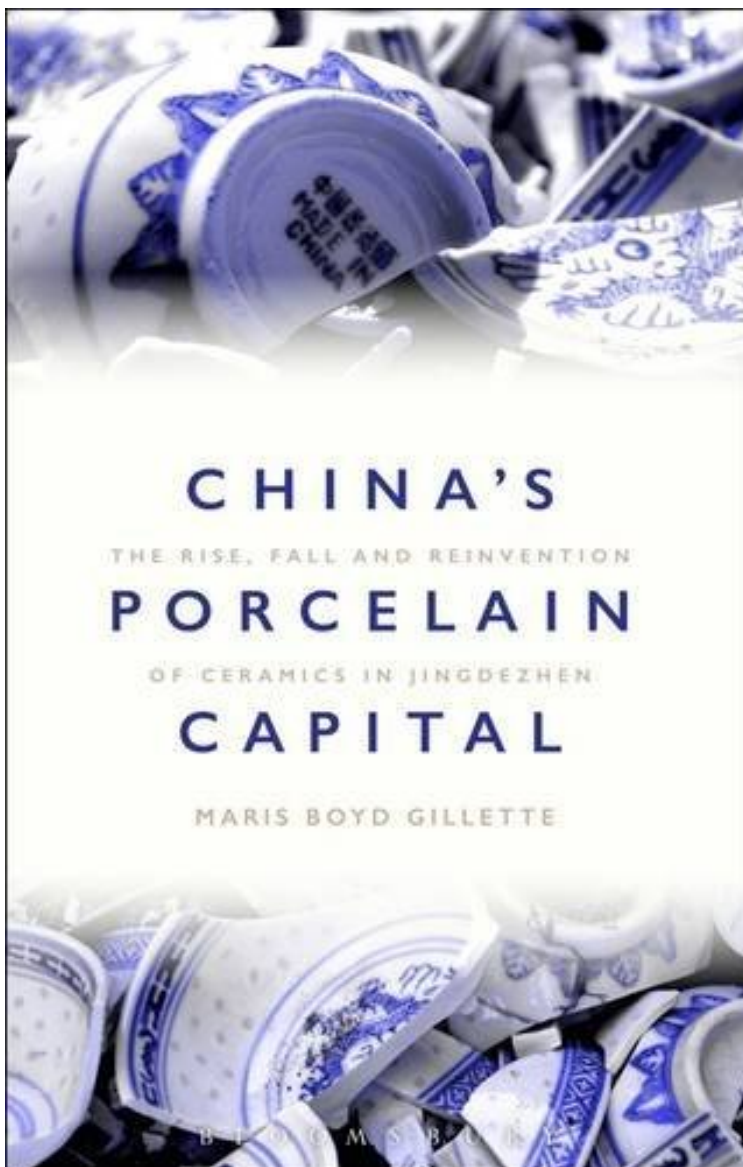


(Online library) China's Porcelain Capital: The Rise, Fall and Reinvention of Ceramics in Jingdezhen

China's Porcelain Capital: The Rise, Fall and Reinvention of Ceramics in Jingdezhen

Maris Boyd Gillette

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Maris Boyd Gillette : China's Porcelain Capital: The Rise, Fall and Reinvention of Ceramics in Jingdezhen before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised China's Porcelain Capital: The Rise, Fall and Reinvention of Ceramics in Jingdezhen:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Everything you should know about China's most famous porcelain centreBy PBjWThis excellent little volume is 'must reading' for anyone interested in Chinese ceramics for it tells the actual story of China's most famous ceramic centre, Jingdezhen, from its first known ceramist (a man named Tao Yu during the Tang Dynasty, 618-907) to today. It is a tale worth knowing for in all the years I've been studying Chinese ceramics never before had I given thought to the actual town. And the tale is told so well, with so many interesting details and facts, that I have just started to read it for a second time. The earliest known Jingdezhen porcelain (what the town is most known for although its earliest pieces were stoneware) came out of a Song dynasty tomb dated to 1000 (p. 12) so as the author notes, JDZ (as most ceramic scholars refer to the site) was actually one of the later ceramic centres of China. Its name, which I would wager, most collectors don't know, was given it by the Emperor Zhenzong, who ordered that the town, originally called Changnanzhen ('the town south of the Chang River') be renamed Jingdezhen ('the town of the Jingde [emperor]') as Jingde was the official reign name he used from 1004-1007. From here Gillette covers not only the growth and ups and downs of the town's history but also stories of its inhabitants past and present, and some of the less obvious facts of ceramics-making. Most ceramic lovers know that during the tumultuous years at the end of the Ming Dynasty and launch of its successor by the Manchus, the Qing, the area was devastated, its kilns destroyed and its potters fleeing into the hills. The town came into its own again when the Emperor Kangxi (around 1683) assigned a new administrator to oversee its redevelopment, but who knew JDZ suffered several periods in its history when not only wars but also politics almost destroyed it--right up into the 21st century. Gillette travelled throughout the region for years, collecting bits of history, stories, and knowledge which she shares with readers--even some of the tricks of JDZ's modern-day replica fraudsters (how to artificially age pots, for example--using citric acid, dye, traditional Chinese medicine, shoe polish, and tea...p. 107). I have to correct one tiny error, however, or perhaps it was just a bit of poor writing or editing. On page 78 Gillette writes, China Wind [a factory] boasted a state-of-the-art facility and introduced a revolutionary practise to Jingdezhen [in 1987]: bisque firing. Throughout Jingdezhens history, porcelain had been thrown, trimmed, decorated, and then fired once (sometimes called raw firing). In China Wind, porcelain would be thrown, trimmed, and fired to become a bisque or biscuit and then decorated and refired. This just can't be true. Doucai wares, and in fact all porcelains that are decorated in overglaze enamels, have to be fired at least twice. First, the blue cobalt outline lines are applied to the pot, then a clear glaze applied, then the pot fired at a high porcelain-producing temperature, then when cooled, the enamels are applied and the pot refired at the necessary lower temperature. One can't get both porcelain and enamelware on the same pot without two separate firings--the first being a temperature high enough to achieve the transformation of the clay into porcelain; then the 2nd lower firing to 'set' the enamels. I'm off to JDZ this autumn and this book is travelling with me. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Pleasure to ReadBy M.G.A must read for museum professionals, historians, or anyone who is interested in the root causes of the extraordinary transformations that has been taking place in China since the late 1970s. Although exceptionally well-researched, the book is void of gratuitous jargons that makes so many scholarly works unreadable. The author's concise style of writing, combined with her sweeping command of the topic makes this book a pleasure to read.

Maris Boyd Gillette's groundbreaking study tells the story of Jingdezhen, China's porcelain capital, from its origins in 1004 in Song dynasty China to the present day. Gillette explores how Jingdezhen has been affected by state involvement in porcelain production, particularly during the long 20th century. She considers how the Chinese government has consumed, invested in, taxed and managed the local ceramics industry, and the effects of this state intervention on ceramists' lives, their local environment and the nature of the goods they produce. Gillette traces how Jingdezhen experienced the transition from imperial rule to state ownership under communism, the changing fortunes of the ceramics industry in the early 21st century, the decay and decline that accompanied privatisation, and a revival brought about by an entrepreneurial culture focusing on the manufacture of highly-prized 'art porcelain'.

[China's Porcelain Capital] is filled with intriguing facts. Those with an interest in porcelain and anyone thinking about working in China, or having artwork made in China, should consider reading this book. * Crafts Magazine * This book is the compelling story of China's 'porcelain capital', as the city is known ... Getting to know the ceramists who work there, Gillette ensures that this tome makes an arresting read. * Ceramic * Maris Boyd Gillette takes us on a journey of more than a thousand years of history from the Song Dynasty until the present day ... This book is without doubt a great way to learn about the history and the present moment of this city. * Infoceramica (Bloomsbury translation) * Whilst researching the book the author has spent months living in the area and studying the past and present production processes ... This is an absolutely readable book with an excellent glossary of technical terms, an extensive biography and a good index. * Keramiske noter (Bloomsbury translation) * Historians like to boast of getting their hands dirty in the archives. In this fascinating book, Maris Gillette got her feet muddy to tell the 1000-year story of how the Chinese state, global markets and the potters of Jingdezhen have interacted to produce the most extraordinary porcelains in the world. * Dr Steven Conn, W E Smith Professor of History at Miami University, USA * Positioning ethnographic writing at the center of art historical and anthropological perspectives, Gillette makes an enormous

contribution to our understanding of cultural production in China. This astute and intimate portrait uses first-rate scholarship and a unique apprenticeship in the community to reveal the complexities of contemporary ceramic production in Jingdezhen. * Dr Morgan Perkins, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Art at the State University of New York, USA * What a story, the town of Jingdezhen! It began making ceramics over a thousand years ago, produced porcelain for emperors of four dynasties while it made blue-and-white ware famous throughout the world, declined sadly under the Nationalist Republic, revived under Mao's state socialism, and was abruptly shut down in China's economic reforms of the 1990s, only to emerge for the third time as a destination for tourists and artists in the 21st century. Maris Gillette tells this story in a clear, fast-moving narrative, completely free of academic jargon, that will appeal to scholarly and popular readers alike. * Dr Stevan Harrell, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Washington, USA * A fascinating read providing an historic and contemporary context of a city in China, whose economic survival and worldwide fame has been uniquely due to a single product, porcelain. For me, involved in education and as an artist potter making work on a regular basis in 'Jingdezhen' it was both intriguing in its narrative and hugely informative. * Felicity Aylieff, Head of Programme for Ceramics and Glass at the Royal College of Art, UK * ...a comprehensive examination of the ways in which the government of China has controlled, invested in, taxed, managed and consumed the products of the Chinese porcelain industry, especially in the twentieth century. * Ringgold, USA * Maris Boyd Gillette's book is a welcome addition to the literature on Jingdezhen. It is well sourced and benefits greatly from research in the town and familiarity at first hand with the practical aspects of the industry. * Michael Dillon, *The China Quarterly* * About the Author Maris Boyd Gillette is E. Desmond Lee Professor of Museum Studies and Community History, University of Missouri, St Louis, USA. She is the author of 'Between Mecca and Beijing: Modernization and Consumption Among Urban Chinese Muslims' (2000).