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## Yuan Ming Yuan The Garden of Absolute Clarity and Imperial Peking, The Last Days

**Sale:** HK0260 | **Location:** Hong Kong**Auction Dates:** Session 1: Tue, 09 Oct 07 10:30 AM[Print Page](#)

LOT 1316 (of 33)

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VARIOUS PROPERTIES

**A RARE IMPERIAL COURT PAINTING OF THE BANNERMAN DALHAN, ATTRIBUTED TO AI QIMENG (IGNAZ SICHELBAUT) (1708-1780) AND JIN TINGBIAO (FL. 1757-1767)**

QING DYNASTY, QIANLONG PERIOD, CIRCA 1760

600,000—800,000 HKD

**Lot Sold.** Hammer Price with Buyer's Premium: 3,127,500 HKD

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**MEASUREMENTS****measurements note**

48.2 by 43.2 cm., 19 by 17 in.

**DESCRIPTION**

ink and color on silk, framed  
 shown in three-quarter view, the meritorious officer wearing a solemn expression upon his angular face, his high cheekbones, mustache and goatee framing his intense brown eyes, his light wrinkles around his eyes, furrowed brow and tanned skin all result of his rugged life, dressed in a plain blue uniform jacket with a light blue collar and gold buttons, his head donning a winter red silk floss hat trimmed with black fur, his rank denoted by the opaque blue bead on top with a single-eye peacock plume hanging off the back, mounted on board and backed with a newspaper from Tilsit, Eastern Prussia, dated 3rd September 1903

**PROVENANCE**

Removed from the Ziguangge, Zhongnanhai, Beijing, 1900 and brought to Germany.  
 Kunsthandel Klefisch auction house, Cologne, 18th November 1989, lot 62.  
 Kunsthandel Klefisch auction house, Cologne, 16th November 1991, lot 1048.  
 Christie's Paris, 22nd November 2005, lot 193.

**CATALOGUE NOTE**

The present lot appears to have been originally a large-scale portrait painted in the same format as the preceding lot. At some point this painting was reduced in size losing the rest of the body and the inscription and subsequently framed as a bust portrait. Again the realism and the naturalism captured in his facial expression is stylistically very similar to the full-scale portrait of Yisamu. It is therefore not out of the question that these two paintings were most likely done by the same hand.

Unfortunately there is not too much biographical information available on the subject of Dalhan. While there are no identifying inscriptions on the present painting, we can identify him through an oil on paper painting of Dalhan in the Ethnological Museum in the Staatliche Museen in Berlin.

The title slip on the back of the Berlin painting reads: *Pingding Yi-li Huibu ci gongchenxiang di sishisan,*

Portrait number 43, series 2, of a meritorious officer who helped pacify the Muslims in the Ili Region.' Ili or Yili is in modern day Xinjiang near the border of Kazakhstan and was part of the region that was conquered during Qianlong's successful campaign over East Turkestan from 1755-1759.

The inscription on the front written in Chinese on the right and Manchu on the left reads *Erdeng shiwei ha-shi-ha ba-tu-lu Da-er-han* (in Manchu: *Jai jergi hiya hasiha baturu Dalhan*), 'The bodyguard of the second rank Haisiha baturu Dalhan.'

The Berlin painting is one of at least two series of Imperial bannermen painted in the oil on paper medium, and housed in the Ziguangge Hall (Hall of Purple Splendour) in Beijing. A group of these bust size oil paintings can be found in the Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen in Berlin and are illustrated in Herbert Butz et al., *Bilder für die "Halle de Purpurglanzes"*, Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst, Berlin, 2003, cat.nos. 12-17. The ones painted between 1755-1759 are attributed to Jin Tingbiao (fl. 1755-67). The ones painted later in the 1770s are done by other court painters. For more on the large-scale bannermen paintings, please see the essay for the precedeing lot.

It is interesting to note that the old newspaper used as backing on the frame, gives us a clue to where the painting went after it was removed from the Ziguangge in Beijing during the Boxer Rebellion, in 1900. The newspaper from about 1900-1903 is from Tilsit, (modern day Sowjetsk), a town at the confluence of the rivers Tilse and Memel. It became an independent district in north Eastern Prussia in 1895. By 1910, it had 40,000 inhabitants. It was a part of the German empire until 1945. Today it is a part of the Russian enclave, Kaliningrad, or German Königsberg.

*Special thanks to Dr. Annette Bügener for helping to identify this painting.*