

Zeitschrift:	Mitteilungsblatt / Keramik-Freunde der Schweiz = Revue des Amis Suisses de la Céramique = Rivista degli Amici Svizzeri della Ceramica
Herausgeber:	Keramik-Freunde der Schweiz
Band:	- (1956)
Heft:	36
Artikel:	Falconet and Sèvres biscuit
Autor:	Sainsbury, Wilfried J.
DOI:	https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-394938

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 16.01.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

Falconet and Sèvres biscuit

by Wilfried J. Sainsbury, London

The purpose of the Vincennes Factory was to provide a competitor to Meissen; success would flatter French vanity, offended by the supremacy which Saxony had achieved in European porcelain production, and as Meissen figurines were being sold in France in great quantities, their replacement by local products would accord with the protectionist policy of the French Government which dated at least from the time of Colbert.

Vincennes therefore introduced a wide range of figures, sometimes glazed and sometimes in colours; sometimes to stand on their own and sometimes to serve as accessories to other articles like clock cases and light holders. There were various groups like *Le Fleuve* (to be seen in colours in the Louvre); *Hercule et Omphale* (white glazed in the Metropolitan Museum in New York); gods and goddesses; animals and birds (two in polychrome in the Metropolitan Museum in New York); the three important groups amongst the first products derived from Boucher drawings, and the first examples of scenes based on a popular play — *La Leçon de Flûte*, *La Margeuse de Raisins*, and *Le Jaloux*, all of which, glazed, can be seen in the Morgan Collection at Hartford, Connecticut. In 1752 there was a new departure in the shape of eight little pieces (including the oft repeated *Petite Fille à la Cage*) by Blondeau after Boucher, the series being known as the *Enfants dits de Vincennes*. These were most frequently made in white glaze in the first place although there are two early polychrome examples in the Metropolitan Museum, and two (formerly in the Chavagnac Collection) are to be seen in the French Institute in New York with the exposed flesh coloured more or less to nature while the rest of the figure is white.

The first production of Biscuit dates from around 1752. Jean-Jacques Bachelier, born 1724, took over in 1748 «la direction des travaux de peinture à la manufacture de Sèvres». About 1796, after half a century of work in the Factory, Bachelier published his *Mémoire Historique sur la Manufacture Nationale de Porcelaine de France*.

The origin of Biscuit is set out by Bachelier in the following words:

«Dans l'origine de la manufacture, la sculpture n'avait, ainsi que la peinture, d'autres prétentions que l'imitation du Japon, jusqu'en 1749. La sculpture était luisante et colorée. L'impossibilité d'approcher des figures de Saxe, par l'égalité d'emploi et l'éclat des couleurs, allait faire renoncer à cette partie, quand le sieur Bachelier proposa d'essayer la sculpture sans couverte, c'est-à-dire, biscuit, mais il n'y avait pas d'exemples de ce genre, aussi fut-il rejeté comme impraticable et ridicule. Inutilement il cita le marbre statuaire, qui n'est ni luisant ni coloré, et qui cependant a des charmes; ce ne fut qu'en 1751, que le ministre exigea qu'on en fit l'expérience. Le sieur Bachelier pensa que rien ne serait plus agréable au public, et de plus facile exécution pour l'espèce d'ouvriers qu'il avait alors, que de traduire en porcelaine plusieurs idées pastorales de M. Boucher. Ce genre eut le plus grand succès jusqu'à ce que M. Falconet (sic), chargé, en 1757, de conduire la sculpture, y porta un genre plus noble, d'un goût plus général, et moins sujet aux révolutions de la mode».

We shall revert to the changes said to have resulted from the appointment of Falconet; at the moment the point to be noted is that Biscuit was in its origin a «pis aller» introduced because of the difficulty in ensuring «l'égalité d'emploi et l'éclat des couleurs». This may be true; but in ordinary porcelain Vincennes had no such difficulty to judge from the numerous first-class vases, jardinières and so on which have come down to us from that period; and after some study of early polychrome figures in the museums, private collections and «dans le commerce», one student at least is struck and delighted precisely by the «éclat de couleurs». However, Bachelier is the best witness we have and his evidence must presumably be accepted until we can find something better, but careful reading of his *Mémoire* suggests that he was not inclined to underrate the importance of his own participation in any development which proved successful.

For successful the Biscuit was. The group of eight *Enfants dits de Vincennes* were bought by the Pompadour and other

social leaders. These people set the fashion and others followed. For twenty years from 1752 there was a steady flow of soft paste Biscuit, and a number of pieces which had previously been made in polychrome or glazed were now made in Biscuit. One of these Biscuit copies, *La Leçon de Flûte*, is shown in Illustration No. 1. From 1752 onwards the Factories seldom made a figure or group in polychrome or glazed. Before we leave the subject of what may be called the «pre-Biscuit period», we should note the three main classes into which the products of this early period can be divided. Classical figures and figures suggested by or based on the classics; scenes from plays; children of the people romanticised but recognisable. We shall find examples from these classes through the period of soft paste Biscuit production, and we shall not find much else. We should also note that Boucher was providing drawings for some of the pieces as he was to continue to do until his death in 1770.

Early Biscuit

In 1754 we get the first of the productions which were designed to be made in Biscuit. The most important products were a series of children called «Les Enfants de Vincennes» by Fernex after Boucher. These were intended for the Laiterie at the Château de Crécy — the Pompadour's original extravagance which was afterwards copied by Marie Antoinette. In this series, the two most famous pieces are probably *Le Mouton Chéri* and *La Bergère Assise*; the two pieces together represent a scene from a popular play in which Madame Favart was playing the lead. We find several representations of Madame Favart in Biscuit during the next few years and number of pieces are derived from scenes in plays written by her husband. Those who are interested in the association between places and things may notice the Rue Favart which runs along the side of the Comédie Française.

In 1755 we get two important series of productions, and, incidentally, the year in which the greatest number of new individual items was produced. The first series, commonly known as *Enfants Vincennes Boucher*, was mainly the work of Suzanne. For beauty of design and skill in workmanship, and also for the quality of the paste these little figures are at least as fine as anything the Factory ever produced. They mainly represent romanticised peasant figures like *La Jardinière au Vase*, and *Le Jardinier au Plantoir*. The other group of 1755, numbering in all about forty, are commonly described as the *Enfants François*. These were derived from XVII Century models which had been made by François Duquesnoy, the Fleming, who worked in Italy and is therefore commonly known as *Il Fiammingo*. All these works represent small chubby children usually naked, and in various positions — lying down, kicking their legs in the air, and so on. In style and appearance, and, indeed, in every-

thing, they are completely XVII Century and are radically different from the children of Boucher and of the rococo period. The *Enfants François* are extremely rare in Biscuit, and, indeed, one finds them more frequently covered with white glaze. Some of these children were also modelled in other media — such as ivory and bronze, and bronze copies are to be found produced as late as the middle of the XIX Century. One at least of the *Enfants François* was copied at Chelsea, and there is the famous Chelsea version in the British Museum which is of special interest because it bears a date.

Favourable Conditions

When Falconet took over the post of head of the Atelier de Sculpture in 1757 many of the conditions were in his favour. Artists of first-class ability and proved experience were already at work — to name only two, Fernex and Suzanne. A splendid medium had been evolved and could be produced with reasonable regularity. There was little competition from other French factories. Furthermore, suitable principles had been laid down governing the type of product. This programme is set out in the following words:

«Gentillesse, nouveauté, variété, doivent être sa devise. Qui dit gentillesse dit choses légères. On ne lui demande que des éternuements de son génie, semblables à ceux d'une jolie femme, c'est-à-dire riants et agréables.»

It may be that a modern would not regard the «éternuement d'une jolie femme» as a particularly agreeable sight but the spirit which underlay this instruction was basically sound. A medium was available for agreeable trifles and these were to be the products. It is hard to imagine any more perfect matching of material and results. Added to all these factors was the presence of Boucher turning out regularly sketches which were precisely suited to the paste employed and the genius of the artists. And, behind and above all these circumstances was the presence and support of the Pompadour, who, with her taste, could inspire Boucher himself and through her influence could ensure the large scale sales needed for the successful exploitation of the factory.

Falconet's Career

Falconet was born in Paris in 1716. His family came originally from Savoy (the belief that the family came from Vevey must be abandoned). His father was an artisan and his childhood was not spent in any artistic milieu. In 1734 he has apprenticed to Jean-Bapiste Lemoyne for whom he always had great respect, and whose memory and reputation he was always prepared to defend. The artistic influences which governed his formative years were essentially old-fashioned and represented the Baroque instincts of the XVII Century rather than the rococo spirit of his own time.

His gods seem to have been Puget and Bernini. The title of some of his early works show this Baroque feeling — the *Milon de Crotone* and *Christ Agonisant*. In 1744 at the age of twenty eight he was «agr  e» at the Academy, but he was not «received» until 1754, the long delay being due in part, apparently, to his own difficult temperament.

He had little or no formal and general education, but he was an earnest student, and deeply interested in the theory as well as the practice of his art. Unlike most of the leading artists of his time he never went to Rome, and although he felt to some extent the influence of Greek and Roman sculpture, he was prepared to maintain that later artists — especially Puget and Bernini — had turned out better work in many respects than any of the famous names of antiquity. These highly individual views were even more heretical in the middle of the XVIII Century than they would be to-day.

The majority of the work he did before going to Sèvres was connected with sculpture funéraire, notably in the Church of Saint Roch in the Rue Saint Honoré. In 1757 he was selected to take charge of the Atelier de Sculpture at Sèvres, where he remained until 1766, when, on the invitation of Catherine, he went to Russia to design and erect the equestrian statue of Peter the Great. He stayed there until 1778. On his return to the West he spent about a couple of years in putting his writings in order, but was then stricken with paralysis and finally died in 1791. He does not seem to have done any creative work after his return from Russia.

The active life of Falconet therefore falls into three parts. First, the essentially baroque work before going to Sèvres; secondly, the rococo period at Sèvres (although during this period he was still doing a certain amount of work on sculpture funéraire in the Baroque style); and, thirdly, the Baroque violent creation in Russia. It is extremely difficult to imagine how his Baroque genius could have accommodated itself to the mièvrerie of the Pompadour and Sèvres Biscuit. Probably financial considerations provide the explanation. At Sèvres he was well paid and well housed. His quarters were vastly better than those to which he had been accustomed in the Rue d'Anjou, and from the point of view of all creature comforts he was probably better off at Sèvres than he had ever been before or ever was afterwards.

Falconet himself was a difficult character. Diderot said of him (the quotation is from Réau):

« Voici, écrit-il dans son *Salon* de 1765, un homme qui a du génie et qui a toutes sortes de qualités compatibles et incompatibles avec le génie . . . C'est qu'il a de la finesse, du goût, de l'esprit, de la délicatesse, de la gentillesse et de la grâce tout plein; c'est qu'il est rustre et poli, affable et brusque, tendre et dur; c'est qu'il pétrit la terre et le marbre et qu'il lit et médite; c'est qu'il est doux et caus-

tique, sérieux et plaisant; c'est qu'il est philosophe, qu'il ne croit rien et qu'il sait bien pourquoi; c'est qu'il est bon père et que son fils s'est sauvé de chez lui; c'est qu'il aimait sa maîtresse à la folie et qu'il l'a fait mourir de douleur; qu'il en est devenu triste, sombre, mélancolique qu'il en a pensé mourir de regret; qu'il y a longtemps qu'il l'a perdue et qu'il n'en est pas consolé. Ajoutez à cela qu'il n'y a pas d'homme plus jaloux du suffrage de ses contemporains et plus indifférent sur celui de la postérité. Il porte cette philosophie à un point qui ne se conçoit pas; et cent fois il m'a dit qu'il ne donnerait pas un écu pour assurer une durée éternelle à la plus belle de ses statues.»

He has been called the Jean-Jacques de la Sculpture, and certainly in many points his character reminds one of Rousseau's. Both of them were intensely touchy and susceptible of criticism but were prepared to make the most scathing «candid friend» comments on their friends and acquaintances and would then express surprise if their friends took offence. Both of them were born with remarkably thin skins but assumed that everyone else had the hide of a rhinoceros! As a consequence of this peculiarity both of them quarrelled throughout life with every friend and each of them was «difficile à vivre». There is no record that the two men ever met, but one can imagine that they came quite near each other at some point. One of Falconet's patrons was La Live de Jully who commissioned Falconet to design the monument funéraire to his wife, which La Live intended to put in his house although it was ultimately erected in Saint Roch. La Live's sister-in-law (the Madame d'Houdetot of the Epinay Memoirs) inspired the famous passion in the breast of the susceptible Jean-Jacques, and it is pleasant to imagine a truly XVIII Century picture in Saint Roch; La Live prostrate with grief before Falconet's monument to his dead wife (who had been notoriously and flagrantly unfaithful to him), Rousseau in the background swooning in the arms of La Live's sister-in-law, and Falconet himself, at the side, grinning sardonically!

Year by Year

1757, the year of Falconet's appointment to Sèvres saw a series of seventeen *Enfants Falconet, Modèles de Boucher*, one of which is represented in Illustration No. 3. These are all what one might call street scenes. We also have the *Curiosité ou La Lanterne Magique* shown in Illustration No. 2, which again finds its origin in popular life. This exemplifies well a number of characteristics which are common to the work of Falconet when creating characters from popular life. One is struck by the liveliness and action of the group, to be traced, perhaps, to the close observation of the artist, sprung from the class he was depicting, as well as to his technical ability. Notice how the child looking into the

lantern is firmly fixed in position, and has no intention of giving way to the other child in spite of his pathetic eagerness to have a peep; and contrast their eagerness with the blasé indifference of the little Savoyard who is turning the handle. To him the operation is merely a means of livelihood, and no emotion enters into it.

In 1758 some of the products are more important. We have the Amour Falconet otherwise known as Cupid and as the Garde à Vous. It was based on the marble which had been exposed the previous year. This Amour Falconet, together with the pendant in the shape of Psyché of 1761, is one of the most popular of all Falconet's works and was copied by a large number of factories. The Baigneuse (shown in Illustration No. 4) of 1758 is of special interest because it is the first time we come across the model who appears again next year in a variant with a rose in her hair: and again as Erigone (1759) and Flore (1761). This female, who seems have rejoiced in the name of Mlle Mistouflet, is far from the short legged type of classical antiquity and far from the fully rounded curves of Boucher. We shall scarcely find this particular female type appreciated again until the 1920's! In 1758 we also get La Chasse and La Pêche, each of which portrays a group of nymphs. We get the same motive again in 1761 in the Femmes Couchées and — most famous of all — in the Léda of 1764. In 1759 there are two small groups which portray children of the streets, the better known of which can be imagined from its title Les Gourmands ou Enfants Buveurs de Lait. We also get La Vache, in which an extremely realistic cow is being milked by traditional XVIII Century children. The Silène, shown in Illustrations Nos. 5 and 5 A, obviously has affinities with the group of which Léda is the prototype. (As Silène was designed as a centre pièce, two different photographs have been needed to show the composition adequately.) In 1760 there are again conventional children such as Le Jardinier as well as the mythological Satyr Courbé shown in Illustration No. 6. We also get in this year the Feuille à L'Envers and Le Sabot Casse both derived from a fable of La Fontaine and hiding a joke which is probably lost on most of the visitors to the museums in which these pieces are exposed. Several of the products of 1761 have already been referred to and in 1762 there was another variant of the Baigneuse commonly known as the Baigneuse à l'Eponge. 1763 was marked by the Pygmalion shown in Illustration No. 7 and this again was derived from the marble which had been exposed in 1761. In 1764 we get a series of children which can be imagined from the title of one of them, La Fille au Nid. We also have Saint Louis, Saint François and Sainte Claire. This series of saints was continued the following year; as if to make up for these religious subjects we get definitely grivois compositions like Les Trois Contenus as well as Le Baiser Donné shown in Illustration No. 8.

Also in this year we have a series of children and dances, some of which are shown in Illustration No. 9. Children figure again in 1766, together with scenes from popular comedies, such as those in Illustration Nos. 10 and 11. The products of the following year are similar to those in 1766, although they were actually issued after Falconet had left the Factory.

Some Statistics

In all, about one hundred works are associated with the name of Falconet. Of these about forty were derived from sketches by Boucher, and the remaining sixty were Falconet's original compositions. During the last three years in which Falconet was working at the Factory, namely 1764/5/6, only nine pieces were derived from Boucher, whereas nearly forty were original. This has given rise to the theory that Falconet was gradually freeing himself from the influence of Boucher. This may be true, but the evidence is too slight to point to any definite conclusion.

About fifteen of Falconet's works can fairly be described as classical or mythological in origin and about eighty five are non-mythological. Here again, the last three years of his work show two products based on classical themes and over forty not so based. On a purely arithmetical basis, therefore, one might infer that Falconet was freeing himself from classical influences, but, here again, the evidence is too slight.

It will be seen from what has been said above in the summary of the works year by year, and in the illustrations to this article, that the subjects which dominated the production of the Factory before Falconet's arrival and even before 1752 were still prevalent during his period of control. We can once more describe the products in the same words as we used to describe those of the earlier period — «classical figures and figures suggested by or based upon the classics; scenes from plays; children of the people romanticised but recognisable.» There are, however, two other elements which should be mentioned, one of which is represented by the saints, who can perhaps be regarded as the forerunners of the long series of representations of national heroes, and the other is that a small number of Falconet's works were derived from originals which had been created in a different medium. Three of these have already been mentioned, namely the Amour and La Baigneuse of 1758 and Pygmalion of 1763. In addition in 1760 he produced a Louis XV in armour which derived from the work of Lemoyne. After Falconet's departure this practice of copying statues which had been made in bronze or marble was comparatively frequent (e. g. as early as 1768 we have Biscuit copies of the Amour de Pigalle and the Amour de Bouchardon, as well as busts of Voltaire, Rameau and Diderot), and this practice continued for the good reason that there was no

artist at Sèvres capable of producing satisfactory original models. The suggestion has been ventilated elsewhere that Falconet was responsible for starting this practice of copying in Biscuit an original which had been made in another medium, but the number of such reproductions or reductions is so small in his case that the accusation does not seem to have much weight.

Some More Statistics

In the previous paragraph we gave an analysis of the works of Falconet. Here are some figures which show the production of Falconet as part of the total production of the Factory.

Vincennes and Sèvres produced in all about three hundred different pieces in soft paste from the inception until about 1770 (this date of 1770 has been taken because although a considerable number of pieces were produced in soft paste in the next few years their aesthetic value, generally speaking, is not great). These three hundred pieces can be divided up approximately as follows:

Produced before 1753 and originally glazed or made in polychrome, but later produced in Biscuit, say	40
Produced in 1754 and 1755, i. e. before Falconet joined the Factory, say	80
(This includes about 40 of the <i>Enfants François</i> series.)	
Products of Falconet	100
Products of the Factory during the Falconet period but not associated with his name	20

Produced after Falconet left and up to about 1770, including a certain number of pieces in the preparation

of which Falconet may have played some part

60

These figures are given with all reserve. The records are incomplete, and unrecorded pieces occur from time to time. For instance, the author has recently acquired two small children which are not referred to in any book but which are obviously part of a series and date from somewhere between 1755 and 1760. All figures must, therefore, be given and accepted with great reserve and be subject to correction as further information becomes available.

Conditions in 1766

When Falconet left Sèvres in 1766 conditions were fundamentally different from those which had existed when he took over the management of the Atelier de Sculpture nearly ten years earlier. Competent artists still remained, but several of those who had first been responsible for the popularity of Biscuit had either died or left the Factory. Competition was widespread. Mennecy, Orléans, Crépy, Niderviller, to name only some of the other French factories, were in active competition. Not only did these other factories develop their own Biscuit products with their own workmen, but they were quite prepared to copy a successful model (there was, of course, no law of copyright, and legal

monopolies were not enforced) and to seduce workmen from Sèvres. These «pirate products» were apparently offered for sale at prices well below those required by the Sèvres Factory. The Pompadour herself had died in 1764 and Boucher an old man, was approaching his end, which came in 1770.

Two other important developments had also taken place. The laughing triviality of rococo was giving way to the derivative earnestness of the neo classical. It is true that for some time after Falconet's departure no great difference is to be seen in the nature of the products, but by 1770 we are in a new world. The titles themselves show the development. We have a reduction of Pigalle's monument at Reims. We have those arid groups with such improving titles as *L'Espérance Qui Nourrit L'Amour*. We have vestals carrying on a litter the body of Pollux. In 1771 we get a group of gods — Mars, Minerva, and so on. We are far indeed from the «éternuement d'une jolie femme» which had governed the products of the Factory less than twenty years before.

Coupled with this change in popular taste, a new medium was about to appear. Around about 1770 kaolin was discovered in France, and in a very few years it replaced completely the soft paste in Biscuit products. (It is interesting to note that Sèvres went on using soft paste for its ordinary products for a number of years after it had discontinued the use of soft paste for Biscuit.) This hard paste or true porcelain was suited to the representational and reproductive school which was part of the neo classical movement and was also suited to the large pieces demanded by popular taste. We may fairly conclude that Falconet was fortunate in leaving Sèvres when he did. One can scarcely imagine that he would have been able to add to this reputation during the next ten years.

Appreciation

Bachelier said that Falconet had introduced «un genre plus noble» into Biscuit: elsewhere, it was said of him that he gave «le coup de maître». What was it that distinguished Falconet's work from that of his predecessors?

We have already pointed out that his subjects were similar to those of the earlier period, similar in their origin and in their execution: the paste was no better: the workmanship was indistinguishable.

The difference lay in the naturalness and realism which he introduced. A study of some of the illustrations accompanying this article will help to make the point clear. *La Leçon de Flûte* (Illustration No. 1) of the pre-Falconet period shows a pleasant young man teaching the flute to a pleasant young girl: and it does nothing else. There is no characterisation; the figures are conventional and dead. Contrast *Le Satyr Courbé* (Illustration No. 6). Note that, again, the figures are conventional: but the movement, the

life, the realism, are something quite different. Or take *La Baigneuse* (Illustration No. 4). Superficially, this represents a girl, partly clad. True, but not the whole truth. Note the stoop of the figure, the hesitation with which the foot is advanced before entering the water. Here is life and observation. Similarly, *Pygmalion* (Illustration No. 7) is not merely looking at the statue. From the whole of his pose, as well as from the expression on his face, he is lost in wonder at the beauty of his creation. The girl in *Le Baiser Donné* (Illustration No. 8) — the photograph has deliberately selected an unusual angle — is lost in ecstasy; note the angle of the head and neck and the abandon of the hand and arm. Realism, naturalness, observation: these are superimposed on the «pretty pretty», mièvre convention of the rococo period. And these additions brought by Falconet to his work distinguish it from that of others.

This superimposition seems to have sprung from Falconet's earlier training and natural aesthetic tendency. There is an old proverb which tells how the best spoken Italian is «*Lingua Toscana in bocca Romana*». Falconet was a Baroque artist working in a rococo medium and milieu: the marriage of the two schools, the restraint which

each imposed on the other and the stimulation which each afforded to the other, perhaps explain — in so far as genius ever can be explained — the creations of the greatest artist who worked in European porcelain.

Some reference books:

«*Mémoire Historique sur la Manufacture Nationale de Porcelaine de France*», redigé en 1781 par Bachelier. Reprinted 1878 by Raphael Simon, 9, Quai Voltaire, Paris.

Bourgeois, «*Le Biscuit de Sèvres*». Goupil, Paris, 1909. Réau, «*E.-M. Falconet*», Demotte, Paris, 1922.

Chavagnac et Grollier, «*Histoire des Manufactures Françaises de Porcelaine*». Picard, Paris, 1906.

Bourgeois et Lechevallier-Chevignard. «*Le Biscuit de Sèvres, Recueil des Modèles*». Ministère de l'Instruction publique, and Lafitte. No date, but apparently about 1910.

Notes on Illustrations:

Pygmalion (Illustrations No. 7) by courtesy of Mr. H. E. Backer. Other illustrations from the author's collection. Photographs by Raymond Fortt, London.

Keramische Probleme

Von Dr. S. Ducret, Zürich

Und wie zahlreich sind sie! Wir haben in der «Weltkunst»¹ mehrmals auf solche Fragen hingewiesen und damit eine rege Diskussion eröffnet. Hier wollen wir erneut ein paar Probleme streifen. Alle Stücke stammen aus Vitrinen unserer Sammler. Der braune Walzenkrug (Abb. 12) mit seinem wundervollen Silberdeckel aus der Sammlung von Dr. Schneider wird von Fachexperten als Böttger-Steinzeug angesprochen; die Malerei in Gold auf dem polierten Untergrund sei Manufakturarbeit vor 1719.

Ohne diese Zuschreibung zu kritisieren, möchten wir die Provenienz von einer andern Seite her beleuchten. Die grossen Goldchinesen sahen wir bis heute nie auf Böttger-Steinzeug, dagegen sind sie uns geläufig aus Bayreuth². Wir wollen weiter als Vergleich die beiden Böttger-Becher der Abb. 13 anführen. Der eine ist in Bayreuth mit einem schreitenden Chinesen in pelzumsäumtem Mantel aus purem Gold und purpurfarbener Soutane bemalt worden. Mit dem Goldchinesen auf dem Böttger-Krug ist er identisch. Auch der Chinese auf dem zweiten Becher mag dem Maler des Böttger-Kruges als Vorbild gedient haben, nur hat man ihn mit einem Kopfputz gekrönt.

Wir müssen hier drei Fragen klären. Sind die beiden Tassen wirklich Bayreuth? Aus welcher Zeit? Wann ist der

Böttger-Krug bemalt, sofern er überhaupt in Meissen dekoriert wurde?

Es würde zu weit führen, wollten wir die Herkunft dieser Tassenmalerei aus Bayreuth hier begründen. Nach unserer Ansicht gibt es keine Zweifel, wenn man das «primitive» Spitzenornament, das sich von Metzsch herleitet, als den einen und die feinen Dannhöfer-Blumen als den anderen Beleg ansieht. Beide Tassen sind um 1740 bemalt, das wäre auch das Datum für den Böttger-Krug, sofern er wirklich von Bayreuther Malern dekoriert ist. Beachten wir, dass alle diese eigenwilligen Bayreuther Malereien, eigenwillig in den Farben und der Technik, auf Porzellanen der Meissener Frühzeit vor 1720 (gelegentlich auch auf Du Paquier-Ware?) angetroffen werden. Warum sollte nicht auch mit dem weissen Porzellan gelegentlich ein braunes Stück dorthin gelangt sein?, wenn nicht überhaupt der ganze Krug in Bayreuth selbst entstanden ist und wie andere signierte Stücke von Clemens Wanderer bemalt wurden. Erinnern wir uns, dass im Jahre 1730 Johann Georg Keyssler schrieb³: «In St. Georgenstadt ist eine Fabrik von braunem und weissem Porzellan, welches häufig in benachbarte Provinzen verkauft wird. Insbesondere hat man daselbst eine Erfin-