Peranakan Nonyaware and Satsuma - Educator guide

ACM203: Museum Management
Prof. Margaret Chan

Prepared by
Miyato FURUYA
Singapore Management University
Peranakan porcelains and Satsuma - Educator guide
By Miyato FURUYA

This educator guide will cover two kinds of porcelain that are Nonyawares used in Peranakan culture and mostly from China and Satsuma used in Japan and exported to the world in the Edo period. A porcelain could be one of the interesting indicators of cultures that enable people to know tastes, preferences and ways of expressing their wealth and daily life. Thus, this paper will introduce two types of porcelains and compare the context of these artifacts.

Satsuma has been chosen because the author is from Japan and wanted to compare Peranakan Nonyaware and Japanese traditional ware, exploring and researching about the Peranakan Museum. Also, It is a highly interesting comparison because Peranakan Nonyaware and Shiro-Satsuma were both produced for similar purposes to serve as a gift on a special occasion. In addition, both have very similar sophistication in terms of ceramic paintings. Therefore, the author selected this two particular artifacts for this educator guide.

1. Peranakan’s Nonyaware (Kamcheng)
   - Overview of peranakan
     Peranakan culture commenced from mixing cultures of local Southeast Asia and the rest of the world, with its high diversity and fusions. A Peranakan porcelain is mainly evolved by chinese peranaks who arrived in Southeast Asia from China in the 14th century and integrated their customs and behaviors with local Malay counterparts.

   - History of nonyaware
     In the early 18th century, European countries introduced enamel coating production to China, which enabled Chinese production to make sophisticated decorated porcelains. From the middle 19th century to the early 20th century, the Peranakan Chinese people who lived in Singapore, Malacca, Penang and other parts of Indonesia started to use polychrome enamel porcelains called nonyaware made in a famous ceramic production center of Jingdezhen, China. As “Nonyaware” is used to describe a porcelain of Peranakan because it was a favorable type for Peranakan women, the word comes from a term to describe female peranakan called “Nonya”. Nonyawares were constantly bought by the Peranakan until around the 1930s when the political initiative had been changed in China and affected Nonyaware production. Nowadays, historical Nonyawares are rather rare because many family collections were sold off during the war and large family homes were renovated in the post-colonial period until Singapore became independent from Malaysia. A number of collections that protected by Peranakan families were fragmented. Few of porcelains are inherited to continued descendants of the Peranakans. Today, most of the existing Nonyawares are collected and preserved in Singapore and Malaysia as one of the most recognizable objects from the Peranakan Chinese community.

   - Features of nonyaware
     Nonyaware was mostly founded in Peranakan Chinese homes. Many families had a large number of porcelains that were normally stored in wall or display cupboards as shown in the Baba house in Singapore. As the quality of Nonyawares is widely ranged from poorly decorated pieces to very fully detailed, it depends on how wealthy a family has been. Some of the very wealthy families ordered their own special Nonyawares with special marks, names and surnames painted on the porcelains. Many pieces of Nonyawares used for special occasions, so a number of wealthy family also made their special porcelains.
Nonyawares decorated brightly with a combination of hot pink, lime green, blue, brown-olive and coral red and auspicious motifs were mainly reserved for special occasions and special functions such as wedding, birthdays, anniversaries, and the Chinese new year. These porcelains known as “in-and-out” porcelains were generally decorated with colored enamels on both surfaces inside and outside. In addition, the inside of surface did not fully function when they used porcelains in special occasions, but it is decorated because they want to show their wealth on the Nonyaware. Moreover, some pieces have special marks or characters that identify them as belonging to certain families. Green was so popular for color decoration that Peranakan people favored painting their home exteriors with green. While, for ancestor worship, Peranakans commonly used blue and white porcelains, the Peranakan chinese also used other type of porcelain for daily use from China, Japan and Europe.

**Kamcheng**

Some of common porcelains for Nonyaware such as the Kamcheng, chupu and teh kuan(cylindrical teapot) were often found in a number of Peranakan communities. Kamchens are made in a wide range of colors. Common decoration theme of Nonyaware porcelain is the phoenix-and-peony and some marks that related owner family names. Richer families ordered pieces made with rare colors. Although some colored grounds such as indigo blue and powder blue are very rare, this scarcity of blue colored porcelains is linked with the fact blue colors are associated with ideas of death and mourning for their ancestors.

The Kamcheng is a type of covered container which is popular in the Peranakan community. It is one of the most common forms of Nonyaware porcelains. Kamcheng was used as a drinking water storage as well as a serving vessel on special occasions. The Kamcheng was made in various colors as well as general sense of Nonyaware, and other materials such as copper and silver. Many Peranakans are still familiar with the term “ayer Kamcheng” that is the Peranakan Malay word and meaning for “boiled water for drinking”. Thus elderly people of the Peranakan community still remember that kamcheng stores their drinking water in their kitchen.

**Size of nonyaware and use**

Various sized of kamchens were founded in lots of Peranakan homes, it is ranging from 4 to 39cm and means to use kamchens are differentiated depending on the sizes. Medium and large kamchens mainly used as a container of drinking water, food or desserts and that is depending on how the family wished to use big size of kamcheng. On the other hand, small size of kamchens contained cosmetics or sweets. Large kamchens are very precious and only few pieces found in very wealthy Peranakan families. Interestingly, the condition of many existing kamchens are well preserved, and it suggests that they were used only for special occasions.
2. Satsuma Ware

• Overview
Satsuma is one of very famous porcelain in Japan and it was highly evaluated by all over the world since it had been expressed in Exposition Universelle de Paris in 1867. Satsuma is a pottery and porcelain with creamy beige glaze, decorated with blue, red, green, orange, or gold. Satsuma was a name of place in long years ago, until Meiji period, currently called as Kagoshima prefecture in Kyushu(九州). This porcelain was made two types that depends on purposes, called Shiro-Satsuma(白薩摩: White Satsuma) and Kuro-Satsuma(黒薩摩: Black Satsuma). Shiro-Satsuma was used by Daimyo who is a local feudal lord in satsuma and Kuro-Satsuma was used for daily use. Until Satsuma had exhibited in Exposition Universelle, Satsuma was not well-known in the world, however, this porcelain has long history more than 400 years.

• History of Satsuma
Satsuma is a name of porcelain that produced from Momoyama period(1573-1603) in Satsuma in Japan. Satsuma is placed in southern part of Kyushu, it used to be ruled by Daimyo named Shimazu. During Momoyama period to Edo period, Japan was under condition of stable politics except war(Sekigahara no tatakai: Sekigahara war) in 1603 in middle part of Japan, Sekigahara. Since economy and politics had stabled at that time, Shimazu started

Panel-2
Name: White Sake Pot with Inlaid Plant and Flower design
Date: late 17th century - early 18th century
Region: Satsuma, Japan
Dimension: H-20.1×W-20.5cm
Museum: Kiln of Chin Jukan Museum

This Shiro Satsuma was produced for Sake pot in Edo period and purpose for gift to feudal lord at that moment because it did not start exporting. It was highly evaluated because of the contrast between usage and design. This pot used for containing sake but it designs flower on the surface it seems like vase.
encouraging people and merchants to run some industries such as sugar production, gold mining, and along as well as porcelain productions. Production of porcelains, Satsuma, had started after war against Korea during 1592 to 1598, Shimazu brought back some craftsman of porcelains for enhancing industries in Japan. After they naturalize in Japan, they opens kilns around Satsuma and the technology of porcelains production had been rapidly improved. Around that time, that porcelain has named as “Satsuma” that used name of that areas, while, it was called as “Kuniyaki” means as porcelain of country. Until Satsuma had disclosed, Satsuma was only used for daily use even though there are two kinds of Satsuma as mentions earlier. After Satsuma had exhibited in Exposition Universelle in Paris In 1867 and in Vienna in 1873, it was worldly admired and increasing demand to obtain the piece of Satsuma. Currently, Satsuma has been listed under certification of Japanese Traditional Crafts and it is very valuable porcelain for collection.

- **Shiro-Satsuma and Kuro-Satsuma**

Satsuma mainly divided to two types called Shiro-Satsuma and Kuro-Satsuma. These porcelains are hardly same because it is using different materials such as clay, likewise different process to production. Shiro-Satsuma was produced in authorized kiln in Kagoshima prefecture as a gift for feudal lord, Shimazu. In the late years, after international exposition in Paris, it had been used for exporting to the world for purpose to obtain foreign currencies. Shiro-Satsuma has decorated brightly and coated by enamels. Moreover, It colored by white base, drawn ceramic paintings by brilliant colors on. To add these painting methods, craftsman installed the technology of openwork for meet the demand from European preferences. For enhancing the sales in the world as the effort to meet demand by craftsman, Shiro-Satsuma has been developed because of heavily supported by government in Satsuma. The distinctive paintings on Shiro-Satsuma is based on Japanese traditional signatures, for example, beautiful scenery of local daily life or the beauties of nature such as flower, birds, winds and moons. These pieces colored by white, to add this, Satsuma painted in red or gold colors. Thus this Shiro-Satsuma was mainly used by feudal lord or foreign collectors for daily use and for appreciation.

On the other hand, Kuro-Satsuma was called as “Kuro-mon” used local material that gainable in these area, produced for daily use for local people. Therefore, on Kuro-Satsuma, there are no ceramic paintings and openworks that shown on Shiro-Satsuma, in addition, it was very simplified for suitable in daily life. However, because of simple decoration, craftsman had been required sophisticated techniques to integrate a lot techniques from around Japan with local materials. Kuro-Satsuma has been shaped for suiting daily use for people and it was from local life styles and principles of local people. From the past to nowadays, Kuro-Satsuma is loved by people because craftsman concentrated on usability of the piece. Kuro-Satsuma is used as container of water or Japanese sake that is depending on size of Satsuma ware and preference of people. Likewise to contain water, Kuro-Satsuma was produced for various purposes for local people.
3. **Recommendation to guide student about ware learning as a summation.**

To guide student, teachers preferably compare with both artifact, explain historical background, and context of use.

- **purpose of this learning session.**

This educator guide is designed for enhancing discussion between students, as well as lead increasing interest into the traditional wares that has been cultivated as the commodity and also luxury items in both Peranakan and Japanese culture. To achieve this purpose, by comparing these artifacts between Nonyaware and Satsuma, student could realize similarity and differences of these wares such as pomposity, usage of artifacts and context.

- **Perspectives from teacher**

It would be preferred that teachers enable students to touch and observe the actual artifacts and experience real mood that artifacts have. For student, teacher leads student to discuss about their observation based on the comparison sheet below, and make the class more interactive.

**Summary of educator guide**

Through all of this paper covered two kinds of porcelains and wares these are Nonyaware from peranakan culture and Satsuma from Japan. These particular features are shown in table below. Interesting point for comparison are the similarity of context why these wares are decorated luxury, and purpose of usage of the artifacts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>example answer</th>
<th>Nonyaware</th>
<th>Shiro-Satsuma</th>
<th>Kuro-Satsuma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>purpose for use</strong></td>
<td>Special occasion such as wedding, birthdays and chinese new years. Containing water, food, sweet, etc.</td>
<td>Gift to feudal lord and for exporting to foreign countries.</td>
<td>Daily use for local people, but mainly for containing water and Japanese sake.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>features</strong></td>
<td>Ranged various size for various usage.</td>
<td>Sophisticated techniques to paint on the wares.</td>
<td>Very simple for a lot of purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>colors</strong></td>
<td>Hot pink, yellows, blues, and green</td>
<td>White based ware, painting by red and gold</td>
<td>Normally black based and non paintings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>remarks</strong></td>
<td>Expressing means of wealth of the families. Rich families ordered their original nonyawares.</td>
<td>Firstly disclosed in Paris in 1867 in the international exhibition and it had been highly evaluated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Similarity**

Nonyaware and Shiro-satsuma both used for special cases, and both divided daily use and special use.

**Differences**

Nonyawares are decorated entirely by enamel but Satsuma designed more less color and more simplified.
4. References

**Articles**

Seyock, B. (2007). Trade Ceramics from the Gotō Islands (Japan), Circa Sixteenth to Early Seventeenth Century: The Yamami Underwater Site (Ojika) and Related Issues. Asian Perspectives: Journal Of Archeology For Asia & The Pacific, 46(2), 335-360.


**Pictures**


5. Teaching materials for the class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>example answer</th>
<th>Nonyaware</th>
<th>Shiro-Satsuma</th>
<th>Kuro-Satsuma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>purpose for use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>features</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>remarks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>