

Arts of Asia Lecture Series Spring 2016
Patronage in Asian Art: Monarchs, Merchants, and Devotees
Sponsored by The Society for Asian Art

The Man Who Had Everything: Qianlong as Patron of the Arts

Patricia Berger, April 29, 2016

The Qianlong emperor (r. 1736-1795), in a letter to King George III of England, responded to the gifts brought by the delegation led by Lord George Macartney in 1793, writing: "As your ambassador can see for himself, we possess all things. I set no value on objects strange or ingenious, and have no use for your country's manufacture."

Collecting modes: gifts received and given; imperial production of new objects; variations on a theme; *faux* effects and illusory scenes; copies of famous old objects.

Paintings and Prints:

James Gillray, *The Reception of the Diplomatie [Sir George Macartney] & his Suite at the Court of Peking*, 1792. Lithographic print.

George Alexander, *The Emperor of China Receiving the Ambassador at Jehol, Tartary*. Watercolor on paper. British Library, London.

Tribute objects brought by Macartney, as described by George Saunders: [Allan Ramsay, *Portrait of George III*, 1762] (and reverse glass painting, ca. 1810), Weltmaschine of Philipp Matthäus Hens; Burning lens.

Jean Denis Attiret (1702-1768), *Garden of Ten Thousand Trees* 萬樹園, 1755. Ink and colors on paper. Palace Museum, Beijing. Records the Qianlong emperor's reception at Chengde (Jehol) for the Dörbut Mongols in 1754.

Tribute paintings: Giuseppe Castiglione (Lang Shining 郎世寧, 1688-1766), *Kazakhs Offering Horses*, 1757. Musée Guimet, Paris; Anonymous, *Envoys from Vassal States and Foreign Countries Presenting Tribute to the Emperor*, 1761. Palace Museum, Beijing.

Portrait of the Qianlong emperor: *Is it One or is it Two?* 是一是二, originally kept in the Sanxitang 三希堂 (Three Rarities Hall) of the Yangxindian 養心殿 (Hall of Cultivating the Mind). Note: Wang Mang-era (9-23 CE) grain measure and Ming Xuande (1425-35) blue-and-white porcelain jar with Buddhist *dharanī* (talismanic phrase).

Portrait of Niohuru Héshēn 和珅; inventory of his property seized by the Jiaqing 嘉慶 emperor.

Porcelain in 4 categories: overglaze enamels in Chinese style (*fencai* 粉彩), overglaze enamels in European style (*falangcai* 珐瑯彩), *yaobian* 窯變 "kiln transformation" glazes, *faux*-surfaces.

Foreign places:

Yuanmingyuan 圓明園: Chinese gardens and Western palaces

Chengde 承德: Eight Outer Monasteries 外八廟, "replicas" of famous temples, such as the Potala, Lhasa (Putuozongchengmiao 普陀宗乘廟, built to celebrate the Qianlong emperor's 60th birthday and the pledging of allegiance of the Torguts in 1771, and Tashilunpo, Shigatse (Xumifushoumiao 須彌福壽廟, built to honor the visit of the Panchen Lama in 1780 on the occasion of the emperor's 70th birthday).

Religious objects:

The Qianlong emperor in the robes of a Lama and with the attributes of Mañjuśrī, *thangka*, colors on cotton (Freer and Sackler Galleries, Washington, DC)

Buddhist pantheons of the Qianlong emperor's guru, Rolpay Dorje: Fanhua lou (梵華樓, Hall of Buddhist Efflorescence), 300 Icons, 360 Icons.

Replicas of Famous Images: Sandalwood Buddha (lost?), Arya Lokeśvara, 1744, gift of the Tibetan leader Polhanas (Yonghegong, Beijing), Śadākṣarī Lokeśvara (AAMSF), based on a Ming-dynasty Yongle-period (1403-24) image woven into presentation scarves.

Catalogues and illustrated compendia of the Qing emperors: *Shiqu baoji* 石渠寶笈 (1744-45, catalogue of the imperial painting collection); *Bidian zhulin* 秘殿竹林 (1744-45, catalogue of the imperial collection of Buddhist and Daoist images); *Xiqing gujian* 西清古鑑 (completed in 1755, catalogue of the imperial bronze collection); Jiao Bingzhen 焦秉貞, *Gengzhitu* 耕織圖 (1696, Pictures of Agriculture and Weaving); Album of Porcelain Production, 1738, etc.

Recommended reading:

Simon Schaffer, "Instruments as Cargo in the China Trade," *History of Science* XLIV (2006): 217-46.

Jonathan Hay, *Sensuous Surfaces* (London: Reaktion and University of Hawai'i Press, 2010). Chapter 4, 5, 6, 9: "Monochrome Smoothness," "Material Patterning," "Formal Pattern," "Fictive Surface," p. 109-167, p. 215-236.

Anne Gerritsen, Ceramics for Local and Global Markets: Jingdezhen's Agora of Technologies' in *Cultures of Knowledge: Technology in Chinese History*, Dagmar Schafer and Francesca Bray, ed. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2011), p. 164-86.

Ellen Huang, "From the Imperial Court to the International Art Market: Jingdezhen Porcelain Production as Global Visual Culture," *Journal of World History* 23:1 (2011) pp. 115-145.

Patricia Berger, "The Problem of Authenticity: A Historical Geography of Buddhist Art in Eighteenth-Century China," in ed. David Park, *Art of Merit: Studies in Buddhist Art and Its Conservation, Proceedings of the Buddhist Art Forum* (London: Courtauld Institute Archetype Publications, 2013).