The handle [http://hdl.handle.net/1887/21757](http://hdl.handle.net/1887/21757) holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation.

**Author:** Grasskamp, Anna Katharina  
**Title:** Cultivated curiosities : a comparative study of Chinese artifacts in European kunstkammern and European objects in Chinese elite collections  
**Issue Date:** 2013-09-17
CULTIVATED CURIOSITIES:

A Comparative Study of Chinese Artifacts in European Kunstkammern and European Objects in Chinese Elite Collections

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden

op gezag van Rector Magnificus prof.mr.C.J.J.M. Stolker

volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties

te verdedigen op dinsdag 17 September 2013

klokke 16.15 uur door

Anna Katharina Grasskamp

geboren te Düren in 1983.
Promotiecommissie:

Promotoren:  Prof. dr. Mark Meadow (University of California Santa Barbara)  
                 Prof. dr. Barend ter Haar (University of Oxford)

Commissieleden:  Prof. dr. Shih Ching-fei (National Taiwan University)  
                          Prof. dr. Leo Lucassen  
                          Prof. dr. Kitty Zijlmans  
                          Dr. Mariana Francozo  
                          Dr. Ewa Machotka

The dissertation was made possible by the financial support of the Hulsegé-Wazniewski Foundation (Hulsegé-Wazniewski Stichting, HWS) for the advancement of teaching and research in the archeology, art and material culture of China at Leiden University and the Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society (LUCAS).
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgments..................................................................................................................... VII

Introduction.................................................................................................................................. 1

Objects in Frames.......................................................................................................................... 1

1 Verbal Frames to the Foreign Object: Neologisms and Descriptions................................. 2

2 Likening the Foreign to the Familiar: The Frames of Comparison........................................ 5

3 Placing the Foreign: The Frameworks of Early Modern Collecting and Display............... 8

4 Framing Fragments of Far-Away Spaces: Place Names and Geography............................ 11

5 The Dissertation Framework: Time Frame and Case Studies.............................................. 13

Chapter One............................................................................................................................... 17

I Porcelain in Frames: The Europeanization of Chinese Ceramics through Sixteenth-Century Metal Mounts................................................................................................................. 17

I.1 The Economics of Framing: Mounting as Investment.......................................................... 20

I.2 Personalized Objects: The Social Implications of Mounting............................................. 21

I.3 Changing an Object's Status: The Aesthetic Implications of Mounting............................ 26

I.4 “Bound in” and “Constrained”: The Semantics of Mounting............................................. 34

I.5 Objects in Frames: The Metal Mount as Parergon.............................................................. 37

I.6 Ming Dynasty Collectibles with Chinese Metal Mounts.................................................... 42

I.7 The Role of Object Supports in the Staging of Chinese Artifacts ...................................... 46

I.8 Frames of Appropriation: The Europeanization of Chinaware ........................................ 50

Chapter One - Figures................................................................................................................. 53

II Staging the Foreign: Global Arts at Emperor Kangxi’s Observatory..................................... 67

II.1 Objects in Frames: An Iconographical Analysis of the Stand.......................................... 69

II.1.1 European Conceptions of the Chinese “frame or foot”............................................... 69

II.1.2 The Dragon as Embodiment of Imperial Monopoly.................................................... 74

II.1.3 Dragons on Lions’ Back: An Unprecedented Iconography of Power.......................... 77

III
II.2 Attribute, parergon, tai 臺 and zuo 座: Conceptualizing the Chinese Stand
II.2.1 The Stand as Attribute
II.2.2 The Stand as parergon
II.2.3 Conceptualizing tai 臺 and zuo 座
II.3 The Frames of Translation: Sino-European Visual and Material Culture
II.3.1 An Act of Translation: The Visual Framing of Verbiest’s Instruments
II.3.2 The “Culture Eye” as Translator
II.3.3 The Frame in Context: Emperor Kangxi Staging the Foreign
Chapter Two - Figures
III Framing Foreign Nature: Coral Fragments in between Form and Figure, Potential Images and Spaces
III.1 Framing the Fragment of Nature: Acquisition, Imitation and Integration
III.1.1 Hunting for Coral: Agents and Networks
III.1.2 The Craft of Nature: Artificial and “Wondrous” Coral
III.1.3 Framing the Fragment: Mounts, Wraps and Cases
III.2 Foreign Underwater Worlds: Coral Boxes as Miniature Grottos
III.2.1 Treasures of the Earth, Treasures of the Sea
III.2.2 Grottoed Walls, Boxed Displays
III.2.3 Natural Forms, Artificial Figures
III.3 Coral Metamorphoses: Daphne and Actaeon
III.3.1 Coral Transformed
III.3.2 Coral as Potential Image
III.3.3 Coral Trophies
III.4 Visions of “Ethiopia”: Framing Coral’s Origin
III.4.1 Hunting the Foreign, Exploiting the Oceans
III.4.2 Perseus’ Flight, Medusa’s Blood
III.4.3 Potential Treasures, Potential Places

IV
Conclusion
Framing Foreign Nature: Coral in between Form and Figure, Potential Images and Potential Spaces........................................................................................................................................167

Chapter Three - Figures........................................................................................................................................169

IV Mapping Foreign Nature: Coral Specimens on Display in Late Ming Visual and Material Culture........................................................................................................................................193

IV.1 Mapping the Empire ................................................................................................................................209
   IV.1.1 Coral as Foreign Tribute......................................................................................................................195
   IV.1.2 One Among Many Foreign Materials: Yan Song’s Coral .................................................................203
   IV.1.3 The Social Language of Foreign Materials.......................................................................................206

IV.2 In Between Spaces................................................................................................................................213
   IV.2.1 Imagining Penglai: Coral as Tree.........................................................................................................209
   IV.2.2 The Dragon Palace: Coral as Underwater Tree..................................................................................213

IV.3 In between Art and Nature: The Aesthetics of Coral ................................................................................214
   IV.3.1 Staging the Foreign: Coral in Ming Dynasty guan tu 古玩圖 ..........................................................214
   IV.3.2 Aesthetic Criteria For Selecting Coral...............................................................................................216
   IV.3.3 Fragments in Frames: Curating Coral ...............................................................................................218

IV.4 Coral as Qi 奇 .......................................................................................................................................222

Conclusion
The Golden Valley Garden or Coral Fences in Scholar’s Paradise.................................................................226

Epilogue
A Rarity In-Between: Coral on Display in Two Different Cultures.................................................................230

Chapter Four - Figures................................................................................................................................235

V Afterword.....................................................................................................................................................255

Picturing the Self through Things: The Frames and Stages of Performance in European and Chinese Collecting..................................................................................................................................................255

Afterword - Figures........................................................................................................................................265

Sources and References................................................................................................................................279

Bibliography of Primary Sources..........................................................................................................................279

Inventories in Chronological Order..........................................................................................................................279
Acknowledgments

I look back to a four year PhD trajectory in Leiden full of fun and numerous challenges. During the past weeks I have personally thanked a number of people for having done a wonderful job in facilitating my research during that period, as I believe a personally expressed thank you is more important and meaningful than semi-public displays of gratitude. In the following lines I only wish to name a few people and institutions to whom I owe a special debt.

I am deeply grateful to the Hulsewé-Wazniewski Foundation (Hulsewé-Wazniewski Stichting, HWS) for the advancement of teaching and research in the archeology, art and material culture of China at Leiden University for financially enabling me to carry out my PhD research under very generous circumstances. I am thankful to the Leiden University Foundation for awarding me with a grant to undertake research in Taipei during May 2012. I am also indebted to the Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society for providing me with a working space and equipment, sponsoring my participation in a summer school in August 2012 and for financial support of the printing of this dissertation.

Leiden University regulations prevent me from thanking my advisors and the members of my reading committee, but it goes without saying that I owe a huge debt of gratitude to Barend ter Haar and Mark Meadow and am thankful to all members of the reading committee, too. In Leiden I would like to thank Oliver Moore for providing support during the initial stages of the project and am grateful to him and Barend ter Haar for letting me actively participate in their Premodern Chinese classes. I thank Kitty Zijlmans for advice at different stages, in particular concerning teaching related issues. I am grateful to Minou Schraven and Mariana Francozo for cheerful couching whenever things seemed confusing.

In Taipei I thank Shih Ching-fei for letting me audit her classes and her, Tsai Mei-fen, Lai Yu-chih and Wang Cheng-hua for their interest in my work and insightful conversations. I am also grateful for discussions with other Palace Museum staff members and Taiwan University graduate students.
Among the many people who commented on my research during conferences or individual consultations, I wish to particularly thank professors Craig Clunas and Petra ten-Doesschate Chu, museum curator Eva Ströber and fellow graduate students Michael Hatch and Meimei Rado. I also thank Jan Stuart for the exceptional generosity of sharing an article with me before its publication.

A special thank you goes to Maureen Warren, Sophia Rochmes and Erin Downey, who read drafts of my chapters and commented on them with language corrections and editorial suggestions, and to Marrigje Rikken for fine-tuning my Dutch dissertation summary.

I also wish to thank the members of research group “The Reception of Netherlandish Art in the Indian Ocean Region and East Asia, and its Impact on Asian Cultures” at Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences for giving me the feeling of being a member of the group though I was just their research assistant.

I am very grateful for having been welcomed by Jennifer Hammerschmidt (with Sören, Kaja and Zoey) in Santa Barbara and Ghent and wish to express my gratitude to Barbara Kaminska, Sophia Rochmes, Marta Faust and Sophia McCabe for conversations and support during my stays in California. A big thank you also goes to my fellow graduate students in Leiden: I will miss conversations and lunches with you, Larissa, Bettina, Willemijn, Jeanette, Shih-ying, Meiwen, Sun Jing, Eline, David, Marrigje and Elisa!

I certainly would have been a less happy and efficient PhD student without the friendship of Julia, Flora, Elisa, Carolin, Uta, Onno and Pascal and am most grateful for loving support throughout the process by my brothers Lukas and Andreas and my parents Eva and Walter.

Leiden, June 2013