

## Pantheum Mythicum

At least six designs on porcelain are recorded that derive from the Pantheons of Pagan Gods produced in the 17th & 18th centuries as illustrated texts intended for education of the young.

### Porcelain:

The porcelains fall into two fairly clear groups:

a. five designs (A-E): dinner plates painted en grisaille and in fairly good quality, with a central scene and with borders of panels and scrolling that suggest a date around 1745-50. Examples of some are known with different borders, though all have a gilt spear border in the cavetto.

a2. one design of these (Aurora, A) is on an armorial service for the English market, with the arms of Humbertson.

b. F, two teaservices, one in *famille rose* and one in grisaille and *rouge-de-fer* flesh tones. These are rare and of a weaker quality of painting, though the two are very similar and probably form the same workshop and made at the same time.

	1	2
A-Aurora	van H	(van V)
B-Juno on a Chariot	van H	(van V)
C-Neptune	van H	-(pt Chauveau)
D-Aeolus	van H	(van V)
E-Aristeus	van H	-
F-Mars on a Chariot	-	van V

A



B



C



D



E



F



**Design Source:** These are taken from two related works describing the pagan Gods.

1. Five of the images (A-E) are taken from David van Hoogstraten (1716) *Beschryving de Heidensche Goden en Godinnen, getogen uit de fabelschryveren en oude dichteren*. [Description of the Pagan Gods and Goddesses, raised from the fables and old poets] First Edition: Amsterdam 1716, Nicolaas ten Hoorn. [The second edition dates from 1726 and editions followed in 1733, 1742 & 1761]. The 1742 edition would seem to be around the right date to have been taken to China and used for these designs.

2. One image is derived from a work by the Jesuit priest François Pomey (1619-1673), *Pantheum mythicum seu fabulosa deorum historia* (1659), with illustrations added circa 1690 by Jan van Vianen (c1660-1726) an Amsterdam engraver who also worked in London.

Van Hoogstraten's mythology was based on Pomey's *Pantheum Mythicum*, which itself derives from Boccaccio and others. He translated Pomey's stories into Dutch but decided also to add material of his own and from other sources including *Beschryving der Roomsche Mogentheit* by Joachim Oudaen (1628-1692), and the French author Pierre Gautruche (1602-1681).

Similarly some of the 32 plates of the van Hoogstraten are derived from the van Vianen illustrations. Others are new creations with some elements taken from other sources including a detail (Scylla) from the Leclerc/Chauveau illustrations for the Ovid *Metamorphoses*, tr Isaac Bensereade (1676).

The images in the van Hoogstraten mythology

are not signed, though the frontispiece is by Jan Goeree. Other works by van Hoogstraten had illustrations by Romeyn de Hooghe, Jacob Houbraken and notably his Dutch translation of the Fables of Phaedrus (1703) had many small illustrations by Jan van Vianen. So it is quite possible that van Vianen engraved these using elements from his first suite of the Pomey *Pantheum*. Examples are known in only one orientation suggesting that the plates were not re-engraved, though a comparison of the 1716 and 1742 editions shows that the plates were touched up a little.

The 1742 edition was published in Amsterdam by 'Adriaan Wor, en de Erve G. onder de Linden'. Adriaan Wor published between 1729 and 1746 with the 'heirs' (Erve) of Gerard onder de Linden (died circa 1729) notably in 1740 an extensive poem by Jan de Marre extolling the VOC, which had an allegorical frontispiece, *Batavia*, by Jan Punt that is also found in puce enamels on a series of Chinese plates (see example below).

The 1742 edition of the van Hoogstraten also has a foreword by Wor dedicating the volume to Gerard van Papenbroek (1673-1743), an Amsterdam merchant and Burgomaster, and a noted art and antiquities connoisseur, who formed one of the largest 18th-century Dutch art collections that was divided between the *Athenaeum Illustre* of Amsterdam (his portraits) and Leiden University, the founding collection of what became the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden.

A 1733 edition of van Hoogstraten's *Dictionary* was also published by Wor and dedicated to Papenbroek suggesting a relationship between the two. So perhaps Papenbroek was part of the order for the Chinese plates with these designs through the VOC.



detail of Chinese porcelain plate circa 1745-50



by Jan Punt (1711-1779), Allegory of the VOC, 1739, used as a title page for the poem *Batavia* by Jan de Marre, Published: Adriaan Wor, Amsterdam 1740

The five images from this series known on Chinese export porcelain plates are all painted *en grisaille* and all around the same period, circa 1745-50. Each follows the orientation of the van Hoogstraten images and matches the details closely.

In 1698 Pomey's *Pantheum* was translated into English by the Rev Andrew Tooke, later Headmaster of Charterhouse School, who did not credit Pomey, becoming known as *Tooke's Pantheon of the Heathen Gods and Illustrious Heroes*. There were many editions throughout the eighteenth century, which reused and reengraved the original illustrations. These prints are found in both orientations and in some simplified versions.

Several of the van Hoogstraten designs seem to have been inspired by the van Vianen illustrations for the Pomey, and three of these (Auroria, Juno and Eolus) are also those found on Chinese porcelain but details show that they were taken from the van Hoogstraten rather than the van Vianen/Pomey/Tooke images. However one further design, not used by van Hoogstraten, is found on Chinese porcelain teawares, both in *famille rose* and *en grisaille*, Mars on a Chariot. The orientation is not the same as the original van Vianen prints and this suggests that the example taken to China was from a re-engraved version for the English Tooke translation.

This indicates that both works were taken to China at some stage but the first group was mainly for the Dutch market, though the armorial service is for the English market, and the second more likely for the English market.

**References:** Hervouët & Bruneau 1986, p294, No 13.10, a plate like this one, identified as Apollo; Howard 1974, p334, service with this scene (as Jupiter) and the arms of Humbertson; Lange 2005, p201, fig. 74

Aurora



1716 First edition



Related sources:

Pomey's *Pantheum*, illustrated by Jan van Vianen



A

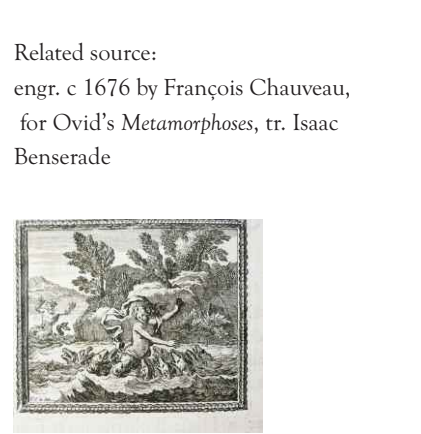
Juno on a Chariot

B



Neptune - Scylla

C



Related source:  
engr. c 1676 by François Chauveau,  
for Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, tr. Isaac  
Benserade

Aeolus

D



Aristeus - Diana as a Statue

E



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Mars on a Chariot

F



signed J van Vianen  
circa 1690  
(Rijksmuseum  
RP-P-1905-918)



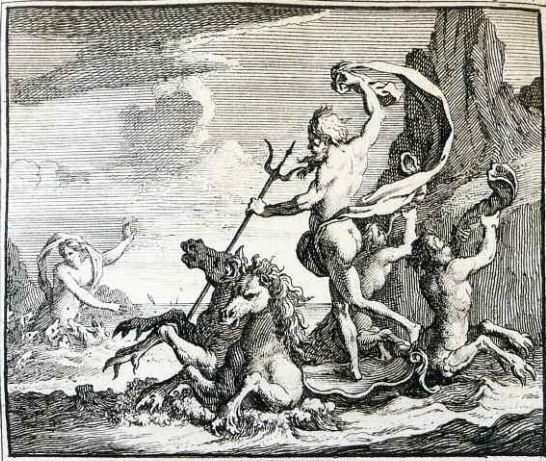
unsigned illustration from  
Tooke's Pantheon  
(circa 1745)



1716

1742





NEPTVNVS.



NEPTVNVS.



EOLUS.



EOLUS.



ARISTEVS.



ARISTEVS.