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GOLD DECORATION ON FRENCH, GERMAN,  
AND ORIENTAL PORCELAIN IN THE  
EARLY 18TH CENTURY

• ERROL MANNERS •

A degree of confusion has long surrounded the attribution of the different groups of gold decoration applied in France and Germany to porcelain and enamel in the early decades of the eighteenth century. This paper is an attempt to isolate the groups and suggest a chronology.

That gold decoration was done at the Saint-Cloud factory in its earliest years is known from two sources; the report by the British physician and scientist Dr. Martin Lister in his ‘A Journey to Paris in the Year 1698’,<sup>1</sup> where he observed that the Saint-Cloud porcelain makers ‘had arrived at the burning on Gold in neat Chequer Works’ and the inventory of 1701 of Philippe, duc d’Orléans (1640 – 1701), which includes the entry:

840 La garniture dudit bureau composée de deux gobelets de porcelain de Saint-Cloud gravés et remplis d’or, deux soucoupes de la Chine garnis d’or, une tasse de porcelaine doublée d’or avec sa soucoupe de bois de la Chine bordée d’or....<sup>2</sup>

However it is not easy to identify examples of gold decoration that can be plausibly attributed to the factory itself at these very early dates. The snuff box from the collection of the comte de Chavagnac,<sup>3</sup> with gold ‘Chequer Works’, sometimes cited in relation to the Lister quote in fact has the *décharge* mark for 1732 – 38 and belongs to a later group decorated outside the factory.

One possible piece of factory decoration from this early period is a beaker from the Hallwyl Museum, Stockholm (**Fig. 1**). Copies of exactly this type were made at Samson in the late nineteenth century,<sup>4</sup> but this example has the characteristic deep and diffuse blue, quite unlike the sharply defined Samson blue, and has the distinctive glassy paste and proportions that confirm that it is an original piece with

border patterns that indicate a date of around 1695 – 1705.<sup>6</sup> The gilt decoration derives loosely from the engravings of Jacques Androuet du Cerceau (circa 1510 – circa 1585) or Jean Bérain (1640 – 1711) and is very much in the spirit of the decoration that is found on the blue and white wares of Saint-Cloud of the end of the seventeenth century and is similar to designs found on Boulle marquetry of this period.<sup>7</sup>

A beaker perhaps fitting this

**Figure 1.** Beaker, soft-paste porcelain, Saint-Cloud, with gold decoration possibly added at the factory, 1695 – 1705, Hallwylska Museet, Stockholm.



description with blue borders and gold ‘ornamens dorez’ can also be found in the inventory of the Duke’s son, the next Philippe, duc d’Orléans (1674 – 1723), the Regent.

Appartement de Madame la grande duchesse

3075 Un gobelet de porcelaine blanche de la chine avec des reliefs dorez, un autre gobelet de porcelaine blanche a bords bleus avec des ornemens dorez fabrique de St. Cloud et deux petites soucoupes de vernis noir du Japon a relief doré, 50.

This might have been a piece that he had inherited from his father. In any case The Hallwylska Museum beaker seems to be one of the very few gold-decorated pieces of Saint-Cloud porcelain that can plausibly be attributed to the earliest period of factory decoration. If, however, one can find a class of decoration occurring on Asian and Meissen porcelain as well as on that of Saint-Cloud one can reasonably infer that it was decorated outside the factory in a workshop of an independent enameller, jeweller or *marchand mercier*.

There were essentially two techniques used for the application of gold to porcelains in France in the early eighteenth century. One was to apply designs stamped from gold foil or *paillions*, the other was to apply gold in powder form mixed with an oily substance to bind it into a medium suitable for painting, which is conventional gilding.

Gold powder can be made in two ways. The finest powders are precipitated by the addition of iron sulphate to a solution of gold dissolved in *aqua regia*, a mixture of nitric and hydrochloric acid. This was a technique known from the Renaissance and used at the Meissen factory and later in France on hard-paste porcelains but was, according to Antoine d’Albis, formerly chemist at the Sèvres porcelain factory, not easy to apply to soft-paste bodies. In France in the early eighteenth century an alternative method of grinding gold leaf in a sticky substance such as honey or gum arabic to prevent it dissipating seems to have been used.<sup>8</sup> This second technique tends to lead to a thicker application of gold and allows for further fine tooling or *ciselure* similar to the tooling on Vincennes and soft-paste Sèvres porcelain.

In both methods the gold was combined with a fusible glassy flux to fix the gilding firmly enough to resist normal wear and to withstand burnishing or polishing, but not so high that the surface would crack.

**Figure 2.**

Bowl, hard-paste porcelain, Chinese, underglaze blue *Fu* seal mark, 17th century.  
Saucer, soft-paste porcelain, Saint-Cloud, c. 1720, both with *piqué d'or* decoration, lined and mounted in gold in a silk-lined parquetry box, the gold mounts bear the *poignon de décharge* for Paris, 1722 – 1726, and the date letter which is probably readable as G for 1723, the *poignon de maître* is illegible.



### The '*piquée d'or*' group

The first of the groups decorated outside the factory where they were made belongs to the conventional gilding type and occurs mostly on Chinese Dehua or *blanc de chine* porcelain and occasionally on that of Jingdezhen, Japanese and Saint-Cloud but apparently not on Meissen or enamel. It forms an easily recognisable and cohesive group characterised by densely applied gold dots and simple chinoiseries. The application of painted gold is quite thick and allows for further fine tooling or *ciselure*. Pieces are often mounted in gold or silver gilt.

John Whitehead has noted that wares of this type can be identified in the inventory of the Regent, Philippe II, duc d'Orléans<sup>9</sup> who died on 2 December 1723. The inventory of his possessions was started in March 1724. In the four instances cited below they are described as *piquée d'or*. John Whitehead notes that these are amongst the most highly valued pieces listed.

The first item of this type listed is in the *Petits appartemens sur la rue de Richlieu*.

Petit cabinet des appartemens de Madame

1344 Une petite boette quarrée de verni dans le gout de la Chine, doublée de velours rouge, dans laquelle est un gobelet et sa soucoupe de porcelain blanche piquée d'or, le gobelet doublé d'or, le pied dud. gobelet et le tour de la soucoupe garnis d'or, une cuilliere d'or, 300.

An example that matches this closely, except that the box is of parquetry rather



**Figure 3.** Beaker with raised prunus moulding, hard-paste porcelain, *blanc de chine*, Dehua, the saucer, hard-paste porcelain, Arita, Japan c. 1700, both with *piqué d'or* decoration and mounted in gold, both with *fleur de lis* marks used from 1 October 1717 to 15 February 1722. The British Museum, 1931 5 – 13.

than lacquer, was by family tradition, said to have belonged to the young Louis XV (**Fig. 2**). The gold mounts bear the *poinçon de décharge* for Paris, 1722 – 1726, and the date letter which is probably readable as G for 1723. The *poinçon de maître* is illegible.

The decorators were quite happy to mix different types of porcelain; in this case the bowl is of Chinese porcelain and the saucer Saint-Cloud. In a number of instances in both the *piqué d'or* and the *paillon* group they used rather rare types of Chinese porcelain which were not part of the bulk export trade. In this case the bowl is completely white and has an underglaze blue *fu* seal mark and perhaps comes from one of the small kilns in Fujian province.<sup>10</sup> It was exceedingly difficult to find white Chinese saucers; *blanc de chine* saucers are very uncommon and those of Jingdezhen and Japan are rarely white, and so they were forced to substitute, in this case, a Saint-Cloud saucer.

In the next *piqué d'or* entry, which could match something like an example from the British Museum (**Fig. 3**), they used a *blanc de chine* beaker and a Japanese Arita saucer with a characteristic concave rim.

3552 Un gobelet et une soucoupe de porcelain blanche en relief garnis et piquez d'or, 100.

The term *en relief* refers to the raised prunus design so popular on *blanc de chine*.

The decorators were forced to go to considerable lengths to get a white saucer.

**Figure 4.**  
The saucer from  
**Fig. 3**, hard-paste  
porcelain, Arita,  
Japan c. 1700, with  
the ‘ghost’ of the  
erased *kakiemon*  
‘tiger pattern’ under  
the *piqué d’or*  
decoration.



This becomes apparent when it is held in a glancing light; the ghost of the earlier Kakiemon decoration, the ‘tiger and bamboo’ pattern, becomes visible (**Fig.4**). They have carefully erased the original decoration to get a white saucer. Some scratching is visible on the glaze surface beneath the gilding so it seems that they must have simply abraded the original enamels off. It might seem surprising that they would have defaced a Kakiemon saucer that was itself a most valuable type of porcelain in the eighteenth century but it seems that the real vogue for Kakiemon wares became established shortly after 1720; it is notable that very few Kakiemon wares are found in the inventory of the Regent.

The third *piqué d’or* entry refers to a cup and saucer with a brown ground.

3561 Une petite tasse et une soucoupe de porcelaine brune piquée d’or, la tasse garnie de son pied d’or, 50.

The only corresponding brown-ground piece that I know is a small Kangxi period cup of so-called ‘Batavian’ ware in the British Museum that actually has silver-gilt rather than the gold mounts specified in the inventory.<sup>11</sup> It entered the collection with another great rarity, a piece with silver *vermiculé* rather than *piqué d’or* decoration



**Figure 5.** Figure 5. Brown-glazed, 'Batavian', teabowls and saucers, hard-paste porcelain, Jingdezhen, China, Kangxi (1661 – 1722), with *piqué d'or* and silver decoration, mounted and lined in silver-gilt with the *décharge* of the 'tête de saumon' for 1 October 1744 to 1 October 1750, from the Hamilton Palace sale of 1882. The British Museum, inventory no.s 106+ and 107+.

which also has a silver-gilt liner and mount (**Figs.5 & 6**).

These both came from the Hamilton Palace sale of 1882, lot 1357, where they were described as "A Pair of Brown Cups and Saucers, with gold spots, lined and mounted with silver gilt". A further label indicates that they came from William Beckford's collection (Beckford was the 12th Duke of Hamilton's father-in-law).<sup>12</sup> Interestingly these are only twenty lots after the famous Gaignière-Fonthill vase recorded in the inventory of the Grand Dauphin in 1689, another French Royal piece that Beckford had acquired in Paris at the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>13</sup>

There are two problems with identifying the brown-ground cup in the British Museum with the one in the Regent's inventory; firstly it has silver-gilt rather than gold mounts and both pieces have the *décharge* of the 'tête de saumon' for 1 October 1744 to 1 October 1750, a date completely out of keeping with this sort of decoration and which makes little sense. A possible explanation could be that the original very



**Figure 6.** The underside of the brown-glazed teabowl and saucer in **Fig. 5**.

**Figure 7.**  
Tankard of hard-  
paste porcelain,  
*blanc de chine*,  
Dehua, circa 1700,  
the decoration c.  
1720. This shows  
evidence of having  
once been mounted.  
Private Collection.



precious gold mount was replaced with a silver-gilt one at this date. Replacing valuable gold mounts with less costly silver-gilt ones is a practice that often occurs with snuff boxes<sup>14</sup>. Since no other example of a brown-ground teabowl and saucer with *piqué d'or* decoration seems to be known, this cup stands a very good chance of being the one mentioned in the inventory.

A close match has not been found for the last '*piqué d'or*' entry, a small water jug with cover mounted in gold:

3565 Un petit pot a l'eau de porcelaine blanche couvert piqué incrusté et garni d'or, dans une petite jatte en feuille d'artichault de porcelaine ancienne de couleur, 100.

**Figure 8.**  
*Nécessaire*,  
comprising  
hard-paste porcelain,  
*blanc de chine*,  
Dehua with *piqué  
d'or* decoration and  
rock crystal and gold,  
mounted in gold in  
a silk-lined  
parquetry box.  
1717 – 1720.  
The Musée du  
Louvre.



A very tentative possibility is a small tankard which has evidence of once having been mounted (**Fig.7**). Another example is in the Victoria and Albert Museum. It is difficult to think of a small *blanc de chine* jug that could correspond to such an entry but perhaps a tankard of this type once had gold mounts that converted it into a *petit pot à l'eau* which have since been removed, gold being so precious.

In at least one instance in the Regent's inventory pieces of this '*piquée d'or*' group can be identified in an entry where the actual phrase *piquée d'or* is not used; this is the most spectacular boxed set from the David-Weill collection donated to the Louvre in 2007 (**Fig.8**).

2060 Un petit nécessaire en bois de violette garni de ses portans de métal doré, les entrées de serrure d'or, dans lequel est une boette d'or à thé, une thayère, une boette à sucre de porcelaine ancienne, un flacon de crystal de roche, le tout garni d'or, deux tasses et leurs soucoupes de porcelaine, deux cuillières de vermeil, dans le tiroir de dessous, un plateau vernis de Japon, 400 livres.

The description is precise down to the gold lock plates and brass carrying handles on the box, the solid gold tea canister and the rock crystal flask. The Japanese lacquer tray is now missing. Except that the writer of the inventory has identified the spoons as *vermeil* or silver-gilt when in fact they are of solid gold, this describes the set closely<sup>15</sup>. It is dated by the Louvre to 1717 – 1720. The form of the teapot is most unusual and this is a very rare instance where the saucers actually are *blanc de chine*. Since the phrase *piquée d'or* is not used here it is possible that other pieces of this group remain undetected in the inventory.

A fascinating extract from a letter written by the dowager duchesse d'Orleans, Liselotte of Pfalz, of March 1718 was found by Claire le Corbeiller<sup>16</sup> which describes a very similar set:

'My son gave his sister an elegant present, too, a *nécessaire*, that is a rectangular box containing porcelain cups and everything that is needed for taking chocolate, coffee and tea. The cups are white, with a raised design in gold and enamel, and there is a drawer with an Indian tray. Under this tray there is a little blue cushion with all kinds of gold objects underneath, needlecase, thimble, corkscrew-case, two golden boxes and some more things all made of pure gold and finely worked.'

Her son, referred to here, was the Regent and his sister, her daughter, was Elizabeth who had married the duc de Lorraine twenty years before so it cannot

**Figure 9.**  
Covered box, soft-paste porcelain, Saint-Cloud with raised gold *paillons* and green enamel decoration and silver gilt mounts. Christian Bonnin collection.



**Figure 10 a & b.**  
Snuff box, soft-paste porcelain, Saint-Cloud with raised gold *paillons* and green enamel decoration and silver gilt mounts. Christian Bonnin collection.



refer to the same service but to another of similar luxurious quality; the mention of ‘the raised design in gold and enamel’ is tantalising, if accurate, as none of the known pieces of the *piqué d’or* group have enamel colours. Another beaker and saucer ‘en porcelaine blanche piquée et garnie d’or’ can be found in the inventory of the second wife of the prince de Bourbon Condé, princesse Caroline de Hesse Rhinefelds, of 28 June 1741.<sup>17</sup>

This small but coherent group of ‘*piqué d’or*’ pieces have *décharge* marks that span the years 1717 to 1726. The small number of pieces in this group, (probably less than twenty) suggests that they cannot have been made over an extended period. A number of examples were in the collection of the Regent before his death in 1723, and as the latest date-letter noted is that for 1723, it can be assumed that the group was produced by a Paris jeweller or *marchand mercier* for just a few years either side of 1720.

### **Die-stamp or *Paillon* group**

The next group or groups to consider are those that use gold foil *paillons* or die-stamped appliqués, and this is rather more complicated. Decoration with *paillons* is found on Saint-Cloud, Meissen and Asian porcelains as well as on enamels on copper. This technique was used in Paris as well as in Saxony, and notably in Berlin on enamel at the Fromery workshop to which French enamel boxes are frequently misattributed.

Charles Truman has written of the



**Figure 11**  
(far left)  
Tobacco jar and cover, soft-paste porcelain, Saint-Cloud with raised gold *paillon* decoration. The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.

**Figure 12.**  
Tobacco jar and cover, soft-paste porcelain, Saint-Cloud with raised gold *paillon* decoration. Published in Alfassa and Guerin, *Porcelaine Française du XVIIe au milieu du XIXe siècle*, (Éditions Albert Lévy, Paris, 1929), pl. 18 B.

*communauté des Paillonneurs*, of Paris, which was later amalgamated into the goldsmiths' guild in 1777, who supplied *paillons* to enamellers and makers of clock cases and dials.<sup>18</sup> These were strips of gold foil punched into metal dies and the resulting decorative elements were applied and fired onto the porcelain over a suitable flux. The gold *paillons* are often quite substantial with considerable relief decoration in the thickness of the gold itself; alternatively a thin foil was pressed into the die and it was backed with a vitrifiable medium or enamel, in these cases one can frequently see the white backing enamel in areas where the gold has been rubbed, such as on the bottom of boxes.

This technique is employed on quite a number of small pieces of Saint-Cloud *galanterie*, such as snuff boxes and cane handles (**Figs 9 & 10**). Bertrand Rondot has pointed out that this sort of work does not appear in successive inventories of the Saint-Cloud factory indicating that it was done outside the factory.<sup>19</sup> These pieces often have Paris hallmarks which date to just a little later than the '*piquée d'or*' group, mostly from the mid 1720s and into the 1730s. Amongst the earliest Saint-Cloud examples is a set of knives in the Villa Floridiana, Naples, with marks for 1722 – 26.<sup>20</sup> It should be noted that some of the dates published elsewhere can be misleading as the marks can be difficult to read. Many of these Saint-Cloud pieces are also enamelled in green over the *paillons*, but very rarely in any other colours.

There are a handful of more substantial pieces of Saint-Cloud porcelain with this type of decoration such as the two wonderful tobacco jars in the State Hermitage Museum (**Fig. 11**) and an example published in Alfassa and Guerin<sup>21</sup> (**Fig. 12**) but apparently no Saint-Cloud tea wares were decorated in this way.

The same *paillon* decoration is found on Chinese *blanc de chine* porcelain including tea wares (**Figs 13 & 14**) as well as on Jingdezhen porcelain typically with French mounts. Further enamel colours including red, green, blue and black also begin to appear (**Fig. 15**). Aileen Dawson has shown that it can also be found on French enamels on copper such as the small mug with a frieze of American ‘Indians’ in the British Museum.<sup>22</sup> The same motifs are also found on *blanc de chine* and on Saint-Cloud porcelain. One small service comprising a *blanc de chine* teapot and two teabowls with gold mounts adapts a further teabowl into a sugar bowl with the addition of a white enamel cover with the same gold *paillons* (**Fig. 16 a & b**). Certain more elaborate classical *paillons* are found on enamels on copper which can be linked to the work on Saint-Cloud pieces through the shared use of ornamental *régence paillons* (**Fig. 17**). These anticipate the work on watch cases sometimes signed by G. Bouvier that Charles Truman has identified<sup>23</sup>.

The same technique can also be found on at least one example of du Paquier porcelain (**Fig. 18**). Du Paquier porcelain must have been rare in France at this time but Gheneke Zelleke has recently published the pieces owned by the duc de Richlieu who was the French ambassador to Vienna from 1725 – 28, and there is also the early service said to have been made for a prince de Rohan. These show that it was occasionally to be found in France.<sup>24</sup> Similar *paillons* occur on at least six pieces of Meissen. (I am leaving aside a problematic group of scent bottles).<sup>25</sup> We know that Meissen was available in Paris, for example from the number of pieces mentioned in the 1724 inventory of the Regent.

One can identify on Meissen exactly the same *paillons* as used on Saint-Cloud and Chinese porcelain.

In one instance a Meissen teabowl bears precisely the same four *paillons* that

**Figure 13.**  
Beaker, hard-paste porcelain, *blanc de chine*, Dehua with gold *paillon* decoration. Anthony du Boulay collection.



**Figure 14.**  
(far right)  
Teapot and cover, hard-paste porcelain, *blanc de chine*, Dehua with gold *paillon* decoration. Private Collection.





are found on a number of *blanc de chine* examples (Figs 19 & 20). The Meissen example has the addition of green, red and blue enamels. In this instance the *paillons* seem to have been tooled to form wells for the enamel – a sort of *champlevé* technique.

Where an attribution of this group to Paris becomes problematic is with the most famous example of Meissen with this type of decoration, now in the Österreichisches Museum für Angewandte Kunst in Vienna

**Figure 15.** Gold-mounted beaker, hard-paste Jingdezhen porcelain with gold *paillons* and enamel decoration in four colours. The Chinese Porcelain Company, New York.



**Figure 16a** Part tea service, hard-paste porcelain, *blanc de chine*, Dehua mounted in gold with gold *paillon* decoration. Gold marks for 1717 – 22. Private collection.



**Figure 16b.** A teabowl from Fig. 16a adapted into a sugar box with the addition of an enamel cover.

**Figure 17.**  
Beaker, enamel on copper with elaborate *paillon* decoration of classical scenes and *régence* strapwork. The Victoria and Albert Museum.



**Figure 18.**  
(far right)  
Two-handled beaker and cover, hard-paste Du Paquier porcelain, Vienna, with gold *paillon* decoration. Museo Nazionale della Ceramica Duca di Martina, Naples.

(**Fig.21 a & b**). This bears the signature of Christoph Conrad Hunger, with the addorsed ‘C’s for his initials. It was first published in 1902 by Gustav Pazaurek<sup>26</sup> when it was in the collection of Karl Mayer, the great collector of Vienna porcelain. Mayer considered it to be du Paquier porcelain but it is now accepted as early Meissen. It has exactly the same *paillons* as the others pieces in this group.

Hunger was an enameller or gold worker and an important character in the early spread of hard-paste porcelain. He arrived in Meissen in early 1717 and later stated to the commissioners of the factory that he had come from France.<sup>27</sup> He is known to have worked with J.G. Melhorn in developing underglaze blue and was paid 300 *thalers* in this year.<sup>28</sup>

In October 1717 he was persuaded to desert Meissen for Vienna where he was instrumental in establishing the du Paquier porcelain factory. He then fled to Venice in 1719 where he sold the secret of porcelain manufacture to the Vezzi brothers, remaining there until 1724. In 1727 he returned to Dresden and in July of that year agreed to gild as many pieces of porcelain as were delivered to him. It was conceded that he would not work in the Meissen factory itself in the fortress of the Albrechtsburg but, like the enameller George Funcke before him, would be allowed to work in Dresden.<sup>29</sup>

Although Hunger built a muffle kiln in Dresden at his own expense he left Saxony in July 1729. A well-known group of gilt decoration used to be attributed to him; it is in a mixed *paillon* and gilding technique; one can see certain *paillon* motifs, such as ostriches, other birds and foliage scrolls repeated exactly (**Fig.22**). The foil appears thinner than on other groups that we have been considering and has a rather crumbly texture; there are problems with the adhesion over the yellow brown flux. There are dots similar to those on the *piquée d’or* group which were presumably applied with



**Figure 19a – d.**  
Four views of a  
Meissen, Böttger  
porcelain, teabowl  
with gold *paillon* and  
enamel decoration.  
The Metropolitan  
Museum of Art.

gold in powder form but they usually have a small dimple in the centre, probably caused as the substance in which the gold is suspended evaporates. It only occurs on early Meissen, Böttger porcelain, and glass.

Although we can be certain that this group was done in Saxony it can be shown that Hunger was definitely not responsible for this work because this decoration on Meissen porcelain corresponds exactly with glasses such as the example that Aileen Dawson has published which must date from the accession of August III to the Kingdom of Poland in 1735 and Hunger is known to have left Dresden by 1729. But the important point for us is not whether he did this work but that he was once believed by scholars and collectors to have done so. However the signed bowl from the Mayer collection is in a technique quite different to this so-called Hunger work on Meissen but can be linked clearly with the *paillon* groups that we have seen

**Figure 20a – d.**  
 Four corresponding  
 views of a teabowl of  
 hard-paste porcelain,  
*blanc de chine*,  
 Dehua with the same  
*paillons* as **Fig. 19**.  
 Private Collection.



occurring on Chinese and Saint-Cloud porcelain.

I tried to group examples of these pieces on the basis of the *paillons* used and the differing use of enamels to see if it was possible to find a group that was done in Germany and another that was done in Paris. Arranging them by the use of repeated identical *paillon* motifs such as pagodas, flower vases, flower baskets, American ‘Indians’ and *régence* strapwork elements it became evident that these groups were completely inter-related and could not be sensibly divided along these lines. This is not to say that sub-groupings cannot be made, the silver and gold marks, such as the *fleur de lis* on the gold mounts which was used between 1717 and 1722 indicate that the multi-coloured enamelled pieces on oriental porcelain and Meissen and a few isolated pieces of Saint-Cloud slightly pre-date the more coherent group of sometimes green-enamelled Saint-Cloud *galanterie* (**Figs 9 & 10**). Another rare sub-group with gold mounts and Paris marks for 1722 – 27 uses unusually thick gold *paillons* that seem not to relate to the others (**Fig. 23**).

A possible sequence is that a workshop independently developed this type of decoration on whatever white porcelain was available to it and then slightly later was either commissioned by the Saint-Cloud factory to work on its smaller wares or that



the workshop specifically ordered these pieces in the white (they would have made little sense if left undecorated). However it became clear that the same *paillons* and techniques were used throughout this group from around 1720 into the 1730s and the evidence of the silver and gold marks all pointed towards France.

The only problem with attributing all these pieces (Figs. 9 to 20) to France remains the signed Hunger bowl in the Österreichisches Museum für Angewandte Kunst.

I considered various possible explanations.

Firstly that Hunger had decorated this bowl when he was still in France before 1717; the Meissen porcelain could possibly be that early but the *fleur de lis* mark on the gold mounts on a number of pieces with exactly this type of decoration

was introduced on 1 October 1717 and Hunger is recorded as being in Dresden by the beginning of 1717. This suggests that this possibility, whilst not impossible, is unlikely.

Secondly that the same *paillons* were used in two centres, in both France and Germany, but I think this most unlikely as certain defining features would surely have become evident between the works done in centres 550 miles apart.

I was forced to conclude that the most plausible solution to the problem is that the signature on the Mayer bowl is in fact a later addition to a genuine Böttger bowl that was decorated in Paris. I am not the only person, nor indeed the first to doubt the authenticity of this signature. Bertrand Rondot in a footnote to his section on ‘Gold – Foil Decoration’ in the 1999 Bard ‘Saint-Cloud Manufactory, ca. 1690 – 1766’ catalogue noted:

‘The signature under the Vienna bowl has been questioned by some scholars, although not yet in a publication....’<sup>30</sup>

Others have also expressed their long-held suspicion of its authenticity to me in conversation citing the over bold scale of the signature and a script that does not seem eighteenth century in style.<sup>31</sup> In fact this bowl is the only real piece of evidence

**Figure 21a**  
A bowl, Meissen, Böttger porcelain, with gold *paillon* and enamel decoration now in the Österreichisches Museum für Angewandte Kunst in Vienna with the signature of Christoph Conrad Hunger. Illustration taken from ‘Wiener Porzellan, Sammlung Karl Mayer’, 1928.

**Figure 21b**  
Another view of the bowl Fig.21a, showing the signature. Illustration taken from Gustav E. Pazaurek, *Deutsche Fayence – und Porzellan-Hausmaler*, (Leipzig 1925).

**Figure 22**

Teapot and cover, Meissen, Böttger porcelain, with gold decoration added in Saxony. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



**Figure 23**

(far right)

Bowl and cover of Chinese porcelain, the cover, *blanc de chine*, the bowl with underglaze blue *Fu* mark from a minor Fujian kiln, with gold mounts and Paris marks for 1722 – 27. The unusually thick gold *paillons* are characteristic of this rare sub-group with motifs that do not appear on other Paris pieces. Anthony du Boulay collection.



that suggests that any of this work was done in Germany at all.

The bowl is known to have turned up in a Viennese antique shop at the end of the nineteenth century.

A piece of du Paquier (as it was thought to be) signed by one of the founding fathers of the factory would have been perfectly attuned to the taste of a collector such as Karl Mayer who was forming a comprehensive collection of the factory, and since Hunger left Vienna in 1719 it would have been the earliest known piece from the factory.

If the signature is a later fraudulent addition we can discard this piece of evidence. The whole group then gains a satisfying coherence in terms of technique, motifs used and enamels, as well as a secure attribution to France; one might add that even if the unlikely possibility that Hunger decorated this bowl in Paris before moving to Dresden in 1717 is accepted the attribution to France remains secure.

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The Hallwylska Museet, Stockholm , **Fig. 1**; © The State Hermitage Museum / Photo by Svetlana Suetova **Fig. 11**.

## NOTES

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1. Dr Martin Lister, *A Journey to Paris in the Year 1698*, London, 1699.
2. This and the following extracts are taken from John Whitehead, 'Porcelains in the inventory of the Regent', *The French Porcelain Society Journal*, I, (2003), 11 – 45.
3. Sold Hôtel Drouot, Paris, Comte de Chavagnac sale, 19 – 21 June 1911, lot 78.
4. Florence Slitine, *Samson, genie de l'imitation*, (Editions Charles Massin, Paris, 2002), p. 118.
6. I am grateful to Bernard Dragesco for his views on the authenticity of this piece.
7. I am grateful to Amelia Jackson for help in trying to identify the source of this design.
8. L. B. Hunt, 'Gold in the Pottery Industry, The History and Technology of Gilding Processes', *Gold Bulletin, The Journal of Gold Science, Technology and Applications*, 12, (1979), 116 – 127.
9. For an analysis and transcription of the inventory see John Whitehead, 'Porcelains in the inventory of the Regent', *The French Porcelain Society Journal*, I, (2003), 11 – 45.
10. Another instance of this type of unusual white porcelain being used on an example with gold *paillon* decoration is a bowl with a *blanc de chine* cover (**Fig. 23**). A further instance of unusual Chinese porcelain being used is the rare white late Ming Jiajing marked bowl in the Louvre, illustrated in Bertrand Rondot, ed., *Discovering the Secrets of Soft-Paste porcelain at The Saint-Cloud Manufactory, ca. 1690 – 1766*, (Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, New York, exhibition catalogue, 15 July – 24 October, 1999) pl. 203, p. 242.
11. The curious princely taste for brown-glazed wares is evident from the number of Chinese pieces described as *feuille morte* in early French Royal inventories.
12. Bet Mcleod has not been able to identify this piece in the Beckford lists. Perhaps it was merely an assumption on behalf of the writer of the paper label that the Hamilton Palace provenance implied that it had come through the Beckford inheritance.
13. Arthur Lane, 'The Gaignieres-Fonthill Vase – A Chinese Porcelain of about 1300,' *Burlington Magazine* vol. 103 (1961), 124 – 132.
14. I am grateful to Charles Truman for his advice on this matter.
15. Paul Micio has kindly given me access to his unpublished PhD thesis at the Université Paris-IV, presented on 14 March 2009, in which he suggests that the Louvre *nécessaire* might not actually be the one specified in the inventory but another very similar due to slight discrepancies in the descriptions of the mounts.
16. *Letters from Liselotte*, translated and edited by Maria Kroll, (London: Allison & Busby Ltd., 1998), p. 210. Aileen Dawson, 'Gold foil decoration on enamel, glass and porcelain: a new look', *Burlington Magazine*, vol. 132 (May 1990), 338.
17. Geneviève Le Duc, 'The Porcelain of Chantilly: The Collections of the Duke and Duchess of Bourbon Condé and the inventory of the factory in the middle of the 18th century', *The International Ceramics Fair and Seminar Handbook*, (London, June 1993), pp. 12 – 13.
18. Charles Truman, *The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection, Renaissance jewels, gold boxes and objets de vertu*, (London: Sotheby Publications, 1984), p. 266.
19. Bertrand Rondot, 'Gold Foil Decoration', *Discovering the Secrets of Soft-Paste porcelain at The Saint-Cloud Manufactory, ca. 1690 – 1766*, (Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, New York, exhibition catalogue, 15 July – 24 October, 1999) p. 296.
20. Ibid. pl. 206, p. 243.
21. Paul Alfassa et Jaques Guérin, *Porcelaine française du XVIIe au milieu du XIXe siècle*, (Paris: Éditions Albert Lévy, 1929), pl. 18 B.
22. Aileen Dawson, op. cit. (see note 14), pl. 49 and 50.

23. Charles Truman, op. cit. (see note 18), p. 267, pl. 1.
24. Meredith Chilton et. al. *Fired by Passion, Vienna Baroque Porcelain of Claudius Innocentius du Paquier*, (Hartford: Melinda and Paul Sullivan Foundation for the Decorative Arts, and Stuttgart: Arnoldsche Art Publishers, 2009), pp.972-979.
25. Hugh Tait, 'Herold and Hunger', *The British Museum Quarterly*, XXV (1962), 40.  
Jeffrey Munger, *The Forsyth Wickes Collection in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1992) p.262, no 229. A number of scent-bottles decorated with gold *paillons* depicting religious subjects such as John the Baptist which are not found elsewhere are now believed to be by Samson. These have variously been attributed to Saint-Cloud, Meissen and Samson. An example described as Saint-Cloud from the comte de Chavagnac sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 19 – 21 June 1911, lot 79, was actually bought by Samson perhaps in an attempt to avert the possible embarrassment of its origin coming to light in such a high profile sale.
26. Gustav E. Pazaurek , *Mitteilung des Nordböhmischen Gewerbemuseums in Reichenberg* (Reichenberg 1902) and Gustav E. Pazaurek , *Deutsche Fayence – und Porzellan-Hausmaler* (Leipzig: K. W. Hiersemann, 1925 reprinted, Stuttgart 1971), pl. 10 opposite p. 146.
27. For a transcript of Hunger's deposition see: J. F. Hayward, *Viennese Porcelain of the Du Paquier Period*, (London Rockliff Publishing, 1952), Appendix III, pp. 186 – 188
28. Rainer Rückert, *Biographische Daten der Meißener Manufakturisten des 18. Jahrhunderts*, (Munich: Bayerischen Nationalmuseums, 1992) pp. 162 – 163.
29. Ibid. pp. 162 – 163.
30. Bertrand Rondot, op.cit.(see note19), p. 297, footnote 7.
31. I am grateful to Anton Gabszewicz, Meredith Chilton and Robert Williams for their views on the authenticity of the signature.