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Made for trade - Made in China. Chinese export paintings in Dutch collections: art and commodity

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Chinese
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in Dutch
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Made for Trade — Made in China

Propositions / Stellingen

1. The distinction between 'art' and 'commodity' is not helpful for understanding the wide range of Chinese export paintings with their various emblematic, aesthetic, historical and material qualities.
2. In the broad spectrum of Chinese export art products, paintings are more valuable than other objects for relating the historical China trade to present-day trade practices between the Netherlands and China.
3. Our knowledge of eighteenth-century China would be greatly reduced if the Dutch art collector Jean Theodore Royer (1737-1807) had not had such a profound interest in China and its ordinary people, and without his decision to bequeath his collection to the King William I, laying the foundation for a future museum.
4. In the Netherlands too few people are in a position to intervene in current museum management of Chinese export paintings. We need better education and understanding to improve handling and appraisals of these materials, and to allow for value accrument.
5. To establish the value of Chinese export paintings, a single voice does not suffice. It needs a community to consolidate the value of an artwork and to agree on appreciation, as values have no other rationale than usage and general agreement.
6. To get the collections of Chinese export paintings higher on the cultural heritage agenda, both within the Netherlands and beyond, finding resources and having innovative ideas are paramount.
7. The term 'Made in China' elicits negative perceptions and attitudes as well as a positive stance.
8. We need a diverse media ecology in order to disseminate academic work adequately.
9. Spinning workouts and intrinsic personal ambition are key to completing a dissertation.
10. A PhD thesis without a follow-up engenders feelings of redundancy and discontent in the author, regardless of the age of the 'young doctor'.

Rosalien van der Poel

30 November 2016
