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**Author:** Grasskamp, Anna Katharina  
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CULTIVATED CURIOSITIES:
A Comparative Study of Chinese Artifacts in European Kunstkammern and European Objects in
Chinese Elite Collections

Stellingen

1. Frame/parergon and stage/tai are useful concepts for the better understanding of early modern forms of material appropriation in China and Europe.

2. The example of (red) coral specimen forms a suitable case study for our understanding of the framing of nature in Ming China and Renaissance Europe.

3. Metal mounts on early modern Kunstkammer artifacts are parerga that, in the case of Chinese porcelain, serve as a Europeanizing frame to the foreign object.

4. The pedestals and platforms that stage the astronomical instruments made by Flemish Jesuit Ferdinand Verbiest form a statement on the powerful agency of Emperor Kangxi as their commissioner and owner.

5. Comparison serves as a tool not just to the early modern collector, but can as a systematic approach be of high use for the advancement of interdisciplinary as well as intercultural academic research.

6. To avoid commonplaces and still produce general insights, comparative scholarship demands the precise study of selected case studies.

7. While collecting is a global phenomenon, systems of display change between culturally defined zones and historic periods.

8. For an Art History that takes non-European art histories seriously it is ideally a priority to not just consider visual and material culture, but include the study of written sources.

9. Competitiveness is overrated.

10. You do not know the weight of a burden you do not carry.

11. What was a tame dissertation has potential to become a brave book.

Anna Katharina Grasskamp

Leiden, 17 September, 2013