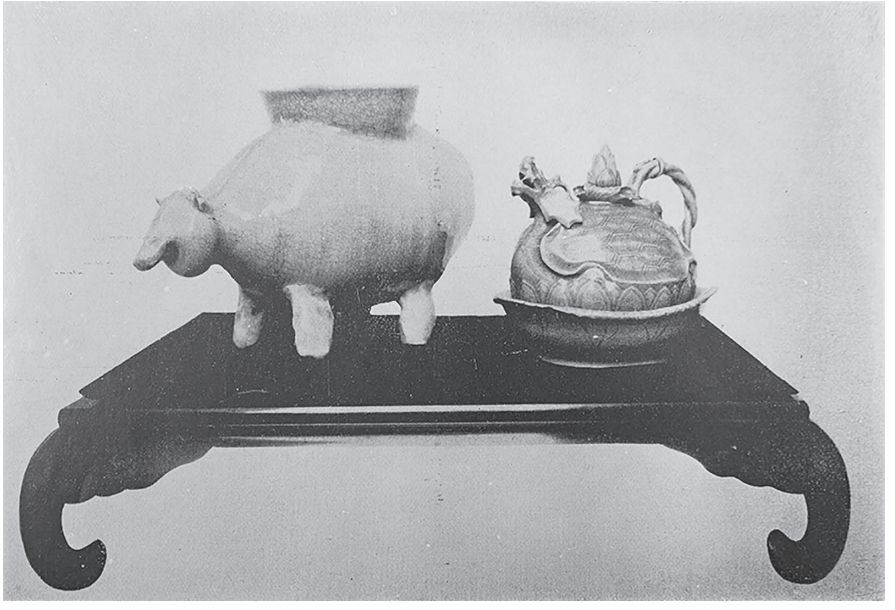

Figure 4.5 Dragon-headed ewer with lotus shaped bowl, and animal-shaped vessel, in the collection of Ōkura Kihachirō. Koryŏ period, late twelfth to mid-thirteenth century. From Itō and Nishimura, *Kōraiyaki*, no page number.

Source: Courtesy of Special Collections, SOAS Library, University of London.

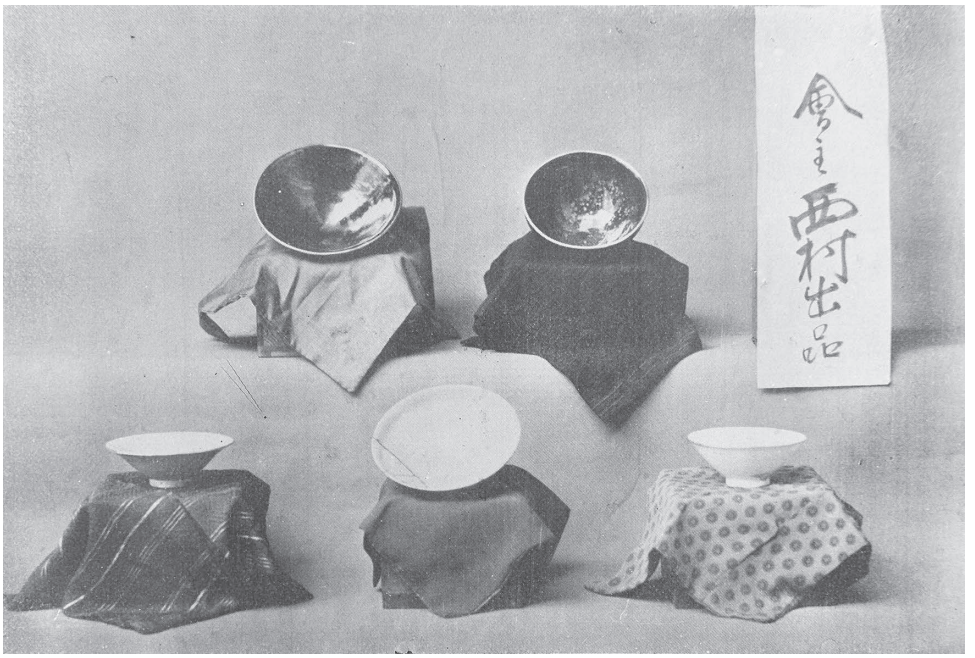

Figure 4.6 Black glazed Ding wares and "oil spot" tenmoku in the collection of Nishimura Shōtarō. From Itō and Nishimura, *Kōraiyaki*, no page number.

Source: Courtesy of Special Collections, SOAS Library, University of London.

Korean [celadon] are rather subdued with a muted glaze."[35] The catalogue included illustrations of vessels believed to be Korean but which are now known to have been manufactured at Song Chinese kilns, such as black glazed Ding wares and "oil spot" tenmoku bowls from Jian kilns (Figure 4.6). Nishimura and Itō did not entertain the possibility of Koryŏ having forged an alliance with Song, leading to goods from the Chinese mainland being imported to Kaesŏng, as was in fact the case. Rather, they accounted for the similarities between Song and Koryŏ ceramics by arguing that Korean potters strove to emulate the works of Song potters. In negating the creative agency of Korean potters, the curators supported the colonial argument of Korean people being weak and subordinate. Thus, they concluded that all artefacts found in Koryŏ tombs were of local manufacture:

> There are so many kinds of Korean pottery. Some are almost exactly like Chinese or otherwise Cochin [southern China] or Annan [Annan province, now Vietnam] pottery. At first glance one suspects they are imported wares but after seeing many pieces one finds Korean characteristics.[36]

Collecting of Song and Koryŏ Ceramics

Nishimura and Itō's comparative study of Chinese and Korean ceramics is indicative of the rising interest in early Chinese glazed stonewares that led to growth in the Korean art market. As in the case of Korea, the expansion of the railway network in China resulted in the discovery of tombs that yielded ceramic wares.[37] In the 1910s the grave

goods entered the art market in increasing numbers, resulting in extensive collections of them.[38] Particularly popular were the so-called "five classic wares" from Song imperial kilns, namely, Ding, Ru, Jun, Guan, and Ge wares, as well as Yaozhou and Longquan celadons.[39]

The interest in such vessels marks an important shift away from Ming and Qing porcelains with their colourful and intricately painted decorations, which had been popular in America and Europe in the nineteenth century.[40] At times referred to as the "purer forms" of pottery, glazed stonewares appealed to those who saw themselves as "serious" collectors of East Asian art. In 1911 the British dealer Edgar Gorer (1872–1915) coined the changing approach to Chinese ceramics as follows:

> The delightful art of Chinese porcelain is now so well known and appreciated that a work such as this needs but little introduction. . . . It was from the latter part of the sixteenth century until the end of the eighteenth that the finest work was produced, but many of the purer forms are found in the earlier dynasties of Han and Sung.[41]

Sir Charles Hercules Read (1857–1929), Keeper in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities and Ethnography at the British Museum, felt that "the delicate restrained tints [of early Chinese ceramics] cannot fail to appeal to lovers of Chinese art."[42] Read credited early finds of them to "thorough and ardent collectors," emphasising that "the uncertainty as to their date and their comparatively coarse aspect sufficed to deter the normal amateur."[43] Thus, as the art market became more crowded, established collectors singled themselves out from novices by claiming that their acquisitions of early Chinese ceramics were not only more scholarly but also aligned better with Chinese taste than the collecting of Ming and Qing porcelains.

As the fascination with Chinese celadon wares grew, so did the interest in Koryŏ ceramics, exemplified by the collecting endeavours of George Eumorfopoulos (1863–1939). A British businessman, he gained renown as one of the most significant collectors of East Asian art of the early twentieth century. In 1911 he donated to the British Museum around 33 Korean ceramics, most of them from the Koryŏ dynasty, followed by a gift of 24 artefacts of bronze, including spoons, hairpins, and razors, also from the Koryŏ dynasty. The largest group of Korean objects from Eumorfopoulos's collection entered the British Museum in 1936 and 1938. Having been badly affected by the Depression, Eumorfopoulos abandoned his initial aim to bequeath his extensive collection to the nation and instead offered it for sale at £100,000, a figure that was far less than its true value.[44] As neither the British Museum nor the V&A Museum were able to meet the costs alone, the collection was acquired jointly, with most of the Korean artefacts entering the collection of the British Museum. Prior to their formal acquisition, the artefacts were displayed in the North Court of the V&A Museum. Numbering around 2,500 objects, most of them Chinese, the exhibition included displays devoted to Korean, Thai, and Indian objects, among them two cases centred on Koryŏ ceramics and metalwares (Figure 4.7).[45]

Little is known of where Eumorfopoulos acquired his Korean artefacts, but it was most likely from the dealers who supplied his Chinese ceramics, such as John Sparks in London.[46] Having begun collecting English and European porcelain, in the early 1890s he turned his attention to Chinese ceramics and started purchasing Ming and Qing porcelains. Gradually he began adding wares from earlier dynasties, and they came to form

Figure 4.7 Display of Koryŏ celadon in the Eumorfopoulos Exhibition of Chinese Art. The V&A Museum, 1936.

Source: © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

the mainstay of his collection. Eumorfopoulos explained his fascination with such vessels as follows:

> It was in 1906 that I saw for the first time a few specimens of the tomb wares, and I was at once attracted by them. Archaeological appeal alone, however, has never induced me to acquire an object: to enter my collection it was indispensable that it should at the same time appeal to me aesthetically in some way or another. . . . From 1908 onwards these tomb wares appeared in increasing numbers, and collections were gradually being formed. By the end of 1909 they were exciting sufficient interest and discussion for the Committee of the Burlington Fine Arts Club to decide to hold in the summer of 1910 an exhibition of "Early Chinese Pottery and Porcelain."[47]

Most likely it was Eumorfopoulos's fascination with early Chinese ceramics that drove his purchases of Koryŏ vessels. Among the rarest of his Korean pieces is a celadon bowl decorated in underglaze copper-red. Eumorfopoulos seems to have recognised that the bowl was unique since in 1921 he presented it to members of the Oriental Ceramic Society in London as an "important specimen." In the same year an illustration and a brief description of it was included in the inaugural volume of the *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society*. In 1938, the bowl was acquired by the British Museum together with other artefacts from Eumorfopoulos's collection.[48]

In America too, new collectors on the East Asian market began acquiring early Chinese and Korean ceramics around this time. In Boston, Frank Gair Macomber (1849–1941) built a large collection of nearly 300 early Chinese and Korean ceramics. The head of an insurance firm, Macomber's interest in art also included Near Eastern antiquities and works by Whistler.[49] However, like Eumorfopoulos, his focus lay in Chinese ceramics, and he advocated strongly for the need to exhibit artefacts of the Tang, Sung, Yuan, and Ming dynasties as they, in Macomber's words, "had been subject to great neglect."[50] In the early 1910s, Macomber partially sold and donated to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 288 ceramics, including 20 Korean wares. At the time of its acquisition, the collection was believed to have no rival in any public museum, and with its strong representation of wares from the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties, was argued to exemplify the types that "many collectors held most dear."[51] Macomber's gift led to the museum appointing him Honorary Curator (Miscellaneous Collections).[52]

In 1909, prior to accessioning Macomber's collection, the museum displayed 212 ceramics, including 37 Korean vessels, which belonged to him. To Arthur Fairbanks (1864–1944), Director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the exhibition enabled the institution to be at the forefront of the new trend in the field of Chinese ceramics, believing that it would "create a more intelligent public interest" in Chinese stonewares.[53] Macomber hired John Getz (1854–1928) to author the catalogue. He was a well-connected dealer and one of the most sought-after experts of Chinese art in America in the early twentieth century. Over the course of his illustrious career, he authored ten catalogues of Chinese art for museums and private collectors in the United States, including Samuel P. Avery (1822–1904) and James A. Garland (1840–1900).[54] Adopting an illustrative rather than an analytical approach, Getz's popularity as an author may largely be attributed to his vivid descriptions of the artefacts. The tonal variations and designs of the Korean ceramics, of which no photos were included, were meticulously detailed, with, for example, a bowl from the late Koryŏ dynasty described as "grayish tone, coated in varied shades of pearly gray with crackle; interior merging into grayish-toned celadon clouding."[55]

It may have been the display of Macomber's Chinese and Korean ceramics that inspired Desmond Fitzgerald to form a similar collection. He lived near Boston, where he was known as a patron and lover of the arts. Entries in his pocket diaries suggest that his social circle included Macomber as well as other scholars and collectors of East Asian art based in Boston and New York, among them Edward Sylvester Morse, Langdon Warner, and John Platt.[56] Initially a chief engineer of the Boston & Albany Railroad, he forged a career as a hydraulic engineer and oversaw the development of water works in Boston, New York, Chicago, and other major cities. He was said to be one of the first Americans to acquire paintings by Monet, Renoir, Sisley, and other French Impressionists, some of whom he knew personally.[57] He began to acquire Chinese and Korean ceramics in 1911 and quickly succeeded in building a substantial collection which by January 1914 numbered 180 Korean ceramics and at least as many from China.[58]

Fitzgerald never travelled to East Asia and instead purchased objects from dealers in America, in particular Yamanaka in New York, whose sales rooms he often visited. Other artefacts he bought from Langdon Warner, Oshima Kano (1868?–1955),[59] and the Montross Gallery in New York. From the onset, Fitzgerald aimed to make his ceramics accessible to the public. In September 1911, Francis Stewart Kershaw, Keeper of the Chinese and Japanese Collections at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, informed Fairbanks that "Mr. Fitzgerald is buying Chinese and Korean pottery largely and lending us any of his pieces we wish for."[60] However, Fitzgerald's main objective was to display them in his own museum, and like Charles Freer, he invested much time in selecting artefacts for this purpose from his expanding collection. By December 1911, he had identified 109 ceramics suitable for display.[61] In 1913, he opened a museum adjacent to his home in Brookline, Mass., where members of the public could enjoy the artefacts free of charge. Designed with a plain interior so as not to detract attention from the exhibits, the museum included a large central room in which Fitzgerald's extensive collection of Impressionist paintings covered the walls and ceramics were displayed on top of and inside low wooden cabinets (Figure 4.8).[62]

Fitzgerald's pocket diaries reflect his keenness to study the historical context of Chinese and Korean ceramics. Often, he scribbled notes from lectures, books, and articles and jotted down significant dates, sites, and even Chinese characters (Figure 4.9). An undated entry from 1913 reads:

> KOREA or Corea. Annexed [by] Japan 1910. Before independent state. 910–1392 Wang dynasty – Mongol family. In 913 he unified the peninsula under name Korai and

Figure 4.8 Interior of the Fitzgerald Gallery, Brookline, MA.

Source: From American Art Association, *Paintings by the Impressionists*, 18.

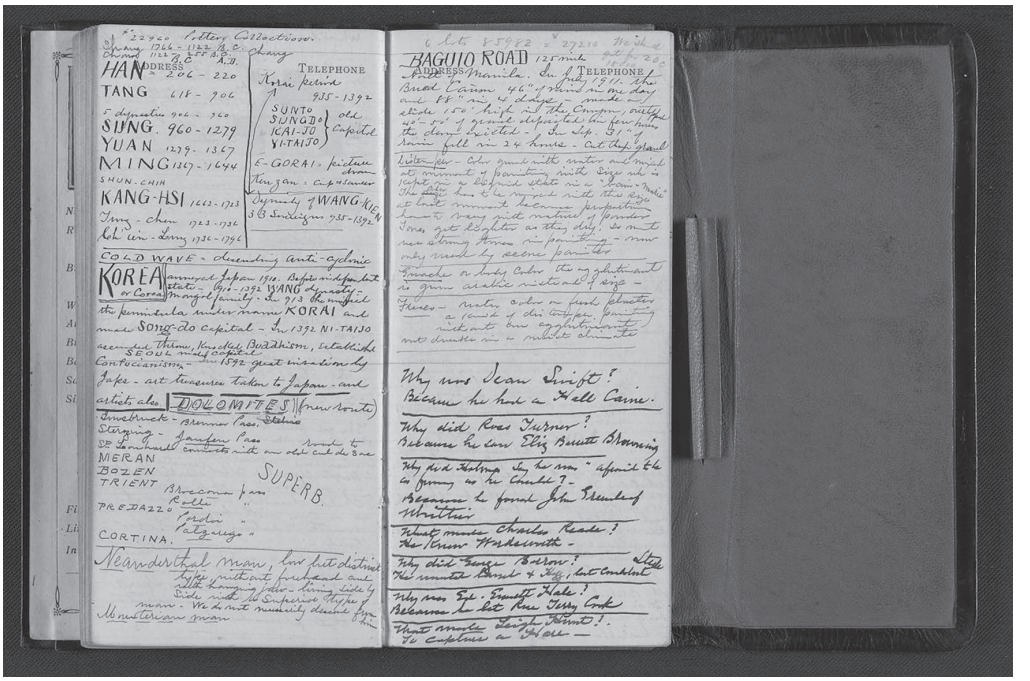

Figure 4.9 Undated entry in the pocket diary of Desmond Fitzgerald, 1913. Desmond Fitzgerald papers, 1868–1927, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Digital ID: 14642.

Source: US Public Domain.

> made Song-do capital. In 1392 Ni-Taijo ascended throne, knocked Buddhism, established Confucianism. Seoul made capital. In 1592 great invasion by Japs. Art treasures taken to Japan and artists also.[63]

Fitzgerald's foray into ceramic acquisition lasted less than a decade, but he succeeded in building a substantive collection of more than 500 Korean and Chinese ceramics. Entries in his pocket diaries suggest that his last purchases were made in 1918. By then he was a widower of 72 years of age and suffered from ill health. In 1927, a year after his death, his collection of East Asian ceramics and Impressionist etchings and paintings was put up for sale in the American Art Galleries in New York, as discussed in Chapter 5.[64]

Exhibitions of Early Chinese and Korean Ceramics

Private acquisitions of early Chinese and Korean stonewares were linked closely with public displays of the wares as reflected in the exhibition of Macomber's collection. Not only did the exhibitions draw attention to the comparative visual characteristics of the vessels, they furthered scholarship of them and confirmed their inclusion in the canon of East Asian art. It was typically private collectors who lent their objects to the exhibitions, evidencing the circulatory system of financial and cultural transactions that underpinned the art market. By contributing to the exhibitions, collectors accounted for their acquisition choices and confirmed their acumen as art experts with sophisticated taste. In turn, their activities spurred on others to purchase similar objects.

In 1910, Eumorfopoulos was a major lender to a seminal exhibition of early Chinese glazed stonewares. It was organised by the Burlington Fine Arts Club in London with the aim to draw attention to the merit of such wares.[65] Robert Lockhart Hobson (1872–1941), who authored the introduction to the catalogue, acknowledged the challenges associated with the study of newly unearthed Chinese tomb wares, as Song ceramics were often called. Having joined the British Museum in 1897, he was appointed Keeper of Ceramics and Ethnography in 1921 and served as Keeper of Oriental Antiquities and Ethnography from 1934 until his retirement in 1938. Widely recognised as a leading expert of Chinese ceramics, his scholarship and curatorial work significantly furthered the field.

In Hobson's view, the exhibition at the Burlington Fine Arts Club "inaugurated a new era in the collecting of Chinese pottery and porcelain," as it brought attention to the collectible nature of early Chinese ceramics.[66] Over the years, he strengthened his advocacy for their historical and aesthetic value. In 1915 he wrote in *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*: "The Sung wares are true children of the potter's craft, made as they are by the simplest processes, and in the main decorated only by genuine potter methods."[67] In the following decade, Hobson's endorsement of early Chinese wares further evolved, and in 1923 he claimed,

> After [the 17th century] potting technique may have been further elaborated and certain new glazes invented, but the art of the Chinese potter never reached a higher plane than in the best of the early periods. . . . The simple beauty and the freshness of the earlier wares are their chief distinction, and they do not suffer from the fussiness which is often noticeable in the work of the 18th-century potters.[68]

Hobson acknowledged that early Chinese ceramics were challenging to collect due to the "obscure nature of the subject" and the ambiguity of their date and classification.[69] However, like others, Hobson believed that understanding of the objects could be furthered by studies of their contemporaneous counterparts in Korea, namely Koryŏ glazed stonewares, and he played a leading role in enabling this. In his pioneering scholarship on Song and Yuan wares, he made frequent mention of Koryŏ celadon, and he included Korean kilns among the seven that produced celadon in pre-modern times.[70]

In the 1910s, exhibitions held in London, Boston, and New York brought further attention to Koryŏ ceramics and validated their inclusion in the canon of East Asian ceramic history.[71] Trusted experts such as Hobson described Koryŏ ceramics as "singularly refined and beautiful objects," thereby verifying their appeal to serious and amateur collectors alike. Curators and collectors also highlighted the broader significance of Koryŏ wares by emphasising comparative aspects of early Korean and Chinese ceramics.[72] In Hobson's words:

> The Corean potters are stated [by the Song Chinese envoy Xu Jing in the *Xuanhe fengshi Gaoli tujing*] to have modelled their wares on those of Ting Chou [Ding wares], and the relationship between the two styles is obvious in the carved, incised and moulded ornaments, and the forms of many of the bowls.[73]

American collectors' growing interest in early Chinese and Korean ceramics led to two major exhibitions held in Boston and New York in 1914. Advantaged by the support of several local collectors who lent their pieces to the museum, the Museum of Fine Arts,

Boston, opened in March an exhibition titled "Special Collection of Chinese and Korean Pottery." Numbering close to 300 Chinese ceramics from the Han to the Qing dynasty, coupled with around 100 Koryŏ vessels, it was the largest-ever exhibition of its kind to be held in America. Originally due to close in April 1914, it garnered so much interest that it remained open until the autumn.[74]

Displayed in the Japanese Court Gallery, most of the artefacts were arranged according to dynasty, region, and ceramic type. Two cases contained celadon wares from the Song to the Qing dynasties, reflecting the strong interest in comparative studies of glazed stonewares (Figure 4.10). The exhibit featuring Koryŏ ceramics was titled "Pottery found in Korean graves believed to date from the 10th to the 14th century," indicating the importance placed on the archaeological origins of these artefacts (Figure 4.11). Several of the objects were listed as being possibly Chinese, suggesting that also curators in America struggled with distinguishing Korean celadon vessels from their Chinese counterparts. Lenders of the Korean exhibits included well-known benefactors of the museum: Fitzgerald, Denman W. Ross (1853–1935), Russell Tyson (1867–1963), Lorraine D'O Warner, Mrs. Samuel Cabot, née Helen Augusta Nichols (1856–1917), and Miss Margaret Thomas Gardiner (1889–1981). Among them, Fitzgerald was the largest contributor, having lent 44 pieces.[75]

Figure 4.10 Case M, titled "Celadon ware of the Sung to the Ming dynasty, 960–1643 AD." From "A Special Exhibition of Chinese and Korean Pottery at the Museum of Fine Arts, March 16th to April 15th, 1914" (unauthored, unpublished catalogue), MFA Archive.

Source: Photograph © 2024 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 4.11 Case O, titled "Pottery found in Korean graves believed to date from the 10th to the 14th century." Object nos. 8 and 19 were classed as being "probably Chinese." From "A Special Exhibition of Chinese and Korean Pottery at the Museum of Fine Arts, March 16th to April 15th, 1914" (unauthored, unpublished catalogue), MFA Archive.

Source: Photograph © 2024 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Around the same time Knoedler Galleries in New York opened an exhibition titled Chinese, Corean and Japanese Potteries. Organised by the Japan Society and supported by the newly established Asiatic Institute, the show featured close to 400 ceramics, lent by leading American collectors. Among them were Charles Freer, Samuel T. Peters, John Platt, and Howard Mansfield (1849–1938). The latter was a New York–based lawyer and a major collector of Japanese prints and ceramics, as well as etchings by Whistler. Freer, Peters, and Mansfield also sat on the organising "pottery committee," alongside founding members of the Japan society, namely, Lindsay Russell (1870–1949), Eugene C. Worden (1877?–1963), and Alexander Tison (1857–1938). Also on the committee were Ushikubo Daijirō and Miya Mataichi 宮又一 (dates unknown), both from Yamanaka in New York.[76] The involvement in the exhibition of one of the largest art dealers in America evidences the blurred boundaries between commercial and connoisseurial priorities that characterised the art market of this time.

In the exhibition catalogue, Hobson summed up the conditions that made the exhibition not only timely but also possible:

> The circumstances which have made such an exclusive exhibition possible are in themselves interesting. The growing desire among Western collectors to possess examples

> of the beautiful Sung wares, and the consequently enhanced prices which these wares now command, have created a good market for them outside of China; and the demand has come at a time when the conditions prevailing in China, regrettable as they are from so many points of view, have set free a supply of keramic rarities which have been hitherto jealously guarded. At the same time our knowledge of the wares themselves has been greatly augmented by the finds of early pottery and porcelain in the ground which railway construction has chanced to disturb. Consequently there has been a steady stream of early wares leaving China in the last few years, potteries coarse and refined, grave-goods and collectors' masterpieces, all of them attractive for aesthetic or antiquarian reasons.[77]

The exhibition received favourable reviews in newspapers and art magazines and was so popular that the Art Institute of Chicago requested to borrow it. However, this was rejected by the "pottery committee," due to the risk of damage to the objects.[78] A review published in the *American Art News* read:

> The mouths of . . . collectors will water, and the general public will wonder, when the values are quoted at the loan collection of Chinese, Corean and Japanese Potteries. . . . It is a superb show that every collector and dealer will visit, and they will come, too, from cities far and near.[79]

The Sun newspaper in New York not only called the collection of objects extraordinary, it stated that the focus on early glazed stonewares was in alignment with "Japanese and Chinese ideals" and more authentic to "Oriental taste."[80] This argument developed from earlier-mentioned discussions on the appeal of glazed stonewares versus elaborately painted porcelains, and the association of the former with collectors' interest in the so-called purer forms of art that were believed to represent East Asian aesthetic traditions. The fact that Koryŏ celadon ceramics were included in this group enhanced their appeal among collectors. *The Sun* singled out the "tomb pieces of the Korai period" and described them as "beautiful bowls, ritual ewers and wine bowls of rugged and graceful but sometimes strange outlines."[81]

Freer was much invested in the exhibition.[82] An early advocator of the historical, and especially, the aesthetic appeal of early glazed stonewares, he was keen to induct others into the field. In a letter to Hobson he wrote:

> It is, perhaps, a little early to prophecy but we see many signs of converts in America to the potteries of the Far East. To be sure Porcelains will continue to appeal to the fashionable ones but many true lovers of beauty are already arranging to enter our fold.[83]

It was on Samuel Peters's recommendation that Hobson be charged with selecting the Chinese and Korean pieces, and he authored the preface on them in the catalogue. Freer's trusted advisor, Edward Sylvester Morse, was tasked with selecting the Japanese ceramics and he also contributed to the catalogue.

Rose Sickler Williams (1867?–1958) was commissioned to write the essay on Chinese ceramics that made up the largest section of the catalogue. Living in Beijing where her husband, Edward Thomas Williams (1854–1944), served as secretary in the American legation, she made much use of local collections and Chinese-language scholarship.[84] In this she was unusual. At the time, only a limited number of specialists in America and Europe

were able to read Chinese, and even fewer had close access to collections in China. The Williams's social status enabled friendships with leading Chinese collectors, such as Tang Shaoyi 唐紹儀 (1862–1938), who briefly served as the first Prime Minister of the Republic of China, Chun Chik-yu 陳席儒 (1859–1936), a Chinese-Hawaiian businessman who took up the post of Governor of Guangdong Province in 1922, and Guan Mian-jun 關冕鈞 (1871–1933), who owned an extensive collection of paintings and calligraphy. Also noteworthy is Williams's efforts to balance information drawn from Chinese historical and contemporary sources with studies in the English language, resulting in a text that aimed to uncover "what is true in the existing Chinese and foreign works on the subject of Sung Dynasty pottery [and to detect] what is untrue."[85] Focusing on ceramics from the Song and Yuan dynasties, Williams presented a detailed discussion of major types of kiln products, including Ding, Guan, Jun, and Longquan wares. Sections on "hints to the collector" catered to the increased want for reliable information on how to best build a ceramic collection. Williams also provided explanations of the distinguishing features of specific types of ceramics and advised on how to distinguish genuine articles from imitations. Equally noteworthy is her mention of the cost of ceramics, suggesting that the exhibition was first and foremost aimed at ceramic collectors. For example, on Jun wares, she commented the following:

> Prices are high and mounting. The value of a flower pot or bulb bowl of good colour and marking runs into thousands. These values, now established, are not likely to decrease, unless absolutely successful imitations are made in large numbers.[86]

The exhibition numbered 50 Korean vessels, among them four that were identified as "probably Corean." 11 of them were lent by Samuel Peters, eight by John Platt, one by R. H. Williams (dates unknown) and one by C. Coleman (dates unknown), while the rest came from Freer, evidencing the strength of his Korean collection.[87] The significance attached to the burial uses of Koryŏ ceramics is evidenced in Hobson's explanation of the vessels:

> The Corean wares described below have mostly come from tombs and show signs of burial. A few, indicated in each case by a foot-note, have been preserved in Japanese collections. They all appear to belong to the Korai period (936–1392 A.D.), when the potteries at the capital, then Sungdo, were very celebrated. Under the succeeding dynasty the capital was removed to Seoul, the Sungdo potteries fell into disuse, and the burial customs changed, so that tomb wares of post-Korai are exceptional.[88]

Hobson's discussions of the Korean objects reflect the challenges of correctly distinguishing Korean ceramics from their Chinese counterparts. Like many scholars of his time, Hobson believed all wares unearthed from Korean tombs were of local manufacture, including white porcelain vessels. He described a porcelain ewer from the Horace Allen collection as a "white porcelaneous ware of porous-looking texture with thick cream-white glaze of Ting type, slightly crackled," and labelled it according to Japanese terminology: "haku-gorai" (litt. "white Korean").[89] Allen had placed its manufacture specifically to the early 1300s, but Hobson dated it broadly to the Koryŏ dynasty.[90] Similarly, Hobson described a vase with an oval melon-shaped body of bluish-white porcelain as a "rare and singularly beautiful vase [that] recalls both Greek and Egyptian pottery in the details of its design" (Figure 4.12).[91] Also this vessel originally belonged to Allen,

Figure 4.12 Porcelain vase with transparent pale blue glaze. Northern Song dynasty, eleventh century. Height 26.1 cm.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Collection, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1907.289.

who claimed to have had much trouble in acquiring the piece. He was certain it had been unearthed from a royal tomb and referred to it as his celebrated "Greek Vase":

> It is pronounced by those collectors who have seen it to be the finest piece of white Korai [Koryŏ ceramic] they have seen. Its shape is a suggestion of the Greek, but it is merely a most graceful adaption of the ordinary melon shape bowl with a slender neck and flaring mouth in perfect proportions. It is perfect with two very small, unnoticeable nicks on the rim.[92]

In 1918, Lorraine D'O Warner made a strong case for the Korean provenance of such "white Korai" vessels, arguing among other points that "it is hardly likely that they would have survived the journey of a thousand miles or so in such quantity as to be still available by hundreds in Korea."[93] However, Hobson's views of the vessels changed over the following decade, and in the 1920s he concluded that they were unlikely to have been manufactured in Korea since no kilns producing such pieces had been excavated on the peninsula.[94] Indeed, the two "haku-gorai" vessels in Allen's collection that were acquired by Freer were later attributed to the Northern Song dynasty, and in the 1970s they were identified as Qingbai ware.[95]

Williams and Hobson placed much emphasis on the colour and surface textures of the ceramics discussed in the catalogue. Their methodology was akin to that of dealers and collectors who similarly judged the monetary and collectible value of ceramics on

their visual qualities. For example, Williams commented that Yuan wares "showing good colouring command a high price."[96] In his analysis of Koryŏ celadon, Hobson similarly focused on the hue, tone, and evenness of their glaze colours. Insight into how these qualities impacted their sales value may be gleaned from purchases made by Charles Freer in the 1910s. In August 1917, he bought 19 Koryŏ celadon ceramics from Yamanaka in New York, ranging from jars, oil bottles, and boxes to bowls, totalling $1,615.[97] In the group were 11 bowls which ranged in price from $30 to $250. The most expensive among them was a finely potted bowl with a delicately arranged inlaid pattern of paired fish (Figure 4.13). In Freer's inventory it was described as "coated with a brilliant and boldly crackled celadon glaze of a fine grayish sea-green tone and aqueous transparency."[98] In contrast, the glazes of the cheaper bowls in this group of vessels were less translucent, the colours were uneven, and the shapes less delicate. At $30 the cheapest bowl in the lot was thickly potted and of a squat shape. Freer described it as having a "luminous celadon glaze of fine sea-green note, with grayish variations" (Figure 4.14).[99]

Acquisitions and Exhibitions of Koryŏ Ceramics in Britain

The exhibitions of Koryŏ ceramics held on the American East Coast in the 1910s signal how American interest in the objects was largely driven by private collectors, among them Freer in Detroit, Peters and Platt in New York, and Macomber and Fitzgerald in Boston. In contrast to Horace Allen, none of them acquired artefacts in Korea. Rather, they relied on local dealers, in particular Yamanaka, which was the largest

Figure 4.13 Celadon bowl with inlaid decoration of paired fish. Koryŏ period, twelfth century. Height 5.5 cm, diameter 19.3 cm.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Collection, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1917.293.

Figure 4.14 Celadon bowl with inlaid decoration of litchi. Koryŏ period, first half of thirteenth century. Height 8.1 cm, width 20 cm.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Collection, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1917.294.

supplier of Korean art in America. Freer also purchased Korean artefacts from the London and Osaka branches of Yamanaka, as discussed later.

In Britain, Eumorfopoulos's objects made a significant contribution to the British Museum's holdings of Korean art, while that of Aubrey Le Blond enabled the V&A Museum to build one of the best collections of Korean ceramics in Britain. Le Blond is unusual for having acquired his entire collection in Korea. A keen collector of European porcelain, paintings, and other works of art, Le Blond's immersion in the field of Chinese and Korean ceramics began in 1913 during a trip to East Asia with his wife, Elizabeth. In her travelogue, Mrs. Le Blond recounted how their meeting with Archibald Henry Sayce (1845–1933) in Hong Kong initiated her husband's interest in East Asian ceramics.[100] A professor of Assyriology at the University of Oxford, Sayce travelled in East Asia between 1912 and 1913. In spring 1912, he made his first visit to Seoul, where he purchased a few examples of celadon ceramics, a Koryŏ bronze spoon and a lacquered cabinet of contemporary make, among other artefacts.[101] He advised Le Blond to acquire Koryŏ celadon, saying that they were becoming sought after by American and Japanese collectors, but that they "might still be acquired at moderately reasonable prices."[102] Inspired by Sayce, Le Blond subsequently began acquiring Korean ceramics. In his wife Elizabeth's words, he "succeeded in building a collection of early Korean pottery which later on, realizing that it was the largest and most varied in Europe, he presented to the Nation."[103]

Mr. and Mrs. Le Blond briefly visited Korea on their way to Japan but returned for a longer stay in late spring, before travelling back to London on the Trans-Siberian

Railway in June 1913.[104] It is not known how Le Blond acquired the Korean objects, but he is likely to have frequented the Japanese antique dealers in Seoul. He may also have purchased objects from John Kavanaugh (1866–1918), who opened a "Curio Shop" in Seoul around 1908.[105] An American from Kansas City, Kavanaugh was well-known among Western collectors and museum curators, including Sayce, who acquired a range of Korean and Chinese objects from him in 1912.[106] Sinn Song (dates unknown) may also have supplied Le Blond with artefacts. Sinn was one of the few Koreans who at the time worked in the antique trade in Korea. He was the proprietor of The Seoul Curio Shop, which was strategically located within walking distance of Sontag Hotel and other tourist accommodation in central Seoul.[107] However, in contrast to their Japanese counterparts, Korean dealers tended to sell mostly Chosŏn ceramics and other artefacts of contemporary make, possibly because the illegality of trading in looted goods deterred them from selling Koryŏ ceramics.[108] As colonised subjects they were likely to be subjected to harsher punishment than Japanese dealers, who openly sold ceramics and other artefacts robbed from tombs.

In 1914, when Le Blond offered to lend his Korean collection to the V&A Museum, Charles Harry Wylde (1864–1953), Curator of Ceramics at the V&A, strongly recommended that the museum accepted the offer. In May, he wrote to Cecil Harcourt-Smith (1859–1944), Director of the V&A Museum:

> This ware is practically unknown in this country as only a very few collectors have studied it. The pieces of blue and white which I bought in Corea about two years ago are probably the first of their kind imported into Europe. Mr. Le Blond has only a very few of these but his collection is very strong in all the other classes of Corean ware and he has many specimens different to anything we have here. In my opinion the collection is a very important one and would make a very interesting exhibit in the loan court as representing a class of pottery new to the Ceramic World.[109]

Le Blond was encouraged to select his best pieces for the museum, and in June he sent 143 ceramics to the V&A Museum, where they were shown first in the Loan Court and later in a display case managed by the Ceramics Department.[110] Two years later, Le Blond let the museum know he would donate his artefacts to the museum on the condition that a catalogue be published.[111] Eager to acquire the collection due to its educational and artistic merit, the V&A Museum produced in 1918 the first-ever English-language monograph on Korean ceramics. Le Blond's gift made a significant contribution to the V&A's holdings of Korean ceramics, as indicated in the preface to the catalogue:

> It is doubtful whether any larger or more important collection of Corean pottery exists in Europe, since only isolated specimens have hitherto made their way into the national museums. Through the generosity of Mr. Le Blond it now becomes possible for the public to study a phase of the potter's art which combines sound ceramic qualities with real beauty of form and decoration, and deserves a more general appreciation than it has hitherto received.[112]

The main text was authored by Bernard Rackham and offers important insight into scholarly developments in the field of Korean ceramic research. Particularly interesting is the fact that Rackham not only referenced seminal writings on East Asian art by American and British scholars, such as Bushell, Brinkley, Hobson, Jouy, Geare, Morse, and Platt, he

also listed works by Japanese collectors and archaeologists, indicating his access to such sources. The latter included the earlier-mentioned catalogue by Nishimura and Itō as well as volumes on Korean cultural remains published by the Government-General of Korea.[113] Rackham's volume became a much-quoted source for later scholarly writings on Korean ceramics, such as that written by Lorraine D'O Warner.[114]

In the introductory chapter Rackham presented an overview of ceramics found on the Korean peninsula and separated them into three groups: (1) local manufacture, (2) imported wares, (3) wares of uncertain origins. In the second group were vessels he identified as being from Cizhou kilns, some of which were included in Le Blond's collection. The third group consisted of brown-glazed, white and cream-coloured vessels which Rackham associated with Jian and Ding wares. Acknowledging the ongoing debates among collectors and scholars on the latter group, Rackham explained the following:

> It has sometimes been argued that the numerous specimens of Ting ware of various classes found in Corean graves were without exception imported from China. The record of Hsü Ching [Xu Jing], already cited, refers not only to green ware or celadon as being made in Corea, but also to bowls, cups, platters and other vessels "all closely copying the style and make of Ting [Ding] ware." This statement, taken with the large quantitites of white ware found, is good evidence in favour of a Corean manufacture, although it is not easy to differentiate the indigenous from the imported specimens.[115]

It led him to identify several porcelain bowls as being "very likely" or "possibly" of Korean origin, including a small white porcelain cup with incised floral decoration (Figure 4.15).[116] However, the cup is now believed to be Ding ware from the Song dynasty.

Figure 4.15 Porcelain cup with incised floral spray. Song dynasty, 960–1279. Height 4.4 cm, diameter 8.9 cm. The V&A Museum (acc. no. C.620–1918).

Source: © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Interest in the Archaeological Context

As interest in ceramics and their historical and archaeological contexts grew, collectors began to augment their collections with bronze items and other artefacts unearthed from Koryŏ tombs in the belief that they would offer further insights into Koryŏ artistic traditions. Freer was at the forefront of this trend too. Following trips to archaeological sites in China between 1907 and 1910, he recognised the value of archaeological material in the study of Asian art, and in 1912 he become involved in the establishment of an American School of Archaeology in China.[117] His fascination with the archaeological record prompted him to accumulate a growing collection of early Chinese and Korean metalwares, frequently with the intention of using the latter as comparative study material for the former.[118] In 1907, he bought from Yamanaka in New York a Koryŏ bronze bottle richly patinated from burial priced at $250 (Figure 4.16). Though bronze artefacts never became collectibles on par with ceramics, the cost of larger-sized well-proportioned

Figure 4.16 Bronze bottle. Koryŏ period, fourteenth century. Height 32.6 cm.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Collection, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1907.366.

vessels, such as Freer's bottle, was similar to that of Koryŏ ceramics, pointing to their popularity on the art market.[119] This is indicated by Freer's acquisitions the following year when he in March purchased a long-necked Koryŏ celadon bottle for $200, and in April bought a celadon *meibyŏng* prunus vase with inlaid decoration of flying cranes and clouds for $350, both from Yamanaka.[120]

In 1917, Freer's investment in expanding his collection with archaeological finds led him to purchase a large tiered lacquered box containing 117 smaller-sized jade and metal objects from archaeological sites dating to the Three Kingdoms period and Koryŏ dynasty, also from Yamanaka.[121] Aware of Freer's interest in the objects, Yamanaka Sadajirō later instructed Ushikubo to gift Freer a second box which similarly contained metal objects unearthed from Korean tombs. The objects in both boxes were grouped according to type and period and attractively arranged in trays that were labelled with the name of the sites from which they were found.[122]

However, Freer's investment in Korean archaeological material began much earlier. In 1909, he may have been the first collector outside East Asia to acquire a stone casket from the Koryŏ dynasty, which he purchased from the Osaka branch of Yamanaka for 250 yen (Figure 4.17).[123] Made of six separate slabs of slate that make a small, lidded box when joined, the casket included a seventh slab incised with a lengthy inscription.[124]

Figure 4.17 Stone casket with Four Guardian Animals on the inner walls, accompanied by an epitaph tablet. Koryŏ period, dated 1197. Height 22.7 cm, width 56.7 cm, depth 34.1 cm.

Source: National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Collection, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1909.359a-g.

Freer's interest in the object may have been triggered by mention of such caskets by Horace Allen in the catalogue that accompanied his ceramic collection:

> About this time [1894–97] I was asked to come to the Police Department to view and value a collection that had been seized from some Japanese who had been caught robbing one of the Royal Tombs near Songdo [Kaesŏng]. I found the whole lot broken into small bits. It had been buried in a stone box hewed out of a block of stone with a stone lid attached to the top. The contents had not been repacked before sending them to Seoul.[125]

In a manuscript Allen sent to Freer in 1907, he reiterated the use of such caskets: "it was the custom to bury stone boxes filled with the finest specimens of this highly prized ware, in the tombs of royal personages."[126]

Relatively small numbers of Koryŏ caskets entered the art market in the early twentieth century. This may be attributed to their heavy weight, which would have challenged any grave robber who likely assessed the difficulties associated with hauling it out of a tomb against the economic gains from doing so. When in Seoul, Le Blond acquired a casket which he donated to the V&A Museum in 1918 alongside his ceramics. In the catalogue on the Le Blond collection, Rackham stated it was from a tomb located on Song'ak Mountain near Kaesŏng and that it was found containing ceramic vessels. Rackham correctly identified the motifs on the casket as representing the guardian animals of the four cardinal directions: tiger (West), dragon (East), tortoise (North), and vermilion bird (South).[127] In contrast, nine years earlier, the incised motifs on each of the four slabs that made up the walls of Freer's casket were described as two walking lions, a landscape and "a strange bird amidst flames," respectively.[128] The image believed to be a landscape is in fact the head of a tortoise peeking out from its shell. It seems that Freer and his advisors overlooked the possibility that the motifs were associated with intricate mortuary customs regulated by local worldviews.[129]

Conclusion

The Korean art market flourished in the 1910s as several factors converged to generate ideal opportunities for dealers, collectors, and curators. Sales and acquisitions of Korean artefacts continued to be centred on Koryŏ ceramics, which were still available for sale in large numbers. The vessels were prominently displayed in permanent museum galleries and in groundbreaking temporary exhibitions, and detailed scholarship of them was published. The want for in-depth scholarly knowledge on Koryŏ art led to displays that were no longer exclusively focused on ceramics. In 1917, the Cleveland Museum of Art became the first museum to arrange a display devoted solely to Koryŏ "grave-spoons," accompanied by a seminal article on the subject published in the *Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art*.[130]

The annexation of the Korean peninsula by Japan had much impact on the supply and demand of Korean antiques. Upon their arrival in Korea, the colonial elite embraced ceramic collecting with its aristocratic roots dating back to Hideyoshi's invasion of the peninsula. Their privileged status enabled them first hand access to newly unearthed artefacts supplied to them by Japanese art dealers in Seoul. Meanwhile, the colonial government confirmed its control over Korean history and culture with the opening of

the Prince Yi Household Museum and the Government-General Museum of Korea. Their prominent displays of Koryŏ ceramics not only endorsed ownership of tomb loot, they ascertained the cultural value and collectability of the artefacts. The colonial government further asserted its dominion over Korean antiques by publishing them in catalogues that established the standard for high-quality works of art.

To collectors in America and Europe, the Japanese fascination with Koryŏ ceramics validated their own acquisitions of these objects. In a comptetive and expanding art market, established collectors set themselves apart from amateurs by claiming that their taste aligned with that of Chinese and Japanese experts, adding a layer of sophistication to their collections. Ambitious collectors, such as Freer, actively acquired artefacts that aligned with "Oriental" taste. This pursuit of local preferences steered their attention to Song and Yuan ceramics, known to be favoured by Chinese collectors, and to Koryŏ ceramics, which were highly valued by Japanese collectors. As noted by Francis Stewart Kershaw, the appeal of Koryŏ ceramics lay in their representation of "a distinctively Korean expression of taste and skill."[131] However, neither Kershaw nor collectors in America and Europe endeavoured to identify Korean taste in art as represented by Koreans themselves. Instead, they acknowledged Japan's hegemony in Korea and conflated Japanese aesthetic interests with Korean ones. This trend in the art market accounts for the success of Yamanaka, as the art dealership was believed to represent Japanese and by extension Korean taste. Aware of the significance collectors attached to following "Oriental" customs, Yamanaka Sadajirō deliberately designed his sales rooms in a Japanese manner to give customers the impression of being in Japan.[132]

Additionally important was the notion that the beauty of early Chinese stonewares required close study to be appreciated. The same was the case of Koryŏ ceramics, which were argued to be similarly challenging to understand. Encouraged by these complexities, new collectors, including Macomber, Fitzgerald, Eumorfopoulos, and Le Blond, entered the field, building substantial collections of Koryŏ ceramics. However, they represented the last generation to do so. By the end of the 1910s, the Korean art market underwent significant changes, opening the way for new approaches to Korean art acquisition.

Notes

1 Kim Ji-hyung, "The Japanese Annexation of Korea as Viewed from the British and American Press: Focus on *The Times* and *The New York Times*," *International Journal of Korean History* 16, no. 2 (August 2011): 87–123.
2 "Recent Museum Acquisitions," *American Art News* 9, no. 18 (February 1911): 6.
3 Francis Stewart Kershaw, "Korean Pottery," *Museum of Fine Arts Bulletin* 9, no. 54 (December 1911): 63.
4 Bernard Rackham, *Catalogue of the Le Blond Collection of Corean Pottery* (London: H.M. Stationary Office, 1918), 4.
5 *The Star* (Reynoldsville, PA) summed up well prevailing understandings of the Korean peninsula when it stated, "The Hermit Kingdom ceases to exist because she had come to exist only for herself. Calm and inaction are the ideals of certain philosophies but they do not serve to protect a people against the vigor and aggressiveness of rivals who may also be philosophers but not to an extent which interferes with business." "Kingdom of Korea Erased from the Map," *The Star* (Reynoldsville, PA), October 19, 1910.
6 The statement was issued in connection with a donation of 32 Koryŏ celadon wares from Samuel T. Peters to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The gift numbered 16 vases, 9 bowls, 6 dishes and 1 small box with a cover. The Metropolitan Museum of Art Gift, February 1, 1915, and February 6, 1915, Peters, Samuel T. – Loans and gifts, 1911, 1913, 1915, Office of the Secretary Records, the Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York. For a

discussion of the gift, see Soyoung Lee, "Goryeo Celadon and Its Reception in the West," in *Arts of Korea: Histories, Challenges, and Perspectives*, ed. Jason Steuber and Allysa B. Peyton (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2018), 267–68.

7 The Japan British Exhibition, *Official Report of the Japan British Exhibition 1910 at the Great White City, Shepherd's Bush, London* (London: Unwin Brothers, 1911), 283–92.

8 Jane Portal, "Korean Ceramics in the British Museum—A Century of Collecting," *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* 60 (1995–96): 53. See also Jung-Taek Lee, "Korean Artefacts Donated to the British Museum by Ogita Etsuzo in 1910," *Orientations* 41, no. 8 (2010): 78–83.

9 Information drawn from the Collections Information System at the V&A Museum, and the Merlin Collections Management system at the British Museum. I am grateful to Sangah Kim, Curator of Korean Art at the British Museum, for this information.

10 Kungnip chung'ang pangmulgwan [National Museum of Korea], *Han'guk pangmulgwan 100 nyŏnsa* [The 100-Year History of Korean Museums] (Seoul: Kungnip chung'ang pangmulgwan, 2009), 11–12. The renaming of the museum resulted from the annexation of Korea and the subsequent forced abdication of Emperor Sunjong (r. 1907–10). Sunjong's short-lived reign followed that of his father Kojong, who was removed from the throne by the Japanese in July 1907. The name of the museum is referred to in different ways in colonial Japanese and modern scholarship. In 1918, in a catalogue published by the Government-General of Korea, it was rendered in English as the Prince Yi Household Museum. Seunghye Lee, "Korea's First Museum and the Categorization of 'Buddhist Statues,'" *Sungkyun Journal of East Asian Studies* 21, no. 1 (2021): 74.

11 According to Shimokōriyama Seiichi 下郡山誠一 (1883–?), who worked as a government advisor to the Imperial Household Museum in 1908, Komiya was daily frequented by art dealers from whom he would purchase ceramics. Charlotte Horlyck, "Desirable Commodities – Unearthing and Collecting Koryŏ Celadon Ceramics in the Late 19th and Early 20th Century," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 76, no. 3 (2013): 483. See also Pak So-hyŏn, "'Koryŏ chagi' nŭn ŏt'ŏk'e 'misul' i toeŏnna: Shingminji sidae 'Koryŏ chagi yŏlgwang' kwa Yi wangga pangmulgwan ŭi chŏngjihak" [How 'Goryo chagi' Became 'Art': 'Goryo chagi Mania' and Politics of the Yiwanga Museum in the Colonial Period], *Sahoe yŏn'gu* 7, no. 1 (2006): 13–16; Seunghye Lee, "Korea's First Museum," 54.

12 Komiya wrote several pieces on this topic. Noriko Aso, *Public Properties: Museums in Imperial Japan* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), 116.

13 Seunghye Lee, "Korea's First Museum," 55.

14 Hwang Chŏng-yŏn, "Kojong yŏn'gan (1863–1907) kungjung sŏhwa sujang ŭi chŏn'gae wa pyŏnmo yangsang" [The Development and Evolution of Royal Art Collections During King Kojong's Reign (1863–1907)], *Misulsahak yŏn'gu* 259 (2008): 99. See also Hwang Chŏng-yŏn, "Taehan Cheguk hwangsil sŏhwa k'ŏlleksyŏn ŭi hyŏngsŏng kwa chŏn'gae" [The Formation and Development of the Collection of Paintings and Calligraphy of the Court of the Great Han Empire], in *Taehan Cheguk ŭi misul: Pit ŭi kil ŭl kkumkkuda* [Art of the Great Han Empire: The Emergence of Modern Art], ed. Pae Wŏnjŏng (Seoul: Kungnip Hyŏndae Misulgwan, 2018), 338.

15 Seunghye Lee, "Korea's First Museum," 55.

16 Kungnip chung'ang pangmulgwan, *Han'guk pangmulgwan 100 nyŏnsa*, 59.

17 Kungnip chung'ang pangmulgwan [National Museum of Korea], *Han'guk pangmulgwan kaegwan 100 chunyŏn kinyŏm t'ŭkpyŏlchŏn* [Korean Museums' 100-Year Celebration] (Seoul: Kungnip chung'ang pangmulgwan, 2009), 32. See also Horlyck, "Desirable Commodities," 486.

18 Kungnip chung'ang pangmulgwan, *Han'guk pangmulgwan 100 nyŏnsa*, 59.

19 Tŏksugung samuso, *Yi wangga pangmulgwan yŏnhyŏk* [The History of the Prince Yi Household Museum] (Document Produced by Tŏksugung samuso, Seoul, 1944), 1. Translation after Sang-hoon Jang, "A Representation of Nationhood: The National Museum of Korea" (PhD diss., University of Leicester, 2015), 27.

20 For discussion of Korean staff employed at the Government-General Museum of Korea, and Korean contributions to archaeological work, see O Yŏng-ch'an, *Chosŏn Ch'ongdokpu pangmulgwan kwa shingminjuŭi: Shingminji yŏksa ŭi chaehyŏn kwa munhwajae kwalli* [Colonialism and the Government-General Museum of Korea: Representation of Colonial History

and Management of Cultural Properties] (Seoul: Sahŭi p'yŏngnon ak'ademi, 2022), 306–9, 320–35. Yangjin Pak, "Japanese Colonial Archaeology in Korea and Its Legacy," in *Unmasking Ideology in Imperial and Colonial Archaeology: Vocabulary, Symbols, and Legacy*, ed. Bonnie Effros and Guolong Lai (Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, University of California, Los Angeles, 2018), 411–12.

21 Sang-hoon Jang, "Representation of Nationhood," 35.

22 "Editorial Comment," *Hwangsŏng sinmun* (Seoul), November 26, 1909. Translation after Sang-hoon Jang, "Representation of Nationhood," 35.

23 "Nara ŭi pobae ŏpsŏjinŭn han" [If Treasures of the Country Disappear], *Taehan maeil sinbo* (Seoul), April 12, 1910. Translation after Sang-hoon Jang, "Representation of Nationhood," 34.

24 Sang-hoon Jang, "Representation of Nationhood," 36.

25 The Korean perspective on tomb goods was widely known and commented on. See for example, Durr Friedley, "Korean Pottery," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 10, no. 3 (1915): 44; Lorraine D'O Warner, "Kōrai Celadon in America," *Eastern Art: An Annual* 2 (1930): 65.

26 For a discussion of the Seoul Arts Club, see Pak Sŏng-wŏn, "Ilche kangjŏmgi ŭi Kyŏngsŏng misul kurakpu hwaltong i Han'guk kŭndae misul sijang e kkich'in yŏnghyang" [The Influence of the Seoul Arts Club on Korea's Modern Art Market During the Japanese Colonial Rule] (Master's thesis, Ewha Womans University, 2011).

27 "Chōsen Shina Nihon kotōjiki shōfuda chinretsu" [Korean, Chinese, Japanese Antique Porcelains for Sale for Just Price], *Asahi Shinbun Chōkan* (Tokyo), April 14, 1912.

28 In 1919, Saint Louis Art Museum purchased from Itō Yasaburō & Co. a standing Buddha believed to be from either the Northern Qi dynasty (550–77) or Sui dynasty (581–618). "Standing Śākyamuni Buddha," the Saint Louis Art Museum, accessed April 30, 2023, www.slam.org/collection/objects/14738/. Accession number 182:1919.

29 Itō Yasaburō and Nishimura Shōtarō, *Kōraiyaki* [Koryŏ Ceramics] (Tokyo: Printed by Authors, 1910), no page numbers.

30 For example, Yamanaka sent a translation of the catalogue to Freer. It entered Freer's personal library and was accessioned as *Korean Pottery. A typewritten article from Yamanaka*, SI 737. Yamanaka to Freer, "Korean Pottery," n.d., provided to author by National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

31 Shimokōriyama Seiichi described seeing boxes of artefacts plundered from tombs in the residence of Komiya Mihomatsu. Pak So-hyŏn, " 'Koryŏ chagi' nŭn ŏt'ŏk'e 'misul' i toeŏnna," 13.

32 Current scholarship suggests that the bottle was used for oil and the boxes contained cosmetics or incense.

33 "Korea is an old country with over two thousand years of history, but none whatsoever of her so-called 'art objects' are worthy of attention by foreigners like us." Itō and Nishimura, *Kōraiyaki*, chap., Kōraiyaki no kachi [Value of Koryŏ ceramics]. Translation by Mineo Kato.

34 Itō and Nishimura, *Kōraiyaki*, chap., Kōraiyaki no kachi [Value of Koryŏ ceramics]. Translation by Mineo Kato.

35 Itō and Nishimura, *Kōraiyaki*, chap., Shina kotōki to Kōraiyaki [Chinese old wares and Koryŏ ceramics]. Translation by Mineo Kato.

36 Itō and Nishimura, *Kōraiyaki*, chap., Kōraiyaki no shubetsu [Kinds of Koryŏ ceramics]. Translation by Mineo Kato.

37 Charles Hercules Read, preface to *Exhibition of Early Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*, by Burlington Fine Arts Club et al. (London: Printed for the Burlington Fine Arts Club, 1910), ix–x. See also Stacey Pierson, *Collectors, Collections and Museums: The Field of Chinese Ceramics in Britain 1560–1960* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007), 90.

38 The British collector George Eumorfopoulos details this development in the preface of R. L. Hobson, *The George Eumorfopoulos Collection: Catalogue of the Chinese, Corean, and Persian Pottery and Porcelain* (London: Ernest Benn, 1925), 1: vi.

39 This classification of Song wares began in the Ming dynasty and continues to be in use today. Pierson, *Collectors*, 94.

40 Pierson, *Collectors*, 97; Horlyck, "Desirable Commodities," 474.

41 Edgar Gorer and J. F. Blacker, *Chinese Porcelain and Hard Stones* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1911), 1: ix.

42 Read, preface to *Exhibition of Early Chinese Pottery*, x.
43 Read, preface to *Exhibition of Early Chinese Pottery*, ix.
44 Nominal file: Chinese Art: the Eumorfopoulos Collection, April 1936 (MA/29/49/1), V&A Archive, Victoria and Albert Museum. See also "The Famous Eumorfopoulos Treasure Bought for the Nation for £100,000: Gems from the Greatest Collection of Its Kind Acquired on Terms Which Amount to a Gift," *The Illustrated London News*, January 12, 1935.
45 For a discussion of the Eumorfopoulos collection of Korean artefacts, see Portal, "Korean Ceramics," 56–57 (see n. 8); Jane Portal, "The Origins of the British Museum's Korean Collection," *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch* 70 (1995): 39–40; Charlotte Horlyck and Sascha Priewe, "Displaying a Nation: Representations of Korean Art in the UK," in Steuber and Peyton, *Arts of Korea*, 93.
46 Known as a dealer of Chinese art, in particular ceramics, Sparks also sold Korean artefacts. Ching-Yi Huang, "John Sparks, the Art Dealer and Chinese Art in England, 1902–1936," (PhD diss., SOAS, University of London, 2012), 83, 114.
47 George Eumorfopoulos, preface to *Eumorfopoulos Collection*, by R. L. Hobson, 1: vi.
48 "Description of Specimens," *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* 1 (1921–22): 10. Accession number 1938,0524.763.
49 Macomber's collection of Near Eastern antiquities was on display at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, for 20 years. In 1924, when it was sold at auction by the American Art Galleries, the 259 items brought nearly $19,000 with prices ranging from $150 to $2,500. "Near East Art Finds Many Buyers," *The New York Times*, February 28, 1924.
50 In a letter to Kershaw, Macomber outlined three primary reasons for lending his collection to the museum and stated his aims for its future expansion: "1. To show what the potters of the Tang, Sung, Yuan and Ming periods produced, because they had been subject to great neglect, and the Museums had failed to make any collection of these periods, and had gathered together only a few isolated specimens. 2. That by my collection the staff of the Museum might become acquainted with the products of these periods and thereby increase their knowledge of Chinese art. 3. That the collection might be of general interest to the public." Macomber to Kershaw, November 26, 1909, File: M Prior to 1910, Asia Department Archive, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
51 John Ellerton Lodge, "Department of Chinese and Japanese Art," Acquisitions, *Annual Report of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston* 38 (1913): 106.
52 Francis Stewart Kershaw, "The Staff of the Museum," *Annual Report of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston* 35 (1910): 12.
53 Arthur Fairbanks, foreword to *Catalogue of the Macomber Collection of Chinese Pottery*, by John Getz (Boston, MA: Boston Museum of Fine Arts, 1909).
54 Among John Getz's achievements was his appointment as Director and Chief of the Department of Decorations for the United States Pavilion at the World's Fair in Paris in 1900. For further discussion of John Getz's career, see Kin-Yee Ian Shin, "Making 'Chinese Art': Knowledge and Authority in the Transpacific Progressive Era" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2016), 98–130. See also "John Getz. Authority on Art, Dies at 74," *The New York Times*, June 4, 1928; Getz's catalogues include *Hand-Book of a Collection of Chinese Porcelains Loaned by James A. Garland* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1895) and *Catalogue of the Avery Collection of Ancient Chinese Cloisonnés* (New York: Museum of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, 1912).
55 Getz, *Macomber Collection,* 73. Despite Getz's scholarly acumen, his catalogue was much criticised by R. L. Hobson and John Ellerton Lodge (1878–1942). R. L. Hobson, review of *Catalogue of the Macomber Collection of Chinese Pottery,* by John Getz, *Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 16, no. 83 (February 1910): 282–83; Lodge to Fairbanks, n.d., Box: Official Correspondence, 1910–1922, Asia Department Archive, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
56 Pocket diaries, 1900–1925, Desmond Fitzgerald Papers, 1868–1927, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution (hereafter cited as Desmond Fitzgerald Papers).
57 G. F. Swain, "Desmond Fitzgerald (1846–1926)," *Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 62, no. 9 (May 1928): 256. Entries in Fitzgerald's pocket diaries tell of his travels to France and his meetings with French artists. For example, in an entry in the back pages of his pocket diary, dated September 5, 1925, Fitzgerald wrote: "Monet was glad to see me. He is 85 but still active." Desmond Fitzgerald Papers.

58 Entry in Fitzgerald's pocket diary, August 16, 1911: "I have now somewhat over 150 pieces of Chinese porcelain & pottery." Entry in Fitzgerald's pocket diary, January 27, 1914: "I then took out all my Korean pottery here 180 pieces." Desmond Fitzgerald Papers.
59 The Japanese characters for this name are unknown.
60 Kershaw to Fairbanks, September 15, 1911, File: To the Director, Folder no. 1, 1910–13, Box: Official correspondence, Asia Department Archive, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
61 Entry in Fitzgerald's pocket diary, December 14, 1911: "I find I now have 109 pieces of pottery in the art museum." See also undated pages in the back of the 1911 pocket diary. Desmond Fitzgerald Papers.
62 "Public to Enjoy His Art Treasures," *The Boston Globe*, July 10, 1913.
63 Fitzgerald's 1913 pocket diary. Desmond Fitzgerald Papers.
64 American Art Association, *Chinese and Korean Potteries & Porcelains: Collection of the Late Desmond FitzGerald* [. . .] (New York: American Art Association, 1927); American Art Association, *Paintings by the Impressionists: Collection of the Late Desmond FitzGerald* [. . .] (New York: American Art Association, 1927).
65 Read, preface to *Early Chinese Pottery*, by Burlington Fine Arts Club et al, ix. For further discussion of the exhibition, see Pierson, *Collectors*, 89–94.
66 R. L. Hobson, "Sung and Yüan Wares in a New York Exhibition," *Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 24, no. 132 (March 1914): 321.
67 R. L. Hobson, *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain: An Account of the Potter's Art in China from Primitive Times to the Present Day* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1915), 1: 46.
68 R. L. Hobson and A. L. Hetherington, *The Art of the Chinese Potter from the Han Dynasty to the End of the Ming* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1923), 20.
69 Hobson, review of *Macomber Collection*, by Getz, 282.
70 R. L. Hobson, "Wares of the Sung and Yuan Dynasties-III. Celadon," *Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 15, no. 75 (June 1909): 173.
71 For a comparison of Chinese and Korean ceramics, see for example, Japan Society et al, *Chinese, Corean and Japanese Potteries: Descriptive Catalogue of Loan Exhibition of Selected Examples* (New York: Japan Society, 1914), 63.
72 Hobson, "Sung and Yüan Wares," 322.
73 Hobson also noted that an ewer in Freer's collection (F1907.286a-b, Japan Society catalogue no. 136) was similar to one described by Xu Jing as having a lid in the form of a lotus flower surmounted by a duck. Hobson, "Sung and Yüan Wares," 322.
74 "There is so much interest in the Special Exhibition of Chinese and Korean Pottery, and so much admiration of the pieces lent, that we like to keep the cases as they are through the summer. May we continue borrowing your pieces until the fall?" Kershaw to Fitzgerald, 11 April 1914, File: Desmond Fitzgerald, Box: Unofficial Correspondence in MFA Archive from 1912–1922, Asia Department Archive, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
75 "A Special Exhibition of Chinese and Korean Pottery at the Museum of Fine Arts, March 16th to April 15th, 1914," unauthored and unpublished catalogue, Asia Department Archive, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
76 "Committee on the Pottery Exhibition" in Japan Society et al, *Chinese, Corean and Japanese Potteries,* no page number.
77 Japan Society et al, *Chinese, Corean and Japanese Potteries,* 61.
78 Peters to Freer, March 12, 1914, Freer to Peters, March 14, 1914, Box 25, Subseries 2.1: Charles Lang Freer Correspondence, Charles Lang Freer Papers, FSA A.01, National Museum of Asian Art Archives, Smithsonian Institution (hereafter cited as Charles Lang Freer Papers).
79 "Oriental Potteries at Knoedler's," unsigned review of *Chinese, Corean and Japanese Potteries*, Knoedler Galleries (New York), *American Art News* 12, no. 22 (March 7, 1914): 6.
80 "What Is Happening in the World of Art," *The Sun* (New York), March 8, 1914.
81 "What Is Happening in the World of Art," *The Sun* (New York).
82 In addition to his advisory position on the "pottery committee," Freer commissioned the American photographer Lawrence X. Champeau (1882–1959) to document the show, and he covered part of the cost of bringing Hobson to America to write the catalogue. Expenditures made in connection with Pottery exhibition of the Japan Society, May 14, 1914, Folder 8 Japan Society, Box 230, Series 7: Exhibition Loan Files, Charles Lang Freer Papers.

83 Freer to Hobson, March 14, 1914, Box 18, Subseries 2.1: Charles Lang Freer Correspondence, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
84 Edward Thomas Williams was a Protestant missionary-linguist who went to China in 1887 where he over the next 20 years served in a number of official posts. In 1914 he returned to America and was appointed the Agassiz professorship of Oriental languages and literature at the University of California. Esson M. Gale, "Edward Thomas Williams, 1854–1944," *Far Eastern Quarterly* 3, no. 4 (1944): 381–83. See also "Edward Thomas Williams, Oriential [*sic*] Languages and Literature: Berkeley," University of California: In Memorium, 1944, Online Archive of California, accessed October 9, 2022, https://oac.cdlib.org/view?docId=hb696nb2rz.
85 Japan Society et al, *Chinese, Corean and Japanese Potteries,* xi.
86 Japan Society et al, *Chinese, Corean and Japanese Potteries,* 44.
87 Note that the exhibition catalogue erroneously lists object no. 137 as having been lent by the Smithsonian Institution. In fact, it belonged to C. Coleman. Japan Society et al, *Chinese, Corean and Japanese Potteries,* 106. Annotated copy in the National Museum of Asian Art Library, National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution.
88 Japan Society et al, *Chinese, Corean and Japanese Potteries,* 99.
89 Japan Society et al, *Chinese, Corean and Japanese Potteries,* 102. The accession number of the ewer in the National Museum of Asian Art is F1907.285.
90 Horace N. Allen, *Copy of a Certified Catalogue of a Collection of Ancient Korean Pottery: Purchased and Owned by Horace N. Allen. U.S. Minister, Seoul, Korea* (Nak Tong: Seoul Press, 1901), 8–9.
91 Japan Society et al, *Chinese, Corean and Japanese Potteries,* 102.
92 Allen, *Collection of Ancient Korean Pottery,* 10.
93 Lorraine D'O Warner, "Grave Pottery of the Korai Dynasty," *Bulletin of the Pennsylvania Museum* 16, no. 61 (April 1918): 18.
94 Hobson, *George Eumorfopoulos Collection*, 6: 35.
95 TMS records (The Museum System—the Smithsonian Institution's electronic database) for F1907.289 (vase) and F1907.285 (ewer). F1907.289 is number 6 in the annotated photograph of Horace Allen's ceramic collection, illustrated in Chapter 3 (Fig. 3.7). F1907.285 is number 3.
96 Japan Society et al, *Chinese, Corean and Japanese Potteries,* 53.
97 Sales voucher no. 3, August 1917, Box 123, Invoices 1917, Subseries 6.5.2: Art vouchers, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
98 L.2552, Pottery List 6 of 6, p. 673, Box 70, Subseries 5.6: Pottery-Oriental, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
99 L.2559, Pottery List 6 of 6, p. 676, Box 70, Subseries 5.6: Pottery-Oriental, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
100 Mrs. Aubrey Le Blond, *Day In, Day Out* (London: John Lane, Bodley Head, 1928), 156, 162. See also, A. H. Sayce, *Reminiscences* (London: Macmillan, 1923), 396–97.
101 Sayce bequeathed his East Asian ceramics to the Ashmolean Museum. For further discussion of Sayce's Korean artefacts, see Jihye Hong, "Collecting Korean Things: Actors in the Formation of Korean Collections in Britain (1876–1961)" (PhD diss., the Royal College of Art, 2021), 86–87.
102 Le Blond, *Day In*, 162.
103 Le Blond, *Day In*, 163.
104 Le Blond, *Day In*, 162–63.
105 Jihye Hong, "Collecting Korean Things," 94.
106 Jihye Hong, "Collecting Korean Things," 86–87.
107 Jihye Hong, "Collecting Korean Things," 100–103.
108 Son Yŏng-ok, *Misul sijang ŭi t'ansaeng* [The Birth of the Art Market] (Seoul: P'urŭn Yŏksa, 2020), 149.
109 Wylde to Smith, Internal Memorandum, May 26, 1914, Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Le Blond, MA/1/L594, V&A Archive.
110 Objects Submitted On Approval for Loan, June 17, 1914, Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Le Blond, MA/1/L594, V&A Archive; Smith to Rackham, Internal Memorandum, July 17, 1918, Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Le Blond, MA/1/L594, V&A Archive.
111 Smith to Le Blond, November 11, 1916, Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Le Blond, MA/1/L594, V&A Archive.

112 Cecil Smith, "Prefatory Note," foreword to *Le Blond Collection*, by Rackham (see n. 4).
113 Rackham, *Le Blond Collection*, vii–viii.
114 Warner, "Kōrai Celadon in America," 121 (see n. 25).
115 Rackham, *Le Blond Collection*, 17.
116 Rackham, *Le Blond Collection*, 18.
117 In 1912, Freer and Eugene Meyer (1875–1959), an American financier and collector of East Asian art, donated $10,000 towards the establishment of the school which was to operate under the auspices of the Archaeological Institute of America. Langdon Warner was appointed "Director of Work" and was tasked with investigating local Chinese responses to the school. However, in 1915, the outbreak of war and poor economic conditions brought a halt to the project. Phoebe Sherman Sheftel, "The Archaeological Institute of America, 1879–1979: A Centennial Review," *American Journal of Archaeology* 83, no. 1 (January 1979): 12.
118 The annotated inventory of Freer's bronze artefacts indicates that several Korean objects were purchased for this purpose, as in the case of a bronze mirror, sold as "Old Corean" by Yamanaka in New York for $50. Freer noted in the inventory that it was "useful for comparative study." Accession number F1915.62, TMS record; Inventory list titled "Bronze (Chinese, Japanese, Korean)," Box 74, Subseries 5.8: Bronze, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
119 Sales invoice, Yamanaka & Co., December 18, 1907, Box 114, Subseries 6.5.2: Art vouchers, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
120 Accession numbers F1908.19 (bottle) and F1908.24 (vase). Sales voucher no. 26, March 1908, and sales voucher no. 13, April 1908, Box 115, Subseries 6.5.2: Art vouchers, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
121 Freer paid $3,000 for the lacquered box. Sales voucher no. 3, August 1917, Box 123, Subseries 6.5.2: Art vouchers, Charles Lang Freer Papers. Accession number F1917.317.2a-f (box).
122 Accession number F1917.306.2a-f (box). Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, *Korean Art in the Freer and Sackler Galleries* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2012), 143.
123 The cost of the coffin plus freight totalled $131. "Purchases Made During Trip, May to December 1909, From Sums Charged Foreign Travels," Journal Voucher, December 1909, Box 116, Subseries 6.5.2: Art voucher, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
124 The inscription on the seventh slab was not translated until 1965, and it was only in 2010 that its content was studied and a date of AD 1197 was ascribed to the coffin. Accession number F1909.359a–g, TMS record.
125 Allen, *Collection of Ancient Korean Pottery*, 6. See also Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, *Korean Art,* 139–40.
126 Horace N. Allen, "Regarding my collection of 82 pieces of ancient Korean pottery," March 15, 1907, Box 9, Subseries 2.1: Charles Lang Freer Correspondence, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
127 Rackham, *Le Blond Collection,* 3, 21–22, 44.
128 "One Ancient Stone Coffin. Corean," Box 116, Subseries 6.5.2: Art vouchers, Charles Lang Freer Papers.
129 For further discussion of the use of such stone caskets, see Charlotte Horlyck, "Ways of Burial in Koryŏ Times," in *Death, Mourning, and the Afterlife in Korea: From Ancient to Contemporary Times*, ed. Charlotte Horlyck and Michael J. Pettid (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014), 87–90; Charlotte Horlyck, "The Eternal Link: Grave Goods of the Koryŏ Kingdom (918–1392CE)," *Ars Orientalis* 44 (2014): 161–62.
130 The term "grave-spoons" denotes the custom of placing bronze spoons in Koryŏ tombs alongside ceramic vessels. L. W. [Langdon/Lorraine Warner?], "Korean Bronze Spoons of the Korai Dynasty," *Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 4, no. 6 (August 1917): 101.
131 Kershaw, "Korean Pottery," 63 (see n. 3).
132 Thomas Lawton, "Yamanaka Sadajirō: Advocate for Asian Art," *Orientations* 26, no. 1 (January 1995): 82.

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5 Authority, Resistance, and Expansion

Introduction

From the 1880s till the end of the 1910s, the Korean art market was dominated by private collectors of American, British, and Japanese descent whose interest in Koryŏ celadon ceramics was fuelled by the availability of tomb loot from Korea. However, in the 1920s and 1930s, the market changed significantly resulting in a final surge in collecting activities before this ended with the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937 and the Pacific War in 1941. During these decades, the introduction of strict heritage laws by the Government-General of Korea significantly reduced the flow of objects out of the peninsula. This coincided with a rising number of public institutions expanding their holdings of Korean art. The decrease in supply of antiques coupled with the increase in buyers resulted in more competition and a steep rise in prices.[1] The high cost of Koryŏ ceramics led some collectors to acquire objects from the Chosŏn dynasty, such as wooden furniture, screens, and lacquered chests. Only a few decades earlier, such objects had been dismissed as being of poor quality and without artistic merit, but in the late 1920s and 1930s, they were sold in increasing numbers by respected dealers, such as Yamanaka in New York.

The absence of newly uncovered artefacts made objects from earlier-formed collections much sought after. In practical terms they compensated for the lack of new finds, but their acquisition histories also enhanced their value as collectibles. Moreover, having been acquired when interest in Koryŏ celadon was at its infancy and prior to the influx of fakes on the art market, they were believed to be genuine. The identification of authentic vessels posed considerable challenges for ceramic collectors of the 1920s and 1930s when modern reproductions of Koryŏ celadon wares, made in Korea and Japan, became increasingly common.

This chapter analyses the convergence of these factors and considers their impact on the Korean art market. On the one hand, collecting activities of these decades were shaped by earlier trends; on the other hand, they developed in new directions framed by local and global political events, in particular Japan's territorial expansion and the worldwide economic downturn of the 1930s. On the Korean peninsula, the colonial government used cultural schemes to coerce Korean subjects into supporting the military advancements of the Japanese Empire, with excavations, research, and display of Korean artefacts playing a crucial role in the implementation of such agendas. Japanese-led scholarship significantly furthered Western knowledge of Korean cultural heritage and enabled nuanced understandings of Koryŏ celadon and other objects. Conversely, these decades also witnessed defiance of Japanese cultural hegemony as Koreans began to buy and display Korean antiques for the first time.

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Colonial Cultural Agendas

Colonial cultural schemes were essentially aimed at assimilating the Koreans and strengthening ties between the peninsula and the Empire. Initiated already prior to the annexation of Korea with the establishment of the Imperial Household Museum in 1908, this strategy took on increased significance in the 1920s and 1930s as Japan prepared for war. In 1919 the Government-General of Korea replaced the harsh "military rule" (J. *budan seiji* 武断政治) of the 1910s with the "cultural rule" (J. *bunka seiji* 文化政治) in part in response to mass demonstrations that broke out in March 1919 when thousands of Koreans openly demanded independence from Japan.[2] Though the Koreans' plea for freedom was ignored at the Paris Peace Conference held that year, the brutality of the Japanese rule was widely known and condemned by American and European leaders. In response, Japan appointed Saitō Makoto 斎藤実 (1858–1936) as the new Governor-General of Korea and initiated a series of reforms aimed at assimilation rather than coercion. Included in the reforms envisioned by the Saitō government was the promise to respect Korean culture.[3] The American and British press placed much trust in the new colonial policies, as suggested in an article published in *The Washington Times* in October 1919:

> The tremendous series of punishments which followed the suppression of the independence demonstrations . . . have caused infinitely greater resentment than the ruthless severity of the suppressions themselves. . . . Admiral Saito intends to carry out a humane policy [and] declares that Japan does not desire to eradicate Korean culture, but to cherish it.[4]

Keen to strengthen its local and international image as the benefactor of the Korean nation, the colonial government put in measures to effectively administer Korean cultural heritage, starting with the establishment of the Department of Historical Sites and Relics Investigation (J. *Koseki Chōsaka* 古蹟調査課) in 1921. As the department oversaw all work related to archaeological surveys, heritage management, and conservation, it played a key role in systematising the study and preservation of Korean cultural remains.[5] Leading staff included Fujita Ryōsaku 藤田亮策 (1892–1960), who not only served as head of the Government-General Museum of Korea, but also taught history and archaeology at Keijō Imperial University in Seoul (now Seoul National University).[6] The following year, the colonial government established the Commission for the Compilation of Korean History (J. *Chōsenshi Hensan Iinkai* 朝鮮史編纂委員会), which was led by Fujita and other prominent Japanese archaeologists and historians.[7] The government also expanded the museum network with the founding of municipal museums in Kaesŏng and Pyongyang in 1931 and 1935, respectively. In 1939 museums were also established in Puyŏ and Kongju to house remains excavated in the southwestern part of the peninsula. Though the opening of regional branches of the Government-General Museum of Korea facilitated broad access to newly unearthed finds, they confirmed the Japanese monopoly over Korean archaeological heritage.[8]

In the 1930s the Great Depression and the economic cost of Japan's war campaigns led to reduced financial support for the Government-General Museum of Korea.[9] Yet cultural schemes remained essential to the colonial strategy of assimilating the Koreans into the Japanese Empire, as it was believed that pride in so-called "Eastern culture" would foster patriotic feelings towards Japan and garner support for its military operations.[10]

Interest in the advancement of Eastern culture was presented as being of concern to not only the Japanese but also the Koreans. Key to this agenda was the colonial narrative that the two countries shared the same cultural heritage, but that the Korean nation had failed to progress in contrast to Japan. The rhetoric on "sameness" between the Koreans and the Japanese had its roots in anthropological and archaeological research undertaken by Japanese scholars already prior to the annexation of the peninsula that ascertained the common ancestral origins of the Korean and Japanese races.[11]

Assimilation campaigns included the launch of the official slogan of "Japan and Korea as One Body" (J. *naisen ittai* 内鮮一体), which emphasised that Koreans too were subjects of the empire.[12] In November 1933, the Museum Week (J. *Hakubutsukan Shūkan* 博物館週間) was implemented, followed by the Penchant Day for Historical Remains (J. *Koseki Aigobi* 古蹟愛護日), which began in 1935 and held annually on September 10.[13] The latter formed part of the Mind Cultivation Movement (J. *Shinden kaihatsu undō* 心田開発運動) aimed at promoting loyalty to the Japanese Empire and the Emperor himself.[14] The *Tong'a ilbo* newspaper informed its readers that the aim of the Penchant Day for Historical Remains was to foster love for local culture through various educational means, such as public talks, radio programmes, and speeches to schoolchildren. Additionally, on this day museums had to offer discounted entrance fees to encourage more visitors.[15]

The colonial government also promoted its role as guardian of Korean culture by issuing heritage management laws that mirrored those implemented in Japan since the 1890s.[16] In Korea, the first of such laws was implemented in 1911. Focused on temples and shrines, it was in 1916 followed by the more extensive *Regulations on the Preservation of Ancient Rites and Relics of Chōsen* (J. *Koseki oyobi ibutsu hozon kisoku* 古蹟及遺物保存規則) and the establishment of the Committee for the Investigation of Korean Antiquities (J. *Chōsen Koseki Kenkyūkai* 朝鮮古蹟研究會), which oversaw the excavation, research, and preservation of remains.[17] The 1916 regulation clarified how ancient monuments (J. *koseki* 古蹟) and remains (J. *ibutsu* 遺物) should be defined and decreed that, if damaged, the perpetrator should be reported to the police. It also stipulated that government permission was needed for the removal, repair, and preservation of remains.[18]

The effectiveness of the law was mixed as objects continued to be unearthed illegally and sold. In the 1920s the American businessman Russell Tyson (1867–1963) significantly expanded his collection of Koryŏ celadon on a trip to Korea. His journey coincided with the expansion of the railroad network, and it was said that "each evening coolies brought in sacks of pottery which had turned up in the excavations."[19] Yet the law did to some extent reduce the looting, as suggested in a letter from Reverend Alfred S. Hewlett (1860?–1931) to Sir Cecil Harcourt-Smith, Director of the V&A Museum in London, in 1920:

> Corean things have been at a fabulous price since the rifling of the tombs has been stopped by Government in compliance with the Coreans protest and the Japanese have commandeered most of them for their museums and ask an exorbitant price, both in Corea and Japan.[20]

At the time Hewlett served as chaplain to the Leper Hospital in Kumamoto on the Japanese island of Kyūshū. To raise funds for the hospital, he offered for sale around 41 Korean and Japanese objects, totalling £65. Bernard Rackham (1876–1964), Keeper of

Ceramics at the V&A Museum, agreed to Hewlett's asking price, saying that it was "very reasonable," and purchased 11 of the Korean ceramics for £32 10s. 6d. Ranging from a stoneware cup dating to the Silla kingdom to Koryŏ celadon bowls and porcelain wares from the Chosŏn dynasty, the objects were priced from ten shillings to £7.[21] Rackham described a small porcelain dish with cobalt-blue decoration as "absurdly cheap at £3."[22]

In 1933, the Government-General of Korea initiated further measures to protect and in effect control Korean cultural remains, when it issued the *Treasures, Ancient Sites, Famous Places, and Natural Monuments Act* (J. *Chōsen hōmotsu koseki meishō ten'nen kinenbutsu hozonrei* 朝鮮寶物古蹟名勝天然記念物保存令). The law outlined criteria behind the classification of sites, monuments, and artefacts deemed worthy of safeguarding and restricted their exportation to Japan and foreign countries.[23] Remains could only be exported subject to prior permission from the Governor-General of Korea. Perpetrators were sentenced to up to five years imprisonment or fined up to 2,000 won.[24] The earlier mentioned Committee for the Investigation of Korean Antiquities played a crucial role in the launch of the decree. Mikami Tsugio 三上次男 (1907–87), who in the 1920s and 1930s surveyed the region occupied by the former kingdom of Koguryŏ (trad. 37 BCE–668) for the South Manchurian Railway Company, reported that members of the committee felt "they could not just stand by and watch thousands of mounds destroyed by railway construction [and they] made a strong plea to the railroad authorities for permission to conduct research."[25]

The 1933 law effectively brought an end to the export of Korean antiques from the peninsula to America and Europe, forcing collectors and museums to seek alternative methods of acquiring them. Consequently, objects from previously established local collections became highly sought after. Having partially donated his extensive collection of Koryŏ ceramics to the V&A Museum in 1913 and 1918, in 1936 Aubrey Le Blond informed the museum that illness compelled him to sell the remainder of his Korean artefacts. Bernard Rackham and A. J. Koop (1877–1945), Keeper in the Metalwork Department, strongly encouraged the director to purchase the group of 22 ceramics and 70 bronze artefacts from the Koryŏ and Chosŏn dynasties.[26] On the ceramics, Rackham commented,

> We might well purchase the whole collection at a suitable price. Many of the things are first rate of their kind, showing the excellent qualities which distinguish Corean porcelain from contemporary Chinese and Japanese wares, and would be difficult nowadays to obtain elsewhere, owing to official restrictions of exports from Korea.[27]

Eager to augment the V&A's otherwise scant representation of Korean metalwork, Koop supported Rackham's views, arguing that "the acquisition of the Le Blond collection would set us up in the class of work which Mr. Rackham has said regarding the porcelain, practically never reaches the market now."[28] Rackham felt that "the question of price is somewhat difficult, as Corean porcelain of this kind so seldom comes into the market and it is certain that prices would be much higher than those paid before the [First World] war."[29] A price of £75 for the ceramics and £150 for the bronzes was subsequently suggested, though Rackham urged the museum to increase it, if necessary. Le Blond argued he could obtain higher prices in Japan and America, but in wanting to keep the collection intact and in England, he accepted the proposed sum of £225 for the entire collection.[30] The porcelains ranged from monochrome to cobalt-blue and copper-red decorated wares, while the metal wares included spoons, mirrors, seals, bottles and bowls, among other types of bronze artefacts typically found in Koryŏ tombs alongside celadon wares.

The *Chōsen Koseki Zufu*

From the mid-1910s, the findings of the surveys and excavations of Korean archaeological sites and monuments carried out by Japanese archaeologists were published by the Government-General of Korea and distributed to institutions within and outside the Japanese Empire. The most ambitious of these publications was the large-sized 15-volume *Chōsen koseki zufu* 朝鮮古蹟圖譜 (Album of Ancient Korean Sites; hereafter CKZ) that was produced between 1915 and 1935.[31]

Initiated by Terauchi Masatake 寺内正毅 (1852–1919), Governor-General of Korea from 1910 to 1916, the work was led by Sekino Tadashi 関野貞 (1868–1935). An architect of training, Sekino first investigated archaeological and architectural remains in Korea in 1902, having been despatched to the peninsula by Tokyo Imperial University.[32] Over the next three decades he was charged with leading and managing several government-led projects, starting in 1909 with the first-ever systematic survey of Korean archaeological and architectural remains.[33] American and European scholars held him in high esteem and frequently quoted his scholarship. In 1917 he was awarded the Stanislas Julien prize by the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres in France for his work on the CKZ.[34]

In contrast to other publications on Korean cultural heritage produced by the Government-General of Korea, the CKZ was essentially a photographic record of Korean cultural remains with their location and, if applicable, the owner listed next to the illustrations. In some cases, the volumes also included photographs of sites before and after their restoration as a way to emphasise the positive impact of Japanese archaeologists.[35] While offering little in terms of scholarly discussion, in their identification and depiction of a vast number of historical sites and artefacts, the volumes added considerably to existing knowledge of Korean cultural heritage. The Government-General of Korea distributed the CKZ and other studies produced by Japanese scholars to institutions within and beyond the Japanese Empire, thereby ensuring that Japanese-led research and preservation of Korean culture were widely known. In 1934 alone, 47 copies of the CKZ were sent to institutions in America, Europe, China, the Soviet Union, and Manchuria.[36] American and European collectors and curators placed much trust in Japanese scholarship and collecting activities, in part due to their keeness to follow "Oriental taste," as discussed in Chapter 4. References to the CKZ can be found in several English-language writings on Korean ceramics published from the mid-1910s, including Rackham's much-quoted catalogue of the Le Blond collection as well as Lorraine D'O Warner's extensive study of Koryŏ ceramics.[37] For scholars and collectors of Korean ceramics, the CKZ presented valuable insights into the types of artefacts that Japanese scholars considered significant. These objects became the standard against which American and European collections were judged.

Arranged chronologically, the CKZ spanned three volumes on artefacts and archaeological sites predating the Unified Silla period (vols. 1–3), two on Unified Silla (vols. 4–5), four on Koryŏ (vols. 6–9), and six on Chosŏn (vols. 10–15). In their content the volumes mirrored the development of colonial interests in Korean cultural heritage. The first covered remains from the earlier territory of the Han Chinese commandery of Lelang, located in and around Pyongyang that began to be excavated in the early twentieth century. The Government-General of Korea was much invested in the sites as they were believed to evidence Korea's historic subjugation to powerful nations and thus supported the Japanese racial narrative of the Koreans' genetic dependency on superior rulers.[38] In 1935, the penultimate volume in the series was published. That it focused exclusively on

porcelain and *punch'ŏng* ceramics from the Chosŏn dynasty is telling of the rising interest in such wares that began in the late 1910s and intensified in the 1920s and 1930s in part in response to the scarcity of Koryŏ celadon ceramics on the art market.[39]

The volumes on Koryŏ remains were published between 1918 and 1929, when collectors' interest in celadon ceramics was at its peak. The content built on earlier surveys of Koryŏ archaeological sites, including the first-ever study of the Koryŏ royal tombs located near Kaesŏng, which was published by the Government-General of Korea in 1916.[40] Volume six, the first of the Koryŏ volumes, covered architecture, stone pagodas, and stone lanterns, followed two years later by volume seven, which focused on stone epitaphs, tombs, stone coffins, and Buddhist artefacts. In the late 1920s, the Koryŏ run was completed with the publication of volume eight on ceramics (1928) and volume nine on lacquer and bronze objects (1929).

Initially volume eight covered a range of artefacts unearthed from Koryŏ tombs. However, soon after the books were printed, they were destroyed by fire in the Great Kantō earthquake. Subsequently, Sekino limited the focus of the volume to ceramics from public and private collections.[41] The decision to devote an entire volume to Koryŏ ceramics likely stemmed from the ongoing strong interest in them. As in the case of the other volumes in the series, volume eight did not include discussion of the objects, but in its typological arrangement of the vessels according to shape, design, and glaze type, the content reflects recent advancements in Koryŏ ceramic scholarship. It also evidenced the scale of individual and institutional collections of Koryŏ ceramics in Korea and Japan. Most of the near to 400 objects listed in the volume were selected from the then five largest public collections in the region, namely, the Government-General Museum of Korea, the Prince Yi Household Museum, the Tokyo Imperial Household Museum (J. *Tokyo Teishitsu Hakubutsukan* 東京帝室博物館), the Okura Museum of Art (J. *Ōkura Shūkokan* 大倉集古館), and the School of Engineering at Tokyo Imperial University (J. *Tokyo Teikoku Daigaku Kōgakubu* 東京帝国大学工学部), Sekino's alma mater.[42] Also included were around 50 ceramics from the private collections of ten Japanese individuals who worked and lived in Korea between the 1870s and the 1920s. Nine vessels belonged to Sekino himself. Other groups of objects were owned by Ayukai Fusanoshin 鮎貝房之進 (1864–1946); the hotelier Mori Tatsuo 森辰男 (dates unknown); Agawa Jūrō 阿川重朗 (1870–1943), who owned a construction company in Korea; Yokota Gorō 横田五郎 (1869–?), who served as chief justice of the High Court in Seoul; and Hayashi Gonsuke 林權助 (1860–1939), who in his position as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Japan signed the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1905 that made Korea a protectorate of the Japanese Empire.

The most elaborate privately owned vessels belonged to the businessman Nakata Ichigorō 中田市五郎 (dates unknown), who was a board member of a joint-stock company dealing in the lucrative white ginseng trade in Kaesŏng.[43] Having run a string of businesses in the city since the First Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95, Nakata had easy access to the many ceramic wares that were unearthed near the ancient capital of Koryŏ. His collection was said to exceed 100 Koryŏ ceramics, making him one of the foremost collectors of his time.[44] Among the 12 celadon wares included in the CKZ that belonged to him was a dragon-shaped ewer and an incense burner with a lid shaped in the form of a lion (Figure 5.1).[45] Their complex three-dimensional shapes and flawless glazed surfaces suggest that they were products of the royal kilns that manufactured vessels for the Koryŏ court. The incense burner is especially important to the understanding

Figure 5.1 Celadon incense burner. Koryŏ period, twelfth century. Height 21.2 cm. National Treasure 60.

Source: National Museum of Korea (acc. no. Kaesŏng 1).

of Koryŏ ceramic production as it closely matches a description of a celadon incense burner authored by the Chinese envoy Xu Jing (1091–1153) in the *Xuanhe fengshi Gaoli tujing* (Illustrated Account of the Embassy to Koryŏ in the Xuanhe Era). As mentioned in Chapter 1, the passage was well-known to collectors of Korean ceramics, having been discussed in scholarly volumes on Koryŏ art and culture by Korean, Japanese, and Western scholars since the late nineteenth century.

In 1933, Nakata included the ewer and the incense burner in a group of around 30 Koryŏ ceramics, which he sold to Kaesŏng Prefecture Museum for 20,000 won – a sum comparable to the cost of ten private properties in Seoul.[46] The sale made headlines not only due to its high price, but also because the vessels were argued to be exemplars of the much-celebrated kingfisher-coloured glaze (K. *pisaek* 翡色) mentioned by Xu Jing, thereby verifying the accuracy of the twelfth-century text.[47] The sale also provides evidence of the increasing prices of celadon ceramics on the art market in Korea, reflecting trends observed in America and Britain.

Figure 5.2 Celadon jars. Koryŏ period, twelfth century. Height 25.6 cm (*left*), 35.5 cm (*right*). Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (acc. no. 19.927 [*left*], 11.1821 [*right*]).

Source: Reproduced with permission of MFA Boston from Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Chōsen koseki zufu*, 8:993. Courtesy of Special Collections, SOAS Library, University of London.

Despite the fact that several important collections of Koryŏ ceramics had been formed in America and Britain by the time volume eight of the CKZ was published, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, was the only collection located outside the Japanese Empire which was included in the volume.[48] The reason why may be attributed to Sekino Tadashi and his connections with American scholars, among them Langdon Warner, who was one of America's leading authorities on East Asian art. He held various advisory roles for numerous museums in America and served as Curator of Oriental Art at the Fogg Museum of Art in Boston from 1923 to 1950. Only two examples from the museum's extensive collection of Korean ceramics were illustrated in the volume: a *meibyŏng* prunus vase and a jar with four small handles (Figure 5.2). The *meibyŏng* was acquired in 1911, having been purchased in Japan by Langdon Warner on behalf of the museum for 275 yen.[49] The jar originally belonged to John Bickering Lyman (1847–1914), President of Webster and Atlas National Bank of Boston. A collector of ceramics and paintings from America, Europe, and East Asia, it is not known how Lyman acquired it. Following Lyman's death, Lyman's sister Theodora donated his collection to the museum in 1919.[50]

Private Acquisitions and Displays of Art

The government's systematic approach to the management and preservation of Korean culture went hand-in-hand with a heightened individual interest in the collecting and display of Korean art, also among Koreans. For the colonial government, the promotion of Korean culture was a means to coerce the Koreans into supporting the empire, while

for Koreans it offered a veiled method of resistance. In 1921, Japanese archaeologists excavated the first of several tombs from the Silla kingdom in Kyŏngju, beginning with the Tomb of the Golden Crown.[51] The tomb was named after the magnificent gold crown that was found inside the burial chamber alongside hundreds of other precious artefacts made of gold, glass, jade, and other material. When the Japanese planned to despatch the unearthed remains to Seoul, local Korean leaders strongly objected. They succeeded in raising funds to build a gallery inside the Kyŏngju Society for Conservation of Ancient Sites (J. *Keishū Koseki Hozonkai* 慶州古蹟保存會) where the objects were exhibited. Yet as the society was managed by the Government-General of Korea, the gallery was in effect controlled by the Japanese and in 1926 it became the Kyŏngju branch of the Government-General Museum of Korea.[52] The Japanese were much invested in the Silla sites since to them the archaeological remains confirmed Empress Jingū's supposed conquest of the peninsula as recorded in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*.[53]

In Korea, private acquisitions of Korean artefacts were largely driven by Japanese residents. Many had arrived in the early twentieth century and had established themselves as businessmen and government administrators. To them, Korea was a land of opportunity where they could carve out a new and successful life. Art collecting formed part of this process as it enabled inclusion in elitist networks of influence and power. Over the course of the colonial period an increasing number of dealers catered to the growing desire for art objects. Whereas there were only ten dealers on the peninsula in 1909, the number doubled by 1919. It rose further over the next decade, and by 1928 there were 36 registered dealers: 25 Japanese, 10 Korean, and one unidentified "foreigner."[54]

Encouraged by the growing want for Korean antiques among local consumers, most of them Japanese, Sasaki Chōji 佐々木兆治 (1869–?) co-founded the Seoul Art Club (J. *Keijō Bijutsu Kurabu* 京城美術倶楽部) with Itō Tōichirō 伊藤東一郎 (1863–1923/24)[55] and Agawa Jūrō in 1921.[56] Sasaki came to Korea in 1906, having heard rumours of easy money that could be had from selling Korean antiques to Americans and Europeans.[57] His arrival coincided with the opening of Korea's first auction house by a Japanese named Akao 赤尾 (dates unknown). While managing his own antique shop during the day, Sasaki spent his evenings bookkeeping for Akao.[58] Many of the artefacts sold by Akao were discovered in Kaesŏng and then sent to Seoul. According to Sasaki, only a handful of the vessels were intact, though it is unclear whether they sustained damage during excavation or while being transported. Still, the craze for celadon was such that even sherds could be sold, and Akao offered them in lots of five at the price of 10 to 20 won.[59] In 1915 Sasaki began renting space in the Wŏngŭm Inn in Inch'ŏn, the port city of Seoul, where he occasionally ran auctions and purchased antiques. Sasaki's timing was fortuitous. Whereas the objects he sold in the 1910s originated from newly discovered archaeological sites, in the 1930s they derived from collections formed in the early twentieth century by Japanese residents in Korea who had died or returned to Japan. A case in point being the sale of 226 artefacts amassed by Komiya Mihomatsu, who died in 1935. When the auction was held the following year, it was attended by Korean, Japanese, and Chinese collectors.[60]

The Seoul Art Club emulated art clubs established in Japan that catered to the rapidly growing demand for antiques, starting with the Nagoya Art Club in 1905 and the Tokyo Art Club in 1907.[61] As an auction house it brought together investors, art dealers, and collectors and encouraged research and discussion on art. It seems that the sale previews were open to the public, but only registered dealers and collectors could participate in the auctions.[62] It also professionalised the art trade as it was the first dealer in Korea to

issue certificates of the auctioned artefacts to guarantee their authenticity. The certificates included the name of the artefact, its use and date of manufacture, as well as a note explaining how such conclusions were reached. The club also offered refunds to buyers in the case of fakes or otherwise problematic objects.[63]

In the 1920s, all members of the club were Japanese, most of them businessmen, but in the 1930s Korean art collectors joined, the most active being Chŏn Hyŏng-p'il (1906–62). Having graduated with a degree in law from Waseda University in Tokyo, Chŏn returned to Seoul in 1930. His interest in Korean culture developed from his close relationship with the Korean politician and calligrapher O Se-ch'ang (1864–1953).[64] O was an independence activist, who was imprisoned for three years due to his involvement in the March First Movement in 1919. A collector of Korean calligraphy and painting, in 1917 he compiled the first comprehensive history of Korean painters and calligraphers (K. *Kŭnyŏk sŏhwasa* 槿域書畵史), which he in 1928 published as a book under the title *Evidence on the Biographies of Korean Painters and Calligraphers* (K. *Kŭnyŏk sŏhwa ching* 槿域書畵徵).[65] Like O Se-ch'ang, Chŏn believed it was crucial to preserve Korean culture to encourage Korean identity and strengthen national spirit under colonial rulership.[66] Having inherited a sizeable fortune, he was able to carry out this objective by purchasing large numbers of Korean artefacts, often by outbidding Japanese dealers and collectors. In 1935, when the Japanese collector Maeda Saiichirō 前田才一郎 (dates unknown) offered for sale a large *maebyŏng* prunus vase with elaborately inlaid motifs of cranes and clouds, Chŏn purchased it for twice the price offered by the Government-General Museum of Korea.[67] The year after Chŏn outbid Yamanaka when he bought a porcelain bottle for 14,850 won – at the time, the highest price ever paid in Korea for a Chosŏn ceramic vessel.[68]

Chŏn Hyŏng-p'il also endeavoured to have treasures returned to Korea. In 1937, when he learnt that John Gadsby (1884–1970), a British lawyer who worked for the British embassy in Tokyo, was selling his collection of Koryŏ celadon ceramics prior to his return to Britain, Chŏn travelled to Japan in the hope of purchasing them. Gadsby probably acquired the objects in Japan, where he had lived since the early 1910s. Chŏn's initial bid was unsuccessful as Gadsby intended to sell his collection to the British Museum. However, when this plan fell through, Chŏn managed to purchase 20 of Gadsby's Koryŏ celadon for 400,000 won, a sum approximately equivalent to $2 million today.[69]

Chŏn's acts of defiance were a veiled revolt against colonial cultural hegemony, motivating him to build one of the largest private collections of Korean antiques in existence. In 1938, when the colonial government made the use of Japanese language mandatory in all primary and secondary schools and prohibited the study of Korean history, Chŏn established the first private museum in Korea, and thus claimed local control over indigenous Korean culture.[70] O Se-ch'ang named it Pohwagak (now the Kansong Art Museum), meaning pavilion of dazzling treasures.

Scholarship and Collecting in America and Britain

In the 1920s in America and Britain, the research, display, and acquisition of Korean artefacts were dominated by museum institutions as they became the custodians of earlier formed private collections. The size and quality of such museum collections can be gleaned from two reports published in 1929 by Fujita Ryōsaku following his travels in Europe and America between autumn 1926 and 1928.[71] In his view "the best collection of Koryŏ celadon in Europe" was that of the V&A Museum, mainly due to the Le Blond

Figure 5.3 Celadon bottle. Koryŏ period, twelfth century. Height 33 cm. The V&A Museum (acc. no. C.526–1918).

Source: © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

collection, which it had acquired ten years earlier. Among Le Blond's ceramics, Fujita singled out a bowl with *sanggam* inlay and a vase with incised motifs as being particularly noteworthy for their superb colours and patterns. Fujita included no illustrations of the vessels, but it is likely that one of them is a tall-necked vase with an incised decoration of floral sprays and overlapping lotus petals, covered by a light green glaze (Figure 5.3).[72] Fujita argued that it was challenging to find similar exemplars of Koryŏ celadon in the two major museums in Seoul, namely, the Government-General Museum of Korea and the Prince Yi Household Museum.[73] In the late 1920s, the V&A's collection of Korean ceramics included around 200 pieces. However, in the following decade the collection expanded considerably when George Eumorfopoulos sold his extensive collection of Korean ceramics to the V&A and the British Museum in 1934, and Aubrey Le Blond offered the remainder of his Korean collection to the V&A in 1937.

Fujita also argued that the displays of Korean objects differed significantly between Europe and America. He believed that most Korean objects outside the Japanese Empire could be found in America where he observed that it was rare to find a museum with no display of Korean artefacts. He commended American museums for interpreting the Korean objects as fine art (J. *bijutsu kōgeihin* 美術工芸品) whereas he felt that in Europe they were valued less as reflected in them being treated as craft objects (J. *kōgeihin* 工芸品).[74] Fujita's interpretation seems to be based on different ways of exhibiting Korean artefacts in the two continents. In American museums, the displays were comparable to those of the Government-General Museum of Korea and the Prince Yi Household Museum in that they centred on archaeological remains and other antiques. In contrast, in Europe Fujita saw exhibits of contemporary

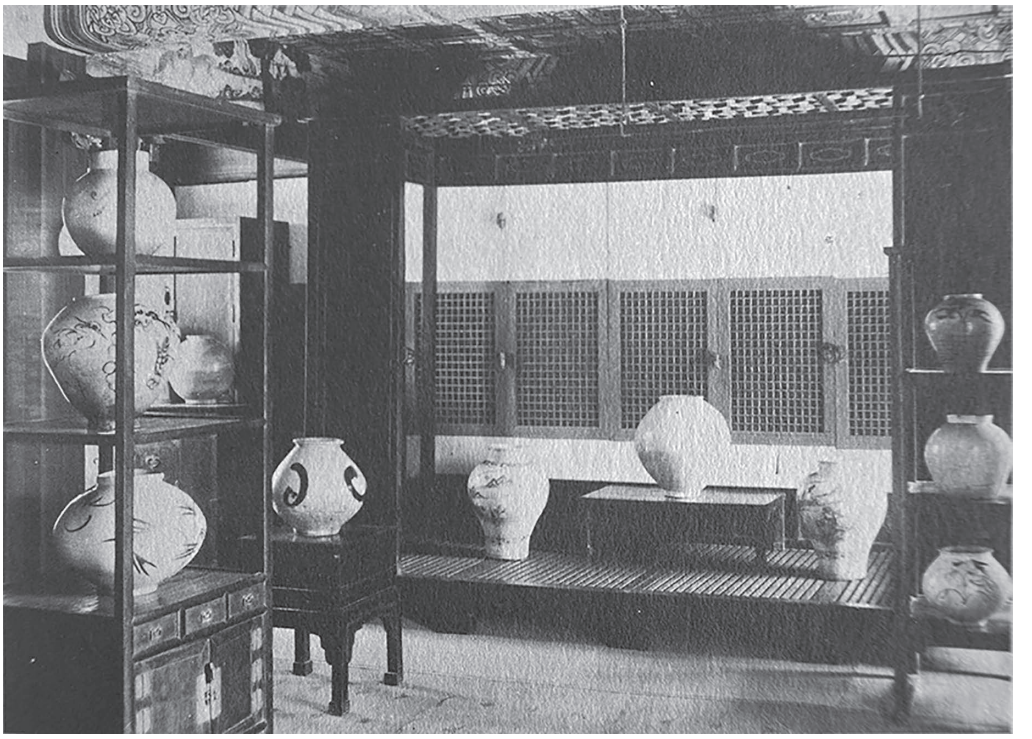

Figure 5.4 Display of Chosŏn ceramics at the Folk Museum of Korea. Seoul, 1928.
Source: From Warner, "Recent Pottery Exhibition," 241.

manufacture, such as textiles and furniture, which were more akin to displays in the newly opened Folk Museum of Korea (J. *Chōsen Minzoku Bijutsukan* 朝鮮民族美術館) in Seoul (Figure 5.4).[75] Fujita's argument rested on dominant conceptions of the distinction between art and craft objects, with the former being associated with elitist culture in contrast to the latter, which were judged on their utilitarian qualities.[76]

When Fujita toured American museums, many had succeeded in building substantial collections of Korean artefacts. Among them were the Art Institute of Chicago; Cleveland Museum of Art; Detroit Institute of Arts; the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; Walker Art Galleries (now Walker Art Center) in Minneapolis; Honolulu Academy of Arts; City Art Museum of St. Louis (now Saint Louis Art Museum); Fine Arts Gallery of San Diego (now San Diego Museum of Art); Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; and Worcester Art Museum in Massachusetts. Their collections varied in size from less than 50 artefacts to more than 1,000 items, and the objects differed in type and medium, though ceramics were the mainstay of all collections.[77] The museums were staffed by curators with scholarly knowledge of East Asian art whose research significantly furthered the field. Several published on Korean ceramics and other topics, and some had even travelled to the peninsula.[78]

The expansion of collections and scholarship on the objects led to more varied museum displays as, for example, that initiated by the Cleveland Museum of Art in 1921 when it

exhibited Korean paintings, embroidery, and metalwork, in addition to ceramics.[79] The ceramics included the Worcester R. Warner Collection of Korean pottery as well as donations by John L. Severance (1863–1936), a wealthy industrialist based in Cleveland.[80] Severance's father, Louis Henry Severance (1838–1913), made his fortune in oil and sulphur and after his retirement used his wealth to further educational and missionary causes. In 1900, he donated large sums for the construction of a hospital in Seoul, which opened in 1904 under the name Severance Memorial Hospital (now Yonsei Severance Hospital).[81] John L. Severance acquired the main bulk of his collection from Dr Alfred Irving Ludlow (1875–1961), who worked at the hospital as a surgeon between 1912 and 1938.[82] Most of the objects in Severance's collection dated from the Koryŏ dynasty, leaving J. Arthur Maclean, Curator of Oriental Art at Cleveland Museum of Art, to state that the gift enabled the Museum to "show a complete range of Korean pottery during the best period, that is, from 920–1392 AD [the Koryŏ dynasty]."[83]

In the early 1920s, the significance attached to Koryŏ art led many museums to augment their Korean collections with metalwares from the Koryŏ dynasty, such as mirrors, kundika vessels, spoons, and chopsticks, which were frequently found in tombs alongside ceramics. For example, in 1920 the City Art Museum of St. Louis purchased a bronze kundika, while in 1922, the Metropolitan Museum of Art acquired several bronze mirrors. Objects from other periods, such as stonewares from the Three Kingdoms period and oxhorn boxes and lacquerwares from the Chosŏn dynasty, were also acquired though in lesser numbers. However, difficulties in obtaining reliable information on Korean artefacts continued to hamper collecting efforts with paintings being a particularly challenging area. Their rarity in museum collections may be attributed to ongoing difficulties in correctly identifying them, as suggested in a letter from John Ellerton Lodge (1876–1942), Curator of Asian Art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, to Denman Waldo Ross (1853–1935), a professor of art history at Harvard University and a keen collector of East Asian art. Lodge also lamented the rising price of Korean paintings, though in fact they remained considerably cheaper than Koryŏ ceramics, which at this time often sold for several hundred dollars.

> Ushikubo [Daijirō (D.J.R.) Ushikubo, manager of Yamanaka in New York] tells me that he has two important Korean paintings of large size which he is quite ready to send here on approval. He does not mention the prices at which he holds these, but I gained an inkling in regard to present prices of Korean paintings when I went to see the lot of which Boston Yamanaka sent us word. These is nothing there that would be of interest to us – nothing to compare for a minute with the two we got last year; the prices, however, without any reference to quality, average four or five times higher than those we paid. It seems we set a fashion; the glad tidings have been passed round among dealers and now the happy days of good Korean pictures for small sums of money are already over.[84]

One of the two Korean paintings mentioned by Lodge depicts a seated Watermoon Avalokitesvara (Figure 5.5). He purchased it for $200, while the second painting, which features two deva, cost $300. Both were initially believed to date from the fifteenth century, but the Avalokitesvara painting is now thought to have been made in the eighteenth century. Both paintings entered the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in 1917.[85]

Despite the rise in the price of Korean art, bargains could still be found, and in 1920, Ross acquired four paintings from Yamanaka in London that he later donated to the

Figure 5.5 Watermoon Avalokitesvara. Chosŏn period, late eighteenth century. Ink and colours on silk, 136 × 121 cm. MFA Boston, Francis Gardner Curtis Fund (acc. no. 17.1636).

Source: Photograph © 2024, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 5.6 Six Bodhisattvas. Chosŏn period, sixteenth to seventeenth century. MFA Boston, Denman Waldo Ross Collection (acc. no. 20.1614).

Source: Photograph © 2024, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Three were sold as Chinese and believed to be from the early Ming dynasty.[86] The fourth was identified as a Korean painting of Avalokitesvara.[87] At £25, it was considerably cheaper than its Chinese counterparts that ranged in price from £75 to £100. However, the following year the Korean painting was re-attributed as Chinese, while one of the Chinese paintings, sold as "Six Goddesses standing on Lotus Flowers," was identified as being Korean (Figure 5.6).[88]

The growing popularity of Koryŏ artefacts that coincided with their decreased availability on the art market made the sale of Desmond Fitzgerald's collection one of the most spectacular auctions of the 1920s. As discussed in Chapter 4, Fitzgerald was an engineer based in Boston, Massachusetts. A keen patron of the arts and for many years a trustee of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, his collecting activities centred on Impressionist paintings and Korean and Chinese ceramics.[89] When he passed away in 1926 at the age of 80, his prints, paintings, and East Asian objects were sold the following year by the American Art Association in New York.[90] The auction made headlines for bringing in a total of $192,169 with the sale of the ceramics alone amounting to $34,121.[91] Paintings by Monet and Renoir were highly sought-after and fetched prices of up to $12,000, but the most expensive work in Fitzgerald's collection was a watercolour by the American painter Winslow Homer (1836–1910), which sold for $15,700.[92]

Fitzgerald's East Asian collection numbered more than 500 artefacts, mostly stonewares from the Song and Koryŏ dynasties. He also acquired porcelains from the Ming and Qing dynasties and a lesser number of wares from the Chosŏn dynasty. The escalating price of East Asian ceramics is apparent when comparing their initial sales prices with their auction prices. In 1911, in his first year of collecting East Asian ceramics, Fitzgerald acquired around 200 East Asian vessels at the total cost of $2,000.[93] In 1927, the sales price of individual objects was close to this amount. The two highest priced ceramics were a tall peacock green vase from the Sung dynasty purchased by the Art Institute of Chicago for $1,500, and a Koryŏ celadon *meibyŏng* prunus vase with a light-green glossy glaze and carved and incised motifs of floral sprays (Figure 5.7). Several large cracks, repaired and covered with gold, ran across the body of the *meibyŏng*, but this appears not to have deterred buyers, and it sold to the Metropolitan Museum of Art for $1,500.[94] The fact that it had been exhibited at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, as stated in the exhibition catalogue, is likely to have further enhanced its sales price.[95] Harold Gould Henderson (1889–1974), Assistant Curator in the Far East Department at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, later singled it out as "the most beautiful piece the Museum has in its whole Korean collection."[96] *Meibyŏng* vases were popular collectibles in the late 1910s

Figure 5.7 Celadon *meibyŏng* with incised lotus decoration. Koryŏ period, late eleventh to early twelfth century. Height 34.9 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 1927 (acc. no. 27.119.1).

Source: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

and 1920 when they tended to fetch higher prices than bowls and other types of celadon vessels. They were commonly referred to as "gallipots" (also spelled as "galipot" or "calipot"), this being a term used for both Chinese and Korean vases of this shape. The rising price of such vessels is evident when comparing the cost of Fitzgerald's *meibyŏng* to ones purchased by Charles Freer 20 years earlier for $300 to $350 when they were among the most expensive Koryŏ ceramics he acquired at the time.[97]

The high price of the *meibyŏng* is indicative of collectors' continuous want for Koryŏ celadon ceramics of elegant shapes and lustrous "sea-green" glazes that dominated the art market in the 1910s. The most expensive bowl sold at the sale was acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art for $475. It was delicately potted with a moulded peony pattern covered with a glossy, bluish-green glaze with a fine network of crackles (Figure 5.8).[98] The Metropolitan also purchased a shallow *sanggam* inlaid bowl with a densely arranged design of phoenixes among clouds (Figure 5.9).[99] The olive-green colour of the glaze and its dull appearance made the vessel significantly less attractive as a collector's item, and this likely accounts for its relatively low price of $35. The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, too acquired several Koryŏ celadon wares at the sale. Among them was a melon-shaped ewer, covered with a lustrous soft-green glaze, which sold for $300, and a squat kundika, which cost $100.[100]

Most writings on Korean art continued to centre on Koryŏ ceramic manufacture, but in contrast to those published 15 or 20 years earlier, articles were well-researched and offered reliable information. Several authors, including Eckardt, referenced sources

Figure 5.8 Celadon bowl with moulded decoration. Koryŏ period, twelfth century. Height 5.7 cm, diameter 19.4 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 1927 (acc. no. 27.119.3).

Source: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Figure 5.9 Celadon bowl with inlaid decoration. Koryŏ period, thirteenth to fourteenth century. Height 5.7 cm, diameter 19.4 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 1927 (acc. no. 27.119.10).

Source: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

published by the Government-General of Korea, signifying the cross-regional scholarly exchanges that took place at this time as travel and communication between East Asia, Europe, and America became easier and quicker. A particularly impressive study was that by Lorraine D'O Warner, who published "Kōrai [Koryŏ] celadon in America" in *Eastern Art: An Annual* in 1930. She illustrated the text with more than 150 ceramics from private and public collections in America, reflecting the growth in ownership of them. Among them were the Freer Gallery of Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Fogg Museum of Art, as well as private collections formed by Russell Tyson in Chicago and Desmond Fitzgerald in Boston, though the latter had by then been dispersed.[101] Warner not only cross-referenced the vessels with examples published in the CKZ, she quoted several other volumes published by the Government-General of Korea, reflecting her reliance on Japanese-led scholarship. In doing so, she validated the quality and authenticity of the ceramics in American ownership and verified America's strong position in the field of Korean ceramic collecting. As Fujita had argued in the journal *Chōsen* 朝鮮 (Korea), Warner noted that Europe had relatively few important examples of Koryŏ ceramics.[102]

Warner's article was the first in-depth study on Koryŏ celadon published in English. It presented an overview of the history and cultural traditions from the Three Kingdoms period to the Koryŏ dynasty, followed by detailed discussion of the key types, glazes,

shapes, and decorations of Koryŏ ceramics. Particularly interesting are the sections devoted to comparative discussions of the glaze colours, clay, and potting of Chinese and Korean celadon wares. In this, Warner catered to the strong interest among scholars and collectors in America and Europe in singling out points of difference and similarity between East Asian ceramic manufacture as a way to enhance understanding of manufacturing techniques.[103] Warner's article is also important for its pioneering discussion of Koryŏ mortuary traditions. Though it was widely known that Koryŏ celadon were looted from graves and hence frequently referred to as tomb wares in English-language publications, Warner offered a broader contextual explanation of their use as burial objects. She was among the first scholars to conclude that the vessels were made specifically for burial, as "they show[ed] none of the unmistakable signs of use."[104]

In many respects Warner's article was published too late for collectors to make full use of it, seeing that in the 1930s it became increasingly difficult to acquire good quality artefacts at reasonable prices as fewer wares became available for sale and prices rose considerably. In the words of Warner:

> Japanese collectors and a few foreigners bought eagerly from 1910 on, but it seems that the supply of fine examples in now exhausted and the collector who enters the field today must content himself with mediocre examples or else pay exorbitantly for the occasional good piece that is offered for sale.[105]

Collectors were further challenged by fakes that began to enter the market in increasing numbers. On this Warner explained:

> Copies and imitations made with intent to deceive are produced in Japan in several places but the glaze is too vitreous and glossy, generally browner or more opaquely green than that of true Kōrai [Koryŏ ceramics], the potting invariably too delicate and the shapes formal and over true in these. . . . It is impossible to make rules for the detection of spurious Kōrai [Koryŏ ceramics], but one should be sure that the glaze is not too evenly brilliant, that the foot shows the proper spur marks.[106]

An example of such copies of Koryŏ wares may be a dragon-shaped celadon ewer, which the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, bought in 1938 for $1,000 from Benjamin Wilfred Fleisher (1870–1946) (Figure 5.10).[107] Fleisher probably acquired it in Japan, where he worked as a journalist for around 40 years, during which time he built a substantial collection of largely Japanese and Chinese artefacts.[108] Originally believed to be from the Koryŏ dynasty, the date of the ewer is currently under question.[109] At first glance, it seems similar to that owned by Ōkura Kihachirō and displayed in the Koryŏ Ceramic Exhibition in 1910 (see Figure 4.5), but its shape is less detailed, and the curves are less fluent. The ewer may not have been made with intent to deceive but could be a product of the so-called "new Koryŏ kilns" (K. *Shin Koryŏso* 新高麗燒) where contemporary copies of Koryŏ celadon were made. The products of such kilns became popular in the 1920s when they were exhibited at expositions and art fairs held in Korea.[110] They also became sought-after souvenirs among the rising number of tourists, largely from Japan, who visited the peninsula at this time.

Figure 5.10 Celadon ewer with lid, with incised decoration. Koryŏ period, late twelfth century (?). Height 17 cm. MFA Boston, Seth K. Sweetser Fund (acc. no. 38.680a-b).

Source: Photograph © 2024, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Broadening Approaches to Korean Art

In the late 1920s the high cost of Koryŏ celadon, not to mention their gradual absence on the art market, forced a broader acceptance of what constituted good Korean art. Harold Gould Henderson at the Metropolitan Museum of Art was among the first American curators to propose a different understanding of Korean cultural heritage. In 1927 he argued that

> the Richo [Chosŏn] period was a time of artistic decadence, and on the ceramic side the best pieces that we know are porcelains decorated under the glaze with blue and red. The blue is usually rather dull and gray, but the red, apparently a copper red, is often a beautiful color.[111]

Henderson's interest in copper-red decorated porcelains is likely the reason why the Metropolitan Museum of Art chose not to purchase any of Fitzgerald's large cobalt-blue decorated dragon jars, favouring instead a round jar with an underglaze cobalt-blue and copper-red decoration of peonies. In the sales catalogue, the unique quality of its glaze was singled out, suggesting that Chosŏn porcelain was judged by the same aesthetic criteria as that of Koryŏ celadon.[112] Henderson argued that "the workmanship [was] much

like that of certain Ming porcelains made in southern China; it probably dates from the late sixteenth century before the first Japanese invasion."[113] However, current scholarship places its manufacture in the nineteenth century. The round jar was the only ceramic from the Chosŏn dynasty which the Metropolitan Museum of Art acquired from Fitzgerald's collection, and priced at $170, it was the costliest of his Chosŏn vessels. More recently, changes in taste among collectors have resulted in large porcelain jars painted with dragons being much sought-after since the 1990s. They rarely come on the market, but in 1996, Christie's New York made headlines when it sold a jar painted in iron oxide for $8.6 million, much above its estimated sales price of $400,000–600,000.[114] In 2011 and 2012, Christie's New York made groundbreaking sales again when it sold two large "dragon jars" painted in cobalt-blue for $3,890,500 and $3,218,500, respectively.[115]

Henderson was not alone in drawing attention to the merits of Chosŏn ceramics. According to Emil Hannover (1864–1923), Director of the Museum of Industrial Art (now the Designmuseum) in Copenhagen, there were "collectors to whom the word 'Corea' always has the ring of something very old and fine, and who never despise anything passing under that name."[116] Yet Hannover himself described Chosŏn porcelain as "clumsy," in contrast to art of the Koryŏ dynasty, which he referred to as the "classic age of Corea" in accordance with earlier scholarship.[117] Hannover included this discussion of Korean ceramics in a handbook for ceramic collectors he wrote in Danish in the early 1920s. In 1925 it was translated into English and edited by Bernard Rackham. Hobson highly recommended Hannover's scholarship, calling it a "great work on ceramics."[118] Hannover characterised Chosŏn porcelain as "heavy and clumsy, not always transparent, sometimes undecorated, sometimes decorated in blue under a glaze which is thick and has a pronounced greenish-blue tint."[119] To illustrate this point, he chose a large jar from the V&A's collection, which he described as a "colossal jar of coarse porcelain" (Figure 5.11).[120] Hannover's evaluation of the jar has since been disputed. In a volume on the V&A's Korean collection published in 2013 by the National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage in South Korea, the jar was described as rare and believed to have been produced at a government-run kiln for royal consumption.[121] The jar was gifted to the museum in 1919 by William Munro Tapp (1859–1936), a London-based solicitor, who also donated ceramics to the British Museum and the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge.[122] Tapp's Korean collection spanned stonewares dating from the Three Kingdoms period to Chosŏn porcelain vessels. It seems that he acquired most, if not all his collection, when travelling in Korea in the early 1910s.[123]

Also Langdon Warner took a keen interest in Chosŏn ceramics, having been introduced to them by Yanagi Sōetsu 柳宗悦 (1889–1961).[124] Yanagi's research on East Asian art was well-known in America, in part as he gave several public talks in Boston, New York, and Cleveland while he served as a research fellow at the Fogg Museum of Art between 1929 and 1930.[125] Yanagi learnt about Chosŏn art from Asakawa Noritaka 浅川伯教 (1884–1964), who was a pioneering scholar and collector of Chosŏn ceramics and furniture. Asakawa's greatest contribution to Korean ceramic scholarship lay in his research on Korean kiln sites which he excavated with his younger brother Takumi 浅川巧 (1891–1931).[126] In 1916, on his first trip to Korea, Yanagi stayed in Asakawa Takumi's house, and together they frequented the antique shops in Seoul.[127] It seems it was in part financial factors that initiated the Asakawa brothers' interest in Chosŏn art. Like many other Japanese middle-class intellectuals who resided in Korea, they did not have the financial means to acquire Koryŏ celadon wares. Instead, they turned to cheaper objects, such as Chosŏn porcelain vessels, which were yet to become popular collectibles.[128]

Figure 5.11 Porcelain jar with cobalt-blue decoration of two dragons. Chosŏn period, nineteenth century. Height 44.5 cm. The V&A Museum (acc. no. C.15–1919).

Source: © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Research by Yanagi and the Asakawa brothers considerably expanded understandings of Korean art, particularly in terms of highlighting the aesthetic merits of Chosŏn ceramics and furniture. In 1922 Asakawa Noritaka published the first comprehensive study of Chosŏn *punch'ŏng* stonewares and porcelains in the influential literary journal *Shirakaba* 白樺, which Yanagi had co-founded in 1910 with other members of Shirakaba-ha 白樺派 (litt. White Birch Society).[129] In the same year Yanagi curated a display of more than 400 Chosŏn ceramics from his own and other private collections in a private gallery in Seoul to raise money for the Folk Museum of Korea. Local interest in the exhibition was high, and it drew more than 1,200 visitors, most of them Koreans.[130]

The opening of the Folk Museum of Korea was celebrated with a special exhibition of Chosŏn ceramics (see Figure 5.4). In his review of the display, Warner summed up contemporary approaches to the objects as follows: "It has been thought that they were neither rare, beautiful nor costly; and collectors of these three categories have avoided them."[131] Whereas earlier scholars characterised Chosŏn artefacts as poorly executed products that evidenced a nation in decline, Warner was the first American scholar to suggest that they reflected a shift in taste among local consumers. Echoing Yanagi's interpretation of Korean art, he viewed the so-called coarseness of Chosŏn porcelain as an aesthetic effect deliberately achieved by Korean potters. He believed that the exhibition would prove "conclusively that skilful potting and the very perfection of decoration did not die" in the Chosŏn period and suggested that the cost of Chosŏn ceramics would rapidly increase, though it would take several decades for this to come true.[132]

In the 1930s the implementation of the *Treasures, Ancient Sites, Famous Places, and Natural Monuments Act* by the Government-General of Korea, coupled with the Great Depression and the onslaught of the Asia Pacific War (1937–45) significantly impacted the art market as it became exceedingly difficult for dealers to acquire objects from Korea. Few Koryŏ artefacts came on the market, and those that did commanded high prices. Thus, when Yamanaka in New York sold an elaborate twelfth-century gilt silver ewer and matching basin to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in 1935, the set was priced at $10,000. Believed to have been unearthed from one of the royal tombs near Kaesŏng, the vessels had been in private ownership for several years before being offered for sale (Figure 5.12).[133] The museum's purchase of the set is indicative of how public institutions diversified and expanded their Korean art collections beyond the field of Koryŏ ceramics as Korean cultural heritage became better known and more firmly embedded within the study of East Asian art.

By the 1930s Korea was no longer regarded as the unknown "other," and many curators and collectors took an active interest in its cultural heritage. Tomita Kojiro 富田幸次郎 (1890–1976) at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, acknowledged this when he in 1935 noted that "year by year Korea's position in the field of Far Eastern art is becoming increasingly significant."[134] Some years prior, this trend had also been observed by Alfred Salmony (1890–1958), who served as Curator and later Deputy Director of the Museum of East Asian Art in Cologne between 1920 and 1933: "Almost every public collection of East Asiatic Art in America and Europe has a Korean section."[135] It became common

Figure 5.12 Gilt silver ewer and basin. Koryŏ period, twelfth century. 34.3 × 9.5 cm (ewer). MFA Boston, George Nixon Black Fund (acc. no. 35.646.1a-d [ewer], 35.646.2 [basin]).

Source: Photograph © 2024, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

to display early Chinese and Korean stonewares next to each other as a means to enable comparative studies of East Asian ceramic traditions. In 1933, this was the aim of a reinstallation of the East Asian collection at the City Art Museum of St. Louis. Three refurbished rooms with new display cases of walnut included an arrangement of Koryŏ ceramics and metalwares, exhibited alongside Chinese and Japanese artefacts.[136] In contrast to the early twentieth century, when references to Korean art were often scant and inaccurate, museum curators, art historians, and collectors now had access to a growing number of well-researched articles and catalogues on Korean art published in English and other languages.[137]

As insights into the region expanded, artefacts from China, Korea, and Japan were collected more widely.[138] As in Korea, also in America and Britain, collectors turned to Chosŏn art due to the high cost of Koryŏ artefacts. In 1928, the collection of Tomita Gisaku 富田儀作 (1858–1930), a Japanese industrialist who resided in Seoul where he had a private museum, was put up for auction in New York by Yamanaka. Tomita was the first to establish a factory that manufactured imitations of Koryŏ celadon wares. Founded in 1902, over the following decades the production grew significantly, and the objects won prices at major fairs, such as the Chosŏn Industrial Exhibition (J. *Chōsen Bussan Kyōshinkai* 朝鮮物産共進會) held in Seoul in 1915.[139] The collection numbered a wide range of artefacts from China, Japan, and Korea with the latter including Koryŏ and Chosŏn artefacts, spanning ceramics, metalwares, and paintings. Yamanaka's emphasis on Tomita's collection of Chosŏn furniture is interesting as it is suggestive of the dealer's interest in identifying a new market for Korean objects that were easier to procure than antique ceramics. The sales catalogue boasted that "never before had any such consignment of early cabinets, chests or caskets been offered at public sale."[140] Some were chests covered in red lacquer and elaborately decorated with mother-of-pearl inlay, while others were plainer-looking cabinets in cherrywood, kiriwood, and other types of wood. The following year, Yamanaka sold two red Chosŏn lacquer cabinets with brass hinges for $130 and $140, respectively, at an auction titled "Art of the Far East," held in the Anderson Galleries in New York.[141] The price range of the Chosŏn furniture was like that of Ming and Qing furniture, suggesting that buyers made little distinction between them.[142]

Collectors of furniture seem to have been different to those who purchased Koryŏ celadon ceramics. Typically, the latter were much invested in the pursuit of knowledge, and this steered their acquisition activities. In contrast, buyers of furniture had little research to rely on, nor was scholarship necessarily a priority. In the 1930s, American interior design magazines, such as *House Beautiful* and *House and Garden*, ran several articles that celebrated the inclusion of East Asian artefacts within modern interiors.[143] They drew attention to the ways in which homeowners took inspiration from their collected artworks and how they incorporated the objects within the living spaces. In the case of Mrs. Bartow Farr's drawing room in New York, it was argued that the blending of Chinese and modern motifs offered a "pleasing harmony of colour and design."[144] In Mrs. Felix Wilkes's apartment, also in New York, the colour scheme used in the bedroom was inspired from a Chosŏn screen said to have been brought back from East Asia. In the dining room a Chosŏn folding screen was placed next to the fireplace, while a second screen lined the walls. Also displayed in the room was a hanging from Tibet and a tiger skin from Calcutta.[145] Neither Hedwig Wilkes (1882–1968) nor her husband Felix (1867–1926) seem to have been active collectors of Korean art. Rather, the interior decoration of their apartment reflects an eclectic approach to Asian art drawn from a wide range of sources, from Korean screens to Japanese prints and Chinese porcelains.

Conclusion

The cultural, political, and economic environment of the 1920s and 1930s lay the grounds for a final heyday of the collecting of Korean antiques before war, economic collapse and a changing world order brought this to an end. During these decades, culture became inseparable from the colonial aim of making Korea an integral part of Japan. With the initiation of the "cultural rule" in 1919, archaeological work, exhibitions, and other cultural projects led by the Government-General of Korea played a key role in coercing the Koreans into subjugation. In the 1930s, as Japan steadily committed to a war policy, the need to amalgamate Korea with the empire became a key priority. Here too, culture played a key role. Within Korea, museum displays, among other schemes, were used to foster national pride and Korean support for the empire, in part since the archaeological remains supposedly evidenced similarities between the Koreans and Japanese. Internationally, the Government-General of Korea promoted its role as paternalistic guardian and advocator of Korea by implementing stringent heritage laws that made the export of antiques to America and Europe illegal.

While the Japanese Empire increasingly sought to assimilate indigenous Korean culture, collectors and scholars in American and Britain became more accepting of Korea's independent contribution to East Asian culture. Ironically, it was in part research conducted by Japanese archaeologists that encouraged this view. As more ceramics and other remains from the Korean peninsula were unearthed and studied, a more nuanced view of Korean cultural heritage emerged. The uniqueness and strengths of Korean culture were reflected in the collections of East Asian art amassed by Freer, Eumorfopoulos, Fitzgerald, Peters, and other collectors in the opening decades of the twentieth century, not to mention those held in public institutions. In 1930, Alfred Salmony summed up the changing approach to Korea as follows: "On the whole, Korean art is much more than an appendage to the art of Eastern Asia. It is in great measure an independent and artistically fertile achievement."[146]

Expanding understandings of Korea were felt on the art market too. In the 1920s most buyers continued to be steered by the ongoing interest in Koryŏ ceramics in the belief that they represented the pinnacle of Korean art. As Eckardt noted in 1929:

> Even nowadays after nearly a thousand years these beautifully shaped pieces with their ribbons and flowers and the delicate note of black and white in their leaves arouse astonishment. But what guarantees for Koryŏ pottery a place of honour for all time in the history of Art, not only that of the Far East but of all civilized nations, are those very characteristics which distinguish Korean pottery of the Koryŏ dynasty, and those are on the one hand an unsurpassed moderation in the use of ornament, on the other a classical perfection of form and a diversity of expression.[147]

By then the market was no longer ruled by private collectors whose wealth and personal networks enabled them exclusive access to choice artefacts. In recognition of Korea's place in East Asia museums actively expanded their Korean collections, often outbidding private buyers. The intense competition for good Korean artefacts coincided with a dearth of newly unearthed antiques from the Korean peninsula, making objects from earlier-formed private collections highly sought after.

In the 1930s it became impossible for collectors and museums in America and Britain to acquire antiques from the peninsula, forcing a diversification of collecting activities.

Around this time, a new understanding of Korean cultural heritage emerged to challenge the colonial narrative of Korea's decline attributed to the incompetence of Chosŏn rulers. Poor craftsmanship and a lack of aesthetic finesse were no longer defining characteristics of Chosŏn art, and instead it was judged on its own merits. Interpretations of Chosŏn art took on much significance following the end of the Korean War (1950–53) when the newly established Republic of Korea in the South and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the North competed for supremacy over the peninsula. As both nations strove to legitimise their right to govern a unified peninsula, Korean archaeological remains, culture, and history were used to support both sides of the argument. The Chosŏn dynasty with its epicentre in Seoul became the obvious point of reference for South Korea where Chosŏn ceramics, among other artefacts, were embraced as emblems of Korean identity and statehood, paving the way for a new direction in Korean art collecting.

Notes

1 By the 1930s the price of Koryŏ ceramics nearly matched that of Song wares. Lorraine D'O Warner, "Kōrai Celadon in America," *Eastern Art: An Annual* 2 (1930): 65.
2 Younjung Oh, "Oriental Taste in Imperial Japan: The Exhibition and Sale of Asian Art and Artifacts by Japanese Department Stores from the 1920s through the Early 1940s," *Journal of Asian Studies* 78, no. 1 (February 2019): 52.
3 David Brudnoy, "Japan's Experiment in Korea," *Monumenta Nipponica* 25, no. 1/2 (1970): 174.
4 "Inflict Cruelties on Men of Korea," *The Washington Times*, October 8, 1919.
5 Yangjin Pak, "Japanese Colonial Archaeology in Korea and its Legacy," in *Unmasking Ideology in Imperial and Colonial Archaeology: Vocabulary, Symbols, and Legacy*, ed. Bonnie Effros and Guolong Lai (Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, University of California, Los Angeles, 2018), 408.
6 In June 1923, a year after arriving in Korea, Fujita was appointed head of the Government-General Museum of Korea and retained this post until 1941. He taught at Keijō Imperial University between 1926 and 1945. For details of Fujita's contributions to Korean archaeology, see Yu Chung-hyŏn, "Hujit'a Ryosak'u ŭi Chosŏn sŏnsa kogohak yŏn'gu wa yŏnghyang" [Fujita Ryōsaku's research on Korean prehistoric archaeology and its influence] (Master's thesis, Aju University, 2015).
7 Yangjin Pak, "Japanese Colonial Archaeology," 408–9.
8 Yangjin Pak, "Japanese Colonial Archaeology," 410–11. For further discussion of the opening of these museums, see Yi Sun-ja, *Ilche kangjŏmgi kojŏk chosa saŏb yŏn'gu* [A Study of the Investigation Project of Ancient Sites During the Japanese Colonial Period] (Seoul: Kyŏngin munhwasa, 2009), 446–80.
9 Yangjin Pak, "Japanese Colonial Archaeology," 410.
10 Sang-hoon Jang, "A Representation of Nationhood: The National Museum of Korea" (PhD diss., University of Leicester, 2015), 58.
11 Hyung Il Pai, *Constructing "Korean" Origins: A Critical Review of Archaeology, Historiography, and Racial Myth in Korean State-Formation Theories* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 40.
12 From the mid to late 1930s onwards, assimilation policies included forced worship for Koreans at Shinto shrines, abolishment of the teaching of Korean language in schools, and a ban of newspapers written in the Korean language. Sang-hoon Jang, "Representation of Nationhood," 60. For discussion of Japan's assimilation policies, see Brudnoy, "Japan's Experiment," 179–88; See also, Nancy K. Stalker, *Japan: History and Culture from Classical to Cool* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2018), 281, 295–97.
13 Sang-hoon Jang, "Representation of Nationhood," 57–58.
14 Sang-hoon Jang, "Representation of Nationhood," 56. For a discussion of this movement, see Don Baker, "Creating the Sacred and the Secular in Colonial Korea," *Journal of Korean Religions* 12, no. 2 (2021): 92–94.
15 "Naeguwŏl shibil ŭn kojŏk aehoil" [On the Tenth of Next Month It Is Penchant Day for Historical Remains], *Tong'a ilbo* (Seoul), July 26, 1935; Yi Sun-ja, *Ilche kangjŏmgi*, 491.

16 In 1871, the Meji government issued a Plan for the Preservation of Ancient Artefacts (J. *Koki kyūbutsu hozonkata* 古器舊物保存方). The Preservation of Ancient Temples and Shrines Preservation Law (J. *Koshaji hozonhō* 古社寺保存法) was implemented in 1897, and revised several times in the 1910s. Hyung Il Pai, "The Creation of National Treasures and Monuments: The 1916 Japanese Laws on the Preservation of Korean Remains and Relics and Their Colonial Legacies," *Korean Studies* 25, no. 1 (2001): 91.
17 Hyung Il Pai, "Creation of National Treasures," 77–78.
18 Hyung Il Pai, "The Politics of Korea's Past: The Legacy of Japanese Colonial Archaeology in the Korean Peninsula," *East Asian History* 7 (June 1994): 32–33.
19 William McCormick Blair and Jack Sewell, "Russell Tyson 1867–1963," *Art Institute of Chicago Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (Autumn 1963): 47. Tyson's collection is now in the Art Institute of Chicago.
20 Hewlett to Harcourt-Smith, Nominal File: Hewlett A S (Rev), MA/1/H1842, V&A Archive, Victoria and Albert Museum. See also Liz Wilkinson, "Collecting Korean Art at the Victoria and Albert Museum 1888–1938," *Journal of the History of Collections* 15, no. 2 (November 2003): 251–52.
21 Rackham to Harcourt-Smith, Minute Sheet, April 12, 1920, Nominal File: Hewlett A S (Rev), MA/1/H1842, V&A Archive.
22 Objects Submitted on Approval for Purchase, April 6, 1920, Nominal File: Hewlett A S (Rev), MA/1/H1842, V&A Archive.
23 E. Taylor Atkins, *Primitive Selves: Koreana in the Japanese Colonial Gaze, 1910–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 99–100.
24 Kim Chong-su, "*Ilche kangjŏmgi* munhwajae pŏpche yŏn'gu – 'Chosŏn pomul kojŏk myŏngsŭng ch'ŏnyŏn kinyŏmmul pojollyŏng (1933 nyŏn)' chejŏng shihaeng kwallyŏn" [A Study of the Cultural Legislation of Historic Properties During the Japanese Colonial Period – Treasures, Ancient Sites, Famous Places, and Natural Monuments Act (1933)], *Munhwajae* 53, no. 2 (June 2020): 169.
25 Hyung Il Pai, "Politics of Korea's Past," 34.
26 Le Blond initially intended to donate the artefacts to the V&A but later decided to sell them. Memorandum authored by Rackham, December, 1936, Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Le Blond, MA/1/L594, V&A Archive.
27 Rackham to Smith, February 22, 1937, Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Le Blond, MA/1/L594, V&A Archive.
28 Koop to Smith, February 23, 1937, Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Le Blond, MA/1/L594, V&A Archive.
29 Rackham to Smith, February 22, 1937, Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Le Blond, MA/1/L594, V&A Archive.
30 The objects were accessioned in 1937. Objects Submitted on Approval for Purchase, May 26, 1937, Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Le Blond, MA/1/L594, V&A Archive.
31 Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Chōsen koseki zufu* [Album of Ancient Korean Sites], 15 vols. (Keijō: Chōsen Sōtokufu, 1915–35).
32 The survey assessed remains located in and around the current and past capitals of Korean kingdoms, namely Kyŏngju, Kaesŏng, Pyŏngyang and Seoul, and it led to the publishing of one of the first studies on Korean ancient remains. Sekino Tadashi, *Kankoku kenchiku chōsa hōkoku* [Report on Investigations into Korean Architecture], vol. 6 of Department of Engineering Research Report (Tokyo: Tokyo Imperial University, 1904); Yangjin Pak, "Japanese Colonial Archaeology," 405. For further discussion of Sekino's work, see for example, Hyung Il Pai, "Politics of Korea's Past."
33 Yangjin Pak, "Japanese Colonial Archaeology," 405.
34 "Chronique," *T'oung Pao* 17, no. 4/5 (1916): 560.
35 Heejung Kang, "Reinvented and Re-contextualized: Cultural Property in Korea during Japanese Occupation," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 4, no. 7 (May 2014): 91.
36 America was the recipient of most volumes, followed by Britain and Germany. O Yŏng-ch'an, "Ilche shigi Han'guk munhwajae wa sop'ŭt'ŭ p'awŏ" [Overseas Korean Cultural Heritage and Soft Power in the Colonial Period] (conference paper, Kugoe sojae munhwajae wa sop'ŭt'ŭ p'awŏ [Overseas Korean Cultural Heritage and Soft Power], Ewha Woman's University, Seoul, August 2022).
37 Bernard Rackham, *Catalogue of the Le Blond Collection of Corean Pottery* (London: H.M. Stationary Office, 1918), vii; Warner, "Kōrai Celadon," 121.

38 For further discussion of this, see for example, Hyung Il Pai, *Heritage Management in Korea and Japan: The Politics of Antiquity and Identity* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013), 138.
39 Charlotte Horlyck, "The Moon Jar: The Making of a Korean Icon," *Art Bulletin* 104, no. 2 (2022): 122–23.
40 All the tombs were reported to have been plundered and only few contained artefacts. Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Taishō 5-nendo koseki chōsa hōkoku* [1916 Report on investigations of historic remains] (Keijō: Chōsen Sōtokufu, 1917). For further discussion of the tombs and their content, see Charlotte Horlyck, "The Eternal Link: Grave Goods of the Koryŏ Kingdom (918–1392CE)," *Ars Orientalis* 44 (2014): 160–71.
41 Chōsen Sōtokufu, "Shogen," foreword to *Chōsen koseki zufu,* vol. 8 (Keijō: Chōsen Sōtokufu, 1928).
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44 Zenshō Eisuke, "Kaijō ni okeru Kōraiyaki no hizōka" [Collectors of Koryŏ Ceramics in Kaesŏng], *Chōsen* (December 1926): 79–84.
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46 After the end of the colonial rule, the collection of Kaesŏng Prefecture Museum was merged with that of the National Museum of Korea, and as a result the two vessels are now in Seoul and were in 1962 designated Korean National Treasures (K. *kukpo* 國寶) number 61 and 60, respectively.
47 "Ch'il, p'albaengnyŏnjŏn ŭi Koryŏ chagi nayŏl" [Seven to Eight Hundred-Years-Old Koryŏ Ceramics], *Tong'a ilbo* (Seoul), November 13, 1933.
48 Chōsen Sōtokufu, *Chōsen koseki zufu,* vol. 8, figs. 3434 and 3435.
49 "Prunus Vase with Carved Dragon" (acc. no. 11.1821), Collections, MFA Boston, accessed April 5, 2023, https://collections.mfa.org/objects/9427/.
50 "John Pickering Lyman Collection," *Museum of Fine Arts Bulletin* 17, no. 103 (1919): 54.
51 Yangjin Pak, "Japanese Colonial Archaeology," 409.
52 Yangjin Pak, "Japanese Colonial Archaeology," 409.
53 Sang-hoon Jang, "Representation of Nationhood," 47.
54 Son Yŏng-ok, *Misul sijang ŭi t'ansaeng* [The Birth of the Art Market] (Seoul: P'urŭn Yŏksa, 2020), 219.
55 According to Sasaki, Itō died soon after the establishment of the club. Sasaki Chōji, *Keijō Bijutsu Kurabu sōgyō nijūnen kinen shi: Chōsen kobijutsu gyōkai nijūnen no kaiko* [A Record Commemorating the Twentieth Anniversary of the Keijō Art Club: A Retrospective of Two Decades of the Korean Antique World] (Keijō: Keijō Bijutsu Kurabu, 1942), 3. For the Korean translation of Sasaki's volume, see Kim Sang-yŏp, ed., *Han'guk kŭndae misul sijangsa charyojip* [Sources on the Modern art Market in Korea] (Seoul: Kyŏngin munhwasa, 2015), 6: 21–81.
56 It opened in the district then known as Namch'on 남촌 in the southern part of Seoul. Kim Sang-yŏp, "Kyŏngsŏng ŭi misul sijang kwa Ilbonin sujangga" [The Kyŏngsŏng (Seoul) Art Market and Japanese Collectors], *Han'guk hyŏndae misulsahak* 27 (2014): 162–63.
57 Sasaki, *Keijō Bijutsu Kurabu*, 11.
58 Sasaki, *Keijō Bijutsu Kurabu*, 11.
59 Sasaki, *Keijō Bijutsu Kurabu*, 11.
60 Kim Sang-yŏp,"Kyŏngsŏng ŭi misul sijang," 163, 165.
61 In Japan five art clubs were established between 1905 and 1918: Nagoya Art Club in 1905, Tokyo Art Club in 1907, Kyoto Art Club in 1908, Osaka Art Club in 1910, Kanazawa Art Club in 1918. Kim Sang-yŏp, "Kyŏngsŏng ŭi misul sijang," 161.
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64 Kansong misulgwan, *Kansong munhwa* [The Treasures of Kansong] (Seoul: Kansong Art and Culture Foundation, 2014), 260–61.
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67 The Government-General Museum of Korea offered 10,000 wŏn for the vessel. In 1962 the vase was designed National Treasure number 68. Kim Sang-yŏp, *Misulp'um k'ŏllekt'ŏdŭl: Han'guk ŭi kŭndae sujangga wa sujip ŭi munhwasa* [Art Collectors: Korea's Modern Collectors and the Cultural History of Collecting] (Seoul: Tolbegae, 2015), 288–89.
68 Kim Sang-yŏp, *Misulp'um k'ŏllekt'ŏdŭl*, 289.
69 Sunglim Kim, *Flowering Plums,* 216–18. Several of the objects that Chŏn purchased were subsequently designated Korean National Treasures and Korean Treasures (K. *pomul* 寶物). For details of them, see Kansong misulgwan, *Kansong munhwa*, 266.
70 For discussion of colonial regulations concerning the use of Korean language, see Brudnoy, "Japan's Experiment," 186–87.
71 Fujita Ryōsaku, "Ōbei no hakubutsukan to Chōsen" [Korea and Museums in Europe and America], pts. 1 and 2, *Chōsen* 164 (1929): 7–20; 170 (1929): 5–23.
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118 R. L. Hobson, "A Great Work on Ceramics," review of *Pottery & Porcelain: A Handbook for Collectors*, by Emil Hannover, *Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 46, no. 266 (1925): 246–49.

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6 Conclusion

This book has demonstrated that the international market for Korean art emerged in the 1870s facilitated by the convergence of a unique set of local and global conditions. Over the following decades, the popularity of Korean antiques grew considerably, fuelled by the craze for ceramics from the Koryŏ dynasty spearheaded by collectors from Japan, North America, and Britain. The demand for green-glazed celadon ceramics resulted in large numbers of tombs on the Korean peninsula being plundered and the loot dispersed by art dealers, most of them Japanese. Few, if any collectors, seemed deterred by this. Rather, the belief that the objects were new finds from Korean archaeological sites only served to enhance their appeal. Once uncovered from tombs, technological advancements in transportation and telecommunications facilitated their dispersal in both domestic and international art markets. Publications on Koryŏ ceramics and exhibitions of them held in Boston, New York, London, Tokyo, and Seoul underscored their aesthetic and historical value and confirmed their cultural uniqueness within the matrix of East Asian art.

The Koreans were not mere bystanders in this unfolding narrative; however, their involvement in these developments was complex and multifaceted. Some partook in grave robbery, while others acted as middlemen, selling on the loot to collectors and art dealers. The royal family also appeared to acquire tomb loot, often presenting such acquisitions as gifts to foreign diplomats. Yet many Koreans were keen to preserve local antiques, not least to prevent them from falling into the hands of the Japanese. However, for economic and political reasons, it was challenging for them to compete against collectors and art dealers of Japanese, American, and European descent who were key players in the Korean art market. It was these individuals who excavated, analysed, and commercialised Korean cultural heritage, ultimately determining which Korean artefacts were deemed worthy of collectors' attention. Their approach was shaped by imperialist agendas and Social Darwinism, resulting in a biased interpretation of past and contemporary Korea. In their quest to pinpoint distinctively local features of Korean culture, scholars compared Korea with Japan, which they were more familiar with. In the process, Japan became the standard against which the peninsula was judged. Scholars argued that Japan was "better" than Korea due to its drive for progress and its embrace of Western values. In contrast to the so-called Land of the Rising Sun and its "fastest moving people on record," many felt that Chosŏn was stuck in the past and unwilling to change.[1] The apparent stagnation of the Korean nation was portrayed as a national defect that could be traced back to Hideyoshi's invasions of the peninsula. As a result, Korea was understood to be weak and unable to progress without intervention from foreign powers.

Japanese collectors played a pivotal role in shaping the art market, particularly regarding Koryŏ ceramics. Their preference for these ceramics not only influenced the market

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but also served to validate such acquisitions in the eyes of American and British collectors. Given Japanese hegemony in Korea, the activities of Japanese collectors were deemed significant as they were seen as representative of local taste, even in the realm of Korean artefacts.

In the increasingly competitive art market, distinguished collectors in America and Britain set themselves apart from amateurs by aligning their aesthetic preferences with those of Japanese art experts. Art dealers of Japanese descent, such as Matsuki Bunkyō and Yamanaka, capitalised on this desire for authentic "local" taste, establishing their dominance in the Korean art market in America and Britain.

The tumultuous international and domestic political situation offered little opportunity for Koreans to impact the interpretation of their national history and cultural heritage. Few, if any, American and British collectors expressed their concerns over the ethics of acquiring loot, nor did they question the relative absence of Korean voices in the field of Korean art. While they knew that desecration of grave sites was illegal during the Chosŏn dynasty as well as the colonial period, the possession of looted objects was not a widely debated issue. The situation was further complicated by individuals with political influence in Korea who were actively involved in acquiring looted objects. They included diplomats and government employees from Japan, America, and Britain, whose privileged positions in Korea allowed them special access to newly unearthed finds.

Art collectors justified their right to own these antiques by arguing that Korea could not effectively govern itself, and they exaggerated the supposed disinterest of the Korean people in preserving and valuing local national treasures. The narrative of Koreans' apparent disregard for local heritage was a colonial trope deployed to highlight the perceived benefits of colonial rule. From the onset, the Government-General of Korea placed great emphasis on the research, collecting, and display of Korean archaeological remains in the belief that it would demonstrate Japan's role as Korea's benevolent protector. As a result, large numbers of sites were excavated and surveyed by Japanese archaeologists, and the objects entered the newly established museums in Seoul and other metropolises on the peninsula. American and British collectors held Japanese interpretations of Korean artefacts in high regard and frequently quoted research published by the Government-General of Korea. Moreover, to them, the objects displayed in the government-run museums in Korea set the standard for good quality art, and they strove to augment their own collections with comparable objects. They widely commended the work undertaken by Japanese curators and archaeologists in Korea, as suggested by Langdon Warner in 1944:

> It will immediately be obvious that the Koreans themselves (unlike their Japanese conquerors) have no great interest in or knowledge of the relics of their own past and, for the last 25 years at least, the Japanese government has collected and preserved such objects and has brought fresh treasures to light through scientific excavation.[2]

Like many others, Warner was evidently unaware of the Korean dissent against the colonial regime and Japanese control over Korean heritage. In fact, few Westerners expressed concern about Japan's domination of the peninsula. In their mind, Korea was firmly part of the Japanese Empire. Yet Korean opposition to colonial rule persisted. From the late 1920s onward, Korean collectors, such as O Se-ch'ang and Chŏn Hyŏng-p'il, contested the Japanese dominance on the art market, albeit covertly to avoid persecution. O's *Evidence on the Biographies of Korean Painters and Calligraphers* (K. *Kŭnyŏk sŏhwa ching* 槿域書畵徵), published in 1928, was the first comprehensive study of Korean calligraphic

and painterly works undertaken by a Korean scholar. The work reflects O's keenness to record the names and personal histories of ancient Korean painters and calligraphers in an effort to preserve local history for present and future generations. O's use of the word *kŭnyŏk* in the title in reference to Korea was likely aimed at reviving the Korean national spirit. *Kŭn* means hibiscus, while *yŏk* denotes a region or area, thus *kŭnyŏk* may be translated as "land of hibiscus." The association of Korea with the hibiscus can be traced back to the Koryŏ dynasty, but in the colonial period it came to signify Korean resistance against Japanese rule, as Korean freedom fighters adopted the hibiscus as a symbol of Korean independent spirit.[3]

Also Chŏn Hyŏng-p'il's acquisition activities were intended at gaining Korean control over local heritage. His debut on the art market in the 1930s coincided with the Government-General of Korea enforcing stricter assimilation policies to compel Koreans into demonstrating loyalty to the Japanese Empire. Having initially pledged to maintain Korean national integrity, increasingly the colonial rulers saw the cultural unification of Japan and Korea as the only means to successfully merge the Koreans into the empire. To them, the Koreans could be "saved" by becoming Japanese, and this necessitated obliteration of Korean cultural identity.[4] When all overt displays of Korean national aspirations were prohibited, Chŏn succeeded in subverting colonial authority by outbidding the Government-General Museum of Korea at auctions and opening a private museum of Korean art. Unlike other nationalist figures such as the writer and educator Yi Kwangsu (1892–1950), who openly collaborated with the Japanese into the 1930s, Chŏn remained firmly against such association.

Global geopolitics significantly impacted the flow and circulation of Korean objects and shaped the ways in which they were defined and understood. In the 1870s, when little was known about Korea, and Westerners had no access to the peninsula, objects sold as Korean on the art market in America and Britain were those thought to have been made by Korean artists in Japan. However, when trade and diplomatic relations were established in the early 1880s, Korea ceased being an unfamiliar entity and became firmly associated with the peninsula itself. The tangible reality of the Korean nation state encouraged new conceptualisations of Korean objects, which as a result became firmly linked to national territorial boundaries. From the early twentieth century, ceramics sold as "Korean" on the art market were only those made by Korean potters in Korea. That this coincided with the annexation of the peninsula demonstrates the complex identity politics that shaped the Korean art market.

Clearly, acquisitions of Korean art were not only triggered by aesthetic interests, but in various ways intertwined with questions of Korean identity, whether explicitly articulated or not. However, the situation in Korea is not unique, as parallels can be drawn to other regions where the acquisition and export of local heritage are similarly linked to looting, colonisation, ethnographic explorations, archaeological undertakings, and other activities typical of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[5] Arguably the most well-known case of this is the much-disputed Elgin Marbles in the British Museum, which have long sparked debates on restitution and cultural ownership. Yet other instances abound, such as the illegal trading of Javanese antiquities by the Dutch in the early nineteenth century, the British looting of thousands of bronze and ivory works from Benin in 1897, the removal of Khmer material by the French in the early twentieth century, and more recently the theft of artworks by the Nazis during World War II.

Questions concerning the ownership, definition, and interpretation of Korean cultural heritage are particularly challenging due to the special circumstances of Korea's recent

history as a colonised and then divided nation. The end of the Japanese occupation of Korea in 1945 provided no clear answers on how to define Korean culture and identity. The subsequent division of the peninsula during the Cold War further heightened these tensions, leading to dual ownership over the Korean nation by the North and the South, and consequently multiple interpretations of Korean identity. In 1953, when the armistice agreement was ratified, articulations of Korean identity became crucial to the newly established regimes in the north and south of the demilitarised zone as they claimed their right to govern the peninsula. Cultural heritage played an important role in this as it provided a tangible basis for national identity in its manifestation of Korean history, values, and spirit. Yet whereas the two Koreas share history, culture, and language, their interpretations of these collective qualities are not identical.

Immediately following the war, during the period of state building, the North solidified its dominance by linking Korean national and cultural heritage to the northern regions of the peninsula. A case in point is the 1993 "discovery" by North Korean archaeologists of the tomb of Tan'gun, the legendary founder of the ancient state of Chosŏn, a state purportedly populated by ethnic Koreans in the early first millennium BCE. Located near Pyongyang, the tomb was claimed to contain the bones of Tan'gun. Yet most scholars in South Korea doubt its authenticity, arguing that Tan'gun is a mythical figure, and the discovery of his physical remains is therefore impossible.[6]

In the South, beginning in the 1950s, scholars challenged colonial interpretations of the supposed cultural backwardness and stagnation of the Chosŏn dynasty. Their work initiated a search for uniquely Korean traditions, philosophy, and sentiments that aligned with a South Korean national identity. In its aim to evidence the strength and uniqueness of Korean culture, the South Korean government launched several exhibitions that toured North America and Europe from the late 1950s.[7] Through displays of objects from prehistoric times to the late nineteenth century, the exhibitions challenged the Japanese colonial dogma and ascertained the historical and cultural significance of Korean artefacts, including those dating to the Chosŏn dynasty that had largely been overlooked by colonial scholars and collectors. More recently, like many other nations with a colonial past and whose artefacts were looted by external powers, South Korea has been much invested in identifying Korean cultural heritage located outside the peninsula and repatriating objects when possible. To this aim, the South Korean Ministry of Culture has regularly published reports detailing numbers of overseas artefacts and their locations.[8] In 2012, the government established the Overseas Korean Cultural Heritage Foundation (hereafter OKCHF) to lead the identification, research, and repatriation of overseas Korean cultural heritage. The foundation also purchases important Korean artefacts sold on the international art market to bring them "home" to Korea. Some of the objects bought by the OKCHF are antique ceramics, signifying the ongoing role they play in Korean identity-making.[9]

In both the North and the South, the appropriation of Koryŏ and Chosŏn ceramics constitutes a significant aspect of the contemporary art scene. Encouraged by Kim Il Sung's appreciation of Koryŏ ceramics as unique local forms of art, potters working under the state-run Mansudae Studio in Pyongyang incorporate Koryŏ designs and manufacturing techniques in their making of celadon ceramics. Among them was Im Sa-jun (1927–2007), who gained renown for his large-sized celadon vessels with inlaid motifs (Figure 6.1).[10] Also in South Korea, ancient Korean ceramics are showcased as a source of national pride, inspiring potters to appropriate their forms and manufacturing techniques. Some have emulated Koryŏ celadon, with Shin Sang-ho's (1941–) meticulous reproductions of the lustrous Koryŏ celadon glaze, inlaid motifs, and delicate potting,

Figure 6.1 Im Sa-jun (1927–2007). Celadon vase with inlaid decoration of plants and birds. North Korea, circa 1990–2000. Height 29.5 cm. The British Museum (acc. no. 2001,0609.1).

Source: © The Trustees of the British Museum.

being especially well-known (Figure 6.2). More recently, South Korean potters' assimilations of Chosŏn porcelain have garnered widespread popularity. Those produced by Han Ik-hwan (1921–2006), Park Young-sook (1935–), Kim Chŏngnok (1941–), Park Young-sook (1947–), and Kwon Dae Sup (1952–), among others, are widely collected by private individuals and museum institutions, also in America and Europe.

The demand for Korean antique ceramics continues to be felt on the art market, though in contrast to the early twentieth century, acquisitions of them are no longer led by collectors of Japanese, American, and European descent. Rather, South Koreans have now taken the forefront, asserting their dominance in the market. Since the 1990s, Korean ceramics have achieved record-breaking sales, with private buyers and museums in Korea actively competing for exemplary pieces.[11] The motivations behind these purchases often stem from a nationalistic desire to reclaim Korean cultural heritage and restore elements that were lost during the colonial period. As in the case of collectors of the early modern period, acquisition activities of contemporary Koreans transcend mere aesthetic considerations, intertwining with broader issues encompassing political influence, economic power, nationalism, and more recently, the imperative of decolonisation.

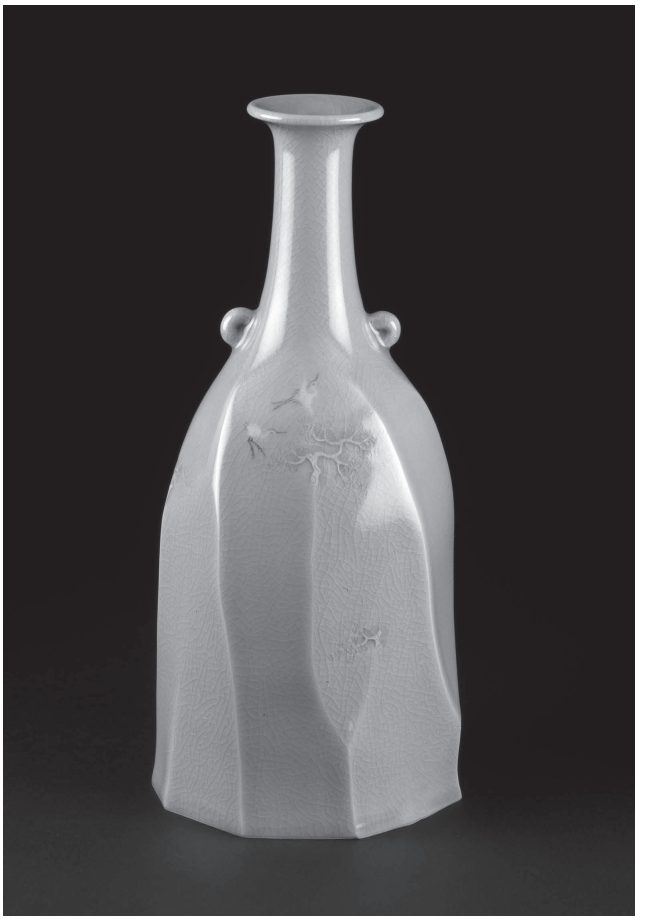

Figure 6.2 Shin Sang-ho (1947–). Celadon vessel with inlaid design. South Korea, 1990. Height 29.4 cm. The V&A Museum (acc. no. FE.41:1–1991).

Source: @ Shin Sang-ho/Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Notes

1 "'Rising Sun' and 'Morning Calm,'" *The Graphic: An Illustrated Weekly Newspaper* (London), September 14, 1895.
2 Langdon Warner, "List of Monuments in Korea," 1, Korea [List of Monuments] 1943–1945, Handbooks and Lists of Monuments 1943–1945, Records of the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas 1942–1946 (RG 239), National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD. See also Christine Kim, "Colonial Plunder and the Failure of Restitution in Postwar Korea," *Journal of Contemporary History* 52, no. 3 (2017): 613–14.
3 Sunglim Kim, *Flowering Plums and Curio Cabinets: The Culture of Objects of Late Chosŏn Korean Art* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018), 212–13.
4 David Brudnoy, "Japan's Experiment in Korea," *Monumenta Nipponica* 25, no. 1/2 (1970): 193.
5 For a discussion of recent scholarship on the histories of looted objects, see Louise Tythacott and Panggah Ardiyansyah, "Introduction: Collecting and Returning Southeast Asia's Past," chap. 1 in *Returning Southeast Asia's Past: Objects, Museums, and Restitution*, ed. Louise Tythacott and Panggah Ardiyansyah (Singapore: NUS Press, 2021).

6 James B. Palais, "A Search for Korean Uniqueness," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 55, no. 2 (1995): 411; Hazel Smith, *North Korea: Markets and Military Rule* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 49.
7 The first exhibition was Masterpieces of Korean Art which toured America from 1957 to 1959. The second was Treasures from Korea which opened at the V&A Museum in March 1961 and travelled to The Hague, Paris, Frankfurt, and Vienna.
8 In 1993, the list numbered 11,567 items located in eight countries, most of them in Japan. By January 2022, the list had grown to 214,208 artefacts dispersed in 25 countries in Asia, Europe, and North and South America. See Christine Kim, "Colonial Plunder and the Failure of Restitution in Postwar Korea," *Journal of Contemporary History* 52, no. 3 (2017): 607; Kungnip kogung pangmulgwan [National Palace Museum of Korea], *Nara pak munhwajae ŭi yŏjŏng* [Journey of Korean Cultural Heritage] (Seoul: Kungnip kogung pangmulgwan, 2022), 7.
9 For example, in 2019, the OKCHF purchased at an auction in North America a small porcelain jar made in the 1800s for Princess Suksŏn (1793–1836). Kungnip kogung pangmulgwan, *Nara pak munhwajae*, 52.
10 Beth McKillop and Jane Portal, *Precious Beyond Measure: A History of Korean Ceramics* (London: Reaktion Books, 2024), 216–18.
11 For a discussion of recent auction prices of porcelain "moon jars" of the Chosŏn dynasty, see Charlotte Horlyck, "The Moon Jar: The Making of a Korean Icon," *Art Bulletin* 104, no. 2 (2022): 136.

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