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Japanese Export Lacquer: the Fine Period

Two famous boxes, the van Diemen box[1] (fig. 1) and the Buys box[2], both of which bear the names of the persons to whom they were given, have rather skewed our perception of the export trade in lacquer from Japan in the 1630s and 1640s. This is not to say that they are not important, for they are, nor that they are not of very fine quality, for they are; but they are not export works of art. Nor, *pace* so many authors, are they necessarily of more fine quality than some, admittedly few, pieces that are export art.

Part of the trouble is the subject-matter; Earle[3] has convincingly shown that they depict a variety of versions of scenes from the *Genji monogatari*, the Tale of Genji, the celebrated romance by the tenth century Court Lady Murasaki Shikibu. This, I suggest, is in this context virtually irrelevant.

According to Professor Christiaan Jörg's report in this publication it was at the instigation of the Dutch that the styles of export lacquer changed from the *namban* style through what we call the 'transitional' to the 'pictorial' style. This was a radical change, but a change already inherant in the later works of the *namban* style. Indeed it may be earlier than that, for we can only guess how the *namban* style evolved. If we suggest that it was originally made in the 1570s, we shall probably not be far wrong.

Sanz and Jordan[4] have demonstrated that *namban* cabinets and other works were used as gifts between the various members of the Habsburg Royalty and nobility of Spain, Austria and Tirol, possibly as early as the 1570s. A coffer they describe in the Convento de las Descalzas Reales, Madrid, was certainly there in 1616, almost certainly there in 1603, and probably there in 1582; if this is so then it is earlier than the Ambras cabinet.

Certainly the top of the Ambras cabinet[5], inventoried in 1596 but quite likely made a decade or two earlier, has the beginnings of a pictorial representation that goes beyond flower-and-bird patterns by the use of the fence in the lower left. What does this signify? Is it a subtle allusion to some literary *mitate*?

At any rate, it is a hint of things to come, as well as reflecting something with which the artist was familiar. I do not believe we can judge how well versed in literature a lacquer artist, or the supervisor of a lacquer artist might be, but *namban* cabinets and chests, avowedly for the export market, are not uncommonly found with scenes such as the Three Drinkers, which are part of the Japanese repertoire and would have no resonance to a westerner other than the decorative and the exotic. Why should Genji be any different? Admittedly, Genji was perhaps the most famous literary work in Japan in the Momoyama and early Edo periods; and admittedly, later, the customers for *Ukiyo-e hanga* were presumably well enough versed in Genji to understand the not so subtle *mitate* so common in the print-makers' repertoire. But that need not set it apart, nor need it disqualify it from being a standard set of motifs usable for any decorative medium for any customer however barbarian. Indeed, there is the remarkable case of the 'pictorial' style dish, of perhaps 1690, in the Pitti Palace which bears a decoration of Monju Bosatsu.[6]

Namban lacquer, then, although made for a western market, may bear scenes that reflect stories or situations familiar to the Japanese lacquerer, as well as the more anodyne *sansui* landscapes and flowers-and-birds.

When the style begins to change, in the 1630s and in the 1640s, just before and just after the expulsion of the Portuguese from Japan and the beginning of the Dutch and Chinese monopoly of the direct trade with Japan, it must change from some impulse. This impulse would be expected to have two components, a commercial demand, and a stylistic origin. The demand was obviously from the Dutch and the stylistic origin is purely Japanese, picked up by the Dutch. It did not stay pure for long; it was too expensive and it was too slow. If the Dutch merchandise missed the monsoon, then the cash-flow was impeded for a year. And in a year fashions and demand may have changed. So this must be the origin of the break-away from the *namban*. Usually such change was a gradual process as the merchants and the lacquerers accomodated to it, but sometimes, clearly, it was not. In the 1630s and '40s new words creep into the orders and the *facturen* (the shipping lists) of the East India Company (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie or VOC). The words *extraordinarij schoon* or *geheel schoon*[7] first appear in the *facturen* in 1643, the word *verheven*[8] work or *takamakie* as late as 1648.[9] This is so late, that I suspect that 1643 descriptions of quality referred to raised work, but I cannot prove it. And these surely follow the quasi-legal private trade rather that provoke it; doubtless the 'fine' style was established in private trade before it became a commercial commodity in commercial numbers.

Interestingly the word *rochevellen*[10] (shagreen, ray-skin, *samé*) first appears in 1635. Shagreen seems never to have been used for the finest pieces, but is very much a hall-mark of the early 'transitional' phase. The pieces with their interiors of red or green lacquer are first ordered in 1639.[11] It should be recalled that delivery, and *facturen* were the actual bills of lading, occurred some two to three years after the orders were made, so in calculating the date of the orders for such things, adjustment should be made accordingly.

The van Diemen box and the Buys box differ from all other of the pieces that I shall call the 'fine' style, in being of standard Japanese shapes. There must be a sharp distinction drawn between the two groups, wherever possible; possibly the 'FC' box[12] only is ambiguous in its shape. The export shapes of equivalent quality are well known and have been catalogued by Joe Earle[13] and by Julia Hutt[14]. Earle did not name the group, but included with the van Diemen and Buys boxes, the Mazarin chest (fig. 2) and the Lawrence chest (only known from a photograph), the Chiddingstone and Vienna caskets and the V&A and the Tokyo 'jewel coffers'; to the complete list should perhaps be added the 'FC' box and the V&A miniature wedding casket. But these are only the ones we know from extant complete examples, or in the case of the Lawrence coffer, from photographs; Earle also included the fragments of a third 'Mazarin' style chest incorporated into a piece of 19th century furniture; this is not of

Fig. 1. The van Diemen box, *c.* 1639; h. 16 cm, w. 48 cm, d. 26.7 cm; Victoria and Albert Museum, W. 49–1916

the same quality and should be discounted. However, inlays into French furniture of the eighteenth century can be used to demonstrate that there were originally more examples of this style and quality, as we shall see below.

The van Diemen and the Buys boxes have been convincingly dated to between 1635 and 1640. Each has on the reverse of the lid, the name of the owner, or recipient. Significantly these names are the names of the wives of the Governor-General in Batavia, Anton van Diemen, and of the Director-General (the second-in-command) Philips Lucasz. Thus the names, inlaid in unusually thick gold (*kimpaku*), are of Maria van Diemen and of Pieternellae Buys. Buys was the maiden name of the wife of Philips Lucasz, whom she married in 1634. There are two anomalies here; why use her maiden name, and why spell the name Pieternellae, where the final 'e' is not normal Dutch usage? There can be no doubt that the names are original, whereas the two other names in the Buys box, Anton: Vernatty and Will: Drinkwater have been added later in gold paint.

The van Diemen box and the Buys box are of the same shape, size and general conformation; each has or had a drop-in tray within. Both are of typical Japanese shape. The decoration is mostly in fine gold and silver *hiramakie* and *takamakie*. The panels of decoration are raised slightly from the corners and edges; this must have made Vulliamy's job marginally easier when dissecting the Buys box for William Beckford.[15] In each, the decoration is confined within complex borders, and the cartouche, where present, is within a narrow border of sheet metal, silver or gold. The panels of the sides are cut at about seven eighths of the way up, as the decoration continues onto the lid. These side panels contain fine *takamakie* landscapes, on both boxes.

Otherwise, the two boxes have little in common. The lid of the van Diemen box has a scene that covers all the area within the borders; the lid of the Buys box has a somewhat similar scene but within a complex shaped cartouche, with spandrels of *hanabishi*. The interior tray of the Buys box has another scene, but without human figures, within a cartouche similar to that on the lid, but with more complex spandrels; the interior of the van Diemen box has a cartouche containing a landscape in an unusual technique resembling ink-painting, which is in fact painted, not in *makie*. The sides of the tray of the van Diemen box are in *nashiji*; the sides of the tray in the Buys box were presumably in the cash pattern, with pearlshell, that is used as decoration inside both Vulliamy cabinets. It is possible that these are extraneous, for the drawers below the fall fronts do not belong to the Buys box, though they are in remarkably similar style and quality. Presumably these were provided by William Beckford who would have been able to distinguish such quality. One of them has been mounted upside down, as the cabinet-maker was not familiar with bamboo. Because the top and the tray of the Buys box are so similar, it was the obvious candidate for cutting up to make two cabinets; the van Diemen box would not have been suitable, and has thus survived intact.

The Chiddingstone (fig. 3)[16] and Vienna caskets[17] are the only known examples of the shape, a European shape derived from precious metal or mounted hardstone caskets of the late renaissance. Of two stages in height, roughly pyramidal in form, they open in the two registers to reveal shallow wells, the lower one above a single line of three drawers. There are pilasters at the corners, and flanking the central drawer on the front, of lacquered wood (Chiddingstone) or of decorated ivory (Vienna). It should be noticed that the pilasters on the Chiddingstone casket bear a marked resemblance to those we describe below and attribute to the bed-chamber balustrade of Amalia von Solms. The ivory pilasters on the Vienna casket resemble those on the jewel boxes to be described below. Both caskets have complex multiple mouldings and borders, with minute inlay of pearlshell. The Vienna casket has panels of black wood veneer, probably ebony, finely carved in relief to give the appearance of black *takamakie*; the Chiddingstone casket has panels of gold and silver lacquer *takamakie* scenes of landscape, flowers, birds or animals, though the lower panels (the flanking drawer-fronts) have quartered panelling with geometrical patterns. Each casket has a recessed centre drawer of arched shape and in each case a loose fitting to cover this drawer; the Chiddingstone fitting hangs awkwardly on the central pilasters, the Vienna fitting inserts into the recess. It is a wonder that both have survived. The Vienna casket has had ivory fittings placed above the central pilasters and *netsuke* (!) above the corners.

The interior of the two lids (one above the other) of each are finely decorated with landscapes in *takamakie* on a black ground. The interior of the lower part of each casket is in red lacquer and has or would have had a drop-in tray (the Chiddingstone tray is missing); the Vienna tray has red lacquered small open compartments around a well in black lacquer in which is a diamond-shaped cartouche containing a landscape in the *sumie* technique used on the tray on the van Diemen box and on the V&A jewel box (to be described below). The interior of the drawers are also in red lacquer while the exterior sides of the drawers are decorated with gold flower-work.

The two 'jewel boxes' are of a standard European shape; here they are of exceptional quality, but there are many other examples of the shape, which vary in quality from the very good to the mediocre. Perhaps this shape could be associated with mentions in the *facturen* in 1636 '*juweelcantoorkens*'[18] or '*juweelcoffertiens*'[19] in 1656.

The shape is rectangular, sometimes with pilasters at the corners, the lid having concave sides and a sliding horizontal door at the apex. One end of the box lifts up, revealing a secret drawer under the well in the interior. In Schloss Aschaffenburg is a painting by Simon Renard de Saint-André (1613–1677) which depicts an example of this shape.[20] Occasionally this basic shape is found with doors and drawers, instead of the open chest.

The V&A example (fig. 4) shares with the Vienna casket the presence of panels of a thin veneer of carved black wood, prob-

Fig. 2. Top of the Mazarin chest, *c.* 1640; Victoria and Albert Museum, 412–1882

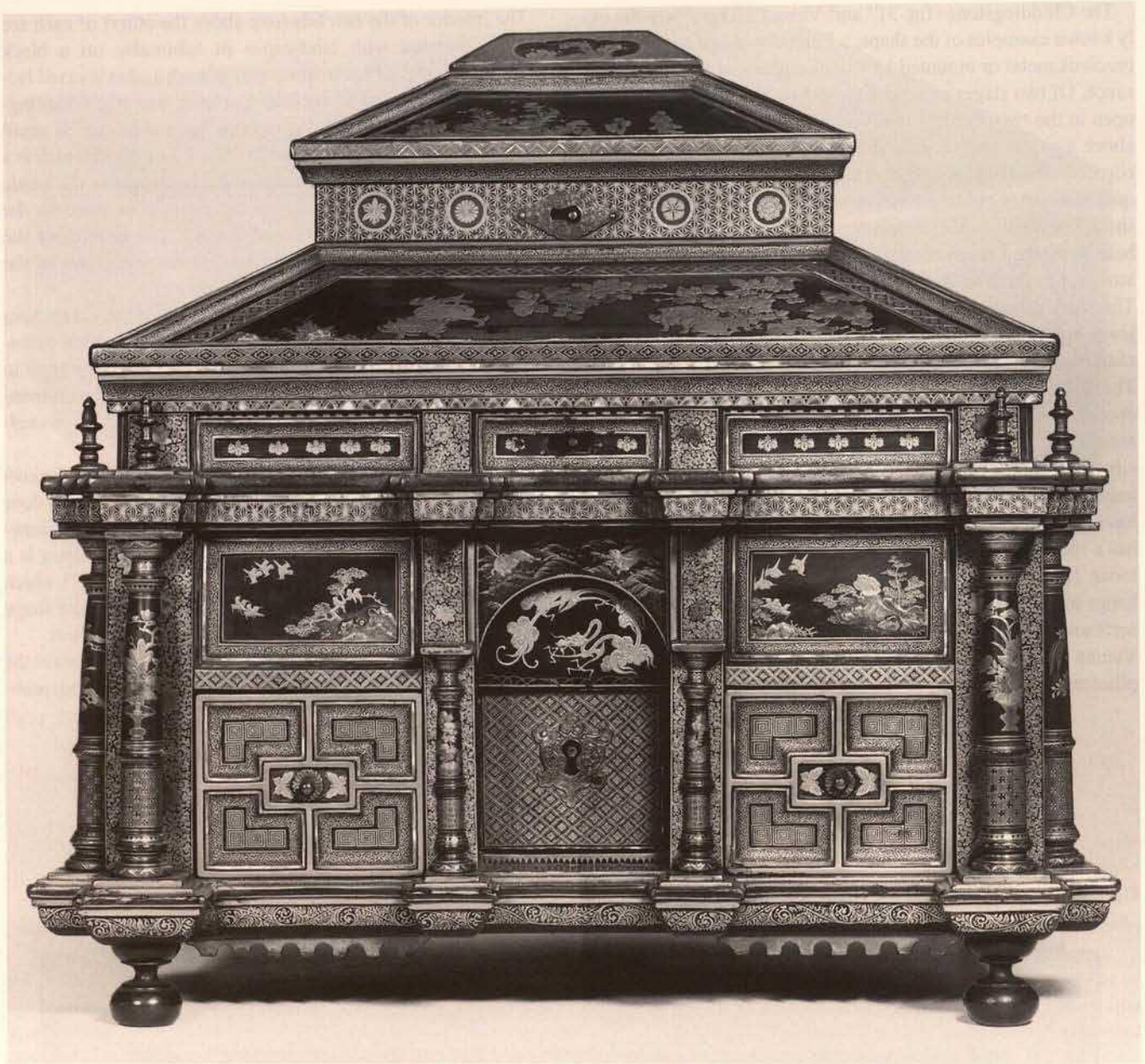

Fig. 3. The Chiddingstone casket, *c.* 1640; h. 35.6 cm, w. 37.5 cm, d. 31 cm; Trustees of the Denys Eyre Bower Estate, on loan to the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

ably ebony[21], covered in colourless lacquer, imitating fine raised lacquer, on the exterior. The interior of the lid has four panels of very fine *takamakie* landscapes (fig. 5). The concealed drawer in the base has countersunk *takamakie* panels on the front and, a most unusual feature, on the sides of the drawers. Where the top slides out, a shallow well is revealed which is decorated in a flat lacquered landscape, very much in Kano style, which is painted, not in *makie*, in the same technique as that found on the tray of the van Diemen box. I have not seen the Tokyo National Museum example and so cannot describe it; the exterior is much more in the style of the 'transitional' jewel boxes, though the quality seems to be equal to that of the V&A piece.

The Mazarin chest[22] is quite different. It is inconceivable that this and the pieces we have been discussing come from the same hand and highly unlikely that they come from the same workshop. The proportions of the chest are somewhat odd; it is too narrow for the depth and for the height; the decoration is of superb quality, comparable to that on the other pieces we have discussed, but in a style and technique different enough to set it apart. The lid, as well as the inside of the lid, have strongly depicted cartouches, with borders of birds and dragons in relief, within which detailed *sansui* landscapes are dotted with animals inlaid in solid metal; this we have not seen in the above examples. The wide borders are of a type that is to become more common, of *mon* and stylized flowerheads linked by scrollwork, with metal sheet as well as pearlshell and colours of gold and silver lacquer; this may be a development from the type of border on the van Diemen box. A red lacquer is found in the pictorial parts, but not in the borders. The back has a charming surprise; a painting in strong Kano (*Sanraku*?) style of a tiger and bamboo, asymmetrical and off centre; no concession to a foreign client.

The small box called the 'FC' box, from the thick silver monogram inlaid into the reverse of the lid (though it could be CF) fits closely but not integrally into this group. The *takamakie bonsai* on the lid, and the landscape inside the box are reminiscent of those on the pieces described above. The lid, however, is bordered with flower-filled half 'cloud-collars' quite atypical, and the exterior has borders which only resemble those on the V&A wedding casket. The attribution of the initials to François Caron, while perfectly possible, for he was Opperhoofd in Japan at this time is pure conjecture. The inclusion of the small 'wedding casket' shaped box now in the Victoria and Albert Museum in this group will be discussed by Julia Hutt in this publication.

Which are the finest pieces? It would seem to me that if we set apart the subject-matter, as predisposing towards Japanese taste and therefore 'Japanese market quality', then the van Diemen box and the Buys box are not of finer quality than the Chiddingstone and Vienna caskets and the V&A and Tokyo 'jewel boxes', but very much the same; they must surely, as Earle deduces, have come from the same workshop. The others, (the Mazarin chest and presumably the Lawrence chest, the 'FC' box and possibly the V&A wedding chest), I submit, do not. The 'third Mazarin chest' certainly does not.

It must be clear, however, that there is another category of 'fine' quality pieces that seem to be of slightly, but discernably lesser quality. These are also more evident from French furniture than from extant pieces, though enough whole pieces exist to give a firm basis for the category; these include the Arched cabinet[23] (colour plate III.1), the Trianon close-stool[24], and two very similar cabinets, one in the Peabody-Essex Museum[25], and the Chiddingstone cabinet (not to be confused with the Chiddingstone casket). It seems likely that the Trianon close-stool (and its companion, now dismembered, see below) was a product of the private trade, for nothing likely to be of this shape has been found in the VOC records; the other pieces are of standard shape, albeit of unusual decoration, which would not be detected by examination of the records. Thus these second category pieces could either be private trade or Company goods. These all have raised work, as have most pieces of good quality from this time on.

One piece, or series of pieces which we think we can detect both in partial existence and in detailed documentation are four pilasters, and possibly some of their top-rail, now included in a piece of French furniture of early nineteenth century date (colour plate II).[26] These are tall, turned, narrow pilasters of two different diameters, but of the same height (as far as we can detect), some 66.8 cm. The present conformation of the piece of furniture makes it impossible to tell whether or not the pilasters were originally free-standing. The quality of the lacquer on these is exceptional, with pictorial cartouches in shaped borders enclosed by *nashiji* and geometric borders. There is no raised work. Many of the subjects depicted in the small cartouches are most unusual or unique. There is no pearlshell on the pilasters themselves, though there is on what appears to be part of the top-rail.

We believe these to be the remnants of the balustrade in the bedchamber of Amalia von Solms, wife of the Stadholder, at Huis ten Bosch. This is described as being composed of seven parts each with eight pilasters, with the centre part opening as two gates. The room was 28 *voet* (feet) wide.[27]

Amalia von Solms ordered a model to be made of a wooden balustrade which she requested Philips Lucasz (Governor-General in Batavia and husband of Pieternella Buys) to have made and lacquered in Japan.[28] How the model reached Japan is not known, but it was returned to Batavia in 1640 in the *Castricum*. The balustrade itself was sent in two parts by François Caron (Opperhoofd in Japan) from Japan; the main part on 29 October 1639 on the *Breda*, the second part on 20 November 1640 on the *Witten Elephant*. Apparently the first part waited in Batavia for more than a year for the second part, but was eventually shipped on 30 November from Batavia to Holland on the *Salamander*, before the second part could have arrived in Batavia. That the whole balustrade was of first quality is confirmed by the price; the first, and larger part was valued at the huge price of 822 taels, the second part at 90.3 taels. The second part must have followed the first to Holland quickly, for on 19 August 1641 the Chamber of Amsterdam considered how to deal with the balustrade (as it was technically illegal private trade) and decided to present it to the Princess, at a value of 2342.14 florins. It turned out that it was a bit too large and five pilasters were omitted and stored.

In 1698 Thomas Bowrey[29] described the room as having 'a true Japan lackerd bed [of which, alas, we know nothing] and Inclosed with rails and Banisters of the same work'. On 16 August 1797, under the French regime, it was put up for auction (lot 162) as *een kostbaar Chinees verlakt hek met paerl d'amour ingelegt, lang 28, hoog 2.5 voet, met zijn voetbank* (a costly Chinese lacquered fence inlaid with pearlshell, 28 feet long, 2.5 feet high, with its plinth)[30], but was unsold. As the present piece of furniture was made up in the early nineteenth century, it is likely that the pilasters, if indeed they do originate as we suggest, came from after the sale, rather than being four of the five put into storage in the 1640s.

Fig. 4. The Victoria and Albert Museum jewel box, *c.* 1640; h. 20.1 cm, w. 28.4 cm, d. 19.6 cm; Victoria and Albert Museum, 628–1868

Fig. 5. The Victoria and Albert Museum jewel box, *c.* 1640; decoration within the upper compartment; Victoria and Albert Museum, 628–1868

Other pieces are documented in Europe, but not in the VOC records. A good example is the Trianon close-stool and its former 'pair', now dismembered and its parts incorporated into at least two, and possibly more, pieces of high quality French furniture by Adam Weisweiler under the direction of the *marchand-mercier* Dominique Daguerre.[31] The close-stool in the Petit Trianon appears not to be documented, but in the Garde Meuble in 1729 there is a description of what must have been its pair. When Weisweiler delivered the grand *secrétaire* for the Cabinet Intérieur du Roi to Versailles on 11 January 1784, it came with the side panels but without the front panels, which were to be supplied by the Garde Meuble. These were the front and sides of the close-stool. The top of the close-stool was made into the hinged top panel of a writing table supplied by Weisweiler to Marie-Antoinette at St Cloud in the same year. Furthermore there is a commode with *pietra dura* panels attributed to Weisweiler that incorporates borders that seem to come off the same close-stool. The point is that Daguerre knew exactly what lacquer he had to supply for the components not taken from the close-stool, for both the former pieces of furniture, and had them available to use. The side panels of the *secrétaire* and the flanking panels of the writing table are in the same style. As the borders of both close-stools and on these extra panels resemble closely those on the Mazarin chest, there must have been other pieces of similar type to be dismembered. Further examples of this type are found in the side-panels of other pieces of furniture by Weisweiler, notably the pair of *secrétaires* in the Metropolitan Museum[32], further evidence of the connoisseurship of Daguerre, but we do not know from what shapes they derive.

The problem is made more complex by the antiques trade of the eighteenth century; dealers were looking for 'old japan' which might equally have been straightforward export pieces, but also included pieces not originally made for export but which had nevertheless found their way to Europe. So much did this happen, that there must have been a flourishing private (and therefore undocumented) trade in Japanese-market lacquer among the Dutch merchants in Nagasaki. The *marchand-mercier* Edmé François Gersaint, who had several times been in Holland, wrote in 1745 'Les morceaux de choix sont de même extrêmement rares à trouver, particulièrement quand ils sont anciens. Ils sont quelquefois portez à des prix qui étonnent même en Hollande'[33]. Such pieces could be disassembled 'at a very great risque' as Vulliamy put it, just as could the export pieces. The fall front of the *secrétaire en cabinet* by Weisweiler now in the Huntington Art Gallery[34] cannot have come from a box, as the flanking panels on the centre row are upright and fit at either side of the central panel suggesting they were cut from it in order to balance the other panels, which are all horizontal in format and not consecutive in design.

Even more enigmatic is yet another cabinet by Weisweiler.[35] The doors are made from a large panel cut vertically; or are they the doors of a cabinet of European shape? As the picture on the doors is of the Yatsuhashi bridge, scarcely a European-taste subject, then this must have been an exceptional cabinet, of a type not known today. It may have been known only a hundred-odd years ago, for in the late 19th century, the cabinet-maker Henri Dasson made a cabinet much in the style of Weisweiler[36], and of the previously-mentioned cabinet in particular, using as doors

two somewhat similar panels very much in Japanese taste and of Japanese pictorial subject-matter, deer and maples, chrysanthemum, bush-clover and bird-cages. These doors seem too large for a piece for Japanese use, even for a large *bunko* or document box.

Connoisseurship was not confined to the *marchants-merciers*; their clients must also have been well aware of the differences in quality available. Mme de Pompadour, for instance, who is always praised for her good taste, kept the van Diemen box in an ormolu-mounted glass case.[37] The Queen Marie-Antoinette had a collection of Japanese lacquer, most of it of non-export type, much of it 'enhanced' in ormolu; and it was for her that Weisweiler had made the writing table for St Cloud from the top of the close-stool.[38] William Beckford, that fanatic collector, was certainly able to distinguish the best from the second-best.

Lacquer of this 'fine period' was extremely expensive; as the Dutch grew more accustomed to the new styles of lacquer, the 'transition' from the *namban* into the 'pictorial', so demand must have grown wider, more was demanded of the lacquerers for less money (the documents are full of this) so that the quality suffered. The quality was still sufficient to satisfy demand, and today one has to look hard to discriminate. It was presumably the lacquerers refusal to lower the quality yet further that caused the Dutch finally to cease official orders for large pieces of lacquer furniture after 1693.

Notes

1 Victoria and Albert Museum, London. See Earle 1983.
2 Elton Hall, Peterborough. See Earle 1983.
3 Earle 1983.
4 Sanz/Jordan Gschwend 2000. We are grateful to them for allowing us access to their unpublished work.
5 For a photograph that shows some of the top, see Boyer 1959, pl. 57.
6 Unpublished; see Impey/Jörg/Viallé, forthcoming.
7 Rijksarchiv, The Hague, Factorij Japan, NFJ 767.
8 NFJ 772.
9 It could be that in this context, the word *geheel* implies raised work, *verheven*, but this is conjecture. The words do not appear ever to occur in the same *factuur*.
10 NFJ 763.
11 VOC 863.
12 Meech 1995, no. 3.
13 Earle 1983.
14 Hutt March 1998, pp. 3–9.
15 Roberts Oct. 1986, pp. 38–141.
16 Chiddingstone Castle, Kent; Trustees of the Denys Eyre Bower, on loan to the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.
17 Museum für angewandte Kunst, Vienna.
18 NFJ 263.
19 NFJ 780.
20 Illustrated in Thornton 1978, pl. 239.
21 Ebony was frequently imported into Japan; see, for instance the letter from Richard Cocks, Chief Merchant of the English Factory in Hirado, to the East India Company, of 25 February 1616, reporting on the wreck of 'a Portingale [Portuguese] junk on the coast of Japon laden with ebony wood the greatest part'. Foster 1896–1902, 6 vols., vol. IV, p. 53.
22 Victoria and Albert Museum, London. See Earle 1983.
23 Private collection, Oxford. See *Lacquer* 1984, col. pl. on p. 127.
24 Petit Trianon, Versailles. See Impey/Whitehead Sept. 1990, pp. 159–165, pl. 1.
25 Sold by Christie's, London, 12 November 1996, lot 257.
26 Private collection. Sold by Christie's, London, 14 June 1993, lot 427.
27 For this room, see Scheurleer 1969, no. 1, pp. 29–66. The sales catalogue (1797) is Lugt, *Repertoire des ventes*, no. 5641.
28 This is documented in the Rijksarchiv, The Hague; NFJ 764, 839, 840, and VOC 101, 1133. See also Impey/Jörg/Viallé, forthcoming.
29 Temple 1927.
30 Sales catalogue (1797) Lugt, *Repertoire des ventes*, no. 5641.
31 See Impey/Whitehead Sept. 1990.
32 See Impey/Kisluk-Grosheide Jan. 1994, pp. 48–61. See especially fig. 4. Note (pl. 2) that the front panels have been replaced.
33 Sales catalogue of the Chevalier de Roque, 1745. Quoted in Whitehead 1992, p. 188 and note on p. 248.
34 Illustrated in Pradère 1989, pl. 482.
35 Pradère 1989, p. 42.
36 Sold Christie's, London, 16 June 1992, lot 333.
37 See Cordey 1939.
38 Impey/Whitehead Sept. 1990.

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Figs. 1, 2, 4, 5: Victoria and Albert Museum, London
Fig. 3: Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Oxford
Colour plate II: photograph courtesy Christie's, London
Colour plate III.1: private collection

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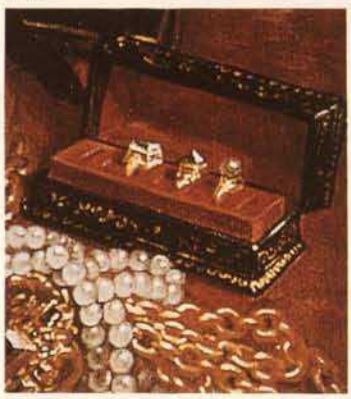
▽ 2

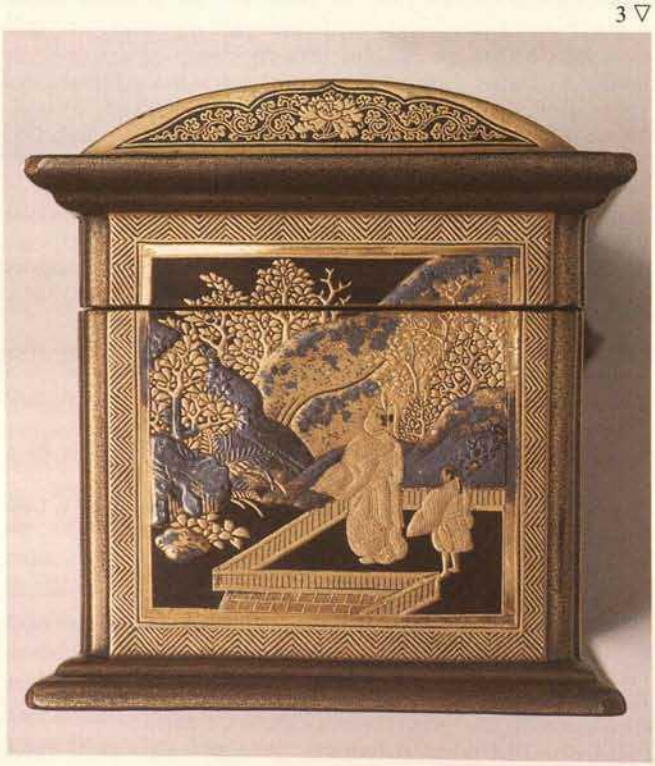


1 The Arched cabinet, *c.* 1640; h. 46.6 cm, w. 49 cm, d. 34.2 cm; private collection

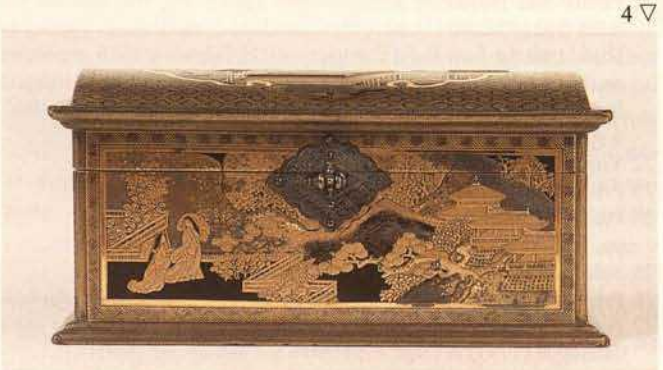
2 Paulus Moreelse, *Allegory of Vanity* (detail), oil on canvas, 1627; Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

3–5 Chest, gold and silver *hiramakie* and *takamakie*, gold foil and mother-of-pearl on a black lacquer ground, Japanese for the Western market, *c.*1640; Victoria and Albert Museum, FE.63–1997 (side: 8 x 7.2 cm, front and top: 8 x 15.3 x 7.2 cm)

3 ▽



4 ▽



5 ▽