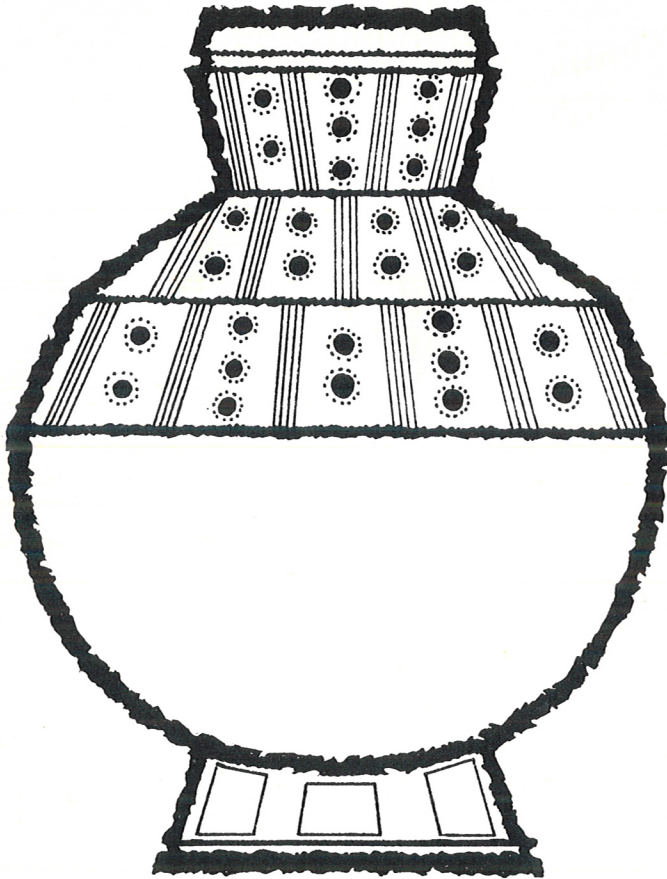
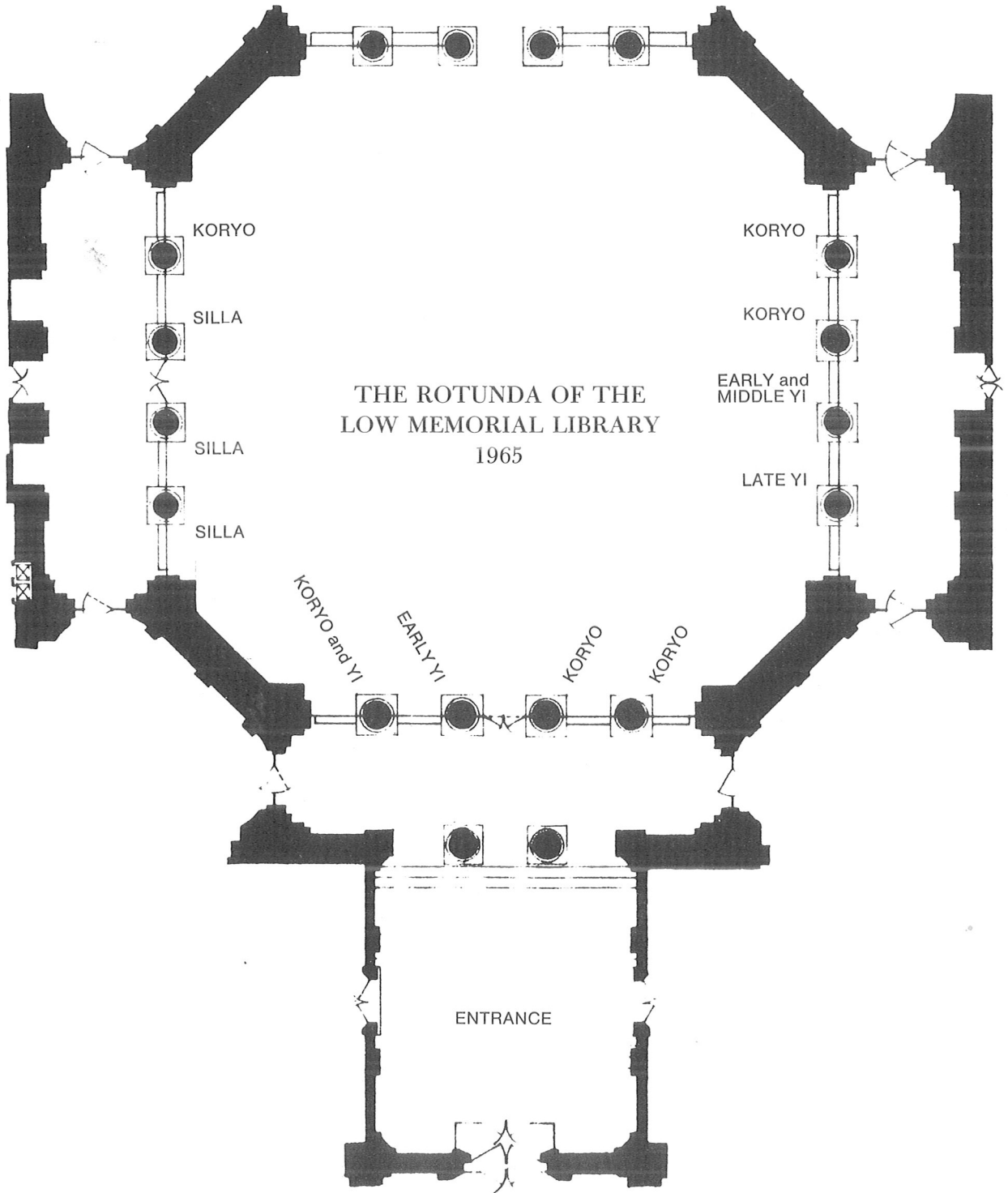


12-1-65



*The Columbia University
Exhibition of
Ceramics and Bronzes of Korea*

FROM THE SACKLER COLLECTIONS

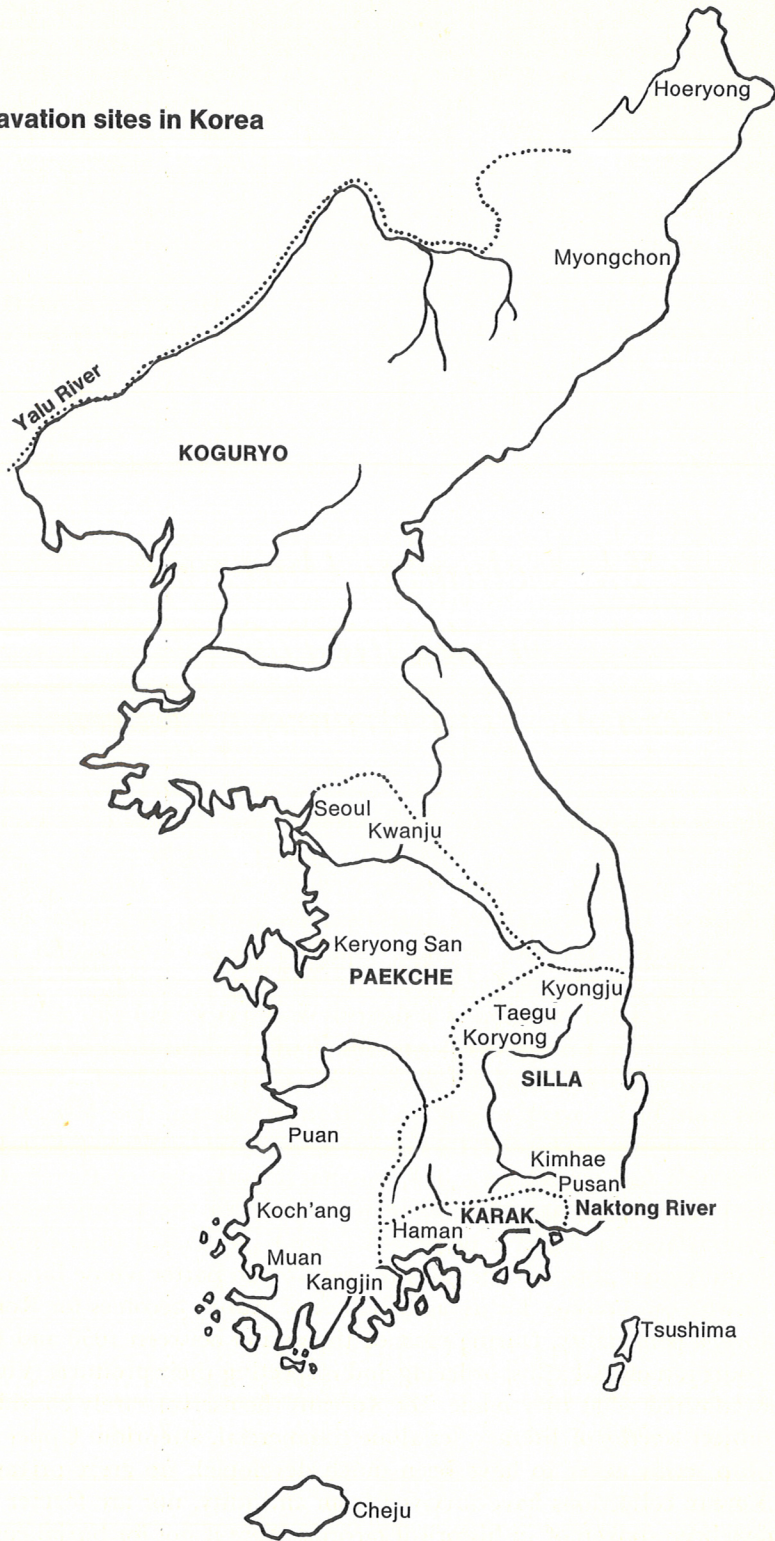


The Columbia University
Exhibition of
Ceramics and Bronzes of Korea

THE ROTUNDA
THE LOW MEMORIAL LIBRARY
DECEMBER, 1965

A PART OF THE PROGRAM
OF ADVANCED STUDIES AT THE GRADUATE FACULTIES
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK

Excavation sites in Korea



Foreword

FOR OVER TWO MILLENNIA, Koreans have made ceramics. Through a thousand years, between the rough red ware of prehistory and the white wares of Yi (from about 500-1500 A.D.), Korean production stood near the forefront of human achievement in this almost universal endeavor. Artistic ceramic production of today throughout much of Europe, America, Australia-New Zealand and Japan and the modern masters of the art, from Bernard Leach to Hamada Shoji and Kawai Kanjiro, owe to the potters of ancient Korea a deep and acknowledged debt.

Such world rank was not consciously sought by Koreans in the past nor has it, until recent decades, even been widely suspected. Unlike Chinese pottery, Korean ware was not made for export and not known abroad, except for a few examples in the Chinese court or in Japan, mostly brought there between the 13th and 16th centuries. Ceramic production in Korea, unlike rugs in Persia, paintings in Europe or China, or swords and screens in Japan, was not a usual part of the country's prestige culture. It was manual labor, as such the work of the humble, often of slaves. It is anonymous; a handful of potters' names are known from rough inscriptions on individual pots, but there is not one Korean potter whose biography is recorded or who can become, for us, as Gislebert of Autun becomes for Romanesque sculpture, a personality. During most of the period between 1050 and 1883, the Korean court ran official kilns, ordering and inspecting their products. Visitors from abroad admired what they made. Yet Koreans themselves rarely considered ceramics a subject worthy of literary, let alone commercial, attention. Upper class connoisseurship seems never to have been much developed; no great private or even royal Korean collections have survived from antiquity, nor are former ones known to have been spoken of in historical records. Were it not for burial custom

this great art would have practically disappeared, leaving behind little more than enigmatic references. Few tributes to Korea's native artistic talent can be more telling than to note that its pottery was great, even when done with the culture's left hand.

Korean wares can be divided into five periods: prehistoric rough, soft, reddish or brown pottery; the monumental grey stoneware of the Kingdom of Silla from circa 450 to 668 A.D., when it was one of three kingdoms within the peninsula and occupied the southeastern quadrant of the country; the decorated stoneware of the period of Silla unification, 668-918 A.D., after Silla had engulfed the neighboring kingdoms of Koguryo and Paekche and united the peninsula under its rule; the Koryo period, 918-1392 A.D., a century of which from 1259-1354 was under Mongol domination; and the long Yi dynasty, 1392-1910. Few, if any, nations have a history of this degree of continuity, a people and a culture of such homogeneity and boundaries relatively so little changing. Yet despite this homogeneity and a territory not larger than the state of Minnesota, Korean pottery displays an astonishing variety and is united by few common characteristics. Some Chinese influence is discernible throughout, though the degree varies from very slight for Silla ware, to very great for early Koryo and Yi ceramics. Korean ware is, in almost all periods, heavy; no true porcelain, no tissue or translucent wares were produced. It shows considerable originality, inventiveness and spontaneity, expressed in form during Silla, in technique during Koryo, and in decoration during the Yi period. Little else is common to it except the lack of detailed surviving knowledge of its production and, in many cases, even of its uses.

The Columbia Exhibition of Ceramics and Bronzes of Korea, assembled and loaned by Dr. Arthur M. Sackler, is not dedicated to a representation of the heights of Korean ceramic achievement but, rather, seeks to stimulate study and appreciation of some of its variety and scope through 1500 years of production. In so doing it fills a considerable need; the attention of museums and, with the exception of Japanese, of private collectors has hitherto been largely confined to the single field of 12th and 13th century celadon and has neglected the achievements of the pottery, distinguished but quite different, which preceded and followed it. The Sackler collection begins the process of opening our eyes to this largely unexplored territory, the present exhibition being one of the first outside the Far East in which the pottery of the Korean kingdom of Silla has been displayed in any quantity or been awarded more than passing description. The objects in this exhibition were, for limitations of space, edited from the larger Sackler collection of Korean art which is still in its formative stage. There will be further exhibitions as the increased scope of the collection warrants.

Three Kingdoms and Silla

FOR PURPOSES OF THIS EXHIBITION, Korean wares up to the 10th century A.D. can be conveniently considered under one rubric. No prehistoric ware is included in the present collection and, though the history of Silla divides in the middle of the 7th century, its pottery and culture form a continuous tradition. Silla ware is distinguished with some sharpness from the prehistoric pottery which precedes it by the development, before the second half of the 4th century A.D., of the tunnel kiln. This kiln, which in Korea seems to have produced the highest temperatures then used in firing ceramics in East Asia, gradually transformed the soft reddish prehistoric wares into the hard grey stoneware characteristic of almost all Silla pottery. During this same period, the loose Korean village confederations known as *Han* tightened and centralized their political bonds, royal and queenly clans formed and a great central capitol developed at Kyongju, near the southeast coast, numbering eventually some half million inhabitants. From the 5th century onward, huge tumulus mound tombs were built into which quantities of pottery, sometimes over two hundred pieces for a single tomb, were placed following elaborate burial and memorial ceremonies. These tombs, enormous until the 7th century, and towering over the modern city of Kyongju like hills, with their contents of gold crowns or earrings, jewelry, iron implements and pottery, remain among the most imposing of all the cultural monuments of Korea. Indeed, the few millions of Silla's population made more hand-produced pottery for the use of living and dead than forty million modern Koreans make for themselves today.

Literary references in China's *Old T'ang History* make it clear that Silla pottery was made for household as well as for tomb use, but, as with the earliest bronzes of China, the exact range of its use or the conformity of shape to that usage can only be surmised. By far the commonest Silla form is the mounted cup, with or without

cover (8), known from at least the 4th into the 7th century. No estimate of the numbers of these can ever be made but tens of thousands must have appeared, broken or unbroken, scores—sometimes over a hundred—being found in single tombs. If a dining ware, this would imply a culture of frightening gregariousness. Perhaps these and other tomb furnishings were not simply the belongings of the deceased but contained also funeral gifts of friends and subordinates such as, now in cash, are still customary in Korea. Similarly, the high stands, surmounted by large jars (11 and 12) might have made an outdoor tomb-side ceremonial more visible and dramatic to assemblages of people, as befitted the great occasions of a vertically-structured society headed by high chieftains and important clans. Great storage jars, like the one shown (4), must have had use within the household for holding grains or liquids, the ware being so hard it needs no glaze to make it non-porous. A minor variant of Silla pottery is a light reddish ware of fine clay, soft and fired at low temperatures. Such ware comprises only a small portion of a tomb's pottery; it is often both simple and beautiful, some pieces with their horn-shaped handles echoing the prehistoric ware. Two examples are shown (2 and 7).

Silla pottery is unglazed with two general exceptions. One glaze, usually dull green, has an effect recalling somewhat the thicker green glaze of the ware of the Han Chinese colony of Lolang which colonized the northwestern portion of the peninsula from 108 B.C. to 313 A.D. Few fully-glazed Silla pieces have survived in lead green or, occasionally, yellow color showing the fragile continuity of the Han glazing technique in the peninsula. No such pieces are represented here. Silla maintained, especially from the 7th century onward, rather extensive contact with T'ang China, used Chinese script, and adopted Chinese Buddhism and governmental forms. Why influence was so narrow in the ceramic field, why, for example, no Silla version of the famous three-color T'ang glaze appeared in the peninsula, why Silla shapes are so disparate from those of T'ang, remain unsolved problems. For those who feel that shape, not decor, is the essential element of the potter's art, the result may have been fortunate. For, unable to rely on glaze and free of direct models, the Silla potter relied on form for his effects and devised his own in a variety and, often, a monumentality known to little of the world's ancient ceramic art.

Silla gradually absorbed the other kingdoms which had existed in the peninsula: Kaya to the south in 562 A.D., Paekche in the southwest in 660 and Koguryo in the north in 668. All these areas produced pottery and a large kiln site for Paekche pottery is known near Puyo. Koguryo pottery is comparatively rough and undecorated. Paekche pottery, also little decorated but graceful and refined, must formerly have been more numerous but seems to have suffered from the great deprivations of Paekche's tombs during the conquest and occupation by Silla and T'ang armies from 660-663 A.D. No Koguryo or Paekche pottery is included here. Kaya, a small, loosely-organized state lying along the southern coast and upward along the Naktong River presents a different story. It maintained close relations with Japan. Its pottery, among the finest produced in 4th-6th century Korea, left its imprint on *Yayoi* form and greatly influenced the less abundant ware of the later half of the tumulus period in Japan (5th-7th century), called *Sueki*, which can probably be considered a branch of the great southeastern ceramic art of Korea. Examples of Kaya pottery are noted below in the description of Cases 1 and 2.

Koryo Period (918-1392 A.D.)

THE KORYO DYNASTY was established as a result of the revolt of a frontier commander of Silla. The capitol was moved from Kyongju to Kaesong, forty miles northwest of Seoul. The new dynasty is usually described as providing comparatively little initial cultural and social break with its predecessor. In ceramics, however, it accomplished within its first 175 years a revolution. The steps of change are not all clear to us, but an inscribed jar dated 993 A.D., made for a shrine commemorating the dynasty's founder and suggestive of Chinese Yüeh influence, is decorated with a primitive, oxidized celadon glaze which appears to show that close contacts with China in the ceramic field had already begun. These seem to have been strengthened in the 11th century, especially during the fruitful reign of King Munjong, 1046-83, and to have led to the making of plain celadon ware under predominately Yüeh influence during the second half of the 11th century. It may well have been to raise the standard of the desirable new wares that official kilns, perhaps the first in the Far East, were established at Kangjin, South Cholla, on the western corner of the southern coast, and at Puan, South Ch'ungch'ong, on the southern part of the west coast. Here for centuries, until late in the dynasty, the finest of celadon wares were made in scores of different kilns, and many experiments in glazing and firing can be traced there in shard and product.

Other Chinese influence was soon exerted on production. The Sung traveller, Hsü Ching, visiting Kaesong in 1123, noted that Koryo had taken many Khitan captives following the fall of the Liao dynasty (between 1114 and 1124), that "one-tenth were artisans" and that the quality of ceramic ware and clothing had greatly improved. He also compared the "halcyon" color of Koryo celadon to "the secret color of old Yüeh" or "the ware of the new kilns at Ju-chou" and noted "furtive imitations" of the designs of Ting pottery. Shape, glaze and design of Koryo

celadon confirm such influence. One of its channels is also clear from the Sung ware found in Koryo tombs, a quantity far larger than has been found in Korea from all other Chinese dynastic periods combined. Various of these influences, discernible in the present exhibition, are described below. There is probably not a single shape of bowl or vase represented among the Koryo specimens here except, perhaps, that of the gourd-shaped ewer (59), which does not have its clear Sung or late T'ang progenitor.

The men of Koryo also shared with those of Sung a restless inventiveness. The technique of inlaying ware, here numerous represented, is the Koryo potter's invention, the first datable example coming from the tomb of a Koryo noble who died in 1159. The large celadon wine waste container (47), inlaid with lotus and floral design, is a fine example of this technique. In the latter part of the 12th century, the Koryo ceramic engineer seems also to have invented the later famous underglaze copper red decoration, a rare and difficult technique afterward much used in China but not illustrated in this exhibition. Koreans also seem to have made many innovations in the field of ceramic sculpture. They decorated with underglaze iron, underglaze slip white, and even used gold leaf and marbled clay decor. Perhaps their greatest triumph, however, will always remain their halcyon glaze: to it their own poets attributed "the radiance of jade...the crystal clarity of waters...as if the artist had borrowed the secret from heaven," and even the men of Sung judged it to outstrip their own official wares. Europe was not, of course, at this time within centuries of entering the race either technically or artistically.

The full glory of Koryo celadon endured just over a hundred years from about 1100 to the second decade of the 13th century. By the latter date, Koryo found herself weakened by that thoroughly modern disease, military coup and counter-coup. The first Mongol foray struck in 1219; it was followed by worse invasions in 1231-1235, a hostage-sending of 1241 and a decade of incursions from 1251 until complete Koryo capitulation in 1259. For a century, until 1354, Korean kings ruled under Mongol supervision. The country became impoverished and semichaotic. The bright glazes thickened, darkened, browned. Design, influenced by Mongol contact with the arabesquerie of Near Eastern art, became elaborate and fussy, then heavy. An example of this is the rare dragon-spouted ewer (59). Control over the kilns weakened and the potters introduced their own folk-art variations to the once stately classic themes of celadon design (65). The threshold to the folk-art-dominated world of Yi pottery had been reached.

Yi Dynasty (1392-1910 A.D.)

THE CYCLE STARTED during the dynastic change of 918-935 was in many ways repeated in 1392 when a Koryo general of a family named Yi (Lee) overthrew his masters, established a new dynasty, backed by many of the old aristocracy, and moved the capitol southeast to Seoul, where it has since remained. The overthrow was easy and bloodless and considerable cultural continuity endured. Buddhism, prop and heart of Koryo civilization, whose ceremonious and *beau monde* aristocracy had ruled the taste of the celadons, was disestablished by the anti-Buddhist intellectual elite guiding the new rulers. The neo-Confucianism of the Sung philosopher Chu Hsi became, for five hundred years, axle and driving rod of Yi culture and polity. Ties to China closed; the Ming dynasty became the national model.

As in early Koryo, the cultural internalization of these changes lagged. For decades, a somewhat mechanical version of late Koryo inlaid celadon technique known as *punch'ong* or, more widely in Japanese, *mishima*, continued to predominate. It was produced in many small artisan workshops which, in the 14th century, were established with especial frequency in Kyongsang Province, the orbit of the old Silla capitol. The pattern of archaeological survival from the 14th-15th century on suggests a certain levelling process: a larger number of small tombs contain pottery and the differences in quality between the contents of upper and middle class tombs narrows, partly, perhaps, because much of the aristocracy followed Ming injunctions not to fill their tombs with objects, partly because invasions with the weakening of the central government made possible social mobility and cultural diffusion of a nature clearer in tomb remains, so far, than in texts. For whatever reason, the 14th and 15th centuries usher in a period of widespread and varied activity by nongovernmental rural kilns, especially in the southern third of the peninsula, to service rising local demand. *Punch'ong* is soon mixed with,

then gradually displaced by, brushed or dipped white slip ware (see Case 8). White slip ware itself becomes decorated with designs painted in iron, first in the kilns of Keryong Mountain south of Seoul, the avant garde, "beat" art of the time (79); then, in the 16th and 17th centuries, in other kilns still farther south in Koch'ang, Muan, Hamp'yong and elsewhere. Fish attest to the local interests of Cholla Province and Cheju Island (76). The joyous spontaneity of local artists in painted iron design enlivens both a somber history and the surface of many handsome wares like the striking large storage jar in Case 7 (74). The visual dominance of this jar over the other Yi wares shown is, in many ways, symbolic of the great place of local, folk-art production in the Yi ceramic milieu. The unrestrained originality of design of this ware, its almost unerring fitness for shape and glaze, has placed modern artistic pottery in debt to the anonymous rural potters of Yi.

Folk art did not, however, monopolize Yi production. Within half a century of its foundation, in 1392, the government expanded and developed a few local kiln sites at Kwangju, some fifteen miles up the Han River from Seoul, into the official potteries of the dynasty with some 31 to 41 kilns. Anxious to be a worthy participant in Chinese culture and to distinguish its dynasty culturally from Koryo, the Yi regime set about to produce there its own version of Ming blue-and-white, the earliest known example of about 1450 being marked with the name of an official who is recorded as having passed the examinations in 1432. The ware's use was largely restricted to the upper class and never became so numerous as Koryo celadon, though its 19th century examples number many thousands. It made steady progress, however, as the "official ware" of the dynasty and was one of the main products of the Kwangju kilns until their closing in the 1880's. Originally derivative of Ming art, it early developed an individuality of its own which it bravely maintained through a long history in the face of the overwhelming Ming blue-and-white export trade. The Yi blue-and-white is, in fact, overlooked evidence of Korean independence from her Chinese neighbor. At a time when kilns in Siam and as far away as Egypt were being driven from production by massive Ming exports, and tables from Borneo to Istanbul groaned with Ming ware, Korea "rolled her own"; the tombs and collections of no other country in Asia contain so little Ming export ware as Korea's. Unfortunately only one 18th century example (80) represents, in this exhibition, four centuries of Yi blue-and-white tradition.

Despite the verve of local ware, Yi taste was dominantly austere, even puritanical. The Japanese invasions of 1592-98 and the more passing penetrations of the Manchus in 1627 and 1636 induced a hermit policy with ramifications for taste. Confucian simplicity was now reinforced by a conscious cult of poverty whose aim was the promotion of national security by warding off foreign cupidity. Symbolic of this taste was the white ware of the Yi which, from official Kwangju to rural southern villages, was as basic to the dynasty as its white clothing. Much of the best of this ware was undecorated. Many lovely, quiet and subtle shades of white were developed, ending in a beautiful blue-tinted white made at the Kwangju-Punwon kilns in the dynasty's last century. The exhibition contains several specimens of Yi white. Among them, two comparatively rare designs (78 and 84) were probably made at the official kilns at Kwangju for individuals of the royal court.

The decline and end of Yi ceramic excellence had a long and pathetic history. The cruel destructiveness of the Japanese invasions bore heavily on the kilns.

Hideyoshi, himself (who did not accompany his troops), and some of his commanders had been schooled to the new rage for Yi bowls by the Japanese tea masters of their time. Such pottery as the invaders could find was looted and the potters taken by the Japanese commanders to their domains in southwestern Japan to find much of Japan's modern ceramic tradition at Arita, Hagi, Naeshirogawa and elsewhere. Standing today at the piles of shards of Keryong-san, whose design abstractions seem to anticipate Matisse, one sees the product march up to the invasion period and abruptly stop. Much of the rest is silence; many a kiln never recovered. The local variety and spontaneity, which is the glory of Yi ceramics, attenuates and dries up. From 1600 on, the variety of Japanese ware, on impetus from the stolen potters, outstrips that of Korea. Korea found no sources to recoup her losses. Her relations with the Ch'ing were cooler than with the Ming; the skills of the imperial kilns at C'hing-tê-ch'en made little impression on Yi production. In Europe, meanwhile, the techniques of Meissen, Sèvres and Delft were bringing rapid strides to the wares of the West. Korea was dislodged from her place in world ceramic art before that place could be given recognition.

Both local and official wares still carried a proud, though lesser, banner through the 18th century. Then decline became disaster. Fiscal collapse in the dynasty's last decades brought further damage to the kiln economy. The final straw was the collapse of the social system from the 1880's on. The lower classes became increasingly mobile. Potters, always members of the humble classes, no longer wanted to be associated with their trade, and the dynasty was now too poor to pay them, and too weak to keep them by their fires. They deserted the official kilns, and the long story of official Kwangju ware ended shortly after 1880. Cheap Japanese-made industrial ware flooded the country, both before and after the Japanese annexation of Korea in 1910. Korean potters were used to build railroads for Japan. The living tradition died just as the dead one came to life. From 1906 until today the peninsula's tens of thousands of ancient tombs, ruthlessly looted to satisfy Japanese, then Western, demands for precious antiquities, have yielded their contents to the world. Today, most of the ancient wares are thus known; but the old tradition is still essentially dead. For the future, Korea's beautiful clay remains, waiting for a talented people to revive one of the most ancient and renowned of its arts.

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CASE 1

The Kingdom of Silla

CASES 1, 2 AND 3 display the stoneware of the first four centuries of Silla pottery. The serious study of these wares has barely started, even in Korea, and their periodization involves many problems which cannot yet be finally solved. No attempt has been made to arrange the Silla ware in these cases by period.

A small, soft, red clay cup (7), oldest, at least in style, of the objects, has a horn-shaped handle which recalls the polished red pottery of prehistoric Korea. Similar pottery was made over an extended period but this example perhaps dates between 350-450 A.D. The chalice of harder red clay next to it (8) is typical of the beautiful pottery made in the southeastern kingdom of Kaya. It is similar to pieces excavated at Haman and Chinju near the south coast, on the neighboring Japanese island of Tsushima, and in western Japan, of a very slightly later period, where it is considered to form part of the pottery known as *Sueki*. It is probably to be dated close to the middle of the 6th century when the kingdom of Kaya was absorbed by Silla.

The large storage jar on short attached pedestal (4) is handsomely decorated with incised hatchings, stamped circles, and a natural kiln ash-glaze. Representative of the monumentality which is the glory of Silla pottery, it displays the thrust and pride of a successful society girding itself for aggrandizement. This jar is of a type often found in graves at the Silla capitol at Kyongju and undoubtedly dates from the 6th century. The four smaller stamped and incised jars (1, 2, 3 and 5), one covered (3), display the tendency to incise the whole surface with decoration, which is believed to have occurred in the late 6th and early 7th centuries. The larger, squat, globular jar (9) shows the full arrival of this style, perhaps toward the end of the 7th century.

CASE 2

Silla

THE PIVOT of the wares displayed in this case is the 6th century of Silla. The case is dominated by a high stand with rectangular openings (11) on whose top rides a beautifully-potted jar (12) of typical Kaya ware with flaring high neck and round bottom of a type found along the Naktong River, especially near Ch'angnyong and Kimch'on around the middle of the 6th century, and also represented among *Sueki* ware in Japan. The base probably did not originally hold this piece, but was made to hold a similar one. Its rectangular openings, rising vertically instead of in the checkerboard pattern of Silla, are believed to be one of the signs of Kaya ware. Stands of almost every height, up to nearly three feet, exist by the thousands from Silla and Kaya tombs, each originally surmounted by a jar probably containing grain or liquids used in the ceremonies honoring the dead, and buried either with the corpse or in an adjoining chamber. Graves with as many as twenty-five or more stands and jars in addition to other pots and gold and glass jewelry were not a rarity in the high tumuli of this productive culture, and were probably used to enhance tomb-side ceremonials.

The small, high, three-zoned goblet (10) is supported by a two-banded hollow sphere, with Silla checkerboard apertures, which encloses two clay pellets which rattle when the goblet is used. This, in turn, rides on a high-splayed foot with four rectangular cut-outs. Several dozen of these bell-cups have appeared, mostly from tombs in Talsong county on the Naktong River. Some of the earliest bells known in Japan appear in this form in *Sueki* pottery. Their use is unknown but there is conjecture that the rattle might have been intended to attract the attention of the spirits when wine was ceremonially poured, much as one claps at a Shinto shrine.

The remaining vessels are typical Silla storage jars of about the 6th century.

CASE 3

Silla

CASE 3 IS BUILT around the commoner wares of the Silla period, most examples appearing to predate the unification of the country under the dynasty in 668 A.D. The covered cup mounted on pierced pedestal is probably the most frequently found form in Korean ceramic history. Thousands, probably tens of thousands, of these cup stands have been uncovered from Silla tombs, scores being excavated from certain single tombs of the period. They appear to have been used to contain food used for the ceremonies in honor of the dead and their large number may betoken gifts made by friends or followers for the funeral ceremonies. The *Chiu T'ang-shu* (Old History of T'ang) states that the Silla people "use mounted cups made of willow, bronze and pottery as dining ware." Metal examples, in bronze or silver plate, are known but the willow examples have disappeared. Certain derivations of this ware from occasional pottery of the Han period can be demonstrated but, in general, its independence of form and spirit is striking. Its roots are, like shamanism with which it may well have been related, deep in the indigenous culture of the northeast Asian mainland. Nothing remotely like it has appeared during the long, more Chinese-influence-ridden centuries which were to follow.

On entering the 7th century, Silla pottery changes. The mounted cups and their feet become shorter and the perforations around the foot become smaller square or circular holes. Covered bowls with very short, circular feet, as in several examples here (19, 20, 21 and 27) appear and designs are no longer incised but stamped or pressed with floral or geometric patterns covering the whole surface. Peoples who begin by singing epics often end up liking lace curtains. Silla was winning her wars and settling down; her capitol was growing. Her spirit had become less grandiose, more concerned with detail.

The grey stoneware pieces without pedestals probably date from just before the United Silla period (668-918 A.D.). Several have incised decoration and the large mounted bowl with looped handles (26) has traces of a green or yellowish ash-glaze. The covers are interesting. Some resemble the Indian Buddhist shape of The Great Stupa at Sañci, India. A small example (27) in front of the case is surmounted by a stupa-shaped finial. The later ware hence contains ever more pronounced overtones of the Buddhist culture then predominant in capitol and court circles. The small, circular, shallow covered dish (23) may have been used for cosmetics; if so, it is the humble ancestor of a numerous and gorgeous Koryo progeny.

CASE 4

Koryo

THIS CASE HAS BEEN ASSEMBLED around the bronze vessels, which are common furniture of Koryo tombs of all periods of the dynasty, and the celadon vessels which imitated their shapes.

Five of these vessels (35, 36, 37, 43 and 44) have the narrow, extended neck and short, covered spout of the Buddhist *kundika* or water-sprinkler. This shape was apparently devised in India or the Near East to enable the drinking of water without touching one's lips to any surface. It traveled across the trade routes of central Asia in the T'ang period and became known to China, Korea and, finally, Japan, where an example is included in the *shosoin*. Most extant examples of the form seem to be from Korea, where the shape was apparently found especially attractive for use in Buddhist ceremonials. Excellent celadon vessels of the form are known and also many rough ones, like the celadon example here shown (35). It is interesting to see, in approximately this form, an unglazed sprinkler (44) made in Silla-type stoneware, an example of many such wares which continued to be made throughout the Koryo period, apparently for ordinary household use. The mallet-shaped bronze and celadon vessels probably also contained wine and so, probably, did the bottles with pear-shaped bodies and tapering necks. The celadon examples are shaped in a form found in contemporary Chinese *Ju* or *Lung-ch'üan* ware. The Koryo mirrors here (38, 39 and 40) and in Case 12 (110) represent a class which in Korea are far thinner and softer than the famous T'ang examples, and usually bear quite different designs. It seems doubtful that their undecorated surfaces can ever have reflected as truly as did those of their T'ang forebears.

CASE 5

Koryo

THIS CASE CONTAINS examples of the celadons of the Koryo period made between the 12th and the 14th centuries, especially those used in the great banquets of the pleasure-loving Koryo aristocracy. Because of the great fame of this type of ware and its recognized importance in world ceramic history, individual descriptions of the pieces displayed are attempted.

45—drinking bowl—ca. 1200

The inside design of this bowl depicts pomegranates whose numerous seeds suggest fertility. The present example is an especially interesting study piece since the exterior floral design was incised in sufficient depth to receive the inlaying of black or white clay, but, through inadvertence, the inlay has been omitted. The piece could have been thrown at any one of many Koryo kilns.

46—vase—ca. 1100-1200

Celadon vase in six-lobed form of an elongated melon or *ch'amoe*. The mouth is shaped like a six-petalled blossom and the foot has flutings. It is a rough example of comparatively inferior glaze and shape of the famous type found in the tomb of the Koryo King Injong who reigned from 1122 to 1147. A number of other examples are known. The shape strongly resembles late T'ang and early Sung examples.

47—*wine waste container—*
ca. 1100-1200

Celadon slop basin with inlaid lotus and floral arabesque design. These rare pieces were apparently used at banquets as containers in which to empty wine which was left over when wine cups were being passed from person to person. At the end of the meal, also, the diners rinsed their mouths with wine or water and then disposed of it into these basins. It is perhaps the largest example known.

48—*cosmetic box—ca. 1100*

Celadon box with simple incised design.

49—*bowl—ca. 1100-1200*

Foliolate bowl with stamped peony design. An oxidized version of the bowl (95) in Case 10.

50—*bowl—ca. 1100-1200*

Celadon bowl with a light inlaid design of pomegranates, chrysanthemums, lotus buds and *posang-hua*, the Buddhist "Holy Image Flower."

51—*bowl—ca. 1100*

Celadon bowl without design. The undesigned wares are thought to be generally early in the history of celadon production when the preoccupation was still with glaze rather than design. This example has the beautiful clarity of blue-green admired by visitors from afar as "first under heaven."

52—*bottle or vase—ca. 1100*

Celadon wine bottle or vase with a pear-shaped body and long tapering neck with a cloud collar and three sprays of chrysanthemums in black and white inlay on the body. A beautiful example in excellent condition.

53—*vase—ca. 1100*

Celadon vase with incised clouds on the neck, a cloud collar, three sprays of peony flowers and leaves on the body and a collar of lotus buds at the base. A delicate example with comparatively fine glaze, this "vase" may also have been used for wine. It is reminiscent of Sung ware made at the *Ju* and *Lung-ch'üan* kilns.

54—*vase—ca. 1200*

Celadon vase *maepyong* (mei-ping) shape with collar in white inlay and a sparse design of clouds and cranes on the body. The glaze is pale and thin but uniform. The dive-bombing crane effect probably betrays the informality which begins to dominate Koryo wares when control of the kilns by court inspectors lapsed during the chaotic period of military coups and Mongol invasions.

55—*plate—ca. 1200-1300*

Small celadon plate with stamped, raised design of chrysanthemums and lotus.

56—*drinking bowl—ca. 1200-1300*

Celadon drinking bowl with inlaid design of grasses and willow-and-waterfowl. This example is inscribed at the bottom with the characters "*Im-shin*" which denote a year in the sexagenary cycle. It is not certain which cycle is appropriate. The chances are that the year referred to is either 1272 or 1332, possibly the latter. The design and this date are both quite frequently seen; a shard of exactly this design and date was picked up by the writer at the kiln sites in Kangjin. Why this and only six other such dates were selected and not others in the cycle is a problem which has never been solved.

CASE 6

Koryo

FURTHER EXAMPLES of Koryo celadon ware including several examples of the ewers used for pouring wine at feasts are shown in this case. These illustrate several of the techniques and innovations with which the society sought stylish variety in its ceramics.

57—*cup stand*

—*middle / late 12th century*

Celadon cup stand incised with a design of fish and waves, sculpted with lotus petals and inlaid with chrysanthemums in black and white. Scores of cup stands and somewhat fewer cups have come from the Koryo tombs, representative of an elegant and aristocratic culture. Stand and cup are conceived of in the form of the flower atop the lotus leaf on which, in the pool before Amitabha's throne, the soul of the dead was reborn. This conceit was frequently, as in the present example, enhanced with much of the elaborate and delicate skill of which official Korean production was then capable. This piece is repaired in gold lacquer.

58—*plate—12th century*

Small celadon plate on the interior of which the design of the hibiscus, the present national flower of Korea, has been molded in relief.

59—*ewer—13th century*

Celadon ewer with flattened sides, dragon head spout and lotus bud over the handle (which has here been replaced). The body of this piece has been decorated with an elaborate design of lotus plants in bud and flower springing from the muddy waters, as he who accepts Buddhism rises above worldly dust and frustration; and of the famous willow-and-waterfowl motif common in bowls (see 56) and found also in wall paintings of the Liao tombs. The lotus scenes are enclosed in cartouches shaped like joined ogee arches, motifs associated with the taste of the Mongols, who had known medallions and cartouches through their extensive contacts and conquests in the Near East. The dragon heads

are reminiscent of the elaborate "baroque" ewers exhibited from 1957-59 in the official Korean collections in the *Masterpieces of Art* exhibition which are normally dated earlier, but which might be dated to this period. This ewer is of a type rarely found and never before published. The writer knows of only one other example.

60—*ewer—12th century*

Celadon ewer for pouring tea or hot honeyed water is in the shape of a bamboo sprout and with an incised design of bamboo addedly decorated with small bamboo leaves. The glaze of this pot is of fine "kingfisher" (halcyon) blue noted with admiration by Sung visitors. In the present example the cover has been replaced, though its extremities contain a little original material. The upper four notches of the spout are also replaced.

61—*drinking bowl—12th century*

Celadon drinking bowl with a raised design of "T'ang" children swinging on grape vines. The design, familiar in Chinese Ting examples, is not uncommon in Koryo pottery. Most examples are, like the one shown, of fine glaze quality suggesting official kiln provenance.

62—*ewer—12th century*

Celadon ewer for wine or hot honeyed water thrown in the shape of a gourd (here warped in firing) and incised with a design of a lotus plant in blossom. The predominance of lotus decoration in the wares of this period derives from Buddhism, the official cult of the Koryo realm. Many Koryo pieces have been found in the graves of Buddhist priests and abbots and there is believed to have been some connection between temples and many Koryo kilns.

63—*drinking bowl—late 12th century*

Celadon drinking bowl of inlaid design of cranes flying through clouds. At the bottom of the insides are two cranes or ducks with necks entwined, probably symbolic of domestic bliss. The bowl might therefore have been ordered for a wedding ceremony. The exterior has been decorated with greater delicacy than the interior in the *posang-hua*, "Holy Image Flower" design. Cranes were not only symbolic of longevity as in China, but were also embroidered into the silk squares which civil officials wore on the front and rear of their robes. Cranes here connoted the Koryo civil aristocracy dominant in the country, except for the period of military coup and control (1170-1259).

64—*cosmetic box—13th century*

Celadon cosmetic box inlaid with a design of a peony blossom and an insect in black and white. The glaze is poor and oxidized.

65—*covered jar—14th century*

Celadon covered jar inlaid with a complex design in black and white. Around the mouth is a collar suggesting the imitation of the tasselled cloth covers that are believed to have been placed over the mouth

of such containers. Cover and mouth have been fitted with a metal rim by their later Japanese owners to convert the vessel for use as a water disposal jar in the tea ceremony.

66—*wine bottle—13th century*

Celadon wine bottle of *maepyeong* form with floral decoration, possibly peony leaves, painted in underglaze iron. This type shows influence from the Tz'u-chou ware of Sung China. The present example has exceptionally strong and fine floral painting and markedly more celadon tone than the general run of examples where oxidation is heavy.

67—*pot—13th century*

Celadon glaze over floral design painted in iron. This pot, of commoner quality than the preceding one, was probably used for tea or honeyed water.

68—*bowl—11th-12th century*

Possibly a Koryo white bowl with incised free floral design. Koryo white pieces are of considerable rarity, only a few score being known. The present example is distinguished from Sung *ch'ing-pai* chiefly by its heaviness.

CASE 7

Early and Middle Yi

THIS CASE CONSTITUTES an example of the wares of the Early (1392-1592) and Middle (1592-1750) Yi periods and shows particularly those wares made in local kilns not under official control. Nonofficial wares flourished in these periods, since the interests of the ruling *Yangban* class were scholarly and austere and court interest in the arts receded from its Koryo heights. Since local kilns had great variety in these periods, individual descriptions are given.

69—*saucer—15th century*

A common product of a rural kiln for daily household use.

70—*food container—16th century*

This jar has a white slip on which a design of ginseng leaves has been painted in iron. The design is typical of the production of the kilns located at the western base of the "sacred" mountain Keryong-san, east of the present city of Taejon and some 60

miles south of Seoul. An examination of the shards at this site makes it clear that all ceramic activity ceased at the end of the 16th century during the Japanese invasion of Korea. It is not unlikely that potters from this site were among those taken to Japan to establish the Japanese ceramic manufacture of Satsuma, Bichu, Bizen and Choshu. The shape is of the kind used to contain condiments heavily preserved in salt, known as *jjot*.

71—white slip bowl—modern

This example is probably a product of a modern Japanese potter, perhaps Asakawa, Hakkyo, but is rendered in the spirit of the bowls produced at the Keryong-san kilns at the beginning of the 16th century. The Japanese use such bowls for tea, but the probable original use was for household purposes. Tea is far less drunk in Korea than in China or Japan.

72—wine flask—16th century or earlier

This wine flask is of a type common to the Early Yi period and known to the Japanese as "sculptured mishima" from its technique of cutting out surface areas to make a raised design. This type has a band of abstracted lotus symbols below the neck and of abstracted peony leaves around the belly of the pot. The smoothness and exactness with which this example has been executed is atypical of Korean wares and may indicate a recent Japanese hand. Shards of this type have been found in the Keryong-san area south of Seoul.

73—saucer—15th century

A typical *punch'ong* (mishima) design and technique. Probably designed for household use.

74—food storage jar—17th century

Standard Yi white glaze with floral design impressionistically painted in iron. An excellent example of the type. Iron painted wares are the characteristic production of the Middle Yi period which followed the Japanese invasions. They were executed

for household use and are characterized by a high degree of spontaneity and verve, hardly any of the thousands of examples known being done in quite the same way, many showing finger marks or, as here, drops flung from the rapid brush of the rural painter.

75—covered rice bowl—15th century

Celadon glaze with peony leaf design painted in white slip. From a kiln in southwestern Korea, probably from the Muan area, South Cholla. Covered bowls of this type were used for holding rice. The cover could serve as an extra dish. The example shown is a fine representative of the broader technique of certain transitional wares between the Koryo and Yi dynasties.

76—pilgrim flask—16th century

Pilgrim wine flask with celadon glaze over brushed white slip, made to be slung in a rope holster and carried for picnic or travel. Made at an unknown site in Chollado and often used on Cheju Island where, since the period of Mongol domination (1259-1354), horses were common. The inlaid decoration of fish eating worms or aquatic plants is executed in a very free style.

77—pilgrim flask—15th century

Pilgrim wine flask similar to the preceding bottle. The design is one of grape leaves, frequently found on pieces of this type. The action of moisture and chemicals in the tomb has produced beautiful seams of red color. The mouth has, as in most examples, been broken off and replaced.

CASE 8

Late Yi

THE FOCUS of this case is on ware made from about 1750 until the end of official production in the 1880's, and includes examples of the official court ware made in that period in the Kwangju kilns near Seoul. Official ware is also extant in earlier periods, back to about 1450, but upper class burial of it greatly decreased, examples are comparatively rare, and none is yet included in the collection.

78—bottle—late 18th century

White bottle in bamboo shape with raised bamboo decoration, probably made at one of the official kilns at Kwangju. A comparatively rare design.

*79—household storage jar—
early 18th century*

Yi white glazed jar with floral design in underglaze iron. A product of a rural kiln probably in central Korea, this characteristic ware of the period was widely made and free from stereotype.

80—large storage jar—18th century

This jar was fired at the official kilns in Kwangju in blue-and-white glaze. Its tone and medium collar indicates that this jar probably dates from about the 18th century. The use of such decorated ware is said to have been confined to the Korean upper classes. The design and type is derivative from earlier Ming but is much heavier and has enough independence to be distinguished from it with some ease.

81—candlestick—18th century

Thin, blueish-white glaze, of a type made for household use until recent times.

82—bowl—18th-19th century

A household bowl of a type produced by many rural kilns in the central and southwestern part of Korea.

83—octagonal vase—18th century

Thin white glaze, probably from a rural kiln in central Korea. The culture of flowers and their arrangement was not ex-

ceptionally developed in Korea, though branches of cherry and plum were often painted and, presumably, displayed. This vase does appear to have been designed to hold a small branch though it could also have been used for the country's more strongly developed culture of wine drinking.

84—vase—18th century

This small vase has the blue-white glaze associated with the Punwon kilns in the official Kwangju kiln area. The official kilns at Kwangju produced pottery at royal or government order. Sometimes the royal household would order in sets or quantity for official use, but often palace ladies would order the potters to execute individual pieces which struck their fancy and which they had seen either in pieces imported from China or in Chinese books. The pieces could have been either ceramic or, sometimes, bronze, and from almost any period. The models served as inspiration for the new pieces; they were not slavishly copied. The blueish-white glaze is typical of that developed in the 18th-19th centuries at the official kilns; it became still bluer in later times. The delicate, scarcely perceptible flutings and neck flourishes indicate a court piece. The model was Chinese of an earlier period, probably Sung. The rarity of the shape indicates it may have been ordered individually or in small quantity.

85—food jar—18th-19th century

Unodecagonal jar of Yi white glaze, probably from a kiln in central Korea. This jar is of the standard shape designed to contain *jjot*, fish or meat preserved in heavy salt, and a mainstay of the Korean diet.

CASE 9

Koryo

MODEST EXAMPLES of celadon ware of the 12th and 13th centuries are displayed here. The pointed base cup with chrysanthemums in black and white inlay (89) was used as a traveling cup by the Korean aristocracy who, when away from home, carried their own cups as Baron Rothschild would his own sheets. Their cups were made not to stand, but to be placed in the corner of their flowing sleeves from which they were plucked to be held from the saddle while a posting slave hurried up with the wine. Examples are numerous for, on horseback as at the banquet table, drinking was one of the core activities of Koryo life and on it a high proportion of the dynasty's celadon ware was lavished.

A small celadon-rimmed stand (91) holds a drinking bowl with peony clusters stamped in raised design on the inside (90). Beside it is a wine cup with delicate incised floral designs (92). The incised outside design of very rough overlapping lotus petals on the larger wine bowl (87) is, in finer forms, a familiar Yüeh and early Koryo stereotype.

CASE 10

Koryo

MOST PIECES are earlier Koryo celadon ware of the 12th century. A deep (96) and a shallow (98) bowl have roughly-incised exterior designs of overlapping lotus leaves, and a saucer (97) above them depicts flying parrots, all echoing familiar Yüeh motifs of the early Sung. The interior of the suspended celadon drinking bowl (95) is stamped with the peony design. It was apparently made from the same molds as the more oxidized version (49) in Case 5. The small saucer (93) at the left is inlaid Koryo celadon. The larger drinking bowl of variegated creamy green (94) is an example of the *punch'ong* (mishima) ware of the early Yi dynasty, the most widely used pottery of the early decades of the period. The height of its manufacture was probably 1390-1480. In this technique, the design was stamped out and white clay rubbed over the surface, the excess then being wiped away and the bowl fired with a celadon glaze which, however, never achieved the clear blue-greens of the Koryo period but a duller, creamier effect. The ancient color was, no doubt, no longer sought. The present example is stamped with the two characters "*naesom*" which denote the Office of Provision for the Royal Household. Other bowls of this period have stamps of one or another central government office, some also containing the names of the many local places in Kyongsang and Cholla provinces where the bowls were made. The reason why such bowls are, like the present example, often of indifferent quality is not entirely clear, especially since the early Yi government was one of the more nearly efficient regimes of Korean history whose inspection system might have been expected to produce more impressive quality results.

CASE 11

Early Yi

THE SAUCERS or small plates here displayed were used, presumably, for the “side-dishes” of the southern Korean rural table and are modest products of local kilns often in southwestern Korea in the early Yi period. The larger bowl (101) is typical of a numerous white ware, widely produced in this period in a variety of brushed, dipped and slip techniques. The present example probably comes from kilns of the Muan area, South Cholla, in the 16th-17th century.

CASE 12

Koryo-Yi

Three Iron Horses and One Iron Donkey
(106, 107, 108 and 109)
probably 13th-16th centuries

A NUMBER OF animal figures made of solid cast iron are known to be from Korea, in number not above a few dozen. Comparatively little is known about them. One iron figure was reportedly found sitting inside a bowl of Koryo celadon dating from the 12th-13th century but the report is not scientific. Horses appear incised on a group of some five or six known Silla storage pots of the 6th-7th century from the Silla capitol area, and some Silla clay horses or cows, not dissimilar to these iron examples, are known. Iron horse statuettes are still worshipped as the protectors of a village at Wonsan Island off the west coast of Korea where they were found by a recent survey team from the Korean National Museum. Clay (and sometimes iron) donkeys were made in some villages during New Year's ceremonies symbolically to carry food dedicated to the large sacred tree which often shielded the Korean village. Ancient customs long extinct elsewhere survive in such villages. We can therefore presume a long tradition connecting horses with religious rites probably associated with indigenous shamanism and gradually dying out as Buddhism and then Confucianism penetrated the country and superseded the custom. From an almost complete lack of known literary references and the paucity of objects known over this long period, this tradition seems not to have been widely practiced. The Korean horse and donkey, so small that the rider's feet were scarcely off the ground, were the familiar vehicle of upper-class transportation to recent times. The iron objects are typical folk art: rough, spontaneous, sometimes childlike, owing little to any formal art tradition. The examples shown are among the simpler examples of this tradition and were presumably locally made for a small village or roadside shrine and then buried. Few other iron animals besides horses and donkeys have survived but there is at least one known example of a cast-iron bear.

Koryo Spoons, Hairpins and Chopsticks
(111 to 120)

Many metal household articles have come from Koryo tombs. Commonest among these are the graceful spoons, then used to eat rice, thousands of which have been uncovered. The double spoon (113) shown here is, however, rare. Much of the original bronze has corroded and the present surface consists largely of the corrosion product.

The bowl (121) or, more probably, a lid for a storage jar made in an indeterminate rural kiln with a green lead glaze makes no pretense at being celadon but is rather in the ancient tradition of Han dynasty lead glazes introduced into the peninsula by the Chinese in their colony at Lolang (modern P'yong'yang) and continued in both the Silla and Koryo periods. It was obviously made for common household use.

Chronology of Korea

circ. 3rd century - 668 A.D.	<i>Three Kingdoms (Silla, Paekche, Koguryo)</i>
668 - 918	<i>United Silla</i>
918-1392	<i>Koryo Dynasty</i>
1392-1910	<i>Yi Dynasty</i>

In view of the basic orientation of these studies, attributions, conjectures as to use, and datings of all the objects are provisional. Though limited and inadequate, they are presented as current points of reference with the conviction that the years to come will see them more suitably founded, more precise and more helpful in our attempts to understand and relate the art, archaeology, linguistics and history of the times, the regions, and the peoples which these collections represent.

The Columbia University Exhibition of Ceramics and Bronzes of Korea is the fifth in a series designed to illuminate the scientific and artistic qualities of archaeological materials. Earlier exhibitions have dealt with Chinese Archaic Jades, Ritual Bronzes, Weapons and Related Eurasian Bronze Art; The Ceramic Arts and Sculpture of China; Pottery, Bronzes and Jewelry of Ancient Iran; and Ancient Textiles from Peru: the Central Coast.

THE COMMITTEE FOR THE EXHIBITION

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Dr. Arthur M. Sackler, *Advisory Council, Department of Art History and Archaeology*

Mr. Davidson Taylor, *Chairman, Committee on the Arts*

Mr. Stanley Salmen, *Coordinator of University Planning*

The objects were identified and the catalogue written by Mr. Gregory Henderson, Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, who was kind enough to undertake this assignment on unusually short notice. The Committee is also grateful to Mrs. Henderson for her help in this project.

The exhibition was designed and installed by Mr. Gene McCabe with the assistance of Mr. Ron Blakley.

The Committee wishes also to express its gratitude to:

Mr. Gari Ledyard, *Instructor in Korean, Department of Chinese and Japanese*

Mrs. Mary Gunn, *Office of the Secretary of the University*

Miss Sarah Faunce, *Curator of Artistic Properties at Columbia*

Mr. Philip Mazzola, *Director of the Sackler Collections*

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*The Columbia University Exhibition
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