

***Kraak* Porcelain from Chinese Tombs and Jingdezhen Kilns: Discoveries and Associated Issues**

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Kraak porcelain is one of the most influential types of Chinese export ceramics, and finds and research of Chinese kiln sites and datable tombs sheds increasing light on *kraak* wares in the past decades. In late 2007 an archaeological excavation was conducted at the Guanying kiln complex in Jingdezhen and this yields finds of *kraak* porcelains alongside large quantities of other ceramics. A comparison of this excavation and *kraak* porcelains found in earlier surveys at kiln sites across Jingdezhen and shipwrecks reveals information on aspects of *kraak* wares such as the production organisation and labour division in Jingdezhen, and the correlation between products primarily for domestic market and *kraak* wares. Also found in China are dozens of *kraak* plates discovered in south Jiangxi from datable tombs of the late Ming period, and this lead some to doubt the traditional view that *kraak* wares is made only for the export market. However, most of these *kraak* plates are defective products with warping or crack etc., and were probably purchased, along the route of their transporting to ports for exporting, at a much reduced price to be used purely as burial objects. According to the local burial custom, porcelain plates may be placed, sometimes in a pair in a mouth-to-mouth position, under the head of the deceased as pillows, and are called shoupan or 'longevity (i.e. afterlife or funeral) plates'. Another *kraak* plate found in a tomb bears a drilled epitaph, and this is another aspect of the burial custom that can be supported by domestic porcelain plates drilled with epitaph found in Jiangxi tombs. The author is of the view that *kraak* porcelain was exclusively for export and the use of seconds as only funeral objects in China provides a good example for the statement made in AD 1616 by Coen of the Dutch East India Company: 'in China assortments like these are not in use...the Chinese were obliged to export and peddle them however much money they lost thereby...'. It is hoped that close collaboration between scholars focusing on kiln sites, shipwrecks and western museum collections would help to reconstruct the history of *kraak* porcelain at high resolutions.

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