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FROM THE LIBRARY OF NORMAN BOBINS (LOTS 38-40)

QIANLONG, Emperor of China (1711-1799) – Dazhang YANG (fl.1770-1790)

Pingding Taiwan deshung tu (Victorious Battle Prints of the Taiwan Campaign). Beijing: Neifu tongban hua, 1790.

Price realised
GBP 81,900Estimate
GBP 80,000 - GBP 120,000

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QIANLONG, Emperor of China (1711-1799) – Dazhang YANG (fl.1770-1790)

Pingding Taiwan deshung tu (Victorious Battle Prints of the Taiwan Campaign). Beijing: Neifu tongban hua, 1790.**Extremely rare set of the Qianlong battle prints relating to the Taiwan Rebellion (1787-1788), providing an extremely interesting example of the interaction of Chinese and European artistic concepts.**

First Chinese edition, 12 engraved plates (approx. 497 x 855mm within light-blue cloth edged borders on sheets approx. 537 x 890mm), bound concertina-style in later cloth-covered boards, metal cornerpieces, decorative gilt-speckled endpapers.

The Ten Great Campaigns (Shiquan Wugong) of the Qianlong Emperor included a military operation to suppress the Taiwanese Rebellion (1787-1788), and the present lot is a pictorial record commemorating that event. The 12 engravings depict the victories of the Qing troops against local rebels in eleven battle scenes, with the final scene showing the imperial reception of the victorious army and its commander, the military officer Fukang'an (d. 1796), a Manchu of the Bordered Yellow Banner.

In 1786, Taiwan's Heaven and Earth Society, comprising Ming loyalists, rose up in revolt under their self-proclaimed king, Lin Shuang-wen. His army soon comprised some 50,000 people, and by 1787, the rebels occupied almost the entire part of southern Taiwan.

The initial Qing troops sent to suppress the rebellion were poorly organised, and were easily defeated by the insurgents. Eventually the Qing court sent General Fukang'an – the Emperor's own son – with 20,000 reinforcements, which, being better equipped and more disciplined, quickly suppressed the rebels, capturing the ringleader Lin Shuang-wen.

Impressed by the wall paintings and the engravings he had commissioned from the Jesuits at the imperial court to commemorate his central Asian victories (see previous lot), Emperor Qianlong desired similar commemorative prints to be made of his other military campaigns. By the time of the Formosa campaign, however, all four of the Jesuit painters who had worked on the first series had died. Therefore, Chinese court painters trained by the Jesuits were entrusted with the task. The scenes in the present lot were designed by Jia Quan and Li Ming, who were used to working in the Jesuit tradition.

The tops of the prints bear calligraphic poems composed and written by the Qianlong Emperor. They are

dated 1787, 1788, and 1789, with the series of prints being published in 1790. Thus these engravings provide an extremely interesting example of the interaction of Chinese and European artistic concepts, as well as an indication of the fascinating relationship of the Jesuit artists in Beijing with the Qing court.

SPECIAL NOTICE ^

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LOT 39

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Hammer Price: £65,000