

ENGRAVINGS OF CH' IEN-LUNG'S FORMOSA CAMPAIGN

As a gift from Baroness Maud Ledyard von Ketteler, the Museum received in 1953 a set of nine engraved sheets showing episodes of Emperor Ch'ien-lung's expedition against rebellious Formosans, 1786-88. They form part of a series of twelve engravings made in commemoration of that expedition, a series entitled *P'ing-ting T'ai-wan Chan-t'u* (Battle Pictures of the Pacification of T'ai-wan). Ten of these pictures show battle scenes; the eleventh, an impressive composition, pictures the fleet sailing home; the twelfth and last one illustrates the solemn reception of the victorious commanders in the Peking Palace. Missing in our set are numbers 6, 8 and 9. The fine and somewhat pale prints are nearly uniform in size, measuring about 20 by 34 1/2 inches.¹

It is recorded that the complete set of the engravings was sent to the Mukden Imperial Library in 1790, so that the designing and printing must have been done through 1788 and 1789.² Also known are the names of the two painters responsible for the design. There are no signatures on the prints themselves, but according to a catalogue published by the Palace Museum in 1936, the *Ch'ing nei-wu-fu tsao-pan-ch'u yü-t'u-fang t'u-mu*, there exists in the Palace a set of ink drawings which indicates that the first draft was made by Chia Ch'üan, while the final drawing, model for the engraver, was made by Li Ming.³ Both artists are mentioned in Hu Ching's *Kuo-ch'ao yüan-hua-lu*⁴ of 1816 as painters of figures, portraits, historical scenes and the like in the latter part of Ch'ien-lung's reign (1736-96). Their names are connected with two further series of engravings. Chia Ch'üan worked for the Annam Series (6 sheets, 1789-90), and Li Ming took part in the designing of the Nepal or Gurkha Series (8 sheets, datable between 1793 and 1799).⁵

The technique of engraving was unknown in the Far East until late in the sixteenth century, when fine European prints first became current through Jesuit missionaries in China and Japan. At a later period designing and printing occasionally was done by the missionaries them-

¹ Acc. no. 1953/1.57-65. The range of variation in the measurements of the plates is as follows: height, from 19 7/8 to 20 inches; width, from 34 7/16 to 34 9/16 inches.

² Paul Pelliot, "Les 'Conquêtes de l'Empereur de la Chine,'" *T'oung Pao*, Vol. XX (1921), pp. 183-274, esp. p. 242, n. 1; Walter Fuchs "Die Schlachtenbilder aus Turkestan von 1765 als historische Quelle, nebst Bemerkungen zu einigen späteren Serien," *Monumenta Serica*, Vol. IV (1939), pp. 116-24, esp. p. 121, where the titles of the twelve sheets are listed after *Ch'ing Kung-shih hsü-pien*, 98, 5a-7a.

³ Walter Fuchs, "Die Entwürfe der Schlachtenkupfer der Kienlung- und Taokuang-Zeit," *Monumenta Serica*, Vol. IX (1944), pp. 101-22; a convenient table of the several series on p. 121.

⁴ In his *Hu shih san chung* (preface dated 1816); hsia 6b-7a (Chia Ch'üan), 24b (Li Ming).

⁵ Fuchs, "Die Entwürfe . . ."



Fig. 8 CH'ÏEN-LUNG'S FORMOSA CAMPAIGN, RETURN OF THE FLOTLIA
 Chinese, 1788-89

selves. Father Ripa created a series of forty sheets representing scenic spots of the Imperial residence of Jehol in 1714–15.⁶ Soon afterward the Chinese had begun to practice the new technique. G. Kuroda has described Western-influenced engravings, vistas of the city of Su-chou, which are dated in accordance with the years 1732, 1741 and 1744.⁷ Most important, however, and immediately linked with the subject of the pictorial records of Ch'ien-lung's wars is the East-Turkestan Series of sixteen sheets printed in Paris between 1767 and 1774. It is an extraordinary document of international co-operation. The drawings for this set were made, after Chinese paintings of large size in the Peking Palace, by four European painters from Italy, France and Bohemia, then stationed in Peking: Giuseppe Castiglione and Denis Attiret, *fratres*, and Ignaz Sichelbart, *pater*, of the Jesuit order; and Giovanni Damasceno, Augustinian. At the Emperor's wish, they modeled their designs after the style of the battle engravings of Georg Philipp Rugendas I (1666–1742), renowned painter and engraver of Augsburg, Bavaria, who had widely traveled in Italy and himself was an admirer of Salvator Rosa's compositions.

It was in continuation of that famous series⁸ that the subsequent sets of Ch'ien-lung's "Campaigns" were executed—as engravings—by Chinese draftsmen and printers.⁹ The style of these sets, however, exhibits but little of foreign character, as is clearly shown by the Formosa pictures here discussed.

Figure 8 reproduces the eleventh sheet, *Tu Hai K'ai Hsüan* (Crossing the Sea and Triumphant Return). Across a wide bay skirted by sharply furrowed bleak hills there comes a long convoy of war junks pitching and tossing through the billowing waters. The boats are jammed with people, officers and men, who are looking ahead expectantly. The swells and the foam are rendered in a conventional graphic manner, delicately yet powerfully. The waves, evenly patterned throughout, suggest a rather moderate degree of spatial depth—in curious contrast to the strong effect of perspective of the diminishing sizes of the ships and sails, which cut harshly through the undulating pattern of the sea. Another ambiguous effect in the spatial design results from the small and bizarre rocky islands, rendered with minute detail, which rise from the big swells in

⁶ Paul Pelliot, *Les Influences européennes sur l'art chinois au XVIIe et au XVIIIe siècle. Conférence faite au Musée Guimet le 20 février 1927* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1948), pp. 12, 14.

⁷ Kuroda Genji, *Shina koban zuroku* (Tokyo: Bijutsu Kenkyūshō, 1932), Pls. 15: 2 (Yung-cheng 10th year), 16 (Ch'ien-lung 6th year) and 17 (Ch'ien-lung 9th year).

⁸ Pelliot, "Les 'Conquêtes . . .'"

⁹ Chin-ch'uan 1776; Formosa 1788; Annam 1788; Gurkha 1792; Ch'ung-miao 1795; Miao 1795. Cf. Fuchs, "Die Entwürfe . . .," table p. 121.

miniature scale. All across the sky there is an inscription in the handwriting of Emperor Ch'ien-lung, consisting of a long poem (the first nineteen columns from right to left) and a postscript dated to the year mou-shen (1788).

MAX LOEHR

*Professor of Far Eastern Art
Department of Fine Arts*

EVOCATION BY FELIX RUVOLO

A large abstract painting entitled "Evocation" (Fig. 9),¹ by the contemporary American, Felix Ruvolo, has recently been added to the Museum's growing collection of works in the modern idiom. The medium is gouache, applied in some areas as simple water color, and used in other areas almost in the manner of oil paint, with color repeatedly superimposed over color. This method of handling, which is well-suited to a work of considerable size, contributes not a little to the quality of authority which informs the painting.

Felix Ruvolo is at present an associate professor of art at the University of California at Berkeley. He was born in this country in 1912, but spent his boyhood in Sicily, where he began to paint. After returning to the United States he lived for a number of years in Chicago, where he first studied and later taught at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Now, after a period in New York, he has taken up residence in California.

Works by Ruvolo have been seen often in one-man shows in New York and elsewhere and in national and regional exhibitions, and the quality of his painting has earned for him many prizes and awards. Our gouache was exhibited in New York in the Metropolitan Museum's show, "American Water Colors, Drawings, and Prints 1952." In an article reviewing the exhibition—where an interesting two-jury system, one for the "conservative" and another for the "modern" sections, was used—favorable comment on this painting was passed by Erle Loran, one of the "modern" jurors. "Perhaps the most exuberant act of painting for the sake of color and paint itself in the whole show,"² was Mr. Loran's judgment on Ruvolo's "Evocation."

The Museum's painting is indeed exciting for its color and its sensuous paint surface. Ruvolo's palette shows remarkable wealth and brilliance: orange-red and yellow, magenta, lavender-purple and blue, and a beautiful dark, glowing green which seems to point up and control the other colors. One senses their kinship with the fire of emeralds and of other precious stones. The gouache medium offers scope for fine textural effect and provides real pleasure in the actual paint quality.