



Imagining Qianlong

Louis XV's Chinese Emperor Tapestries
and Battle Scene Prints at the Imperial Court in Beijing

Imaging and Imagining in the Eighteenth Century

Florian Knothe

This collection seeks to contribute to the developing field of research into cross-cultural influences in Western Europe and East Asia during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A primary focus throughout the essays is on the idiosyncratic ways in which styles and technologies were adapted and the types of hybrid objects resulting from very different but equally influential forms of production on either end of the Silk Road.

Inevitably, when one people depicts another—and by no less than their emperor—established modes of representation, accomplished practices in propaganda and iconic images of past generations of rulers, as well as contemporary variants, can play a significant part. For the *artisans du roi* in France, the brief to flatter and politically position their sovereigns has been well described, and over the generations royal imagery had reached a perfection and style of international acclaim.¹ Consequently, dignitaries from foreign countries sought advice in Paris, commissioning *peintres du roi* and *manufactures royales* to create their own personalised imagery.² The Chinese court, itself depicted by Francois Boucher (1703–1770) in the 1740s, became the geographically most distant admirer in the 1760s and, aware of French talent since Emperor Kangxi (1654–1722, r. 1661–1722), sponsored the imperial observatory. The court also had turned to a number of Paris printers known to have been in the service of King Louis XV (1710–1774, r. 1715–1774).

Due to the political system in twentieth-century China, and the effects it had on academic training and outlook, few Chinese scholars studied Western influences on Chinese art, and even fewer had sufficient access to collections so as to closely examine and compare objects. This situation continues to change and as the number of collections and ways to access them grows, more idiosyncrasies will be detected and studied. Looking from the West, scholars often approach Western art, culture and civilisation in the East through the documents, artefacts and buildings affiliated with or influenced by, primarily, Jesuit missionaries.

Imagining Qianlong goes beyond Jesuit influence and documents the court culture of both the French King Louis XV and the Chinese Emperor Qianlong (1711–1799, r. 1735–1796). Despite this broader view, we are indebted to those

1. See Thomas Kirchner, *Der epische Held. Historienmalerei und Kunstpolitik im Frankreich des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2001.

2. One prominent example being the Swedish king and Nicodemus Tessin and their extensive knowledge of French seventeenth-century artists at the royal Gobelins manufactory. See Florian Knothe, *The Manufacture des meubles de la couronne aux Gobelins under Louis XIV: a Social, Political and Cultural History*, Brussels: Brepols, 2016, pp. 153–175.

members of the religious order who delivered the famous *Chinese Emperor* tapestries to Beijing and to the other Jesuits who signed responsible for the composition of Qianlong's battle scenes. The imaging and adopting of well-established modes of representation testifies to a genuine interest in each other's culture and an intensive and ongoing exchange that benefited from Jesuit skill and social positioning, significantly influencing societal and political developments and propaganda needs.

The compositions of both the tapestries and battle scene prints allude to international relations and a certain knowledge of the other. Since the visit of the Siamese embassy to Louis XIV's (1638–1715, r. 1643–1715) court in 1686, East Asian culture, art, fashion and everyday customs became better known across Western Europe. An educated and influential public began to discern some of these phenomena through Johan Nieuhof's (1618–1672) depictions of China (Fig. 1).³ Beyond the circulation of prints, considerable emphasis was placed on developing relationships with East Asia through its diplomats and the sheer political value of having and stressing diplomatic and mercantile links globally; that is to say, to a largely unknown world.

The fascination with *chinoiserie* and 'exotic' artefacts at the royal French court made these more abstract international relations visible. The weaving of the first *History of the Emperor of China*, a set of tapestries with China-influenced French genre scenes, by the royal Beauvais workshops from 1697 to 1705, followed the Siamese visit as well as the preceding French royal envoy to China in 1685. The tapestries presented, in large-scale depictions, a newly found admiration for East Asian aesthetics, and a direct reference to ongoing French involvement in the East (Fig. 2).⁴ Visually dense and richly decorated, the first set of *Chinese Emperor* tapestries depicts, among other scenes, a group of astronomers of European origin and Jesuit affiliation with Emperor Kangxi. Although the Jesuit

3. Johan Nieuhof, *Het gezantschap der Neêrlandsche Oost-Indische Compagnie, aan den grooten Tartarischen Cham, den tegenwoordigen keizer van China : waar in de gedenkwaardigste geschiedenissen, die onder het reizen door de Sineesche landtschappen, Quantung, Kiangsi, Nanking, Xantung en Peking, en aan het keizerlijke hof te Peking, sedert den jare 1655 tot 1657 zijn voorgevallen, op het bondigste verhandelt worden : befeffens een naukeurige Beschryving der Sineesche steden, dorpen, regeering, wetenschappen, hantwerken, zeden, godsdiensten, gebouwen, drachten, schepen, bergen, gewassen, dieren, &c. en oorlogen tegen de Tarters : verciert men over de 150 afbeeldsels, na't leven in Sina getekent*, Meurs 1665.

4. Edith A. Standen, 'The Story of the Emperor of China: A Beauvais Tapestry Series', in *Metropolitan Museum Journal*, vol. 11 (1976), pp. 103–117.

community in China only numbered a few French members at the time, the depiction highlights an important European foothold within the Imperial City during a period when an additional six French Jesuits had left Louis XIV's for Kangxi's court (Fig. 3).⁵

Without meaning to be overtly political, it is remarkable that this foreign exchange occurred at a time when the success of Louis XIV's domestic political and military campaigns was on the decline. In terms of visual propaganda, contemporary imagery included more allegorical themes rather than actual king-related depictions, and so it seems certain that such an opportunity to highlight the Sun King's global reach would have been greatly welcomed.⁶

Given this pronounced contact with China and an ever-expanding knowledge of Chinese artefacts and culture, the second weaving of the *Chinese Emperor* tapestries appears distinctly different. With Louis XV on the throne, both military and political ambitions shifted, and court culture was largely represented in genre paintings, most notably the *fêtes galantes* through which François Boucher became an internationally celebrated painter. Less Chinese in character than the first *tenture*, Boucher's *Chinese Emperor* scenes are 'gallant' French compositions incorporating Chinese elements, such as imported and Lyon-interpreted silks and Chinese ceramics and architectural structures known from Nieuhof and customs, including fishing and bird-catching, which firmly entered the French vocabulary of *chinoiserie* depictions.

In this volume, Pascal Bertrand and Kristel Smentek describe Boucher's career with the royal Beauvais workshops and the success of the tapestry series woven after his designs. As with the weavings of the *Fêtes Italiennes*, the *Chinese Emperor*

5. In 1685, King Louis XIV sent a mission of five Jesuit 'mathematicians' to China in an attempt to break the Portuguese dominance: Jean de Fontaney (1643–1710), Joachim Bouvet (1656–1730), Jean-François Gerbillon (1654–1707), Louis Le Comte (1655–1728) and Claude de Visdelou (1656–1737). See Catherine Pagani, *Eastern Magnificence and European Ingenuity: Clocks of Late Imperial China*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2001, p. 182. These newly sent Jesuits arrived in Beijing in 1688, when they introduced the scientific culture of the Académie royale des sciences de Paris (established in 1666) rather than that of Jesuit colleges, where most of them had been trained previously.

Prints that served as a detail model of the tapestry represent Johann Adam Schall von Bell (1592–1666), a German Jesuit and astronomer, who spent most of his life as a missionary in China and became an adviser to Emperor Shunzhi (1638–1661, r. 1644–1661), as well as the *Sphere armillaire zodiacale* published Louis Le Comte in *Nouveaux memoires sur l'etat present de la Chine*, Paris, 1696, p. 143.

6. See Peter Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992.

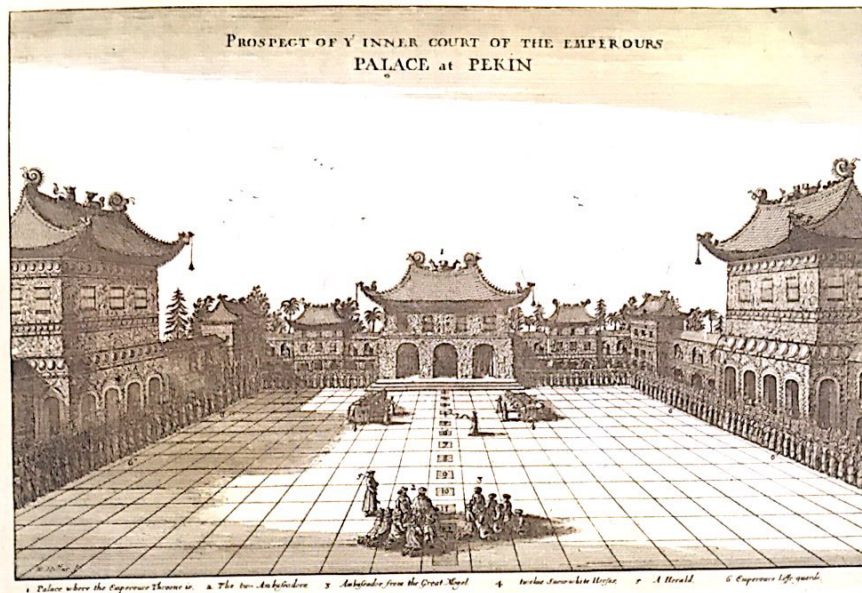


Fig. 1 Prospect of the Inner Court of the Emperor's Palace at Peking, Johan Nieuhof, *Het gezantschap der Neerlandische Oost-Indische Compagnie, aan den grooten Tartarischen Cham, den tegenwoordigen keizer van China*, Meurs 1665.



Fig. 2 *Les Astronomes*, from *L'Histoire de l'empereur de la Chine* (1st series)
Woven at the Beauvais manufactory (founded 1664) under the direction of Philippe Béhagle (1641–1705), after cartoons by painters Guy-Louis Vernansal (1648–1729), Jean-Baptiste Monnoyer (1636–1699) and Jean-Baptiste Belin de Fontenay (1653–1715), about 1697–1705, wool and silk, modern cotton lining, 318.8 × 424.2 cm (125 1/2 × 167 in.); J. Paul Getty Museum, acc. no. 83.DD.338.

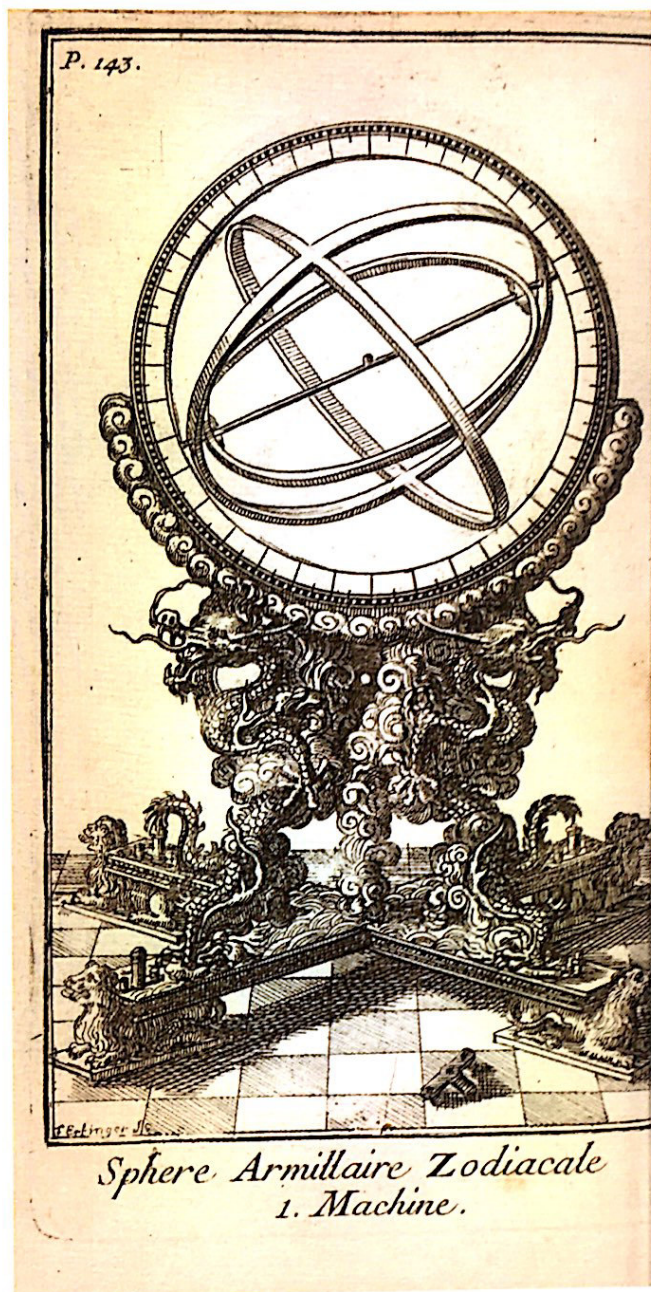


Fig. 3 *Sphere armillaire zodiacale*
Engraving by Franz Ertinger (1640–c.1710) published in Louis Le Comte, *Nouveaux memoires sur l'etat present de la Chine*, Paris, 1696, p. 143; GRI Digital Collections, 2703-526.

tapestries (nearly a *Fêtes Chinoises*) were made for and highly appreciated by the French aristocracy—a society that itself indulged in and blossomed with the same leisure activities depicted in the genre scenes.⁷ Following the success of the textiles, Gabriel Huquier (1695–1772) and his son, Jacques Gabriel (1730–1805), published prints of their engravings after these tapestries, guaranteeing widespread circulation in France and beyond (Fig. 4).⁸ Less expectedly, it also was this same community that would—without the emperor's knowledge—create a

7. Edith A. Standen and Regina Shoolman Slatkin, 'Fêtes Italiennes: Beauvais Tapestries after Boucher in the Metropolitan Museum of Art', in *Metropolitan Museum Journal*, vol. 12 (1977), pp. 107–139.

8. Katie Scott, *The Rococo Interior*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995, pp. 247–252.

domestic French market for Qianlong's battle scene prints that were devised just as the French tapestries reached the Chinese court.

As Nick Pearce describes in detail, the production of the sixteen-piece set of prints constituted an undertaking that might have come close to that of the weaving of the tapestries with regards to the complexity and time commitment; when, like Louis XIV before him, Qianlong commissioned drawings and prints to focus attention on and to commemorate his military victory. This move placed him firmly in the public's eye as the warlord emperor who had pacified the rebel-dominated Western provinces in 1755–1759. In mid-eighteenth-century China, Jesuit painters at the Imperial Court in Beijing provided the models for those vivid and highly detailed battle scenes showing Qing troops gaining command over distant regions few Chinese would have seen in their lifetimes. In order to maximise the dissemination of this imagery, the locally produced designs were sent to Paris for Jean-Philippe Le Bas (1701–1783) and Charles Nicolas Cochin (1715–1790) to organise the transfer of the drawn scenes to copper plates and the printing from 1769 to 1774, after which, sets of prints were shipped to China.⁹

Executed in 1765 and 1766, Giuseppe Castiglione (1688–1766), Jean-Denis Attiret (1702–1768), Ignatius Sichelbart (1708–1780) and Jean-Damascène Sallusti (d. 1781) imagined a forceful army in bare Western lands years after the rebels were pacified. Finely executed, highly detailed in composition and large in size, this set of printed propaganda became available to a more mature monarch almost a generation after the Western Wars had begun. Today, the reception and dissemination of Qianlong's prints in China is little known. The superb quality, as stipulated by the emperor, must have pleased at least the courtiers, and would

9. Paul Pelliot, 'Les Conquêtes de l'empereur de la Chine, in *T'oung Pao*, series II, vol. 20 (January 1921), pp. 268–271; Tanya Szrajber, 'The Victories of the Emperor Qianlong', in *Print Quarterly*, vol. XXIII, no. 1 (2006), pp. 28–47. Pascal Torres, *Les Batailles de l'Empereur de Chine: La gloire de Qianlong célébrée par Louis XIV, une commande royale d'estampes*, exh. cat., Paris: Musée du Louvre, 2009; Niklas Leverenz, 'From Painting to Print: The Battle of Qurman from 1760', in *Orientalism*, vol. 41, no. 4 (2010), pp. 48–51; and Niklas Leverenz, 'Drawings, Proofs and Prints from the Qianlong Emperor's East Turkestan Copperplate Engravings', in *Arts Asiatiques*, vol. 68, no. 1 (2013), pp. 39–60.

Fig. 4 *The Chinese Dance*, Gabriel Huquier (1695–1772) and Jacques Gabriel Huquier (1730–1805), etching and engraving on paper, 42.8 x 55.2 cm, after 1743; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, acc. no. 53.600.1010, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1953.

have further raised the reputation of the court artists. It also testified to the ruler's access to foreign *artisans du roi*, such as Le Bas and Cochin, who regularly supplied the French court.

Linked in character to the arguably less fictive, though more promotional imagery of Adam Frans van der Meulen's (1632–1690) depictions of the Sun King's Northern war—Louis XIV is typically represented in the foreground—the Chinese emperor presented his past military success and implied global reach with this expansive set of images (Fig. 5).¹⁰ The world of imaging and imagining had once again grown closer.

Over these few years of the late 1760s and early 1770s, both the tapestries and prints introduced forms of representation that were novel in China. Whereas the tapestries were genuine French genre scenes, and clearly exemplified the composition of and fashion for courtly pastimes during the rococo, the prints deliberately mimicked the qualities of traditional history paintings as described by the *Histoire du Roi* of Louis XIV in order to follow a successfully established practice of promotional imagery, as well as to assimilate the Chinese emperor with the widely known *modus operandi* of the then most powerful European royal family, along with the carefully constructed propaganda introduced a century before by the Petite Académie.¹¹

10. For Louis XIV's *Histoire du Roi*, see Daniel Meyer, *L'Histoire du Roy*, Paris: Editions de la Réunion des musées Nationaux, 1980.

11. See Stefan Germer, *Kunst—Macht—Diskurs. die intellektuelle Karriere des André Félibien im Frankreich von Louis XIV*, Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1997.

Qianlong's Western Campaign Engravings

Nicholas Pearce

Between 1755 and 1759 the Qianlong Emperor (r. 1736–1795) embarked upon a series of three successful campaigns in Eastern Turkestan, an area that bordered the north-western region of China. As a result of these campaigns a new territory named Xinjiang (New Territories) was brought under Qing dynasty (1644–1911) control and today constitutes the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.¹ The campaigns against the Mongolian Zunghars, who had controlled the Tarim Basin as far west as Kashgar and Yarkand from the middle of the seventeenth century, represented unfinished business for the Qing. Qianlong's grandfather, Kangxi (r. 1662–1722), who was responsible for consolidating Qing rule over China, attempted to thwart the territorial ambitions of the Zunghar Khan, Galdan (1644–1697). At the end of 1687, Galdan had invaded the neighbouring Khalkha territory in an ongoing bid to restore the Mongol confederation and was soon threatening China's borders. Kangxi intervened militarily in 1690, but the outcome was a stalemate. Only with the defeat of Galdan at the battle of Jao Modo in 1696, and Galdan's death a year later, was pacification of the region restored, but it would take another sixty-three years and further conflicts before the Qing would be in a position to eliminate the Zunghars and to annex the region as Xinjiang.²

Qianlong took advantage of internecine struggles within the Zunghar state to intervene militarily in 1755. Following conflicts between Zunghar noble Dawaci (d. 1759) and Amursana (1723–1757), a prince of the Khoit tribe, Qianlong embarked upon a campaign to defeat both in quick succession, thus eliminating the Zunghar threat once and for all. The suppression of a revolt of the Muslim Altishahr Khojas (1757–1759) completed the final conquest of the region. In the spring of the following year a grand ceremony was held at which the two generals who had successfully led the campaigns, Zhaohui (1708–1764) and Fude (d. 1776), were honoured and the events were recorded through the commission of sixteen large-scale paintings (approximately 8 x 4 metres) for the Ziguangge (Hall of Purple Splendour), a building situated on the western lakeside of Zhonghai (Middle Sea) in the imperial garden adjacent to the Forbidden City. Alongside these were displayed one hundred nearly life-size portraits of the

1. For a comprehensive history of the region and the Qing campaigns, see Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West, The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*, Boston: Harvard University Press, 2005.

2. For details of Kangxi's campaigns, see Perdue 2005, pp. 133–208. Xinjiang became an official province only in 1884.

key combatants.³ With the installation of the campaign paintings and portraits in 1761, the hall was used for audiences and the reception of foreign envoys, an appropriate setting for the public display of Qianlong's military power and success. The commission of the campaign paintings also marks the beginning of a remarkable, and perhaps unique, collaboration between Chinese and Western (Jesuit) artists within the court and copper-plate engravers working in Paris (Figs. 1–8).⁴

Even before the campaigns were concluded, Jesuit artists had been sketching the key events of the conquest and their participants. Three Jesuits and one Augustinian were involved in the planning and execution of the sixteen original paintings for the Ziguangge, Giuseppe Castiglione (Ch. Lang Shining, 1688–1766), Jean-Denis Attiret (Ch. Wang Zhicheng, 1702–1768), Ignatius Sichelbart (Ch. Ai Qimeng, 1708–1780) and the Augustinian, Jean Damascene Sallusti (Ch. An Deyi, d. 1781). These large paintings survive only in three fragments: the right, left and fractional middle sections of the painting showing the Battle of Qurman.⁵ They were removed from the walls of the Ziguangge in 1890 and replaced by a new set of paintings depicting the Taiping and Nian Rebellions. The paintings were presumably taken from storage during the occupation of Beijing by the Allied relief forces following the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion in 1900.⁶

3. For further details, see Ka Bo Tsang, 'Portraits of Meritorious Officials: Eight Examples from the First Set Commissioned by the Qianlong Emperor', in *Arts Asiatique*, vol. XLVII (1992), pp. 69–88.

4. The literature surrounding this collaboration is extensive, but the main published sources include: Jean Monval, 'Les Conquêtes de la Chine. Une commande de l'Empereur de Chine en France au XVIIIe siècle', in *La Revue de l'art ancien et moderne*, vol. 18 (1905), pp. 147–160; Henri Cordier, 'Les Conquêtes de la Chine', in *Mémoires concernant l'Asie Orientale*, vol. 1 (1913), pp. 1–13; Paul Pelliot, 'Les Conquêtes de l'Empereur de la Chine', in *T'oung Pao*, vol. XX, Leiden (1921), pp. 183–274 and in *T'oung Pao*, vol. XXIX (1932), pp. 125–127; M. Pirazzoli-T'Serstevens, *Gravures des Conquêtes de l'Empereur de Chine K'ien-long au Musée Guimet*, Paris, 1969; Tanya Szrajber, 'The Victories of the Emperor Qianlong', in *Print Quarterly*, vol. XXIII, no. 1 (2006), pp. 28–47; Pascal Torres, *Les Batailles de l'Empereur de Chine: La gloire de Qianlong célébrée par Louis XV une commande royale d'estampes*, Paris, 2009.

5. The right-hand fragment is in the collection of the Ethnological Museum, Hamburg, acquired in 1903. The remaining fragments are in private collections. See Niklas Leverenz, 'From Painting to Print: The Battle of Qurman', in *Orientalism*, vol. 41, no. 4 (May 2010), pp. 48–53. See also in the same issue, Camille Schmitt, 'The Battle of Qurman: Restoration and Remounting of a Qing Imperial Wall Painting', pp. 53–54. Related renderings are discussed in Niklas Leverenz, 'On Three Different Sets of East Turkestan Paintings', in *Orientalism*, vol. 42, no. 8 (November/December 2011), pp. 96–103.

6. See Hongxing Zhang, 'Studies in Late Qing Dynasty Battle Paintings', in *Artibus Asiae*, vol. 60, no. 2 (2000), pp. 265–296, especially pp. 269–270. See also Walter Fuchs, 'Die Schlachtenbilder aus Turkestan von 1765 als historische Quelle', in *Monumenta Serica*, vol. 4 (1939–1940), pp. 116–124 and Wu Kong, 'Ziguangge he Qianlong de Shiquan wugong' (Hall of the Purple Splendour and the Ten Complete Victories in the Qianlong Reign), *Beijing Wenshi*, vol. 1 (1995), pp. 17–20. The acquisition date of 1903 for the Hamburg fragment matches with its looting in 1900–1901.



Fig. 1 *Receiving the Surrender of the Yili*

Print (plate I) executed in the workshop of Charles Nicolas Cochin after an engraving (1769) by Benoit-Louis Prevost and a drawing (1765) by Ignace Sichelbart; Paris, France; 51.7 x 89.9 cm (image), 56.3 x 92.2 cm (sheet); Collection of Kenneth H.C. Fung.



Fig. 2 *Storming of the Camp at Gādān-Ola*

Print (plate II) executed in the workshop of Charles Nicolas Cochin after an engraving (1769) by Jean-Philippe Le Bas and a drawing (1765) by Guiseppe Castiglione; Paris, France; 51.7 x 89.6 cm (image), 57.2 x 94.2 cm (sheet); Collection of Kenneth H.C. Fung.



Fig. 3 *The Victory of Khorgos*

Print (plate IV) executed in the workshop of Charles Nicolas Cochin after an engraving (1774) by Jean-Philippe Le Bas and a drawing (1766) by Jean-Denis Attiret; Paris, France; 51.2 x 91.5 cm (image), 57.3 x 93.8 cm (sheet); Collection of Kenneth H.C. Fung.



Fig. 4 *The Chief of Us (Turfan) Surrenders with His City*

Print (plate VI) executed in the workshop of Charles Nicolas Cochin after an engraving (1774) by Pierre-Philippe Choffard and a drawing by Jean Damascene; Paris, France; 51.6 x 90.3 cm (image), 59.9 x 96.8 cm (sheet); Collection of Kenneth H.C. Fung.



Fig. 6. The Battle of Abul
Paint (plate XI) executed in the workshop of Charles-Nicolas Cochin after an engraving (n.d.) by Jean-Jacques Allart and a drawing (1765) by Jean-Denis Atte.

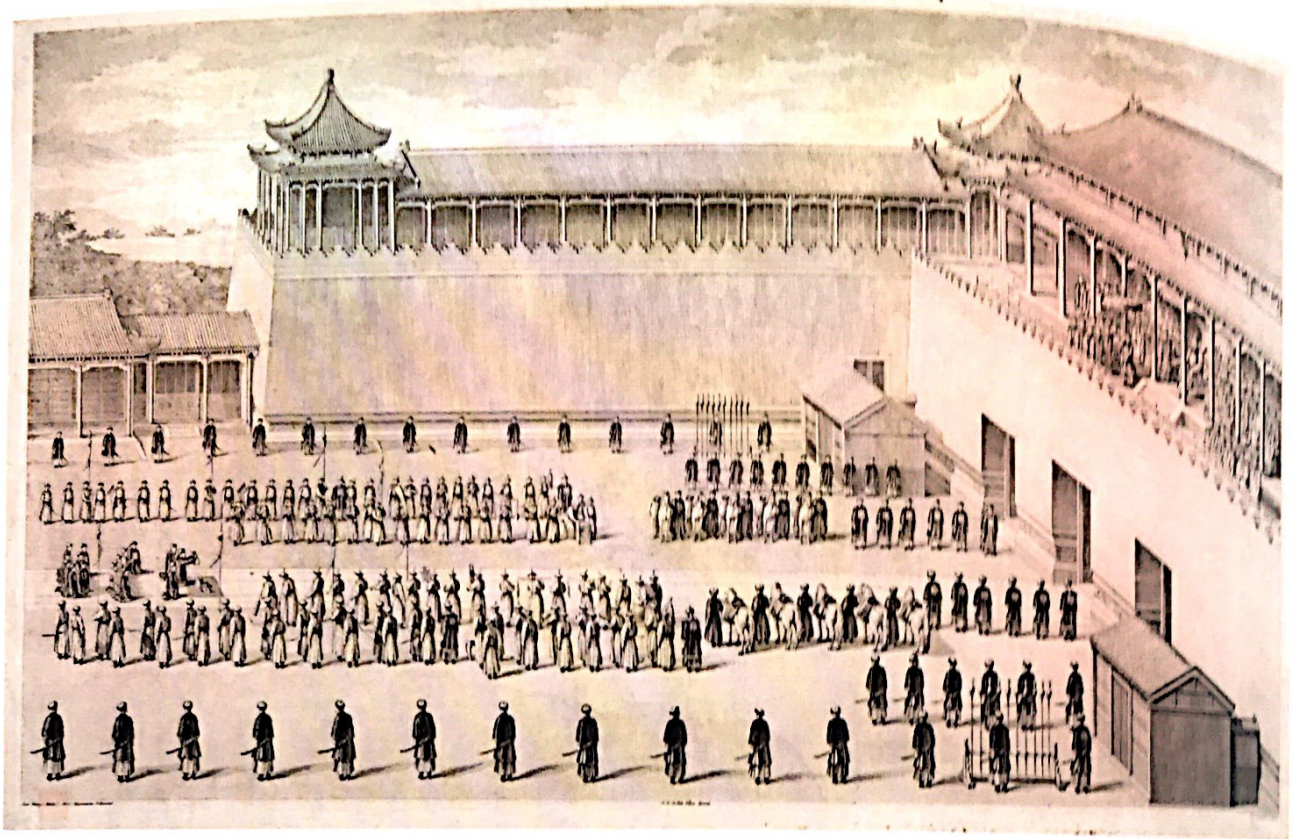


Fig. 7 *The Emperor Is Presented with Prisoners from the Pacification of the Muslim Tribes*
 Print (plate XIV) executed in the workshop of Charles Nicolas Cochin after an engraving (n.d.) by Louis-Joseph Masquelier and a drawing (n.d.) by Jean-Denis Attiret; Paris, France; 51.8 x 89.6 cm (image), 56.7 x 93.4 cm (sheet); Collection of Kenneth H.C. Fung



Fig. 8 *The Emperor in the Suburbs Personally Receives News of the Officers and Soldiers Distinguished in the Campaign against the Muslim Tribes*
 Print (plate XV) executed in the workshop of Charles Nicolas Cochin after an engraving (1772) by François-Denis Née and a drawing (n.d.) by Jean Damascene; Paris, France; 51.8 x 89.7 cm (image), 56.7 x 92 cm (sheet); Collection of Kenneth H.C. Fung

Shortly after their installation, a set of smaller drawings of the large paintings were executed in 1765 with the intention of sending them to Europe so that they might be rendered in copper-plate engravings.⁷ A decree of 13 July 1765 issued by Qianlong commanding that the sixteen paintings be copied onto paper by fathers Castiglione, Attiret, Sichelbart and Damascene Sallusti, as well as Ding Guanpeng (a. 1702–1771), a Court artist who had been trained by Castiglione, was recorded in a letter by Father Augustin de Hallerstein (1703–1774), part of the Portuguese Mission in Beijing, to his brother.⁸ Writing on 27 October 1765, Hallerstein relates that the first four copies had already been sent to Canton for transportation to Europe, that further batches of four would follow thereafter and that Castiglione was desirous of them being engraved and printed in Italy.⁹ As will be seen, Castiglione's wish was not fulfilled, nor the emperor's command that only one hundred impressions should be printed before sending the prints and plates back to China. Money was to be no option and the Viceroy of Canton was instructed to pay the cost in full.

A letter from Castiglione in Latin, Italian and French, which accompanied the emperor's decree, emphasised the need for the best quality in terms of execution as befitted an emperor. According to Paul Pelliot, France was chosen as the European destination for the work because Father Louis Joseph Le Febvre, Procureur-Général of the Missions at Canton, intervened through an official in contact with the Viceroy, suggesting that France was paramount in artistic terms and that the engravings would be best executed there.¹⁰ A contract was accordingly drawn up by ten Hong merchants (traders licenced to trade with Europeans), in which the four initial drawings were listed, the numbers of impressions to be printed (200 from each plate, an increase presumably for insurance, as was the requirement of the use of two vessels of the *Compagnie des Indes*), an advance payment of 5,000 taels of silver and a time-limit for their return (1768).¹¹

7. It has been suggested that these copies were ink drawings, but the existence of an album of campaign paintings in the collection of the Palace Museum, Beijing, measuring 55.4 x 90.8 cm, close in size to the copper-plate engravings, indicate how they must have appeared. See Leverenz 2011, p. 97.

8. For a comprehensive discussion of the commission, see Torres, Chapter 1 'Du décret imperial à la commande royale'. See also Leverenz 2011, pp. 96–97 for reference to Ding Guanpeng.

9. Published by Pelliot 1921, Appendix, p. 268 and dated by him to 27 October, 1765.

10. Pelliot 1921, p. 196.

11. Szrajber has calculated that a total of 31,000 taels was made by the Chinese Hong merchants, although figures vary. See Szrajber 2006, p. 44, and note 48.

The remaining twelve drawings were despatched on two further ships arriving in France in July 1767.¹²

In Paris, the project of *The Battles of the Emperor of China* was seen as being prestigious and, if handled successfully, would reflect well on France and its manufactures.¹³ From the Compagnie des Indes, the commission was passed to the Marquis de Marigny (1727–1781), Director of Royal Buildings, who in turn entrusted the work to Charles Nicolas Cochin (1715–1790), engraver to King Louis XV.¹⁴ Cochin brought together a team of engravers that consisted of Jacques-Philippe Le Bas (1707–1783), Augustin de Saint-Aubin (1736–1807), Benoit-Louis Prévost (1747–1804) and Jean-Jacques Aliamet (1726–1788).¹⁵ The pressure to deliver the finished plates and impressions within the stipulated time was great indeed, and from the beginning there were requests on the part of the engravers to extend the time of delivery from the autumn of 1768 to the end of the summer of 1769, because of the precision of the work and because the two drawings by Father Damascène Sallusti had to be redrawn.¹⁶ Marigny maintained pressure with regard to the timing, but even so, with the skill needed to print from the large plates, the schedule slipped and the first shipment of seven plates and impressions did not reach Beijing until December 1772, with the second shipment following at the end of 1774, and the final one arriving in China in the middle of 1775.¹⁷

As the senior Jesuit artist at the Chinese court and a teacher of painting to Qianlong, it has been suggested that Giuseppe Castiglione was the likely inspiration for the commission of the engravings.¹⁸ However, Qianlong would have had his own reasons for sending the commission abroad, and indeed for commissioning the original paintings for the Ziguangge. As Joanna Waley-Cohen has remarked 'Military power and the associated martial virtues were crucial to the self-image of the Manchu Qing polity (1636–1912), which at its

12. Cordier 1913, p. 10; and Pelliot 1921, p. 208.

13. See Szrajber 2006, pp. 37–38.

14. For a brief biography of Cochin, see Torres 2009, p. 43, note 45.

15. The engravers are listed by Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens 1969, who also includes additional engravers employed by Cochin to complete the work: Louis-Joseph Masquelier (1741–1811), Denis Née (1732–1818), Pierre-Philippe Choffard (1730–1809) and N. de Launey (1739–1792), p. 13.

16. For details of the negotiations see Torres 2009, pp. 43–60 and Szrajber 2006, pp. 38–42.

17. Pelliot 1921, pp. 209–210 and 222–223. See also Szrajber 2006, p. 43.

18. John Warner, 'Castiglione and the Conquests of the Ch'ien Lung Emperor', in *Arts of Asia*, vol. 5, no. 6 (November–December 1975), p. 63.

zenith ranked among the most powerful in the world.¹⁹ Beginning with Kangxi, conquest meant not only the annexation of territory, but the mapping of that territory and historicising the successes through monumental and visual means. For Kangxi, the Jesuits not only created world maps but also began mapping the territory over which the Qing held increasing control. This survey continued under Qianlong, with Jesuits bringing their surveying skills to the task as they did in painting.²⁰ The commemorative battle paintings and portraits of the key combatants were joined by the erection of stelae (a traditional vehicle for commemoration) in Beijing, Chengdu, the Manchu heartland and in provinces around the country, including in the newly pacified regions.²¹ Therefore, exporting 'the vision of imperial might around the world', as Peter C. Perdue has termed it, was a natural next step in promoting the ongoing Manchu Conquest of China, which had begun in 1644 and which continued to enthral Europe.²²

Where Castiglione would most likely have been influential is in the depiction of battles as seen in the campaign paintings and their engravings, and in selecting the models used. It is already known that Qianlong had seen engravings of battle scenes by Augsburg-born painter Georg Philippe Rugendas (1666–1743), which were in the possession of the Jesuit fathers in Beijing and which, according to Father Augustin de Hallerstein, greatly pleased him.²³ There is also the recorded conversation between Qianlong and Father Benoist in 1773, where the emperor revealed his knowledge of the existence of battle prints and their celebration of victories won by European sovereigns.²⁴ While there is clear reference to

19. Joanna Waley-Cohen, 'On the Militarization of Culture in the Eighteenth-Century Qing Empire', in *Common Knowledge*, vol. 12, no. 1 (2006), p. 97.

20. This is explored in detail in James A. Millward, 'Coming onto the Map: Western Regions Geography and Cartographic Nomenclature in the Making of Chinese Empire in Xinjiang', in *Late Imperial China*, vol. 20, no. 2 (December 1999), pp. 61–98.

21. See Joanna Waley-Cohen, 'Commemorating War in Eighteenth-Century China', in *Modern Asian Studies* (Special Issue: War in Modern China), vol. 30, no. 4 (October 1996), pp. 869–899.

22. Perdue 2005, p. 443. European knowledge of and response to Manchu success is surveyed in Edwin J. Van Kley, 'News from China: Seventeenth-Century European Notices of the Manchu Conquest', in *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 45 (December 1973), pp. 561–582.

23. In a postscript to a letter to his brother, Weichard de Hallerstein, dated 27 October, 1765, Hallerstein describes the events leading to the commission of the sixteen paintings, the influence of Rugendas as a model, the involvement of Fathers Castiglione, Sichelbart, Attiret and Damascene and the sending of the reduced images abroad for engraving. See Pelliot 1921, Appendix, p. 268, where the postscript in its original Latin is quoted. For a translation, see Szrajber 2006, pp. 29–30. Although Georg Philippe Rugendas was German-born, he spent most of his career in Italy. His paintings were engraved by his son, Christian Rugendas.

24. *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses écrites des missions étrangères* (New Edition), 14 volumes, Lyon, 1819, vol. 13, p. 427.

the influence of Rugendas, it is quite possible that he was not the only model available to Qianlong and his leading artist, Castiglione. It has been suggested that the emperor's battle engravings could have owed their antecedents to a number of artists such as Philips Wouwermans (1619–1668), Jacques Courtois (1621–1676) and Adam Frans van der Meulen (1632–1690).²⁵ Van der Meulen was the official battle painter to Louis XIV and was commissioned to paint the king's many campaigns. Travelling with the troops and sketching on the battlefield, the immediacy of this approach was influential in the development of a relatively new genre of battlescapes, many of which were in turn engraved and used as the basis for Gobelins tapestry designs.²⁶ Van der Meulen's work was known in China as far back as Kangxi when the French king sent the emperor a gift of engravings of paintings from the royal collection.²⁷ As well as engravings of Raphael's *Saint Michael*, Titian's *Descent from the Cross*, Guido Reni's *Saint Francis* and Poussin's *Rebecca at the Well*, there were also engravings of the tapestries *The Alliance of the Swiss* and *The Defeat of the Comte de Marsin*, (both Charles Le Brun, after van der Meulen) and *The Siege of Tournai* (Sebastian Le Clerc, after van der Meulen), together with sets of the *Fêtes de Versailles* and *Views of Cities and Royal Houses*, both by van der Meulen himself.²⁸

As mentioned, the Jesuits in Beijing held many of these works in their libraries at the Nantang, Dongtang and Beitang Cathedrals. As Noel Golvers has written, the Jesuit libraries were not closed treasure-houses, but 'open to Chinese visitors, especially the emperor, his courtiers and visiting literati', and were in effect working tools of the Jesuit Mission.²⁹ The Beitang, which housed the French Mission, contained some of the most splendid volumes and objects, the result of King Louis XIV's beneficence, which were on display. One visitor wrote: 'In front of the church was a courtyard of forty by fifty feet. On the left and right were two rooms, one for the confraternities and the catechization of the new converts, the other to serve as a kind of museum, where mathematical

25. Irma B. Jaffe and Gernando Colombaro, 'The Flying Gallop: East and West', in *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 65, no. 2, (June 1983), p. 196.

26. I am very grateful to my colleague, Anne Dulau-Beveridge, for drawing my attention to van der Meulen as a source.

27. George R. Loehr, 'The Sinicization of Missionary Artists and Their Work at the Manchu Court during the Eighteenth Century', in *Cahiers d'histoire mondiale*, vol. 7, no. 1 (1962), p. 796.

28. Cab. Est., Paris, Ye 144. *Registre des Livre de Figures et Estampes qui ont été distribuées suivant les ordres de Monseignr le Marquis de Louvois*. D 15e février 1685. Délivré aux RR. Pères Jésuites Missionnaires allans à la China. Cited in Loehr 1962, p. 796.

29. Noel Golvers, 'The Pre-1773 Jesuit Libraries in Peking as a Medium for Western Learning in Seventeenth-and Early Eighteenth-Century China', in *The Library*, 7th series, vol. 16, no. 4 (December 2015), pp. 429–445, p. 430.

instruments, musical instruments and large books with engravings from France were kept'.³⁰ The volumes gifted from King Louis were bound in red morocco leather and gilded with the royal coat of arms. Jesuit Father Jean de Fontaney (1643–1710), who led the French Mission in 1687 and who brought the gifts from Louis, described their magnificence and that they included 'des plus curieuses estampes', which Golvers suggests might have been the 'Vues des maisons royales et des villes conquises par Louis XIV', listed by Hubert Verhaeren, the last librarian, as being in the Beitang Library in 1949.³¹

The choice of European models to visually commemorate the conquest of Xinjiang and the decision to have that commemoration executed in France can be seen as both an artistic and political endeavour. Within China, standing alongside the more conventional written account and the memorial steles, the Qing success could be seen as surpassing even the westward expansion of the previous Han (206 BCE–220 CE) and Tang (618–907) dynasties, and would see Qianlong, towards the end of his reign and with further military successes, assume the mantle of 'The Old Man of Ten Victories' (*shiquan laoren*).³² Beyond China, the prestige of the dynasty could be well served by a project that utilised both European artistic conventions of military power and the best technical skills with which to realise it, while offering up a challenge, at least in propaganda terms, to the growing might of western countries already at its borders. The success of Qianlong's latter strategy can be measured by the fact that even in 1793, the Macartney Embassy would still recall the final victory: 'The last is brilliant by its victories. That year, which in the British annals is justly termed the glorious 1759, was glorious also to Chen-Lung'.³³

30. Sebald Reil, *Kilian Stumpf 1655–1720, ein Würzburger Jesuit am Kaiserhof zu Peking*, Münster: Aschendorff, 1977, p. 79, quoted and translated in Golvers 2015, p. 442.

31. Noel Golvers, *Libraries of Western Learning for China: Circulation of Western Books between Europe and China in the Jesuit Mission (ca. 1650–ca. 1750)*, 2 volumes, Leuven: Ferdinand Verbiest Institute, 2013, vol. 2, *Formation of Jesuit Libraries*, p. 181. Engravings are listed by Hubert Verhaeren as items 705 and 706 in his *Catalogue de la bibliothèque du Péi-t'ang*, Peking, 1949.

32. Waley-Cohen 1996, p. 869. The author points to the fact that both the Han and Tang were perhaps the greatest native dynasties in Chinese history and that Qianlong could both align the Qing and himself to some of the great figures of the past.

33. Sir George Staunton, *An Authentic Account of an Embassy from The King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China*, London, 1797, p. 269. Ironically, the British victory of 1759, to which Staunton refers, was a crucial battle during the Seven Years' War against the French at Quebec.