

Veronica Fontana (1651–88; fig. 202). Inspired by Sirani, but probably trained by her father, Fontana created numerous book illustrations, not only for the catalogue of Ferdinando Cospi's museum of *naturalia* and other curiosities, but also for the sermons of the Jesuit preacher Paolo Segneri and Malvasia's *Felsina pittrice*, of 1678.

According to Bohn, the study of the circulation and distribution of works produced 'by the hand of a woman' – including prints and drawings – is an essential tool for assessing the scope of female achievement in the professional world of art. This, alongside the prestige of the commission; the strategies of self-promotion honed by perfecting the self-portrait; the artist's ability to respond to clients' requirements through innovative compositional and iconographic choices and – in the case of Sirani – the use of 'hidden' signatures which are incorporated into the illusionistic fabric of the picture. It is therefore necessary to take into account market mechanisms and art collecting (and here Bohn has relied heavily on the studies by Raffaella Morselli), including of graphic works, in which Bohn has long specialized. All these angles are explored in the volume with concrete examples and breadth of reasoning, demonstrating the motives behind and the scale of an artistic phenomenon that was undoubtedly facilitated by the cultural openness that characterized the university town of Bologna. IRENE GRAZIANI

BATTLE ENGRAVINGS FOR THE EMPERORS OF CHINA. The Ethnologisches Museum in Berlin organized an exhibition focusing on its collection of copperplates used for the engravings of the so-called *Ten Glorious Campaigns* (*Shi quan wu gong*) originally ordered by the Chinese emperor Qianlong (r. 1736–95), who commissioned five series of prints, beginning in 1764. Two more series were ordered by the Jiaqing emperor while a final series was done for the Daoguang emperor from 1828 to 1829. The large engravings depict battles ranging from the Dzungaria and East Turkestan Campaign (1755–60) on sixteen plates, to the Second East Turkestan Campaign (1826–28) on ten plates (Henriette Lavaulx-Vrécourt, Niklas Leverenz and Alexey Pastukhov, *Berlin Battle Engravings. 34 Copperplates for the Emperors of China / Berliner Schlachtenkupfer. 34 Druckplatten der Kaiser von China*, contribution by Nick Pearce, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin and Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2021, 248 pp., 207 ill., €42).

Of the 88 engravings of the series, the Berlin museum has in its collections 34 copperplates, while another three are kept in the Academy of Science in Beijing, the Houghton Library at Harvard University in Cambridge, MA, and in the British Library in London. Another, not localised, is said to be in Kyoto. Only three of the Berlin plates, and the one in the Houghton Library,



203. Jacques-Philippe Le Bas, after Giuseppe Castiglione, *The Battle of Oroj-jalatu in 1757*, 1770, engraved copperplate, 580 x 945 mm (Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, I D 32517. Image Martin Franken).



204. Anonymous Chinese artist, *The Capture of the Miao Fortified Village of Shilong*, engraved copperplate, 595 x 915 mm (Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, I D 31767. Image Martin Franken).

are from the original Paris series; the others are later plates produced in Beijing in the Imperial workshop. They were all kept in the Hall of Imperial Splendour in Beijing or in an adjacent hall and were first acquired, probably looted, during the Boxer Rebellion and the ensuing Western occupation of Beijing between the summers of 1900 and 1901. In the catalogue, the plates are introduced, and their materiality carefully assessed in Lavaulx-Vrécourt's analysis, where she also discusses their provenances. Next, Leverenz discusses the creation of the copperplates, with the first engravings made in China. It was Matteo Ripa and the Jesuits who introduced the technique to China, producing *The 36 Views of the Imperial Palace of Jehol* in 1714 and later the *Jesuit Atlas* in 1719.

The next chapter discusses the Battles project, beginning with the emperor's decision to commission large paintings of his battles in East Turkistan from four artists including Jean-Denis Attiret, and probably also Giuseppe Castiglione, Ignatius Sichelbart and Jean-Damascène Sallusti if not by some of their Chinese followers. This led to sixteen monumental paintings on silk of four by eight metres, depicting the battles and the

ceremonies held at their return in 1760 (of these only three small fragments from one composition have been localised, as well as three preliminary drawings). These were hung in the Hall of Imperial Splendour, as we know from an anonymous Chinese text. From a letter that the Jesuit Ferdinand Augustin Haller von Hallerstein sent to his brother on 12 September 1764, we know that 'Our Emperor wishes to have engraved and printed in Europe the sixteen pictures depicting the warfare he waged in recent years against the Tatar Eleuths & their neighbours & the subjugated Mohammedans... Therefore he ordered [the four Jesuits mentioned above] to reduce these large pictures to a smaller format'. These works have not survived but they are known through copies in the Palace Museum in Beijing. The preference of the Chinese emperor for French over English prints is attested by Pierre-Philippe Choffard in 1804 ('The sight of Alexander's battles engraved by Audran delighted him with such admiration that he did not hesitate between the two nations'). This is followed by the imperial decree of 13 July 1765 mentioning in great detail the commission of engravings after the sixteen paintings, the number of impressions, the details of the transport and much more.

To this was added a letter by Castiglione with further technical and artistic recommendations.

The production of the East Turkestan copperplate engravings is followed step-by-step, beginning with a letter from the Marquis de Marigny, Directeur général des Bâtiments du Roi, whom the Compagnie des Indes in Paris had contacted, to Charles-Nicolas Cochin II, the engraver, tastemaker and art critic, and the latter's detailed answer. Cochin was placed in charge of the project employing a number of engravers: Augustin de Saint-Aubin, Jacques-Philippe Le Bas (fig. 203), Benoît-Louis Prévost and Jacques Aliamet started working in May 1767. In July 1767, when the next twelve designs arrived in Paris, Pierre-Philippe Choffard, Denis Née, Louis-Joseph Masquelier and Nicolas de Launay were also asked to contribute to the project. The execution is well-known through a number of documents which discuss the project at great length, with numerous technical and artistic details, even including some secret impressions mentioned by the Dresden bookseller Conrad Salomon Walther in 1795. Because of the distance between the commissioner and the production centre of these major prints, the rich correspondence studied here provides real insights into the problems encountered, benefiting even the most seasoned print scholar who will find here rare information on the technical procedures and practices.

When the first seven plates arrived in Beijing, the emperor commissioned Michel Benoist to reprint them. The Jesuit had learnt to engrave through 'what I would

find on this subject in our books that described it'. After Benoit's death in Beijing on 23 October 1774, his co-workers continued printing, but the emperors now also commissioned them to design, engrave the plates and print them in the imperial palace workshop (fig. 204). Information about the in-house production is minimal except for the prints themselves, now adjusted to Chinese aesthetic taste, with longer and straighter lines and much less modelling. The prints lack the graphic quality provided by clearly controlled incisions of various depths and the sophisticated graduation of tonal effects through the mastery of hatchings and cross-hatchings. But this of course makes them special.

The second half of the catalogue contains detailed descriptions and studies of the images on the surviving copperplates in regard to their historical background as recorded in Chinese and Russian sources. This was written by Alexey Mikhailovich Pastukhov of the Novosibirsk State University, a specialist of the military history and imagery of Central Asia and the Far East. Pastukhov provides a thorough identification and analysis of each battle scene and the ensuing Imperial rituals, including the presentations of captives to the emperor at the Meridian Gate of the Forbidden City in Beijing. JEAN MICHEL MASSING

THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH IN LONDON.
Susan Sloman's *Gainsborough in London* (London, Modern Art Press, 2021, 412 pp., 236 ills., £35), covering Gainsborough's fourteen years in London between 1774



205. Attributed to Gainsborough Dupont, *Wooded River Landscape with Shepherd and Sheep*, 1789–93, soft-ground etching and aquatint, 255 x 340 mm (London, British Museum).

PRINT QUARTERLY

VOLUME XXXIX

NUMBER 3

SEPTEMBER 2022

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