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## Collecting *karamono kodō* 唐物古銅 in Meiji Japan: Archaistic Chinese Bronzes in the Chiossone Museum, Genoa, Italy

### Introduction

The Museum of Oriental Art, Genoa, holds the Japanese and Chinese art collections which Edoardo Chiossone (Genoa 1833-Tōkyō 1898) gathered during his twenty-three-year stay in Japan, from January 1875 until his death in April 1898. A distinguished professor of design and engraving techniques, Chiossone was hired by the Meiji government to install modern machinery and establish industrial production procedures at the Imperial Printing Bureau, Tōkyō, to instruct the young generation of designers and engravers, and to produce security printed products such as banknotes, state bond certificates, monopoly and postage stamps. He was well-known also as a portraitist of contemporaneous historic figures, most notably Philipp-Franz von Siebold (1796-1866) and Emperor Meiji (1852-1912, r. 1867-1912). The Genoese artist amassed about 20,000 works of art, a one-man collection that since 1905 constitutes the 'Edoardo Chiossone' Museum of Genoa, the oldest public museum of East Asian art established in Italy, and comprising Japanese antiquities, Chinese and Japanese antique mirrors, armour, arms and sword fittings, paintings, polychrome prints and woodblock printed books, Nō theatre masks, bronze and wooden Buddhist sculpture, ceramic and porcelain, costumes, *katagami* and textiles, Chinese and Japanese lacquerware, enamels, and more.

Amongst these artefacts there is a major collection of about 1,600 bronzes, including Chinese archaistic pieces datable from the Southern Song dynasty (1127-1279) up to the late Qing dynasty (1644-1911), imported to Japan in the thirteenth to nineteenth centuries, as well as later Japanese bronzes influenced by the former. From this collection – certainly the most numerous and significant of its kind in Italy, and one of the largest in Europe – a select group of some one hundred and twenty pieces has been recently introduced to scholars and the

public in the special exhibition *Food for the Ancestors, Flowers for the Gods: Transformations of Archaistic Bronzes in China and Japan*.<sup>1</sup> The exhibits were organised in five main categories: archaistic copies and imitations of archaic ritual bronzes; Buddhist ritual altar sets in archaistic style; *karamono kodō hanaike*, i.e. Chinese flower bronzes collected in Japan; Chinese bronzes for the scholar's studio; Japan's reinvention of Chinese archaism: bronze and iron for *chanoyu* (tea ceremony), for *bunjincha* (tea of the literati), and for flower arrangement in the formal *rikka* style.

Besides documenting the ages-old, multifaceted interest of China in its own antiquity and its unceasing revivals, the Chiossone bronze collection attests to the Japanese tradition of gathering Chinese bronzes from the Kamakura period (1185-1333) up to the Meiji era (1868-1912). Chinese archaistic bronzes are part of the *karamono* 唐物 category, the much sought-after 'things Chinese' regarded in Japan as lofty artistic examples and witnesses to the cultural and spiritual excellence of China. Initially cultivated by Zen Buddhist clergy in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries, this collecting tradition was transmitted to the military aristocracy of the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries. Then, during the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries, it was diffused amongst the tea men (*chajin* 茶人) and the masters of floral art. Furthermore, between the mid-eighteenth and the late nineteenth century, it became part of the cultural interests of fervent admirers of China such as the *senchajin* 煎茶人 and the *bunjin* 文人, adepts of the 'way of steeped tea' and 'men of letters', respectively.

Thanks to its typological completeness and stylistic variety, the Chiossone bronze collection affords the study and research not only of aspects of China-Japan art relations, but also of the transplant of Chinese art forms and decorative idioms into the very body of the Japanese artistic and aesthetic traditions. For this reason, the collection constitutes a relevant

case in point in three particular aspects. First, it documents the phenomenon of de-localisation of art-historical materials out of their original civilisation, and their representativeness in the new context, especially as far as coherent, diachronically numerous and well-preserved groups of artefacts are concerned. Second, it bespeaks the perception and representation of China through the selective gaze and aesthetic ideals cultivated over several centuries by the men of culture who established the Japanese classical canons of art, beauty and taste. Third, it shows the influence exerted by these de-localised art materials in the new cultural contexts – influence to be intended here in the widest possible sense, i.e. copy by design, imitation and reproduction in bronze and other media, alteration of shape, complete or partial change of function and usage, transformation of meaning and novel ways of classification.

### **Bronze vessels as symbols of eternity in East Asia and beyond**

During the Northern Song dynasty (960-1127), consistent numbers of archaic ritual bronzes were retrieved, collected, studied, catalogued and illustrated, as well as copied and creatively reproduced in bronze and ceramic. These combined activities of studying and reproducing antiquities gave rise to the centuries-old, long-lasting stylistic phenomenon defined by western scholars as 'archaism' and 'antiquarianism'. This was a most important contribution not only to identifying and restoring the typologies of archaic vessels up to the end of Chinese dynastic history, but also to spreading the idiom of archaistic decoration to virtually every expression of Chinese art.

To understand at least in part the symbolic importance of bronze collecting both in China and Japan, one has to take into account, first of all, the intrinsic meaning of this art material, both in cultural and sacral terms. Abounding in cultural, religious, ritual, symbolic and socio-political significances, in archaic China the production of ritual vessels and war equipment in bronze – arms, armour, structural and ornamental fittings for horse and war wagon trappings – represented a highly specialised technology firmly placed under the direct control of the elite in power.

Made by the piece-mould casting method, the imperishable bronze vessels were considered the best and most appropriate ritual containers for conserving and presenting offerings of fermented beverages, raw and cooked cereals and meats to the Ancestors' spirits, guarantors and protectors of the continuity of human genealogy. From times remote the ritual bronze vessels constituted a foremost category of aristocratic collecting, being endowed both with a virtually eternal durability, and with an inherent offensive potential: for this reason, for about four millennia they were constantly maintained by the powerful few under their direct control and possession.

Concomitantly with momentous, important political transformations, the antique bronze and metal collections were, if not destroyed in warfare, looted and transferred to the new powers and the emerging elite. These circumstances reconfirm and clearly indicate their importance not only as products of high-level technology and conveyors of a latent yet real potentiality to inflict violence, but especially as long-standing symbols of legitimate authority. The material itself, however, even when 'immobilised' in large, magnificent ritual vessels or sacred effigies, wholly maintains its aggression potential, as it can be melted down and reused to make arms. Such circumstances are recorded in modern Japanese history: in the 1870s, bronze statues and vessels originally belonging to Buddhist temples and monasteries were confiscated by the thousands throughout the country and recycled to produce the military equipment for the modern army.

*Mutatis mutandis*, the possession and control of the bronze antique patrimonies are perpetuated to contemporary times. From the last quarter of the nineteenth century to the second decade of the twentieth century, the political disintegration of the Chinese empire ruled by the Qing dynasty, and the international rise of Japan as a modernised national power constitute the historic scenario in which magmatic transformations took place regarding financial, industrial, military and political internationalisation, modernisation and reorganisation. At the same time, these eventful changes considerably influenced the shifting, de-localisation

and redistribution, especially towards Europe,<sup>2</sup> Japan<sup>3</sup> and the USA,<sup>4</sup> of important artistic and cultural patrimonies, amongst which the historical collections of archaic and archaistic Chinese bronzes hold a prominent place. Not incidentally, it was in Meiji Japan, during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and precisely in the context of modernisation and internationalisation, that the Chiossone bronze collection was amassed roughly at the same time as those of Enrico Cernuschi (1821-1896) and the Victoria and Albert Museum.

The great collections of archaic and archaistic bronzes in Japan and the West continue up to the present day to maintain their enigmatic beauty, potency and solemn aura of importance. Although some of the most prominent among them have been studied and researched at the highest level of specialisation and scientific methodology, they remain quite complex and not easily comprehensible, either to the public at large, or to art historians. Furthermore, the western history of assessing archaistic and later Chinese bronzes is deeply rooted in the study of their archaic progenitors, whilst at the same time it represents both a collateral development of the main research topic, and an important chapter in the history of East Asian art.

### Archaistic copies and imitations of archaic ritual bronzes

During the Northern Song dynasty, archaic bronzes were unearthed and collected, studied and reproduced in bronze and ceramic, and classified and illustrated in apposite catalogues. In 1092 the scholar Lü Dalin 呂大臨 (1040-1092) compiled and published the *Illustrated investigations of antiquity* (*Kaogu tu* 考古圖; fig. 1). This was followed, in 1123, by the famous catalogue *Manifold antiquities of the Xuanhe era* (*Xuanhe bogutu* 宣和博古圖), commissioned by Emperor Huizong 徽宗 (r. 1101-1126), and aimed to reconstruct the vessels' names and types, their forms and functions in connection with the meanings and procedures of the ancient rites. The *Bogutu* represents the early stage of the trend of studying, copying, illustrating, imitating and reproducing antiquities, known in the West as 'archaism' and 'antiquarianism', a phenomenon which remained an

integral part of the deep and wide research on antiquity carried out by Chinese literati, and lasted uninterruptedly even beyond the end of the Qing dynasty in 1911. Descending from the military aristocracy of previous ages, and sharing in common a thorough knowledge of the classics, this social group of public servants used to deal with every field of art, history and thought on multiple reference levels, their scholarly research touching upon the renewed exploration of Confucian philosophy, the political consistence of the state from the perspective of ideology and rituals, and the comparative study of ancient sources on rites. An enormous amount of study and recognition was accomplished by Song dynasty literati, who ascribed to the archaic bronze vessels denominations and functions witnessed or deduced from dedicatory inscriptions engraved on them at the time of their production. The illustrated



Fig. 1 Illustration of a ritual vessel of *yan* 鬲 type in the *Kaogu tu* 考古圖; from a Qianlong reprint of the *San gu tu* 三古圖 dated to autumn 1752, vol. 4; woodblock printed book, ink on paper; Genoa, Museo Chiossone (LI-209/B).

catalogues of bronze vessels and jades published in Song dynasty China contributed not only to the historical recording of proto-archaeological finds and to the establishment of the overall imagery of China's antique rituals, but also aimed to understand the forms, meanings and procedures of the ancient rites, and to reconstruct the paradigm of developments and

transformations of single types of ritual implements over the centuries. Furthermore, the retrieved and illustrated archaic vessels gave rise to a copious reproduction phenomenon, in which the old types, albeit modified and at times rather altered, continued to persist until the beginning of the twentieth century.

Regarding the general characteristics and main features of the category of archaic ritual bronzes in the Chiossone collection (figs. 2, 3), it is important to observe that a significant number of them were acquired during the last eight years of Chiossone's stay in Japan, between 1890 and 1897, when



Fig. 2 China, early Ming dynasty, 15th century, *Archaistic lei* 罍 vessel with whirls in relief on the shoulder and elephant-head handles; Genoa, Museo Chiossone (B-972); cast bronze with partly gilded decoration and artificial patina simulating ancient corrosion; h 26.8, mouth Ø 11.5, base Ø 9.6 cm; weight 2.38 kg; *XRF analyses*: 86% copper, 2.3% tin, 5.2% lead, iron 0.3%, 4.9% zinc (bottom).



Fig. 3 China, early Ming dynasty, 15th century, *Archaistic bian hu* 扁壺 in the style of the *Qin* dynasty; Genoa, Museo Chiossone (B-1391); cast bronze with applied artificial patina; h 26.9, mouth Ø 7.4, base 16.2 x 8, w 32.8 cm; weight 2.4 kg; *XRF analyses*: the five different points analysed show 80-81% copper, 4.6-4.9% tin, 8.2-8.4% lead, 0.2% iron, 5.5-6.2% zinc.

international interest in oriental bronzes had begun to solidify. In my view, though, not all of Genoa's archaic Chinese ritual vessels entered Japan either for this reason or at the same time. Even if some of them did reach Japan in the Meiji period, others might have come into the country during the early Edo period, through the port city of Nagasaki – not in the ambit of the Japanese collecting tradition related to incense and flowers, but as part of a different cultural phenomenon. One importation flow might have taken place after the fall of the Ming dynasty (1644), destined for Confucian temples, fief schools and teachers. Supporting circumstances of historical relevance during the Edo period are represented by the existence in Japan of several Confucian schools, founded by Ming loyalists and scholars who had taken refuge in Japan and soon became involved in the revival of Confucianism. The most famous amongst them, Zhu Shunsui 朱舜水 (1600-1682), arrived as a refugee in 1659 at Nagasaki, where he started to work as a professional teacher. Having moved to Edo in 1665 at the invitation of the *daimyō* of Mito, Tokugawa Mitsukuni 德川光圀 (1628-1700), Zhu became his Confucian philosophy mentor. Furthermore, he carried out Chinese style garden projects and taught Chinese agricultural methods. For the city of Mito, Zhu designed the Hijiridō temple dedicated to Confucius, which was completed in 1672. To guarantee that the ritual vessels responded in full to orthodox models, Zhu designed copies of antique Chinese ritual vessels and supervised their production by Japanese makers. Such manufacture continued into the late Meiji era.<sup>5</sup>

It was likewise from Kyūshū that one of Edo period's most creative Sinophile cultural traditions stemmed, i.e. 'the way of steeped tea', or *senchadō* 煎茶道. From the second quarter of the eighteenth century *senchadō* was diffused in Kyōto, Ōsaka and the Kansai region, where interest in *karamono* was already several centuries old, giving origin to, and supporting, a high level specialised antiquarian commerce that continued to flourish during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In addition, the usage of Chinese bronzes as flower vases and braziers in *bunjin* circles is documented in illustrated woodblock printed texts of the mid-nineteenth

century.<sup>6</sup> For instance, in the shogunal capital Edo, the famous Confucian scholar and calligrapher Ichikawa Beian 市河米庵 (1778-1857) formed a large collection of Chinese calligraphies, paintings and bronzes, of which in 1848 he published a book in ten volumes entitled *Illustrated catalogue of the Shōsanrindō's collection of painting, calligraphy and scholars' implements* (*Shōsanrindō shoga bunbō zuroku* 小山林堂書畫文房図録). According to Thomas Lawton, this was the first catalogue ever published outside China to illustrate Chinese bronzes, although some of them were certainly forgeries.<sup>7</sup> In the late Meiji era, part of Ichikawa's bronze collection was given by his son to the Imperial Museum, today's Tōkyō National Museum.<sup>8</sup>

Interestingly enough, Mr Chiossone acquired not only Chinese catalogues of historic importance on archaic bronzes and jades such as the *San gu tu* 三古圖, but also Edo period sources dealing with Chinese bronzes. It is very likely that he used these illustrated books as a primary direction, documentary source and guidance for recognising, classifying and purchasing his collection, probably adding his own personal inclination for completeness and systematic vision to the connoisseurship and criteria of Japanese antiquarians and experts. Around 1890-92 he purchased a seven-volume book by Tachibana Morikuni 橘守国 (1679-1748), *Illustrated encyclopaedia of the Chinese land* (*Morokoshi kinmō zui* 唐土訓蒙圖彙, 1719), the cultural significance of which to the milieu of Sinophile circles cannot be underestimated. It is worth noting that Ōsaka-born Morikuni had studied Kanō painting in Kyōto under Tsuruzawa Tazan 鶴沢禪探山 (1655-1729), a distinguished pupil of Kanō Tanyū 狩野探幽 (1602-1674), and an official painter (*goyō eshi* 御用絵師) at the imperial court. In the Kamigata region, Morikuni popularised the China-inspired pictorial repertoire of the Kanō School and was a fervent advocate of Chinese imagery throughout his long career as a prolific book illustrator. Very probably, his commitment to intensifying the cultivation and divulgation of Chinese painterly culture, classical erudition and traditions, was intended for the increasing numbers of *senchajin* and *bunjin* living in the Kansai area. Originally published in Ōsaka in

1719, the *Morokoshi kinmō zui* was reprinted in 1802 and 1854, a clear indication that there was a market for this publication both in the early and the mid-nineteenth century, when the 'tea of the literati' (*bunjincha* 文人茶) and its China-oriented cultural ideology had started to spread beyond Kansai, to Owari and Mikawa provinces. Volume four of Morikuni's book illustrates in seven consecutive pages Chinese bronze vessels as well as ceramic, wood and bamboo-woven ritual implements (fig. 4), in all likelihood copied from various Chinese printed sources on rituals and collected antiquities.<sup>9</sup>



Fig. 4 Japan, TACHIBANA MORIKUNI 橘守国 (1679-1748), two pages illustrating Chinese antique bronzes and Confucian ritual implements; from *Illustrated encyclopaedia of the Chinese land* (*Morokoshi kinmō zui* 唐土訓蒙圖彙, reprint 1854), vol. IV; woodblock printed book, ink on paper; Genoa, Museo Chiossone (LI-177).

For the remarkably high price of ¥ 70, Chiossone bought in about 1893-94 a Qianlong reprint of the *San gu tu* dated autumn 1752, comprising the three foremost illustrated texts on archaic bronzes and jades: *Manifold antiquities of the Xuanhe era, illustrated and revised* (*Chong xiu Xuanhe bogutu* 重修宣和博古圖, 30 vols. in 18 folders), *Illustration of ancient jades* (*Gu yu tu* 古玉圖, 1 folder), and *Illustrated investigations of antiquity* (*Kaogu tu*, 10 vols. in 5 folders).

Another Japanese woodblock printed book dealing with Chinese bronzes was collected by Chiossone in 1895 or 1896, the *Repertoire of tea masters' intoxication with antiques* (*Chake suiko shū* 茶家醉古集, Kyōto 1846), which illustrates and names several ritual vessels, as well as the main types of flower vases in bronze and ceramic used by *chanoyu* and *sencha* schools (fig. 5).

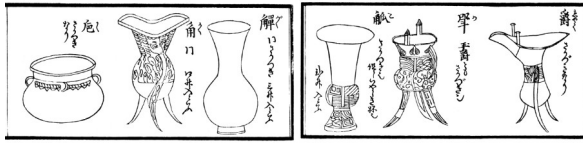


Fig. 5 Japan, Edo period, Kōka era (1844-1848), page illustrating various types of ritual bronze vessels (from right to left): *shaku* 爵 [jue], *ka* 罍 [jia], *kō* 觚 [gu], *shi* 觶 [zhi], *kaku* 角 [jiao], *shi* 卮 [zhi]; from the *Repertoire of tea masters' intoxication with antiques* (*Chake suiko shū* 茶家醉古集, Kyōto 1846); woodblock printed book, ink on paper; Genoa, Museo Chiossone (LI-205).

### Buddhist ritual altar sets in archaistic style in Japan

Buddhist priests and missionaries always acted as a driving force throughout Asia's geography and history, diffusing their religion of benevolence and compassion and the culture inherent in devotional and ritual practices. In the early centuries of the Common Era, Buddhism started to spread in China, thereby fuelling a series of religious transformations, which in the course of several hundred years came to modify both the recipients – not only ancestors, but also divinities – and the main offering materials: flowers, incense and light instead of food and beverages. Around that time, in the fourth century CE, the lost-wax casting method was introduced to China from Central and Western Asia, and thereafter became the habitual casting technique in the Middle Kingdom.

Around the end of the first millennium CE, all these innovations came to full maturity when worship of Transcendent Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, Confucian heroes and Daoist Immortals demanded appropriate cults and offerings, different from the ancient ones. Appearing in the Song dynasty and becoming customary during the Yuan dynasty (1279-1368), the Buddhist ritual altar set for offering flowers, incense and candle light was composed of either five (CH *wutiao tui* 五条腿, JP *gogusoku* 五具足; fig. 6) or three elements (CH *san zu* 三足, JP *mitsugusoku* 三具足). Adopted also by Confucians and Daoists, the altar set found its location in ancestors' chapels, high-ranking scholars' burials and on altars dedicated to the Immortals. Some of the ancient vessel forms, functions and types were selected and adapted for the new cult practices. Incense came to be burnt in vessels deriving from the *ding* 鼎 and the *gui* 鬲, ritual bronze vessels which in the remote past were filled



Fig. 6 China, Qing dynasty, mid-19th century, detail of a porcelain vase for export showing a five-piece ritual set on a family altar comprising a *liding* censer, a pair of *gu* flower vases, and a pair of candle holders; Genoa, Musei di Strada Nuova – Palazzo Bianco (GPB-69).

with cereals and meats. Flower vases (CH *huaping* 花瓶, JP *kabin*) were modelled in the shapes of *gu* 觚 beakers, *hu* 壺 bottles and *zun* 尊 jars (fig. 7), once overflowing with fermented wines.



Fig. 7 China, late Yuan-early Ming dynasty, 14th-15th century, *Altar vase of zun* 尊 shape in archaistic style with elephant-head handles, Genoa, Museo Chiossone (B-165); cast bronze, inserted bottom; black lustrous patina uniformly applied over an induced surface brown colour; h 25.6, mouth Ø 17.9, base Ø 11.9 cm; weight 1.96 kg; XRF analyses: leaded bronze: 88% copper, 4.2% tin, 6.8% lead, 0.3% arsenic, 0.3% antimony, 0.2% iron (bottom).

Ritual altar sets and flower vases from Southern Song, Yuan and Ming China imported into medieval Japan were installed and kept on view on temple altars, admired for their decorative, functional and iconographic orthodoxy, and did not fail to exert significant influences on Japanese casters. From the Muromachi period (1393-1572) onwards these implements were imitated by several generations of Japanese foundry men, who nonetheless introduced in their copies elements of decoration and iconography pertaining to the Japanese tradition. Still extant at prominent Japanese temples are two bronze *mitsugusoku* of the sixteenth century: although long-believed to be Chinese, they were most probably copied from Chinese originals and adapted to Japanese iconography and taste. The earlier one belongs to the Nara Tōshōdaiji 奈良唐招提寺, and according to a hand-written note on the flower vase's wooden box (*hakogaki* 箱書), is believed to have been imported from China on "the first day of the Rat year of the Eishō era, thirteenth in the cycle of sixty" (1515). The other *mitsugusoku*, dating from 1587 and belonging to the Shōju Raigōji in Shiga 滋賀聖衆來迎寺, was justifiably attributed by Masaki Nakano and Tomoyasu Kubo to Japanese manufacture of the Muromachi period.<sup>10</sup> The two *kabin* belonging to these *mitsugusoku* are of archaic *zun* and *gu* type, respectively, and share in common a typical Japanese feature, i.e. a *tutto tondo*, three-clawed dragon coiling around the necks and shoulders, its jaws wide open and a 'wish-granting jewel' (*hōju* 宝珠) clasped in the right fore claw. The coiling dragon also recurs in two Japanese *zun*-shaped flower vases in the Chiossone Museum (fig. 8). The first (fig. 8, left) is closely comparable in shape, size and style with the Tōshōdaiji example, whilst the second (fig. 8, right) is a majestic *kabin* cast, dated and signed in the first month of the fifth year of the Hōei era (January 1708) by the excellent Japanese bronze caster Nishimura Sakon Muneharu 西村左近宗春 (active seventeenth-early eighteenth century).



Fig. 8 (Left) Japan, Edo period, probably early 18th century, *Zun*-shaped altar vase with a three-clawed dragon coiling around the neck and body; Genoa, Museo Chiossone (B-979); cast bronze with *tutto tondo* decoration, cold working, induced surface colour, applied patina of dark brown colour and parcel gilding; h 32.5, mouth Ø 23.3, base Ø 15.5 cm; weight 5.86 kg.

(Right) Japan, Edo period, NISHIMURA SAKON MUNEHARU 西村左近宗春 (active 17th-18th century), *Zun*-shaped large altar vase with a three-clawed dragon coiled around the neck and shoulder, dated 1708; Genoa, Museo Chiossone (B-959); inscription engraved on the wax model, on the foot's internal wall: *Nishi Kōzuke Saimoku-mura Guzeizan Chōraku Zenji jūmotsu / Gosen dai ganshu Shirin Kichiemon / Kyō Daibutsu jū Nishimura Sakon Muneharu saku / Hōei go tsuchi no e ne no toshi Shōgatsu kichi-nichi* 西上野西牧村弘誓山長樂禪寺什物 語仙代願主次輪吉右衛門 京大仏住西村左近宗春作 宝永五戊子歲正月吉日 "This treasure made by Nishimura Sakon Muneharu, member of the Daibutsu [guild] of Kyōto, was presented to the Guzeizan Chōraku Zenji of Saimoku-mura in Nishi Kōzuke at the time of [the chief-priest] Gosen by the temple petitioner [*ganshu*] Shirin Kichiemon on a lucky day of the first month of the Rat year, fifth of the Hōei era"; cast bronze with *tutto tondo* decoration and inserted bottom, with blackish patina applied over induced surface colour and parcel gilding; h 42.3, mouth Ø 27.2, base Ø 19.7 cm; weight 9.10 kg.

### *Karamono kodō hanaike* 唐物古銅花生, 'Chinese flower vases of old bronze' collected in Japan

The archaic bronze vessels imported into Japan during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries from Southern Song and Yuan dynasty China were part of the culture of flowers, incense and tea rooted in Zen Buddhism, and shared by the East Asian peoples. Initially intended for the great Buddhist temples and monasteries, and first imported and collected in Japan by Zen monks for use in ritual flower offerings (figs. 9, 10, 11), archaic Chinese vessels belong in

Japan to the special category of *karamono kodō hanaike*, 'Chinese flower vases of old bronze'.



Fig. 9 China, Southern Song dynasty, 12th-13th century, *Oval-bodied hu* 壺 in archaistic style with loop handles; Genoa, Museo Chiossone (B-134); cast bronze with dark brown induced surface colour and brown-blackish applied patina; h 27.8, mouth 8.8 x 7, base 12.3 x 9.3 cm; weight 1.64 kg.

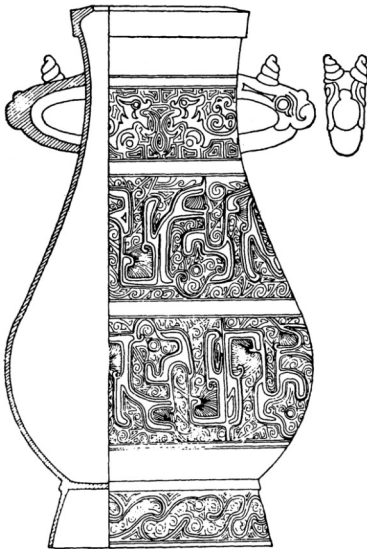


Fig. 10 China, Jin dynasty (1115-1234), *Line drawing of a hu bronze vase with superimposed decorated registers separated by plain strips*; from a Jin dynasty cache (Source: Kerr 1989-90, fig. 13).



Fig. 11 China, late Yuan-early Ming dynasty, second half 14th century-early 15th century, *Archaistic fang hu* 方壺 with galleried mouth, rough seascape and meander motif, Genoa, Museo Chiossone (B-1101); cast bronze with cold working, natural, silvery grey surface colour and applied pastes charged with green, reddish and yellow pigments; h 27.4, mouth 8.2 x 8.1, base 9.7 x 9.6 cm; weight 2.38 kg; XRF analyses: leaded bronze: 77% copper, 3.7% tin, 18.8% lead, 0.4% iron (body).

As harbingers of lofty cultural and spiritual meanings, these vessels started to move into the collections of the military aristocracy around the mid-fourteenth century, as testified by extant medieval documents, and were sought-after and jealously kept by the political elite from the Kamakura period up to the Meiji era (1868-1912).<sup>11</sup> The *Catalogue of precious objects preserved in the Butsunichi-an* (*Butsunichi-an kōmotsu mokuroku* 仏日庵公物目録), an inventory compiled in 1320 and still held by the Engakuji 円覚寺 in Kamakura, was revised and updated in 1363, when several Chinese pieces were sold to the Ashikaga shogunal family as well as to other prominent warriors. This document attests the role of important Japanese temples both in procuring the admired and coveted *karamono*, and in commercially redistributing them to buyers living in the surrounding territories.

The role of the Japanese temples is also confirmed by the 'sunken ship of Sinan', whose cargo was destined, for the most part, for the Kōfukuji 興福寺 in Nara. The ship set sail in 1323 from the Chinese port of Qingyuan (today's Ningbo city 宁波市) in



Zhejiang Province, heading for the Japanese port of Hakata 博多 (today's Fukuoka 福岡) on the northern coast of Kyūshū. Loaded with porcelain, bronze, pewter, silver, incense wood, several tons of copper coins and other valuable items, the ship sank off the Korean coast in the Sinan Gulf not long after its departure. The absolute proportions of the goods transported are indicative of both market demand and of the relative values attributed at that time to ceramics and metals, the former amounting to 96.6%, the latter to 3.4%, and comprising less than one hundred bronze pieces including flower vases and censers.<sup>12</sup>

A mid-fourteenth century narrative scroll, the *Illustrated biography of priest Kakunyo* (*Bokie* 募婦絵) depicts scenes with flowers and branches arranged in large celadon vases placed before hanging scrolls with the images of the Buddha Amida and of the deified poet Kakinomoto no Hitomaro. The fifteenth-century handscroll *Illustration of festivities* (*Sairei sōshi* 祭礼草子) shows a flower-arranging party (*hana no kai* 花会) taking place in a room equipped with *tatami* mats and an angular, wall-fitted, low wooden board (*oshiita* 押板). Set over the latter, just in front of the scroll triptych hanging on the rear wall, is a censer flanked on either side by a row of still empty flower vases, most of which are variants of the *gu* vessel, and are placed on carved lacquer trays.

The flower vases imported from China were used in Japan during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to arrange flowers in *tatehana* 立て花 style and display them in the *zashiki* 座敷, the reception halls of feudal mansions whose decoration was curated by the *karamono bugyō* 唐物奉行, 'officials in charge of managing Chinese art'. These men were *Jishū* 時宗 priests who served the Ashikaga Shogunate and the military aristocracy at a time when Chinese art represented high social status and cultural prestige for its owners.

The aesthetics of archaistic Chinese bronzes took deep root both in the circles of those in power, and amongst the *chajin* 茶人, the tea masters of the fifteenth-nineteenth centuries, and played a significant role in the classic instruction and artistic education of the elevated ranks of the nobility and military aristocracy until the end of the Edo period.

### Chinese bronzes for the scholar's studio

In China the scholar's studio was habitually adorned with small exquisite objects commissioned from various artists, including bronze casters. Kept at hand on the writing desk or the bookshelf, these useful objects were at the same time decorative and pleasant to the eye, whilst their historical, iconographic and mythological meanings represented moral encouragement and instruction. Connected with the 'four precious things for the desk' – paper, ink, ink stone and paintbrush – were other utensils, such as water vessels to wet the ink, and water droppers to dilute it, racks for resting the brushes and basins to rinse them, rulers and paper weights, as well as flower vases, perfume burners and other delightful objects in archaistic style. In the late Ming dynasty, Gao Lian 高濂 and Wen Zhenheng 文震亨 described six categories of writing implements, their usage by the scholars continuing until the end of the Qing dynasty: paper-related utensils; brush-related utensils; ink-related utensils; ink stone-related utensils, such as the ink stone case; seals, seal paste and their containers; wrist-rest and table screen.<sup>13</sup>

The writing implements with which Chinese calligraphers and painters had realised their masterpieces were included in Japanese collections of *karamono* (figs. 12, 13). During the Muromachi, Momoyama and Edo periods, these skilfully produced objects, destined for the supreme art of calligraphy, and bathed in the intellectual aura of the Chinese civilisation, were exhibited in the *shoin* 書院, the study area of the reception hall,<sup>14</sup> in accordance with the decorative arrangement rules established by the *karamono bugyō*, officials in charge of caring for the exotic collections, who served the Shogunate and various aristocratic families.

The treasures of the Chinese studio were usually displayed on a low board fitted into the wall: boxes for seal paste (*inniku-bako* 印肉箱), brushes (*fude* 筆), Chinese carved red lacquer handscroll trays (*jikubon* 軸本), precious stones for ink grinding (*suzuri* 硯), small single panel screens in ceramic or enamel to protect the paper and desk from unwanted ink splashes (*suzuri-byō* 硯屏), and also paper weights (*bunchin* 文鎮), brush stands (*hikka* 筆架), desk utensils such as paper knives (*kamikiri* 紙切), rulers,

water vessels (*mizuire* 水入), water droppers to dilute the ink (*suiteki* 水滴), as well as consumables imported from China, such as valued ink cakes (*sumi* 墨).



Fig. 12 China, Ming dynasty, 16th-17th century, *Shuizhu* 水注, water dropper in the form of a reclining ox; Genoa, Museo Chiossone (B-1593); cast bronze with warm brown induced surface colour; 7.7 x 14 x 8.5 cm; weight 0.68 kg.



Fig. 13 China, Qing dynasty, 17th-18th century, *Bitong* 筆筒, brush holder in the form of an eight-lobed, elongated receptacle supported by a broken magnolia branch; Genoa, Museo Chiossone (B-150); cast bronze with applied dark brown patina; h 19.2, mouth Ø 12.5, base 9 cm; weight 1.36 kg.

With their archaic features and antique figurative and mythological themes, the writing implements and desk accessories from China created a representation of the intellectual world of the literati, and their ideals rooted in the appreciation and connoisseurship of antiquity, literature and mythology.

### Japan's reinvention of Chinese archaism: bronze and iron for *chanoyu*, flower arrangement in *rikka* style, and *bunjinka*

By profusely exporting products of high artistic and technical quality throughout Asia, China gave an enormous contribution to the formation of a transnational idiom in the field of art and aesthetics, helping to spread a common, amply recognisable, ubiquitous language of beauty and ornament. In various Asian regions, this language took inflections more consistent with, and closer to, local taste and preferences, the latter expressed over many centuries both in the selective purchase of China-imported products and in the consequent creative and imitative processes. Within this framework of cultural assimilation and re-elaboration of Chinese models, many aspects of artistic developments in Japan may be understood as the peculiar articulations of a wider transnational cultural paradigm that could be defined as 'Chinese *koinè*'.

Imports of bronzes from China to Japan were at times abundant, at other times rare and scarce, and for lengthy periods they even ceased. Not incidentally, it was during such periods that the absence of direct and novel sources of inspiration from China induced the Japanese bronze casters to elaborate a 'Chinese' archaic taste of their own. The presence of Chinese bronze vessels in Japan since the thirteenth century certainly paved the way to the production of creative copies, imitations, re-elaborations and expressive and functional transformations, as well as to the transposition and use of their ornamentation in compositions, forms and materials other than bronze. Between the late fifteenth and late sixteenth century, a new style definable as 'Japanese archaism', inspired by prominent tea ceremony masters, was adopted and realised by the bronze casters, one that imbued both the bronzes for *chanoyu* and the vessels for formal flower arrangement (*rikka* 立華). In this

locally conceived archaistic idiom, Chinese decorative elements were carefully selected and simplified, and Chinese models and ornaments were transposed into compositions and forms obeying to the Japanese sense of decorative beauty, rhythm and taste. Between the Momoyama period (1573-1600) and the mid-seventeenth century, this archaistic style of Japan was further developed. Referable to this phase is the ‘Chinese bronze fresh water container with a peach branch’ (*karakane momo mizusashi* 唐金桃水差; fig. 14), a tea implement historically associated with tea master Senno Rikyū 千利休 (1522-1591). Expressing the compositional and conceptual skills of Japanese archaism, this *mizusashi* was probably made at the foundry of Iida Sukezaemon 飯田助左衛門 (active 1568-early seventeenth century).<sup>15</sup>



Fig. 14 Japan, foundry or style of IIDA SUKEZAEMON 飯田助左衛門 (active 1568-early 17th century), *Karakane momo mizusashi* 唐金桃水差, lidded fresh water container in Chinese archaistic style with a grip in the form of a broken peach branch; Genoa, Museo Chiossone (B-771); cast bronze with induced surface colour and applied dark grey-greenish patina with sparse spots of thin malachite powder; total h 20.4, h at lip 17.3, mouth Ø 18, base Ø 16.5, lid Ø 16.7 cm; weight 3.10 kg; references to similar examples: Urasenke Foundation, Kyōto; Nezu Museum of Fine Arts, Tōkyō.

Several China-inspired pieces are also recognisable amongst the productions of Nonomura Ninsei 野々村仁清 (active seventeenth century) and of his prolific atelier, as well as in the vast output of his epigones and imitators during the second half of the seventeenth century. Out of many valuable examples, most important is Ninsei's world-famous flower vase

with Buddhist ornament at the Ninnaji Temple in Kyōto, designed by emphasising and markedly stiffening the main features of the archaistic version of the Chinese *zun* vessel.<sup>16</sup>

This trend of assimilation and comprehensive re-elaboration of Chinese forms and ornaments continued well into the mature Edo period. Obtaining inspiration from Chinese vessels imported in earlier times, Watanabe Masatsugu 渡辺正次 (1646-1704), a flower-vase master (*ohanaire-shi* 御花入れ師) of high standing, created majestic containers for formal flower arrangements such as a signed *mimikuchi rikkahei* 耳口立花瓶 held by the Chiossone Museum.<sup>17</sup>

From the eighteenth century to the late nineteenth century, a relevant flow of ‘things Chinese’ – prevalently ceramics, but also preciously refined, small bronze vases, kettles and flower baskets – was destined for the followers of the ‘way of steeped tea’ (*senchadō*), and for the Sinophile literati circles. In this regard, a very telling testimony is the mid-eighteenth century illustrated book *Garden of famous Chinese and Japanese paintings* (*Wakan meiga en* 和漢名画苑, 1750; fig. 15) by Ōoka Shunboku 大岡春卜 (1680-1763). Besides attesting to the progressive diffusion of Chinese-style painting manuals in Japan, this book also contains depictions of Chinese vases fitted with flower arrangements, the style of which certainly appealed to Sinophile taste.



Fig. 15 Japan, ŌOKA SHUNBOKU 大岡春卜 (1680-1763), *Metal and ceramic vases in Chinese style with flower arrangements in bunjin fashion*; double page illustration from the book *Garden of famous Chinese and Japanese paintings* (*Wakan meiga en* 和漢名画苑, 1750), vol. 1; woodblock printed book, ink on paper; Genoa, Museo Chiossone (LI-186).

In her major contributions to the history of *sencha* and *bunjincha*, Patricia J. Graham dealt with the taste for *karamono* in Kyōto and Kansai literati circles, providing important information on Chinese archaistic ritual vessels and flower baskets in woven bamboo collected and used by *senchajin* and *bunjin*.<sup>18</sup> Linked to both *chanoyu* and *bunjincha* circles was Okuda Eisen 奥田穎川 (1753-1811), a ceramist of Chinese descent credited with the first production of Kyōto porcelain in 1781. Well-known for his China-inspired works, Okuda made pieces decorated both in underglaze cobalt blue and in three-colour overglaze enamels. He was also much respected for his excellent copies of Swatow and Kōchi 交趾 stoneware glazed in vivid green, aubergine and yellow, some of which he modelled in the forms of Chinese archaistic ritual vessels of *gong* 觥 type.<sup>19</sup>

Very well connected with Sinophile circles were also some of the most skilled Japanese casters of the nineteenth century. Among them, Murata Seimin 村田整珉 (1761-1837; fig. 16), Hata Zōroku 秦蔵六 (1823-1890; fig. 17), and Honma Takusai I 初代本間琢斎 (1812-1891; fig. 18) developed a keen interest in Chinese metalware, and produced wonderful pieces deserving to be regarded as reverent homages to the tradition of archaic and archaistic style in bronze.<sup>20</sup>



Fig. 16 Japan, end of Edo period (1800-1867), MURATA

SEIMIN 村田整珉 (1761-1837), *Touhu* 投壺, arrow vase with long neck and globular body on five feet, dated 1818-30; Genoa, Museo Chiossone (B-1394); nine-character mark integrally cast in thread relief within a sunken square on the bottom: *Dai Nihon Bunsei nen Seimin chū* 大日本 文政年 整珉鑄 “Cast by Seimin in the Bunsei era in Great Japan” (fig. 16a); cast bronze with two induced surface colours: a warm chocolate tone on the plain parts, and a dark grey, metallic shade on the relief decorations; h 42.2, total w of mouth and tubular handles 9.9, mouth Ø 4.7, tubular handle Ø 3 cm; weight 2.08 kg.



FIG. 17 HATA ZŌROKU 秦蔵六 (1823-1890), *Tetsubin* 鉄瓶, kettle in Chinese archaistic style, 1860-1880; Genoa, Museo Chiossone (B-610); round mark on the base enclosing the name *Hata* 秦 (fig. 17a); cast iron with notched surface (*oshinuki* 押し抜き) and applied black patina; total h with handle 19, h at lip 10, max w 13.5, max Ø 10.5, mouth Ø 7.9, lid Ø 7.8. Weight 0.96 kg.



FIG. 18 HONMA TAKUSAI | 初代本馬琢齋 (1812-1891), *Hanging flower vase in chimaki form with a tuft of orchid and a reishi fungus shaped handle*, 1860-1880; Genoa, Museo Chiossone (B-916); signed *Takusai* 琢齋 in thread-relief characters within a sunken rectangle under the handle (fig. 18a); cast bronze with induced surface colour and applied dark brown patina, h 17, mouth Ø 3.2, base Ø 2.1 max w 6.7 cm; weight 0.70 kg.

## Conclusion

The Edoardo Chiossone collection of Chinese and Japanese archaic bronzes, complemented by relevant printed sources from China and Japan also gathered by Chiossone, allows a reconstruction of the transformations in function, meaning, shape and usage of five categories of bronze vessels deriving from archaic Chinese progenitor forms.

The special exhibition *Food for the Ancestors, Flowers for the Gods: Transformations of Archaistic Bronzes in China and Japan*, installed at the Chiossone Museum from 30 March 2017 until 22 September 2019, has made available to the Italian and international audience a selection of one hundred and fifty bronzes of great beauty and technical mastery. The show has given to observers, scholars and visitors the opportunity to appreciate the artistic, decorative, and cultural interplay linking the Chinese and Japanese casting traditions in archaistic style. The alterations, interpretations and transformations of bronze vessels deriving from archaic vessels, however, represent not only the ages-old phenomenon of Chinese 'archaism', but also the history of Japanese taste for China-imported bronzes from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century and the influence exerted by the latter on the local casting traditions.

## Endnotes

1. Donatella Failla, *Food for the Ancestors, Flowers for the Gods: Transformations of Archaistic Bronzes in China and Japan*, with essays by R. Ciarla, A. Giumlia-Mair and H. Nishida, Genoa 2018.
2. Rose Kerr, *Later Chinese Bronzes*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London 1990; Michel Maucuer, *Bronzes de la Chine Impériale des Song aux Qing*, Musée Cernuschi, Paris 2013.
3. Hiroko Nishida et al., *Hanaike. Flower Vases in the Vogue of Zashiki-display*, Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya, Nezu Art Museum, Tōkyō 1982.
4. Robert D. Mowry, *China's Renaissance in Bronze: the Robert H. Clague Collection of Later Chinese Bronzes*, Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix 1993; Philip K. Hu, *Later Chinese Bronzes. The Saint Louis Art Museum and Robert E. Kresko Collections*, Introduction by Robert D. Mowry, Collector's Profile by Steven D. Owyong, Technical Notes by Laura Gorman, Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis 2008.
5. Patricia J. Graham, *Tea of the Sages: the Art of Sencha*, Honolulu 1998, p. 28-29. It may be supposed that at the time of modernisation the patrimonies of Chinese and Japanese ritual vessels in archaistic style belonging to fiefs and Confucian schools were partly dispersed, partly melted down, and partly put on sale on the antique market.
6. Ibid.
7. Thomas Lawton, *Chinese Ritual Bronzes: Collections and Catalogues Outside China*, in: Steven D. Owyong, *Ancient Chinese Bronzes in the Saint Louis Art Museum*, Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis 1997, p. 17, 29; Patricia J. Graham, *Karamono for Sencha. Transformations in the Taste for Chinese Art*, in: *Japa-*

- nese Tea Culture: Art, History and Practice, ed. Morgan Pitelka, London / New York 2003, p. 124, 135.
8. Personal information received on 4 July 2012 from Kawamura Yoshio, at the time Curator of ancient Chinese metalware in the Tōkyō National Museum.
  9. The first Japanese edition of the *Newly ordained illustrations for the three rituals (Xinding sanli tu 新定三禮圖)* was published in 1761 in Edo by Kikuchi Nan'yō, then reprinted in 1792 in Kyōto by Kitamura Shirobei as a close copy of the *Tongzhitang jingjie* edition: François Louis, *Design by the Book: Chinese Ritual Objects and the Sanli tu*, Chicago 2017, p. 129.
  10. Masaki Nakano in Tadao Suzuki, *Kuyōgu to Sōgu* [Utensils for Memorial Services and Utensils for Monks], *Nihon no Bijutsu* vol. 12, no. 283, Kyōto / Nara 1989, p. 51; Joe Earle, *Flower Bronzes of Japan*, London 1995, p. 38; Tomoyasu Kubo, *Higashi Ajia o Meguru Kinzoku Kogei: Chūsei Kokusai Kōryū no Shin Shiten* [Metal Craftwork Travelling Around Eastern Asia: New Points of View on the International Exchange in the Middle Age], Tōkyō 2010, p. 178-179 figs. 8-1, 8-2.
  11. Failla 2018, *Food for the Ancestors, Flowers for the Gods*, p. 288-310, catalogue nos. 18-23; Donatella Failla, *Collecting and Using Things Chinese in Medieval Japan. Archaistic Bronze Flower Vases in the Chiossone Museum*, in: Andon: Shedding Light on Japanese Art, no. 108, Amsterdam-Leiden 2019, p. 49-74.
  12. *Discoveries from the Sinan Shipwreck*, ed. National Museum of Korea, Seoul 2016. The cargo comprises 24,000 pieces, of which 20,691 are ceramics and porcelains. Amongst them, *celadon* decidedly prevails, whereas blue and white porcelains are absent. Metalware amounts in all to 729 pieces.
  13. William Watson and Ho Chuimei, *The Arts of China after 1620*, New Haven / London 2007, p. 49.
  14. Deriving from the spaces assigned as study area and *sūtra* reading in Zen monasteries, the reception hall comprised a recessed wall space placed on a slightly raised plane called *tokonoma* 床の間, resembling the private altar in ecclesiastical houses. Paintings of value were hung on the rear wall of the *tokonoma* and, in front of these, on a small table (*maezukue* 前机) or on a low wooden board fitted into the wall (*oshiita* 押板) the ritual three-piece altar set (*mitsu gusoku* 三具足) was arranged for offering incense, light and flowers. Together with the incense burner (*kōro* 香炉), candle holder (*shokudai* 燭台) and flower vase (*kabin* 花瓶) there were also a tiny lacquer or porcelain box containing incense granules or tablets (*kōgō* 香合) and a small metal vase holding the utensils for handling the aromatic substances (*hidōgutate* 火道具立). The manner for displaying the valuable Chinese desk utensils on the wooden shelf of the study area is illustrated in the *Flower Manual of Mon'ami (Mon'ami Kadensho* 文阿弥花伝書, illustrated manuscript dated 1522).
  15. Failla 2018, *Food for the Ancestors, Flowers for the Gods*, p. 318-320, catalogue no. 25.1.
  16. Failla 2018, *Food for the Ancestors, Flowers for the Gods*, p. 311-312, figs. 2, 3.
  17. Failla 2018, *Food for the Ancestors, Flowers for the Gods*, p. 321-323, catalogue no. 26.2.
  18. Patricia J. Graham, *Searching for the Spirit of the Sages: Baisaō and Sencha in Japan*, annotated version of the paper presented at the Association for Asian Studies annual meeting in Honolulu, 1996, p. 34-46; Graham 1998, *Tea of the Sages*; Graham 2003, *Karamono for Sencha*.
  19. *Tokubetsu Tenrankai Kyōyaki: Miyako no Ishō to Gi. Kyōto ware: Ceramic Design and Techniques of the Capital*, exhibition catalogue, ed. Kyōto National Museum, Kyōto 2006, pls. 165-171.
  20. Failla 2018, *Food for the Ancestors, Flowers for the Gods*, p. 241-242 catalogue no. 11.3 (Murata Seimin), p. 328-329 catalogue nos. 28.1 (Hata Zōroku), and 28.2 (Honma Takusai I).

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Rose Kerr, *Song and Yuan Bronzes*, in: *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society*, vol. 54, 1989-90, p. 9-24.

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Fig. 6 © Musei di Strada Nuova – Palazzo Bianco, Genoa.

Fig. 10 © Rose Kerr, *Song and Yuan Bronzes*, in: *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society*, vol. 54, 1989-90, p. 9-24, fig. 13.

### Summary

Diverse ideas and levels of knowledge about China and Chinese art had co-existed in Japan for several centuries. The philosophical position of the Japanese thinkers oscillated between enthusiastic adhesion to Confucianism – which in the early and mid-Edo period was an instrument of socio-political stabilisation and institutional radicalization of ethical models – and forms of open competition and ideological expropriation. Chinese poetry (*kanshi* 漢詩), diffused as a means of expression of civil and national sentiments amongst officials and Confucian thinkers, continued to maintain its fortune also with the Meiji political class. Furthermore, the figurative and decorative arts transmitted from China to Japan constituted a profoundly assimilated cultural wealth transformed and ‘Japanized’ over the centuries. Representing a privileged category of art collecting in Japan, the ‘things Chinese’ (*karamono* 唐物) were regarded as everlasting artistic examples and

witnesses to the moral and spiritual excellence of China. For this reason, their aesthetics took deep root in the circles of the highest interpreters of taste from the times of the Ashikaga Shogunate (1336-1573) up to the end of the Edo period (1600-1867), becoming a not negligible part of the classic instruction and artistic education of the elevated ranks of military aristocracy.

In comprehending antiquity and the Chinese models of Japanese civilisation, the theme of *karamono* attracted the discerning attitudes and farsightedness of Edoardo Chiossone (1833-1898), artist and collector, who always retained a special interest in archaistic bronze vessels from both China and Japan.

### Author

A specialist of Japanese Art, Donatella Failla served until 31 December 2017 as Director of the ‘Edoardo Chiossone’ Museum of Oriental Art, Genoa, Italy, and was appointed Honorary Curator and Consultant in February 2018. Since 2012, she has been lecturer at the University of Genoa in the History of Art of Eastern Asia. After obtaining her PhD in Oriental Studies from the University of Rome ‘La Sapienza’ (1980), in 1982 she started working at the Chiossone Museum. Author of over thirty exhibitions and two hundred publications in Italian, English, French, Japanese and Spanish, in 2016 she became a member of Accademia Ambrosiana, *Classis Asiatica*, and received from His Majesty the Emperor Heisei the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette, “for her activity in the divulgation of Japanese art in Italy, as well as for her contribution to the development of research in the field of Japanese art”.

### Title

Donatella Failla, *Collecting karamono kodō* 唐物古銅 in Meiji Japan: Archaistic Chinese Bronzes in the Chiossone Museum, Genoa, Italy, in: *Asia Collections outside Asia: Questioning Artefacts, Cultures and Identities in the Museum*, eds. Iside Carbone and Helen Wang, [kunsttexte.de/Transcultural Perspectives](http://kunsttexte.de/Transcultural-Perspectives), no. 4, 2020 (15 p.), [www.kunsttexte.de](http://www.kunsttexte.de).