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Edited by Marcello Ghilardi and Hans-Georg Moeller

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In memory of Stefano Zacchetti (1968–2020),Yehan Numata Professor of Buddhist Studies and Professorial Fellow at Balliol College, University of Oxford

CONTENTS

Part Two: Aesthetic Concepts

Part Three: Aesthetic Practices and Excercises

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Mechanics of Change: The Aesthetics of Chinese Ceramics in the Northern Song (960–1127) and Early Jin (1127–1234) Dynasties

SABRINA RASTELLI

Song dynasty (960–1279) ceramics are often considered the most accomplished in the history of this material in China,[1] although in recent years the market has favored later wares produced at Jingdezhen for the imperial house of the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) periods.[2] Song manufacture was indeed impressive in terms of quality, variety, and quantity, as reported in many literary documents written over the centuries by eager connoisseurs and confirmed by archaeological excavations carried out since the 1950s. The approach adopted in this chapter rests mainly on archaeological data; that is, it will analyse production in the eleventh and early twelfth centuries relying on excavated evidence to *understand the mechanics of aesthetic change*.[3] For too long the appreciation of Song wares

and the interpretation of archaeological results have been subordinated to scholarly writings which can offer some guidance, but are not consistent. Song records are scarce and tend to be rather concise; Ming and Qing texts are more numerous, but less reliable, as the time gap is wider and, rather than reflecting the appreciation of ceramics in the Song dynasty, they mirror the admiration that later connoisseurs had for Song wares—or what they thought was Song. As such, it is a very interesting phenomenon, worth studying in relation to appreciation and collecting in the Ming and Qing dynasties, but it *should no longer be applied to interpret Song ceramics.*

Ceramic production was presumably determined by the available raw materials and technology, and by "market" requirements. Techniques were tested and improved constantly by trial and error, while market demands depended on the function the objects were destined to serve and their aesthetic qualities. The remarkable increase in output registered in the eleventh century at all the main ceramic manufacturers and the incremental rise in the number of kilns was the result of a combination of social, economic, technological, and cultural factors. Favorable circumstances caused a surplus in production (both agricultural and industrial) and demographic growth (which in turn stimulated the economy). Excess products were traded at home and abroad, thus increasing wealth and bringing relative stability to the country; urbanization turned cities from political-administrative centers into commercial, financial, and production hubs swarming with teahouses, restaurants, gardens, entertainments, workshops, and shops of all kinds.[4]

All these aspects were essential to the development of the ceramic industry in the Song period, but maybe the most significant one was the stratification of Song society and within it the emergence of two specific social classes: the literati and the merchants, beside the imperial court.

The administration of the state was shared by the emperor with officials from the sixty most important families in the country who had direct and hereditary access to bureaucratic careers, but whose knowledge was tested through the civil examination system.[5] This method was also applied to recruit the best candidates from less privileged social classes, who, thanks to government policies and the more widespread distribution of wealth and publications, had access to education. Although divided into two bitterly opposing factions since 神宗 Shenzong's reign (1067–85), these civil officials constituted an educated élite, legitimized by a system based on merit (not just privilege),[6] with a specific cultural agenda aimed at defining their identity as a social group distinct from the emperor. Art theory and practice played an important role, and particularly influential in this respect was the group of intellectuals that gathered around 蘇軾Su Shi (1037–1101).[7] The qualities

they promoted were spontaneity and simplicity, which doubled as both aesthetic and ethical values, while they rejected anything artificial and ornamental. Collecting (and writing about it) was another defining activity of the men of culture, competing for supremacy in this field against the emperor. The main guiding principle was supposed to be the advancement of learning and morality,[8] therefore books (representing knowledge), calligraphy (also in the form of the rubbings from stones amassed by 歐陽修 Ouyang Xiu (1007–72) and in the form of inscriptions on bronzes), paintings, and antiquities were the approved categories.[9] Ceramics were not collected because they were not antiquities; however, they were used in many aspects of daily life, and although the literati pursued learning and morality, they certainly did not reject beauty. Furthermore, in defining their distinguished identity, aestheticized living was important and each activity (such as tea drinking) demanded specific sets of tools, including those made of ceramics.

In the Song period domestic and international private trade reached unprecedented volumes and it even superseded that managed by the state. Merchants, traditionally disparaged by Confucian ethics, became more respected, as the government—desperate to increase its revenues—entrusted to them certain undertakings (related to gain procurement and the monopoly of salt, tea, and wine) and granted them preferential tax rates.[10] Traders increased in numbers, accumulated fortunes, and augmented their prestige in society also by collaborating with the gentry in activities benefiting the general public.[11] The New Policies of Wang Anshi王安石 (1021–86), aimed at curbing the power gathered by merchants with their successful enterprises and money-lending services, probably had the effect of drawing them nearer to orthodox Confucian literati who opposed government interference in the private economic sector.[12] Traders were likely to emulate the educated élite in the cultural sphere to show that their taste was refined too. Collecting was a way for people who did not hold government posts to gain status as men of culture and thus be respected.[13]

Archaeological evidence shows that in this period ceramic production flourished in an unprecedented way. Kiln centers manufactured products of different quality in order to cater for various social classes, each with its own taste and financial possibilities:[14] tableware for busy restaurants and teahouses needed to be more durable than that used in wealthy homes. But generally speaking, quality improved and the amount of excellent products increased remarkably. It is difficult to determine what stimulated what, but market demands are always a good drive. Beside the imperial family, wealthy landowners, and the very top echelons of the clergy, the growing class of the literati had the taste and the means to acquire high-quality ceramics to use in their homes not only with practical purposes in the dining room or the study,

but also for decoration. Merchants may have had a less sophisticated taste than the literati, but they had the financial means to buy expensive ceramics, and the desire to emulate the educated élite may have increased the demand for certain high-quality vessels.

In general terms, the main feature common to the leading kiln centres of the eleventh century, namely Ding, Yaozhou, and Cizhou in the north, and Yue and Jingdezhen in the south, is the embellishment of vessels with ornamental motifs. Objects were decorated in earlier times too, but while before only a minority of pieces was ornamented in comparison with the total output, in the eleventh century the percentage reversed and the variety of patterns was considerably widened. The peony became the most common motif incised, carved, printed, molded, or painted on ceramics. This craze can be attributed to the publication of several treatises dedicated to either the tree (typical in Luoyang) or the herbaceous plant (widespread in Yangzhou).[15] As Ronald Egan explains, in the Northern Song dynasty a substantial corpus of literature on the aesthetics of flowering plants, rather than on their nutritive and pharmaceutical qualities, appeared. Peony, chrysanthemum, plum, crab-apple, rose, camellia, rhododendron, lotus, and orchid were all the subject of monographs, but the peony surprises because while the chrysanthemum, the plum, or the orchid were associated with the moral qualities of the Confucian gentleman, the peony was the symbol of feminine sensuality and allure. At least since the Tang dynasty there were peony festivals in spring attracting crowds of people from all walks of life, but it was not until intellectuals of the caliber of Ouyang Xiu[16] wrote about it that, although retaining its voluptuous charm, it became a frequently represented subject (Fig. 11.1).

Of course peonies were not the only popular motif: many other flowers were carved, incised, painted, and later on impressed on ceramic wares, each carrying symbolic meaning. The lotus, for example, was linked to Buddhism and, as a matter of fact, it often appears on objects found in Buddhist contexts as a symbol of spiritual enlightenment and purity, while in a lay environment it represented modesty and harmony (being homophonous with these very words). The chrysanthemum, plum, orchid, and bamboo were known as the "four gentlemen" (四君子*si junzi*), each of them representing a moral virtue of the ideal Confucian man, namely intellectual achievement, courage, refinement of the superior (educated) man, and endurance. Animals were also depicted, mainly fish and birds that populated gardens, but also dragons with their auspicious meaning, and children at play to wish a copious progeny. The tendency that seems to emerge is one where decorative patterns appear and gradually become more common, varied, and appreciated for their symbolic connotation.

FIGURE 11.1: Bowl decorated with large peony spray. Stoneware with blue-green glaze, Yaozhou ware, Northern Song dynasty (960–1127), excavated at the Yaozhou kiln site, Yaouzhou Museum. Photograph by the author.

If the proliferation of treatises on flowering plants played an important role in the preference for ceramics decorated with ornamental flower motifs, were it not for the wide circulation of manuals and catalogs they might have proved less effective. The distribution of all kinds of texts in the Song period is directly linked to the spreading of printing technology, another commercial activity greatly developed at the time to the point that many urban centers included a publishers' district,[17] and paper-making became a specialization in as many as eight prefectures.[18]

Displays of floral beauty, which may have encouraged the fashion for decorated ceramics, were central to gardens that developed greatly in the Song dynasty and were viewed as a direct expression of their owner's mind.[19] Either urban or rural, they were not simply outside spaces in which to enjoy fresh air. They were meticulously designed to offer breathtaking views from elaborate buildings, areas to entertain friends, and secluded spots to be alone with one's thoughts. Ponds, rocks, trees, ornamental flowering plants, and buildings were all essential elements whose distribution was carefully planned. For the educated élite the garden was the space for self-cultivation, studying, practicing the arts, meeting with friends, and, if in office, making political alliances.[20] Scholars, who often adopted the name of their garden as

their style name, referred to these special outdoor spaces in their writings, but in 1095 李格非 Li Gefei (fl. 1090) was the first to make them the subject of a book, *Account of Famous Gardens of Luoyang* (洛陽名園記 Luoyang ming yuan ji), in which he described in detail eighteen estates belonging to eminent officials, including 司馬光 Sima Guang (1019–86).[21] In the 1070s Luoyang (famous for its peony trees) became one of the favorite destinations for the retirement of banned officials, hence the proliferation of famous gardens there. Suzhou was another sought-after location and the capital Kaifeng naturally became home to many scholar-officials, who tended to live in the east section of the city, where land was available. Through their estates, merchants showed off their wealth and of course emperors spared no efforts in creating astonishing parks.

At the Yaozhou complex, potters resolved to decorate objects encouraged both by the growing fashion and by necessity. The forest depletion in the area forced them to substitute wood with coal as fuel in the kilns. This apparently innocuous change had significant repercussions on the visual aspect of Yaozhou blue-green ware (青瓷*qingci*): deliberate fast cooling at the end of very lengthy firings (caused by the very long final soak at full temperature required in coal-stocked kilns) prevented devitrification, thus causing glazes to become transparent.[22] Roughly at the same time, a change in the glaze recipe increased the level of titanium dioxide, causing the glaze to assume an olive green tone.[23] This color and the transparency of the glaze made plain vessels rather dull and so embellishing them with decorative motifs, carved and/or incised under the glaze, became a question of survival for the Yaozhou kilns. This does not mean that decoration appeared on Song vessels because of the introduction of coal as fuel: Ding kilns also adopted it, but as the glaze had always been transparent, there was no change in this respect. Ding objects began to be decorated with finely incised or carved motifs because fashions were changing.

Bold decoration in contrasting colours is the distinguishing feature of Cizhou ceramics, despite the fact that their main output consisted of whitewares, either made from white clays (like Ding) or from impure materials that needed to be concealed by a layer of slip in order to appear white.[24] Cizhou ware has been classified as "popular"[25] and described as sturdy, lively, and utilitarian—basically a not very refined genre that appealed to common people with unsophisticated taste. However, on deeper (and unbiased) reflection, it appears that Cizhou pieces shared many ornamental motifs with Ding and Yaozhou wares, and some of the decorative techniques were indeed rather laborious, thus affecting the price of the final product. As to their imperfect execution, it may have enticed the attention of the educated class who favoured spontaneity over affectedness to grace their dinner table.

Tea consumption became even more widespread than in the Tang and Five Dynasties periods, and indeed tea became a state monopoly as early as 965.[26] The beverage was prepared according to the "whipped method," consisting of whisking powdered tea and hot water following a specific process, until a thick froth formed on the surface.[27] The method had been developed in monasteries where medicinal drinks were prepared in the same way, but Song literati turned tea drinking into an aesthetic experience, made of a series of precise gestures, in which not only the quality of tea, but also its taste, fragrance, and appearance were essential. Tea connoisseurship became one of the lesser aesthetic pursuits that helped the "men of understanding [to] lodge their minds in things to release their discernment" and advance in the mastery of the Way.[28] The crucial aspect in the preparation of tea was the foam firmness which, if not persistent, would subside, exposing the liquid below (雲腳散*yunjiao san* or dispersed cloud feet). The froth was so central that a competition (鬥茶*doucha* or tea contest) evolved around it.[29] To guarantee successful whipping, certain requirements had to be met: water at the right temperature had to be poured at a specific rate inside a warmed-up bowl and to accomplish this, the shape and texture of bowls and ewers were crucial.[30] Visual gratification was an integral part of the aesthetic experience and according to 蔡襄 Cai Xiang (1012–67), revered as one of the most famous calligraphers of the Northern Song dynasty, the consistent white foam was best set off by stout, conical, black bowls with "hare's fur" (兔毫*tu hao*) or "oil spot" (油滴*you di*) effects manufactured by the Jian kilns (Fujian); these particular vessels were also valued for their ability to retain the heat.[31] Jian tea bowls became very famous and were imitated by many kilns in Hebei, Henan, Shanxi, and Shaanxi provinces, adding blackware to the main genres circulating in the Song period. The hare's fur effect, which results from "phase-separated glazes super-saturated with iron,"[32] was never successfully reproduced by northern kilns, which nevertheless developed other attractive, mostly abstract patterns. The Jizhou kilns in the southern province of Jiangxi also distinguished themselves for their output of black tea ware, characterized by lively effects resulting from inventive decorative techniques, but this happened in the Southern Song period. The fact that Cai Xiang extolled the qualities of Jian ware does not mean that only blackwares were chosen in tea drinking: conical bowls with comparatively large mouths, cupstands, long-spouted ewers, and warming basins were also produced by Ding, Yaozhou, Cizhou, and Jingdezhen kilns (Qingbai ware), thus showing the enormous influence that tea drinking had on ceramic production in the Song dynasty.

If this fashion for tea drinking was relatively new, alcohol made from fermented grains had a much longer history. It was drunk from small cups

placed on a stand similar to that used under tea bowls, but wine cups were smaller, as wine did not need whisking. Alcohol was served warm from long-spouted ewers placed in matching basins to keep the beverage at the right temperature. This kind of ewer was probably also used for pouring hot water on to tea paste, in which case the two routines shared the same kind of vessel. A shape connected to wine consumption is the so-called *meiping*, actually a flask for storing wine, later adopted as a vase to display blooming prunus sprigs.

To increase production, expanding the factories and employing more workers are the immediate options, but technological advances can be much more efficacious. Once the execution of decorative motifs became fashionable, impressing them from a stamp or mould, rather than incising or carving them, considerably speeded up the process.[33] The introduction of decorated hump moulds to impress patterns on the inner surface of a vessel at the Ding and Yaozhou kilns from the late eleventh century coincides with the augmented complexity of the designs, thus showing a change of taste at the end of the Northern Song period from large and supple motifs to dense and intricate designs (Fig. 11.2).

According to Qin Dashu, at the Ding centre the hump mould technique developed from the previous use of plain moulds employed to make the size

FIGURE 11.2: Hump with large peony spray. Stoneware, Yaozhou kiln, Northern Song dynasty (960–1127), excavated at the Yaozhou kiln site. Yaozhou Museum. Photograph by the author.

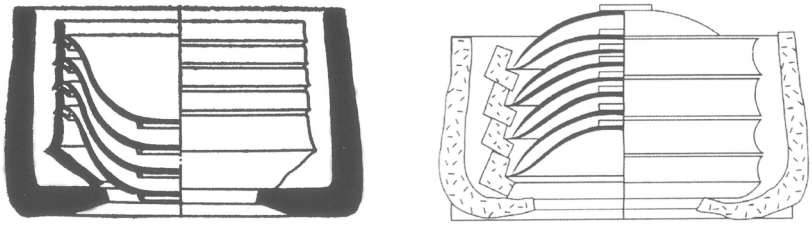

FIGURE 11.3: Drawing of upside-up firing (left) and upside-down firing (right) adopted at the Ding kilns. From Huang Xin, "Dingyao wai gua youqi zhuangshi fangfa tanxi," in *Zhongguo Dingyao*, ed., Beijing Yishu Bowuguan (Beijing: Zhongguo huaqiao chubanshe, 2012), 293.

of bowls and plates perfectly standardized. This was an essential requirement for firing open vessels upside-down (覆燒*fushao*) on circular step setters arranged on top of each other and then placed inside a sagger (Fig. 11.3).[34]

The upside-down firing technique was another invention of Ding craftsmen challenged by the problem of pyroplastic distortion: because of their very thin body, objects easily deformed during firing, therefore potters started to place them upside-down resting on the mouth rim (rather than on the foot) to spread the weight over a wider circumference. A secondary advantage of the *fushao* method was that, as the vessels were stacked very close to each other, a greater number of pieces could be loaded in the same batch, thus increasing the final output.[35]

The unglazed and thus rough mouthrim, inevitable with upside-down firing, has been suggested as the reason why the Song court refused to use Ding ware and accepted instead vessels made by the Ru kilns.[36] However, well before the invention of *fushao*, Ding objects presented a rough mouth and Ding pieces were still used at court during 徽宗 Huizong's reign (1100–26) in the Departments of Food and Medicines, as some marked vessels testify.[37] In order to disguise the unglazed mouth, the lip was covered with a metal rim. Some Yue, Xing, and Ding specimens from the late Tang and Five Dynasties periods show metal bands (usually silver or gold) applied mainly on the mouth, but sometimes also around the foot, to make them more precious. Moreover, in the early Northern Song period, when upside-down firing had not yet been invented by Ding potters, two thousand pieces of Ding porcelain with a golden rim were sent to the Chongde Hall in 980.[38] Some of the gorgeous Yaozhou specimens emerged from the cemetery of the Lü family in Xi'an and dating to the eleventh and early twelfth century have their lip bounded in silver.[39] As Yaozhou kilns never adopted upside-down

firing, it appears that metal rims were applied to enhance their preciousness and not to cover a defect.

By the end of the eleventh century the most influential ceramic genres were Ding white porcelain, Yaozhou blue-greenware, Cizhou colorful pieces, and blackwares with abstract decorations, all produced at many kilns distributed all over the country.[40] Of these many manufacturing sites, the one located at Qingliangsi, in today's Baofeng county (Henan), was destined to make history. Established in the Northern Song period to produce Yaozhou-type *qingci* (also made in the nearby Linru kiln),[41] its potters experimented with translucent bluish glazes, some showing opalescent effects, and rapidly developed an unusual genre, distinguished by a sky-blue glaze enhanced by the presence of crackles and the absence (in most cases) of decorative motifs. This new type was called Ru ware from the name of the prefecture under whose administration Qingliangsi fell at the time. What prompted Ru potters to create such a subtle and apparently unassuming ceramic is difficult to ascertain;[42] the aesthetic and technological precedent can be traced in Five Dynasties Yaozhou blue-greenware, which was fully glazed, fired on spurs, sky blue, and unadorned. Whatever the cause, Ru ware completely broke with the late eleventh century fashionable style of Ding, Yaozhou, and Cizhou wares. Concerning the production date of Ru ceramics from the 1080s, scholars seem to agree since the astonishing archaeological campaign carried out in 2000–02 confirmed Qingliangsi as the manufacturing place of the Ru pieces kept in the most important museum collections in the world.[43] However, the situation is much more complex and can only be understood through a careful evaluation of the archaeological results of the whole area (not just the portion of *locus* IV) excavated in 2000–02 together with the discoveries of the 2012–14 campaign.[44] Qingliangsi *locus* IV seems to have been set up slightly later than the others and in its early stage, while producing Yaozhou-type, white and black wares (like the other *loci* so far excavated), it also developed Ru glaze, which in the following phase virtually became the only genre manufactured here. The concentration on one single type of excellent quality and its further technological advancement[45] reveal that Ru ware attracted some sort of special attention and no effort was spared to improve it over a short period of time. The stratigraphic sequence of *locus* IV is reasonably clear, while the absolute dating of the layers is more challenging. Archaeologists have relied on excavated coins: one from the 元豐 Yuanfeng era (1078–85) of Emperor Shenzong reign found in the lower levels (labeled as "early phase") and a few dating from the 元符Yuanfu era (1098–1100) of Emperor 哲宗 Zhezong (r. 1085–1100) and the 政和Zhenghe era (1111–1118) of Emperor Huizong in strata above (grouped together as the "mature phase").[46] If we accept this dating method, it is

possible to conclude that *locus* IV was set up as an expansion of the Qingliangsi kiln not earlier than 1078, and sometime between 1111 and 1118 it specialized in the firing of Ru ware. Particular aspects of the production mode, such as the manufacture of one single ware of superb quality, the practice of rejecting imperfect objects (found as a thick layer of discarded fragments), and the presence of all the production features from preparing the clay to kilns, suggest a commission of imperial nature. Production at Qingliangsi continued on an even larger scale after the escape of a scion of the Song court to the south, when northern China fell to the Jurchen in 1127. *Locus* IV made a kind of ceramics almost identical to Northern Song Ru ware, which the archaeologists who excavated the site have decided to label as "Ru-type," to distinguish it from that produced in the late Northern Song period. This was manufactured at least until the end of the Jin dynasty, when the production of *locus* IV merged with the rest of the Qingliangsi kiln which, in the meantime, had been firing high-quality blue-green, Jun, and Cizhou black-painted-on-white wares.[47]

Roughly 50 kilometers from the Ru kilns, the Shenhouzhen manufactory in today's Yuzhou also developed translucent, sky-blue glazes, but the kind with opalescent effects, destined to be known as Jun ware, rather than the Ru variety made at Qingliangsi. The traditional dating of Jun ceramics, which attributed the flowerpots sub-type to the Northern Song period and classified it as imperial ware, was unsettled by the archaeological campaign carried out in 2001.[48] The excavation results showed that Liujiamen potters in Shenhouzhen developed a ware characterized by a rather thick and coarse stoneware body coated with a relatively thick layer of opal-blue glaze (which would have made any carved decoration useless). Objects were fully glazed and fired on large spurs or on a glaze-free footrim. Very soon Liujiamen craftsmen were creating stunning visual effects by adding abstract purple splashes on the dry blue coating; these pieces could also be fully glazed and fired on spurs. Both monochrome and splashed specimens of extremely high quality have emerged from the bottom layers of the Liujiamen kiln site together with Yaozhou-type *qingci* (which constituted the main output), also of exquisite workmanship. The team of scholars who excavated the site dated these strata to the first quarter of the twelfth century, that is, to Emperor Huizong's reign, on the basis of careful stratigraphic analysis, presence of coins, comparisons between excavated pieces and datable ones, and historic context—so far not taken into account. Not everybody agrees with this dating: the Henan Cultural Relics and Archaeology Institute, for example, suggests revising the periodization of the lowest levels of the Liujiamen site in relation to the inferior strata they revealed at the Donggou site in Ruzhou, whose content is very similar to that at Liujiamen, but the

dating cannot precede the Jin dynasty on the basis of a coin of the Jianyan era (1127–30).[49] Coins are undoubtedly useful in dating, but their exact position at the time of discovery must be carefully considered in order to avoid hasty conclusions. In archaeological stratigraphy, it is impossible to identify the line clearly dividing one dynasty from the next, unless major changes occurred, and as archaeological excavations at many kiln sites all over northern China have demonstrated, in many cases production under the Jin dynasty continued following in the footsteps of the Song,[50] to the point that objects displayed in museums or published in catalougs bear a caption suggesting the period from the end of the Northern Song to the beginning of the Jin dynasty. Maybe the initial phase of the Donggou kiln ought to be put forward to the last years of the Northern Song and considered as one of the many sites established in the area after Liujiamen to produce Jun ware, before this genre became extremely popular in the Jin period, when it was made at tens of manufactories in Henan province and then also in Hebei, Shanxi, and even Inner Mongolia.[51]

Why Jun ware was developed is difficult to establish, but what is undeniable, despite the coarser body, opal-blue glaze, and large spurs, is the connection between monochrome Jun and Ru ware. In 2014 I had the opportunity to examine Jun sherds recently excavated in Baofeng and to compare them with Qingliangsi Ru ware and Zhanggongxiang samples:[52] I was struck by the visual similarities between Jun and Ru glazes and their superb quality. As early as 1951, after an extensive surface investigation that took him from Linruzhen to Yuzhoushi, Chen Wanli陳萬里 (1892–1969) concluded that blue Jun appeared when Ru ware declined—that is, after the collapse of the Northern Song dynasty—while splashed Jun was a Yuan production.[53] Archaeological evidence available at present (almost seventy years after Chen Wanli's pioneering work) shows that opal-blue Jun began to be made in the early twelfth century, maybe just slightly later than Ru ware, but at least for a few years at the end of the Northern Song dynasty they were both fired at nearby kilns. What induced Liujiamen potters to develop the opalescent blue glaze rather than the crackled, light sky-blue coating characteristic of Ru ware may not be easy to pinpoint, although Nigel Wood has suggested that Jun glazes may have appeared naturally as a result of slight changes concerning raw materials—in particular the wood ash component—used for Northern Song blue-green glazes.[54]

It could be the unavailability of materials with specific characteristics that prevented Liujiamen craftsmen from accomplishing the Ru glaze,[55] or they may have been forbidden from doing so. Whatever the case, their inspiration came from Ru, as the technique of full glazing and firing on spurs, albeit large, suggests.[56] The overall effect of Jun ceramics is not as delicate as Ru

ware, and the aesthetics of purple-splashed Jun is altogether different, but the point on which to reflect is that at the end of the Northern Song period two nearby kilns developed translucent sky-blue glazes applied on undecorated objects, signaling the introduction of an original ceramic style.

The significant changes in the arts are usually attributed to Emperor Huizong, whose role as arbiter of taste is undeniable. Recent research has totally revised his traditionally stereotyped portrait as a weak emperor absorbed in the arts, rather than in state affairs.[57] His choices were indeed very political: a great advocate of the New Policies first elaborated by Wang Anshi and championed during most of his reign by 蔡京 Cai Jing (1046–1126), Emperor Huizong continued to reform the education system, the first step to "unifying morality and making customs uniform" to ultimately transform society.[58] In the firm belief that government institutions should be universal and available to everybody, he had schools established in prefectures and counties all over the empire with specialized ones to study painting, calligraphy, mathematics, and medicine.[59] In this way, court painters, besides being talented with the brush, also received a full education. Furthermore, Huizong is well known for being an avid collector who ordered the compilation of detailed catalougs of calligraphies, paintings, and bronzes in the imperial treasury. This was not simply an act of love for the arts and antiquities: there were political reasons behind these huge cultural endeavors, until recently scarcely emphasized. Rather than relating to the institutional models of the Han and Tang dynasties, Song emperors aspired to restore the "golden age of antiquity" to legitimize their power, picturing themselves as the sage kings of antiquity who by their very rectitude guaranteed the perfect order of the cosmos and a moral society. In this context, it is not surprising that ancient bronzes were esteemed. Emperors collected them and so did the literati, who appreciated ancient ritual vessels for both the content of their inscriptions (which provided information about the past) and the style of calligraphy in which they were written. Bronze collecting by the court reached an unprecedented pinnacle with Emperor Huizong, who reformed rituals and music and had new instruments cast after ancient bronzes in the imperial repository, in order to make sure that the rites would be performed correctly.[60] The interest that both the court and the educated class manifested for ancient bronzes influenced ceramic shapes and decorations with the appearance of ritual forms and motifs depicting metal vessels (Figs. 11.4, 11.5).

In relation to ceramics, Huizong is held responsible for choosing Ru style, with its bluish, subtle glaze, over decorated wares which irremediably fell out of favour. Rogers suggested that a Song imperial ceramic style was created by Emperor Huizong when Ru glaze—inspired by Korean blue-green

FIGURE 11.4: Fragment of Ding ware showing the motif of a metal vase from the *Bogutu*. From Mu Qing, "Dingyao baici zhuangshi jifa ji dingshengqi de dianxing wenyang," in *Zhongguo Dingyao*, ed., Beijing Yishu Bowuguan (Beijing: Zhongguo huaqiao chubanshe, 2012), 290.

FIGURE 11.5: Fragment of a *ding*-shaped vase with decorations imitating those on ancient bronze vessels. Porcelain, Ding ware, excavated in 2009 at the Ding kiln site in Quyang. Hebei Cultural Relics Institute. Photograph by the author.

ware and developed since the 1080s in an area frequented by "fashion-inspiring individuals," like Ruzhou governor Su Zhe (1039–1112)—was brought to his attention.[61] According to Rogers' reconstruction of events, sometime between 1111 and 1118,[62] officials of the *houyuan zuo* (rear-courtyard workshops), which supplied the imperial household with all sorts of goods, summoned Ru potters to the capital to establish a palace kiln. In this way Huizong could directly supervise the court manufactory to meet his aesthetic requirements, which were then inherited by the Guan kilns established in Hangzhou by the Southern Song court under the jurisdiction of the Xiuneisi (Palace Maintenance Office).[63] Despite many attempts, the kiln site producing so-called Northern Guan ware still eludes us,[64] but given the outer aspect of Ru and Southern Guan ceramics, we are inclined to assume that Northern Guan was characterized by a subtle, sky-blue, translucent and crackled glaze. Rogers is right in arguing about the formation of an imperial taste for ceramics in the twelfth century; however, the archaeological data available at present (if carefully read and interpreted) show different mechanics of change. First of all, subtle sky-blue glazes with (or without) crackles were developed before Huizong's reign, in the early 1080s when Su Zhe (Su Shi's younger brother) was governor of Ruzhou and

production of Ru ware at Qingliangsi *locus* IV (lower levels) was still entirely commercial. The initial success of the new type of glaze was determined by the taste of the literati who appreciated the spontaneity and simplicity of Ru ware for a few decades, before Huizong noticed it and placed a commission at Qingliangsi (*locus* IV upper levels).

This choice did not eclipse the other genres and did not prohibit their use at court. As clearly demonstrated by archaeological evidence, intensely decorated Yaozhou, Ding, and Cizhou wares were developed at the end of the eleventh century and continued to be made after the invention of delicate, sky-blue translucent glazes (Ru and Jun) and after Emperor Huizong commissioned Ru ware for court use. The high quality of Yaozhou, Ding, Cizhou, Jun, and black wares implies that they were destined for the upper social classes, while inscriptions and documents attest that Yaozhou and Ding were still accepted at court.[65] This shows that both the vibrant and the subtle styles coexisted, at the palace as well as among the literati. Despite the fact that for Northern Song scholars it was paramount to define their identity as distinct from that of the throne, the two spheres inevitably interacted and influenced each other. Furthermore, it seems natural that, given the many purposes of ceramics, certain types were preferred for certain functions, therefore one genre did not exclude the others. Ru shapes unearthed at Qingliangsi mainly consist of objects to be used in everyday life, but by refined people who enjoyed them to eat their meals, drink tea and wine, display flowers, burn fragrances, store food or other substances, and support other objects. From the upper layers of *locus* IV have emerged a few specimens whose shape imitates ancient bronze vessels (Fig. 11.6), thus suggesting their use in some kind of ritual context.

The amount of examples of this category at Laohudong kiln site within the Southern Song palace precinct in Hangzhou, as well as at Qingliangsi *locus* IV under the Jin dynasty and at Zhanggongxiang, is considerably higher in both quantity and variety, thus implying that at least a portion of the output of kilns established by the court was destined to be used in ceremonies. It seems therefore that the creation of the imperial ceramic style derived from late Song literati taste for translucent sky-blue glazes, and once it was appropriated by the palace it also served ritual purposes.[66] If the Northern Guan kiln really exists, I expect it to yield shapes inspired by ritual bronzes.[67]

The definition "imperial" can be applied to the Laohudong and Zhanggongxiang kilns as they were set up by the palace and exclusively supplied the court. Strictly speaking, Qingliangsi was a private commercial kiln, the section of which that produced what we call Ru ware (that is, *locus* IV) was ordered to make that specific type for the court. This did not make Qingliangsi *locus* IV an imperial kiln (as the rest of the complex continued

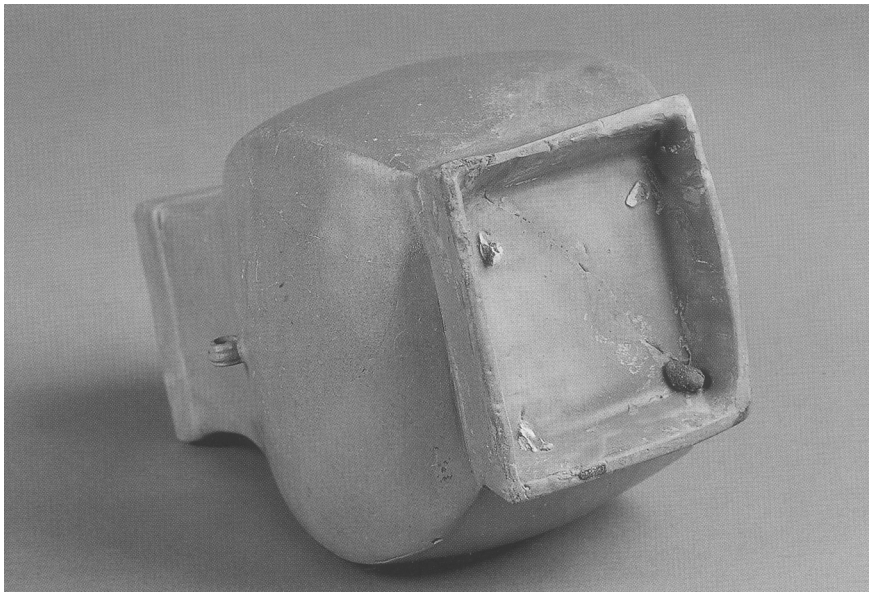

FIGURE 11.6: *Fanghu*-shaped vase, stoneware with blue-green glaze, Ru ware. Northern Song dynasty (960–1127), excavated at the Qingliangsi kiln site. From Henansheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo, *Baofeng Qingliangsi Ruyao zhi* (Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2008), color plate 160.

to fire other genres to be sold on the market), but it introduced a distinct production mode which later qualified imperial kilns. The same situation was maintained during the Jin dynasty, when Qingliangsi *locus* IV manufactured excellent Ru ware for the palace, while the other sections fired *qingci*, Jun, and Cizhou wares.

In conclusion it seems that Huizong's patronage marked a turning point in the history of ceramics in China, not so much for creating a ceramic style as for establishing a production standard observed by all the subsequent dynasties, no matter the prevailing taste of the time. This in turn finally elevated ceramics to the rank of prestigious material, worth collecting and writing about.

NOTES

1. Bernard Leach, *A Potter's Book* (London: Faber & Faber, 1940), 38; Shelagh J. Vainker, *Chinese Pottery and porcelain: From Prehistory to the Present* (London: British Museum Press, 1991), 88; Stacey Pierson with S.F.M. MaCausland, *Song Ceramics: Objects of Admiration* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies,

2003), 7–8; Stacey Pierson, "The Sung standard: Chinese ceramics and British studio pottery in the 20th century," in Stacey Pierson (ed.), *Song Ceramics: Art History, Archaeology, Technology: Colloquies on Art and Archaeology in Asia No. 22* (London: Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, 2004), pp. 81–102.

2. At Sotheby's Hong Kong 2018 Autumn Auction, a Qianlong period *falangcai* poppy bowl from the Yamanaka Collection sold at about € 19,000,000, while a reticulated porcelain vase from the same period and same collection fetched around € 17,000,000; see *Asian Art Newspaper* November 2018.
3. The title of this chapter partially follows that of a paper by Mary Anne Rogers, "The mechanics of change: the creation of a Song imperial ceramic style," in George Kuwuyama (ed.), *New Perspectives on the Art of Ceramics in China* (Los Angeles: Far Eastern Art Council, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, University of Hawaii Press, 1992), pp. 64–79. This was done on purpose to pay tribute to Rogers' research which I found illuminating.
4. John W. Dardess, "La tripartizione della Cina (960–1279)," in Mario Sabattini and Maurizio Scarpari (eds.), *La Cina: L'età imperiale dai Tre Regni ai Qing* (Turin: Einaudi, 2010), pp. 52–66.
5. Ibid.
6. Only 2 percent of Northern Song high officials had aristocratic origins and of all the biographies of eminent people of the same period reported in the *Songshi*, only thirty-two concern descendants of noble families. Mario Sabattini, "La società cinese dalla caduta della dinastia Han al XIV secolo," in Mario Sabattini and Maurizio Scarpari (eds.), *La Cina: L'età imperiale dai Tre Regni ai Qing* (Turin: Einaudi, 2010), p. 374.
7. Coincidentally, most of the members of this circle were "conservatives" opposing the reforms promoted by Wang Anshi (1021–86), and for this very reason they lost their high positions at court and were sent to serve in remote prefectures. This group is comparatively well known and researched because many more written records have been preserved (and commented upon) over the centuries, while information related to the reformers, regarded as responsible for the downfall of the Northern Song dynasty, was deemed not worth keeping; see Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Accumulating Culture: The Collections of Emperor Huizong* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2008), p. 44.
8. For different approaches and feelings about collecting by eminent scholars, see Ronald Egan, *The Problem of Beauty: Aesthetic Thought and Pursuits in Northern Song Dynasty China* (Cambridge (Massachussetts) and London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), 162–236.
9. Buckley Ebrey, *Accumulating Culture*, 6, p. 17.
10. Kent Deng and Lucy Zheng, "Economic restructuring and demographic growth: demystifying growth and development in Northern Song China, 960–1127," *Economic History Review* 68, no. 4 (2015): 1107–1131.
11. Sabattini, "La società cinese," p. 375.
12. Richard Von Glahn, "Le trasformazioni dell'economia nella Cina dei Song (907–1279)," in Mario Sabattini and Maurizio Scarpari (eds.), *La Cina: L'età imperiale dai Tre Regni ai Qing* (Turin: Einaudi, 2010), pp. 169–73.

13. Buckley Ebrey, *Accumulating Culture*, p. 77.
14. This happened in previous times too, but while before the output consisted of a small portion of high-quality pieces and a large one of lower quality, the situation changed in the eleventh century.
15. For this and the following comments on the peony see Egan, *The Problem of Beauty*, pp. 109–161.
16. Ibid.
17. Printing with earthenware movable characters was invented in the eleventh century, but in the Song dynasty woodblock printing remained the most common method. Angelica C. Messner and Martina Siebert, "Scienza e tecnologia," in Mario Sabattini and Maurizio Scarpari (eds.), *La Cina: L'età imperiale dai Tre Regni ai Qing* (Turin: Einaudi, 2010), 891–92; Egan, *The Problem of Beauty*, p. 144.
18. Deng and Zheng, "Economic restructuring and demographic growth," pp. 1107–1131.
19. Egan, *The Problem of beauty*, 144–161; Robert Harrist, *Painting and Private Life in Eleventh-Century China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), pp. 46–60.
20. Harrist, *Painting and Private Life*, pp. 46–60.
21. Egan, *The Problem of Beauty*, p. 149.
22. Sabrina Rastelli, Nigel Wood, and Chris Doherty, "Technological development at the Huangbao kiln site, Yaozhou, in the 9th to 11th centuries AD – Some analytical and microstructural examination," in Guo Jingkun (ed.), 古陶瓷科学技术 5. 国际讨论会论文集 *Gu taoci kexue jishu 5. Guoji taolunhui lunwenji (ISAC '02)* (Shanghai: Shanghai kexue jishu wenxian chubanshe 2002), pp. 179–193; Sabrina Rastelli, *The Yaozhou Kilns: A Re-evaluation* (Venice: Libreria Editrice Cafoscarina, 2008), p. 154; Julian Henderson, *The Science and Archaeology of Materials: An Investigation of Inorganic Materials* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 166.
23. Nigel Wood, "Nought-point-two per cent titanium dioxide: a key to Song ceramics?," to be published in the *Proceedings of the European Meeting on Ancient Ceramics* (EMAC), 15th edition, 2019, Barcelona, I am extremely grateful to Professor Wood for sharing with me the unpublished version; Jingyi Shen et al., "Chemical and strontium isotope analysis of Yaozhou celadon glaze," *Archaeometry*, vol. 61, no. 6 (2019): 1039–1052.
24. This type remained the main output of the Guantai kilns for a long period of time: so-called "imitation Ding" was made until the early thirteenth century, while plain white-slipped pieces continued to be produced, although the quality deteriorated. Beijing daxue kaogu xuexi，Henansheng wenwu yanjiusuo，Handan diqu wenwu baoguansuo, *Guantai Cizhou yaozhi* (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1997), pp. 477–80, 594–98.
25. This term is rather ambiguous: it translates the Chinese word 民*min* (people), in which case it indicates wares made by non-official kilns and destined to be used by common people, that is, not the imperial house, and it also refers to the nature of the ceramic centre managed by private owners. As in English this term

also means something suited to the taste of the general public, rather than intellectuals, I prefer to translate *min* as "private" or "commercial" in relation to the type of management of the manufacture, with no implications on the aesthetic quality of the objects there produced.

26. Hugh R. Clark, "The southern kingdoms between the T'ang and the Sung," in Denis Twitchett and Paul Jakov Smith (eds.), *The Cambridge History of China. Vol. 5, part 1: The Sung Dynasty and its Precursors (907–1279)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 175, 284, 594–5.
27. Simon K.S. Chiu, "The history of tea and tea-making in China as recorded in texts, paintings and artefacts," in Flagstaff House Museum of Tea Ware (ed.), *Chinese Ceramic Tea Vessels: The K.S. Lo Collection, Flagstaff House Museum of Tea Ware* (Hong Kong: Urban Council, 1991), pp. 33–35.
28. Egan, *The Problem of Beauty*, pp. 182–185.
29. Livio Zanini, "Form and significance of tea connoisseurship in the late Ming dynasty," unpublished PhD diss., University of Ljubljana, 2017, pp. 35–38.
30. Flagstaff House Museum of Tea ware, *Chinese Ceramic Tea Vessels*, pp. 26–43.
31. Cai Xiang, 茶錄 *Cha Lu*, quoted in ibid.
32. Rose Kerr and Nigel Wood, *Joseph Needham Science and Civilization in China vol. 5: Chemistry and Chemical Technology part XII: Ceramic Technology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 273.
33. Rastelli, *The Yaouzhou Kilns*, pp. 93–95.
34. Qin Dashu, "Dingyao de lishi diwei ji kaogu gongzuo," in Beijing yishu bowuguan (ed.), *Zhongguo Dingyao* (Beijing: Zhongguo huaqiao chubanshe, 2012), p. 258. For the question of upside-down firing, see Huang Xing, "Dingyao wai gua youqi zhuangshi fangfa tanxi," in Beijing yishu bowuguan (ed.), *Zhongguo Dingyao* (Beijing: Zhongguo huaqiao chubanshe, 2012), pp. 292–299.
35. Qin Dashu, "Dingyao de lishi diwei ji kaogu gongzuo," p. 258.
36. Lu You (1125–1210), *Laoxue an biji* , in *Qinding siku quanshu*, *zi* section no. 171, *zajia* category, general vol. 865, *juan* 2, f. 11a, says: "At the time of the old capital Ding ware was not admitted into the Palace. Only Ru ware was used because Ding vessels had rough mouthrims." The same or similar sentence appears in other records: Ye Zhi's *Tangzhai biheng*, surviving only in the form of excerpts included in Tao Zongyi's *Chuogeng lu*, published in 1366; Gu Wenjian's *Fuxuan zalu*, published between 1260 and 1279, but surviving only in the form of extracts included in another writing by Tao Zongyi, the *Shuofu*, its preface dating 1370.
37. Qin Dashu, "Dingyao de lishi diwei ji kaogu gongzuo," p. 269; Beijing yishu bowuguan, *Zhongguo Dingyao* (Beijing: Zhongguo huaqiao chubanshe, 2012), p. 71.
38. The event is reported in the fourth *juan* of the 吴越備史 *Wu-Yue bei shi*, see Beijing yishu bowuguan, *Zhongguo Dingyao*, p. 70.
39. Shaanxisheng kaogu yanjiusuo, Shaanxi lishi bowuguan, and Beijing daxue kaogu wenbo xueyuan, *Yishi tongtiao: Shaanxi Lantian Lü shi jiazu mudi chutu wenwu Fine relics unearthed from the cemetery of the Lu clan in Lantian, Shaanxi province* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2013).

40. The main centres imitating Ding porcelain were Jingdezhen, then called Raozhou, Xiaoxian, and Fanchang in Anhui province, Pengxian in Sichuan, Pingding, Mengxian, Yangcheng, Jiexiu, and Huozhou in Shanxi; Yaozhou-type ware was manufactured at most sites in northern China (the more notable being Linru and Baofeng in Henan), it took the lead on Yue kilns too and was extensively reproduced at Rongxian in Guangxi, Xicun, and Huizhou in Guangdong; Cizhou pieces were made in Hebei, Henan (Mixian, Dengfeng, Lushan), Shanxi, Shaanxi, and Shandong. The picture of ceramic manufacture in China is growing ever more complex, as archaeological excavations increase and show that, unlike what we thought until now, there were many more kilns than ever imagined and they were closely interconnected; the overall output was staggering.
41. As already mentioned, in the Northern Song period Yaozhou was the most influential kiln for the production of blue-green ware with carved decoration; of the many centres that imitated it, Linru in Henan province was probably the leading one. The site was excavated by Peking University in the 1990s, but the archaeological report has never been published. Recently an MA thesis was written on the subject: Chen Dongqiang, "Linruyao qingci yanjiu," unpublished PhD diss., Zhengzhou University, 2010. In 2001, Professor Qin Dashu of Peking University let me examine the recently excavated Linru material which, in comparison with Yaozhou ware, shows a more transparent, green, shiny, and crackled glaze. The Qingliangsi kiln was probably established as a satellite factory to sustain increasing production of Yaozhou-type ware at the nearby Linru Kiln.
42. Rogers, "The mechanics of change," p. 66, suggests a Korean connection.
43. Henansheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo, *Baofeng Qingliangsi Ruyao zhi* (Daxiang chubanshe, 2008).
44. Qin Dashu, "Ruyao de kaoguxue guancha yu tantao," *Zijincheng* no. 11 (2015): pp. 83–103.
45. The stratigraphy shows that the application of a thick layer of glaze on biscuit-fired shapes was developed slightly later, together with the practice of sealing the saggars with glaze in order to guarantee a more successful reduction firing; the amount of fully glazed pieces fired on small spurs (rather than on the wiped footrim) also increased considerably in the upper layers, see Qin Dashu, "Ruyao de kaoguxue," pp. 99–100.
46. Henansheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo, *Baofeng Qingliangsi Ruyao zhi*, p. 140.
47. Qin Dashu, "Ruyao de kaoguxue," p. 99.
48. Qin, Dashu, Zhao Wenjun, and Li Jing, "Henansheng Yuzhoushi Shenhouzhen Liujiamen Junyao yizhi fajue jianbao," *Wenwu* no. 11 (2003): pp. 25–52; Sabrina Rastelli, "The controversial history of Jun ware/La controversa storia delle ceramiche Jun," in Giovanni Repetti, Sabrina Rastelli, and R.L. Enseki Hancock (eds.), *Jun Shards in the Collection of the Chinese Museum of Parma* (Brescia: CSAM, 2011), pp. 1–15; Li Baoping, "Numbered Jun wares: controversies and new kiln site discoveries," *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* vol. 71 (2008), pp. 65–77; Qin Dashu, and Xu Huafeng, *Beixuan Shuzhai. Junyao Jun yao ceramics from the the Beixuan Shuzhai collection* (Hong Kong: Muwen Tang Fine Arts Publication, 2017).

49. Henansheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo, "Henan Ruzhoushi Donggou ciyaozhi fajue jianbao," *Huaxia kaogu* no. 2 (2009): 12–33.
50. Sabrina Rastelli, "Il grande sviluppo della produzione ceramica di epoca Jin," in Magda Abbiati and Federico Greselin (eds.), *Il liuto e i libri: Studi in onore di Mario Sabattini* (Venice: Edizioni Ca' Foscari, 2014), pp. 753–766; Sabrina Rastelli, "Jindai foushi Yaozhouyao de shuaitui shiqi," in Yaozhouyao Bowuguan (ed.), *Zhongguo Yaozhouyao: Guoji xueshu taolunhui wenji* (Xi'an: San Qin chubanshe, 2005), pp. 30–34.
51. Rastelli, "The controversial history of Jun ware," pp. 1–15.
52. The Zhanggongxiang site in Ruzhou city (20 km from Qingliangsi) was discovered in 2000, while the Henan Cultural Relics and Archaeology Institute was excavating at Qingliangsi. Zhanggongxiang was excavated again in 2001 and 2003–04. As soon as it was discovered it was identified as the site manufacturing Northern Guan ware (Guo Musen, "Ruzhou Zhanggongxiangyao de fajue yu chubu yanjiu," in Henansheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo (ed.), *Ruyao yu Zhanggongxiangyao chutu ciqi* (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 2009), p. 173; Guo Musen, "Qiantan Ruyao, Guanyao yu Ruzhou Zhanggongxiangyao," *Zhongguo gu taoci yanjiu* no. 7 (2001): 11–12), but after a more careful study the production date was postponed to the mid Jin period and the kiln was classified as an imperial kiln serving the Jin court; see Hee-gwan Lee, "Ruzhou Zhanggongxiangyao de niandai yu xingzhi wenti tansuo," *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* no. 3 (2013): 20–38. Some scholars believe that it was set up quite late in the Jin dynasty and was still active during the mongol period; see Qin Dashu, "Songadai Guanyao de zhuyao tedian—Jian tan Yuan Ruzhou qingciqi," *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* no. 12 (2009): 68. I had the opportunity to handle the sherds in 2001 and they looked very similar to Ru ware from Qingliangsi; only a very careful comparison revealed that Zhanggongxiang specimens were slightly paler and with less crackles, while the spur marks were rounder. If the dating of the Zhanggongxiang kiln to the mid Jin and early Yuan is accurate, it means that the standards established by Qingliangsi Ru ware were observed for quite a long period of time after the Northern Song dynasty had fallen.
53. Chen Wanli, "Ruyao de wo jian," *Wenwu cankao ziliao* no. 2 (1951): 46–53; Chen Wanli, "Yuzhou zhi xing," *Wenwu cankao ziliao* no. 2 (1951): 53–56; Rastelli, "The controversial history of Jun ware," pp. 1–15.
54. At a talk at Harvard Art Museum in March 2019, Professor Nigel Wood advanced this theory and supported it by using analyses of Donggou glazes provided by the Palace Museum to show that compositions at the same Donggou site could shade from blue-green to Jun. He subsequently tested this theory in practice: by simply changing the type of wood ash in the basic glaze recipe (without altering the percentage), the glaze fired either as a Jun-type or a green celadon. I am extremely grateful to Professor Wood for sharing with me these pieces of valuable information.
55. Ru is an aluminous lime glaze, rich in iron and low in titania, probably made from granite, similar to Five Dynasties Yaozhou ware; see Kerr and Wood, *Joseph Needham Science and Civilization in China*, pp. 604–605.

56. It is possible that Jun ware was developed as a consequence of the success met by Ru at court, but there is not enough hard evidence to prove it and personally I am more inclined to believe that the two genres stemmed from experiments to renew production and compete on the market.
57. Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Maggie Bickford (eds.), *Emperor Huizong and Late Northern Song China: The Politics of Culture and the Culture of Politics* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006); Buckley Ebrey, *Accumulating Culture*.
58. Peter K. Bol, "Emperors can claim antiquity too: Emperorship and autocracy under the New Policies," in Buckley Ebrey and Bickford (eds.), *Emperor Huizong and Late Northern Song China*, p. 182.
59. All the schools from the National Academy down were organized according to the three-hall structure; the intention was to substitute the old examination system with this new scheme based on entrance and promotion exams and scholarships for the students. John Chaffee, "Huizong, Cai Jing, and the politics of reform," in Buckley Ebrey and Bickford (eds.), *Emperor Huizong and Late Northern Song China*, pp. 31–77.
60. The Agency for Deliberating on Rituals was established in 1107 to revise liturgies for court rituals described in two compendia published in the Daguan (1107–1110) and Zhenghe (1111–1118) eras; of these only the second one survives: 政和五禮新儀 *Zhenghe wuli xinyi* (New rituals for the five categories of rites of the Zhenghe period). Buckley Ebrey, *Accumulating Culture*, 166–7; Egan, *The Problem of Beauty*, pp. 13–14.
61. Rogers, "The mechanics of change," p. 66.
62. Ye Zhi, *Tanzhai biheng* in Tao Zongyi, *Chuogeng lu*.
63. Rogers, "The mechanics of change," p. 72.
64. When Qingliangsi was excavated, some scholars believed that Ru coincided with Northern Guan (Li Huibing, "Songdai Guanyao ciqi zhi yanjiu," *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* no. 2 (1992): 3–17 and 98–100); when the Zhanggongxiang site was discovered, the immediate reaction was to declare it the manufacturing place for Northern Guan (Guo Musen, "Ruzhou Zhanggongxiangyao de fajue yu chubu yanjiu"; Guo Musen, "Qiantan Ruyao, Guanyao yu Ruzhou Zhanggongxiangyao") and lately rumours that the Huizong's manufactury is located in Kaifeng are spreading (verbal exchange with Qin Dashu and Ning Xia, Wang Zhiguo, and Wang Hui, "Bei Song Guanyao yizhi zai Kaifeng dongjiao cunzai de kenengxing," *Dongfang shoucang* no. 8 (2012): 78–82).
65. The presence of inscriptions on Ding ware attesting that it did still enter the Song court was mentioned above, Qin Dashu, "Dingyao de lishi diwei ji kaogu gongzuo," p. 269; for an analysis of Yaozhou kilns paying tribute see Rastelli, *The Yaozhou Kilns*, pp. 33–34, 43–45.
66. This does not mean that official kilns only fired sacrificial vessels, but as the objects were produced by the court for the court, some of them were specifically shaped to be used in ritual contexts.
67. This observation disputes the common explanation given to justify the presence of ritual shapes among Suthern Song Guan ware: as in his escape south the

future emperor Gaozong (1127–62) had left behind ceremonial bronzes, ritual vessels were made of ceramics, a quicker and cheaper method to solve the urgent matter. It seems instead that the practice of employing ceramic objects had been inaugurated by his father Huizong and did not depend on the shortage of bronze after fleeing to south China. All the more so since before establishing the official manufacture at Laohudong in 1145, the court placed several orders for ritual wares at the Yue complex at the Silongkou and Dilingtou kilns (Nigel Wood, Sabrina Rastelli, and Chris Doherty, "Five Dynasties Yaozhou Celadon: a True Ancestor to Laohudong Guan Ware?," in Stacey Pearson (ed.), *Percival David Foundation Colloquy on Art & Archaeology in Asia No. 22, Song Ceramics: Art, History, Archaeology and Technology* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 2004), p. 221; Nigel Wood and Sabrina Rastelli, "Parallel developments in Chinese porcelain technology in the 13th–14th centuries AD," in M. Martinon-Torres (ed.), *Craft and Science: International Perspectives on Archaeological Ceramics* (Doha: Bloomsbury Qatar Foundation, 2014), p. 227). If ceramic specimens were temporary substitutes for bronze ones, no doubt by 1145 the palace would have had the means to have bronze ritual vessels made.

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