

Einladung zum Gastvortrag**Prof. JANG Namwon**

Ewha Womans University / Dept. of Art History

**Goryeo Celadon Understood from
the Material Culture Perspective**

Donnerstag, 30.06.2022, 18–20 Uhr ct.

Raum A127, Kunsthistorisches Institut, Koserstr. 20, 14195 Berlin

The study on celadon produced during the Goryeo dynasty, which is based on the close examination of kiln sites and archaeological finds to identify technique and chronological dates, has earned many achievements in academia. The approach to the dating of Goryeo celadon includes comparative studies of its models, motifs, and any inscriptions on celadon. By extracting formative features from such approach, the study has focused on exploring Goryeo celadon's own evolution or the relationship with China. The discovery and the salvage of a shipwreck, which could be the evidence for the extensive trade of ceramics at that time, also enabled a number of data and its meaning to become concrete in the studies of cultural history as well as ceramic history.

Already in medieval China and Japan, contemporary with the Goryeo period, collectors and experts in celadon emerged, and a ceramic adaptation of ancient objects resulted in the consumption of celadon for other purposes. Written records such as books, publications and lists of ceramic objects suggest many aspects of celadon wares functioned as material objects. Goryeo celadon, too, was re-modelled and developed as a new type of utensil that had never existed before, which consequently allowed it to re-identify itself as an object of taste and to acquire new material value in addition to its original meaning and function. Goryeo celadon wares were also used for table arrangement and frequently regarded as goods for sale or diplomatic gifts, as they gained exchange value as commodities. Considering that the study of material culture centers upon cultural facets of a thing and understands the interrelationship between people and their objects, Goryeo celadon is therefore significant as a material culture text, for it reflects the Goryeo period.

According to the investigation of kiln sites, the twelfth and thirteenth century kilns in the Korean peninsula competitively manufactured celadon, and these periods saw the diversity in celadon models and their qualities. Kilns in Gangjin and Buan, in particular, were two of the largest cities that supplied celadon to other major consumer cities including Gaeseong. It could be inferred by written records and materials that the process of celadon consumption is the visualized results

of contemporary cultural phenomenon such as the use of celadon for table arrangement and contemplation, the admiration of tea sets and incense burners parallel with the growth of tea and incense culture, connotation in burial ceramic objects, and the development of diverse tastes. Interestingly, Koreans referred to their celadon wares as “jadecolored(翡色),” and Goryeo celadon was thus regarded as a masterpiece and appraised as a collectable item in the Song and the Yuan China or in Japan in which Goryeo celadon had been introduced through trade and gift. It is notable that, already in the Goryeo period, the use of various names and terms indicating Goryeo celadon and each model as well as a wide variety of use of Goryeo celadon made celadon itself “the other.” If more specific cases—for example, with regard to the size difference and change in the same celadon model, the function of newly adapted celadon separated from that of original bronze wares, and its commodity value distinctive from other objects at that time—are explained, it will be more promising to clarify such circumstances.



JANG Namwon is a professor of Art History at the Ewha Womans University, Seoul. She majored in Chinese literature at the undergraduate level and studied the history of Korean ceramics in graduate school master's and doctoral programs at Ewha Womans University. Currently, she is interested in East Asian pottery in general, focusing on the history of exchanges in pottery styles and manufacturing techniques and material culture. The current stay of professor Jang at Freie Universität Berlin is within the framework of the Gerda Henkel Network East Asian Art History.