

en The sea gives

Japan



Buddhist dog in Kakiemon style, Japan, 1670-1700, Edo period; Reigen (1663-1687) / Higashiyama (1687-1709) (porcelain, glaze). Collection Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands. Photo Ivo Wennekes.

Buddhist dogs guard the entrances to Buddhist and Shinto temples in Japan. They are always made in pairs because they stand on either side of the doorway. They are usually made from bronze, but smaller porcelain reproductions are made for export. This dog, dating from the end of the 17th century, is made from Arita porcelain, named after the place where the pottery workshops are located. The porcelain is also known as Imari, after the town from which it is exported.



Plate with tiger, dragons and flowering sprigs, Arita, Japan, c. 1680, Edo period, Reigen (1663-1687) (porcelain, glaze). Collection Zeeland Society. Photo Ivo Wennekes.

Merely the size of this dish – with a diameter of 61 cm – makes it a rarity. It is difficult to make dishes with a diameter of more than 55 cm. But there is a lot of money to be earned from them, so the Dutch East India Company merchants order them nonetheless. Large dishes of this kind are made specially for the European market. This dish is hand-painted with symbolic motifs. Chinese viewers would recognise that the combination of tigers and dragons refers to yin (feminine, the tiger) and yang (masculine, the dragon). But it is questionable whether the European buyer would have understood this.

Indonesia



Knife or *badek*, Celebes, Indonesia, c. 1837 (silver, metal, amethyst). Collection Zeeland Society. Photo Ivo Wennekes.

This knife, also known as a *badek*, is decorated with chased silver and a purple semi-precious stone. The reverse of the hilt bears an Arabic inscription with two dates representing the same year: 1837 in the Gregorian calendar, and 1253 in the Islamic calendar. The *badek* comes from the Indonesian island Celebes. In 1837, Prince Henry (1820-1879) sails to the Indonesian archipelago with the naval ship *Bellona*, visiting several places on Celebes. It is possible that the *badek* is brought back to the Netherlands as a souvenir by someone in Prince Henry's retinue.



China



Two plates with birds in *encre de Chine*, China, 1735-1750, Qing dynasty, Qianlong (1736-1795) (porcelain, glaze). Collection Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands. Photo Ivo Wennekes.

These Chinese plates are probably ordered by a British customer. Prints with the desired imagery are sent to Chinese porcelain workshops. Usually the same images are used to decorate an entire dinner service or numerous services. However, that is not the case here. The Zeeuws Museum has six plates depicting different scenes with birds. In addition to these six, three other such plates are known to exist: two in the Metropolitan Museum in New York and one in a private collection. These too depict different birds but come from the same set. It is probable that the set originally consists of twelve plates.

The client has had access to a large variety of bird studies, probably in his private library. These two plates are based on images by two different artists. The plate with the monkey, the cassowary, the ostrich, pheasants and peacocks is based on a print by Francis Barlow (c. 1626-1704). This print has been copied almost exactly in mirror image; only the swallows in the sky are missing. The other plate contains elements from various bird prints by the French artist Nicolas Robert (1614-1685): cranes and storks. Robert's images do not have backgrounds: the landscape with the houses and a bridge have been added in an authentic fashion.

China



Two bottles in kraak ware, China, 1600-1620, Ming dynasty, Wanli (1573-1620) (porcelain, glaze). Collection Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands. Photo Ivo Wennekes.

Early 17th-century Chinese porcelain is also known as 'kraak ware', named after the Portuguese ships called carracks. These are used for transporting tea, and porcelain is added as ballast on the way back home. This costly porcelain soon becomes popular among rich European collectors. The Dutch take over the lucrative trade in porcelain from the Portuguese, shipping large quantities from China to Europe. The Chinese produce this porcelain specially for the foreign market. The kraak ware bowls, plates and vases are characterised by their thinness and their blue decoration, often divided into vertical panels.

In 2009 the Zeeuws Museum commissions the Danish artists' collective SUPERFLEX to make a three-part TV series to be shown on Vietnamese television. The programme concerns a remarkable chapter in the history of the Dutch East India Company and Middelburg: the public auction of a costly cargo of Chinese porcelain from the Portuguese ship, the *San Jago*. In 1602, three ships from Zeeland capture the ship in Italian waters and bring it to Middelburg. The Chinese porcelain is publicly auctioned on the quayside in Middelburg for millions of guilders. In *Porcelain*, this chapter of Dutch history is interwoven with a sweet love story set in 21st-century Vietnam. The vases play a leading role in the television series.

You can watch the entire series on the internet. Go to [vimeo.com](https://www.vimeo.com) and search for 'Superflex' and 'Porcelain'.



SUPERFLEX, Porcelain (video still), 2009. Collection Zeeuws Museum.

China



Sitting dog, China, 1662-1722, Qing dynasty, Kangxi (1662-1722) (porcelain, glaze). Collection Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands. Photo Ivo Wennekes.

This dog is part of the collection started by the Middelburg antique dealer Willem Bal (1880-1962) and his sister Susanna (1876-1948). The largest part of their collection comprises Chinese porcelain. Willem's and Susanna's love of antiques is instilled by their father, who in addition to a bakery also owns an antiques shop. Willem has a good eye for special pieces and is known for his great knowledge of porcelain. He conducts his business from the premises where he lives with his sister. He finds articles both within Zeeland and further afield. He makes regular trips with dealer friends to Paris, London and Brussels. He assembles a large stock, which is sold after his death at a special auction in the Schuttershof in Middelburg. Upon their deaths, Willem and his sister bequeath their private collection to the Dutch state.



Willem Bal and his porcelain collection.

Veere



Melted lidded goblet of the Baker's guild in Veere, 1773 (glass). Collection Zeeland Society. Photo Ivo Wennekes.

This glass lidded goblet is one of a pair, of which the second example is partially melted during the bombing of Middelburg in the Second World War. The goblets are presented to the Baker's guild in Veere on 17 May 1773 by Daniël Wilhelm de Cliever. A representative of the city council, De Cliever is appointed chairman of the guild. The engraved inscription on the lip of the goblet tells us that it is used by the guild members to drink to the guild's prosperity.

China



Two bottles in Amsterdams bont, China and the Netherlands, 1725-1750, Qing dynasty, Yongzheng (1723-1735) / Qianlong (1736-1795) (porcelain, glaze, gilded copper). Collection Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands. Photo Ivo Wennekes.

From 1700 multi-coloured Chinese porcelain comes on the market. Entrepreneurs in Europa smell an opportunity and have white or scarcely decorated Oriental porcelain profusely painted. In the Netherlands, the work is carried out mainly by porcelain painters in Delft and Amsterdam, and the result is known as 'Amsterdams bont'. These bottles are imported from China in an unpainted state by the Dutch East India Company and painted here. The gilded bronze edging on its neck and foot is also added in the Netherlands.

Middelburg



Philippus Prié, Teakettle-on-stand, Middelburg, 1766 (silver, ebony). Collection Zeeland Society. Photo Ivo Wennekes.

Since first being introduced at the end of the 16th century, tea has become part of everyday life by the 18th century. This is due to imports by the Dutch East India Company. Wealthier citizens set themselves apart from the average man by choosing special blends and more expensive types of tea. They also have more elaborate tea services and accoutrements, such as this melon-shaped *bouilloire* with its leaf-shaped lid in the Rococo style. The kettle and burner are used to keep water at a boil for serving tea.

The *bouilloire* is made by the Middelburg-based silversmith Philippus Prié (1721-1793). Silversmiths have been active in Zeeland's cities such as Middelburg and Vlissingen since the end of the 16th century. They are commissioned to make objects for the guilds, militias, churches and city councils. Many of these objects have been lost. In 1795 the government of the Batavian Republic forces the people to hand over their gold and silver objects so that coins can be minted. In May 1940, many of the silver objects in the art collection housed in the City Hall are also destroyed during the bombing of Middelburg.

Philippus Prié is one of the leading silversmiths in Middelburg in the second half of the 18th century. He studies with Cornelis Blaauwbeens and later with his father, Jacobus Prié. In 1749, Philippus Prié is admitted to the guild of silversmiths; thirty years later he is appointed dean of the guild. Prié's work is inspired primarily by developments in silversmithing in The Hague.

Germany



Paulus Reinman, Pocket sundial with compass, Nuremberg, 1604 (ivory, gilded bronze). Collection Zeeland Society. Photo Ivo Wennekes.

A sundial shows the time by casting a shadow on a flat plate with hour markings. As the position of the sun moves, the shadow moves across the plate, giving an accurate reading of the time. Until the 19th century, sundials are mainly used to calibrate clocks. In this period, the majority of clocks are still so inaccurate that they need regular calibration. This explains the presence of a sundial on the South side of many old clock towers.

A pocket sundial has various functions in addition to telling the time: it also works as a calendar and compass. This ivory pocket sundial is designed for travelling: you can adjust it to wherever you find yourself. It is made in 1604 in Nuremberg by Paulus Reinman, the most prominent compass maker of the early 17th century.



Suriname

In the 17th and 18th centuries, groups of enslaved West Africans escape from plantations in Suriname. They venture deep into the jungle and live in communities along the rivers. Hunting, fishing and agriculture are their main means of survival. Coming from different African cultures, they form a new, common culture: the Marron culture. They also attempt to free other enslaved West Africans.

After a century of guerrilla warfare with Dutch colonists and plantation owners, around 1760 the various communities agree peace terms with Dutch colonial rulers. This allows these Marron to live in freedom in their own villages. Various indigenous peoples also live in the rainforest. The Marron sometimes exchanged objects with their neighbours, such as earthenware utensils, like for example this dish, which is donated to the Royal Zeeland Society of Arts and Sciences in 1817.



Plate, Suriname, before 1817 (earthenware). Collection Zeeland Society. Photo Ivo Wennekes.



Pot with lid, Suriname, before 1817 (earthenware). Collection Zeeland Society. Photo Ivo Wennekes.