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Portraits of Valour: Imperial Bannermen Portraits from a European Collection

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141

**AN IMPERIAL OIL PORTRAIT OF FENGSENGGE
ATTRIBUTED TO IGNAZ SICHELNBARTH (AI QIMENG, 1708-
1780), ET AL.
QING DYNASTY, QIANLONG PERIOD, CIRCA 1771-1776**

Estimate: 3,500,000 - 4,500,000 HKD

oil on Korean paper
the bust portrait depicting a commanding officer of the Qing empire in frontal view, dressed in a full set of armour, wearing an iron battle helmet with Sanskrit script picked-out in gilt on the brim of the helmet, the protective flaps extending down from the base of the helmet framing his youthful face enhanced by a thin mustache, his grey suit of armour studded with brass bosses with epaulettes on both shoulders and an circular iron chestplate protecting his chest, his left hand holding a vertical long wooden shaft, all against a bluish-grey background, the upper left corner inscribed vertically in Manchu ('Commander of the Imperial Guard, Assistant Commander to the Left of the Border Protection Forces, President of a Ministry, Banner General, Hero of Merit, Duke of the first rank, Viscount of the first rank, Fengsengge'), the upper left corner of the reverse attached with a yellow label inscribed *Ping[ding] liang Jinchuan gongchen xiang di er* ('The second painting from the series of meritorious officials who contributed in conquering the two Jinchuan [the major and minor]')
72.5 by 55.9 cm., 28 1/2 by 22 in.

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141

**AN IMPERIAL OIL
PORTRAIT OF
FENGSENGGE
ATTRIBUTED TO IGNAZ**
ENGLISH

Provenance

Dr. Wuensch, Germany, early 20th century.
A rare book dealer in Heidelberg, Germany.
E.J. Brill, Leiden, Netherlands, 1985.

Literature

E.J. Brill, *Catalogue 544*, Leiden, 1985, no. 1.

Catalogue Note

Seventeen Portraits from the Imperial Collection
Dr. Harmut Walravens

This collection is remarkable for several reasons: It is believed to be the largest collection of paintings of its kind ever to be offered at auction. No portrait of this type has been sold at auction before. These oil paintings were partially painted in Jehol (Bishu Shanzhuang) and partially in Beijing, but certainly all of them were finished in the Beijing Palace Workshop. They all date from the Qianlong era (1736-1796) and were part of the emperor's plan of action for self-aggrandizement. The subjects were selected by the emperor himself, and a number of them were later honoured with eulogies written by the imperial brush. The portraits document two important events in the history of 18th-century China: The return of the Torgut tribe from Russia and the pacification of the mountainous areas in Sichuan province, known as Gold River Country. Some of the portrayed figures are outstanding for their historical importance like the Torgut



Fig. 1
Fengsengge, Handscroll
Version

Seventeen Meritorious
Generals and Officials by
Jia Quan, detail, 1779

豐昇額 清乾隆四十四年
賈全《平定金川五十功臣
贊》手卷(局部)

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**SICHELBARTH (AI QIMENG, 1708-1780), ET AL.
QING DYNASTY,
QIANLONG PERIOD,
CIRCA 1771-1776**

Estimate: 3,500,000 - 4,500,000 HKD

Zebekdorji (lot 149) and the officers Fengšengge (lot 141), Mingliyang (lot 142), and Septenbaljur (lot 143). The portraits offer true likenesses, not idealistic representations, and are therefore historical documents. Painted in oil, they are also proof of the cultural transfer between East and West - the migration of artistic techniques and ideas.

The collection consists in its present form of two groups: one of Portraits of Mongolian nobles from the Torgut series and the other group of portraits of meritorious officers and civil servants from the Jinchuan campaign. While they were both painted at the command of the emperor and more or less in the same context, namely that of his 'Ten Glorious Campaigns', there are some differences.

Provenance

The collector, Dr. Wuensch, collected these paintings in the early 20th century. He was also a Premier Lieutenant in the German army and the owner of a splendid book and art collection. He married Gisella, the widow of Dr. Carl Lanz Jr., co-owner of a factory of agricultural machinery in Mannheim, Germany. When he and his wife passed away - there being no children - the collection was taken over (in 1972) by a rare book dealer in Heidelberg who sold the portraits individually. The remaining portraits were bought by E.J. Brill, the well-known Leiden publisher and bookseller who advertised them for sale in their *Catalogue 544* (1985). When Brill gave up their second-hand book business, the stocks were taken over by another Dutch antiquarian dealer. The portraits in the present collection were all collected in the 1980s in Germany and in the Netherlands.

I. The Mongolian Portraits

We know of two known series of Mongol noble portraits that the Emperor commissioned to be painted. The remains of the earlier series of portraits now in the possession of the Berlin Museum of Ethnology consists of eight numbered pictures which are part of a set called the *Dörbet Portraits*, despite the fact that four of the nobles are called Čoros and only the remaining four Dörbet. We do not know how many portraits were commissioned. At any rate, all eight nobles belonged to those West Mongols who submitted to the emperor in 1753 and were therefore welcomed and honoured. The new allies strengthened the Manchu-Chinese empire in its pacification of the Western territories (now Xinjiang province).

The *Qianlong shilu* ('Veritable Records') provide us with a statement by the Emperor as to why he had the portraits painted, which was namely to give them to the portrayed and their families in honour of their submission and the granting of imperial favour.¹ We may assume that he had duplicates made for his new allies, giving away copies to them and keeping the originals for his war memorial, the Ziguangge.

While the records do not provide a confirmation of the painter's identity, research demonstrates conclusively that he was the Jesuit Jean-Denis Attiret² (1702-1768), a gifted portrait painter who did his work so well that he convinced the Emperor to give up his resistance to portraits in oil and let him continue to work in this style. Attiret is known to have painted about 200 portraits.

The present collection of Mongol portraits from the second series appears to be very similar; the ethnic background of the nobles depicted is also diverse - four out of the nine from this series are Qošot, four Torguts and one Čoros. In this case, labels on the back of the paintings provide us with the information that these pictures are part of a 'Torgut' set and their numbering indicates that there were at least 21. But why were these people portrayed by imperial command? In a way, they were 'prodigal sons'. The Torguts were not however rebels who contritely sought the Emperor's forgiveness. They left China in about 1620 because they suffered from oppression by the administration and moved to Russia where they settled on the banks of the Volga River. The Tsarist government treated them cautiously but after over a hundred years, the Russians put them under pressure and the leaders of the tribe decided to return to their original home. Led by Ubashi Khan, on 5th of January 1771, they moved out and crossed over the frozen Volga River, with Russian troops at their heels and were confronted by hostile tribes. A considerable part of the population never lived to see the 'promised land' but died of overexertion, starvation or was killed in battle. Once back into China in Dzungaria (Xinjiang), they pledged allegiance to the Emperor. The Emperor welcomed the Torguts because they were the ideal people to move into the vast empty areas de-populated and devastated by his earlier campaign. For this reason, the Torguts were most welcome, their nobles treated royally, awarded Chinese titles and privileges - and were even painted!

The Emperor also expressed his satisfaction of the return of the Torguts in stone inscriptions, and through one of Jesuit Father Amiot's translations, the story became known in Europe just few years after the fact.³ The memorable trek of the Torguts was also vividly recounted by Sven Hedin in his book *Jehol* (1932).⁴

The Mongol portraits of both sets - Dörbeds and Torguts - are similar in style and size and might easily be considered part of one set if it were not for the difference in historical background. In some biographies it is stated that the nobles were portrayed when they went for an audience in Jehol in 1771, immediately after their arrival from Russia. We may assume that the Emperor also in this case offered the nobles their portraits as keepsakes but kept the originals for himself. See a painting in the Palace Museum, Beijing commemorating this event (fig. 1).

Here again, we do not know their exact number and where they were kept. We may assume, however, that they too were stored in the Ziguangge, the Hall of Purple Splendour (the War Memorial). In all those cases where there is a hint to the provenance in Beijing, German sources speak of the 'Mongol Pavilion', or 'Mongol Palace'. There is little doubt that the Ziguangge with the annexed Wuchengdian, where traditionally the foreign envoys and Mongol allies were received and entertained, is meant.

Who was the painter? Jean-Denis Attiret (1702-1768) had passed away in 1768; Giuseppe Castiglione (1688-1766), the best-known European painter in China died two years earlier in 1766. When Giuseppe Panzi (1734-1811), a new Jesuit painter, arrived from Europe in 1771, the only other Jesuit painter at the Chinese court at the time this event took place was Ignaz Sichelbarth (Ai Qimeng, 1708-1780), a modest man who although a gifted and skilful painter, lived in the shadow of Castiglione. Little is known about him and he only recently became the object of scholarly research, not least triggered by the splendid exhibits of the Palace Museum, e.g. in Macau. His best-known pictures are portrayals of animals - horses, deer, monkeys, etc. The subjects were dictated by the Emperor himself and not the choice of the painter.

Sichelbarth was experienced in portrait painting even though he may not have had the same predilection for this genre as Fr. Attiret. On an earlier occasion we know that the Emperor ordered him to copy the faces into the full-size portraits otherwise done by court



Fig. 2
Ten Thousand Dharmas
Return as One, screen,
colour on silk, Qing
dynasty, Qianlong period
Palace Museum, Beijing
Patricia Ann Berger,
Empire of Emptiness:
Buddhist Art and Political
Authority in Qing
China, Honolulu,
清乾隆 佚名《萬法歸一
圖》屏 設色絹本
北京故宮博物院藏
Patricia Ann Berger,
《Empire of Emptiness:
Buddhist Art and Political
Authority in Qing
China》, 檀香山, 2003
年, 圖版2, 圖並見於封面



Fig. 3
Portrait of the Torgut
Ubashi Khan, attributed to
Ignaz Sichelbarth (Ai
Qimeng, 1708-1780) et al.,
oil on paper, Qing
dynasty, Qianlong period,
circa 1771
Reiss-Engelhorn Museum,
Mannheim, Germany
清乾隆約三十六年
(1771) 艾啟蒙等《渥
巴錫像》油彩紙本 德國
MANNHEIM 賴斯博物館藏



Fig. 4
Painting of Yisamu,
attributed to Ignaz
Sichelbarth (Ai Qimeng,
1708-1780) and Jin
Tingbiao (fl. 1757-1767),
hanging scroll, ink and
colour on silk, Qing
dynasty, Qianlong period,
dated to 1760
Sotheby's Hong Kong, 9th
October 2007, lot 1314
清乾隆 (傳) 艾啟蒙及金
廷標《伊薩穆像》軸 設色
絹本 《乾隆庚辰春》款
香港蘇富比2007年10月9
日, 編號1314



Fig. 5
Set of ten imperial
bannermen paintings,
attributed to Jin Tingbiao
(fl. 1757-1767), ink and
colour on paper,
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painters.

Other portraits from the Torgut set have not yet been located. Only three others are known from the Brill sales catalogue. They are the pictures of Ubashi Khan (*Iledkel šastir* 125, 666) now in the Reiss-Engelhorn Museum in Mannheim, Germany (fig. 2), Momuntu (*Iledkel šastir* 128, 673) (location unknown), and Yerempil (*Iledkel šastir* 129, 681) (location unknown), respectively; they form nos. 1, 7 and 9 of the set. Ubashi Khan was certainly the key figure as he led the Torguts from Russian back to Mongolia, with Zebekdorji pulling the strings in the background.

II. Heroes of the Military Campaigns

The second group of portraits pertains to warriors who excelled through their bravery and military skills, i.e. efficient strategy. During the last 15 to 20 years, a number of 'bannermen' paintings have come to light and were sold at auction. The present eight pictures are different from those, however, as they are not full-length hanging scrolls but bust portraits in oil, very similar to the likenesses of the Mongolian princes.

The Context

The Qianlong emperor was a far-sighted warrior, an able administrator, a prolific poet and author, an occasional painter, and a patron of the arts and sciences. He enlarged the Chinese empire tremendously through his 'Ten Glorious Campaigns'⁵ and led China to an economic and cultural high. On the other hand, his wars cost fortunes and were more than China could afford in the long run. He increased the multi-ethnicity of the empire by his conquests, although this would lead to problems in the future. Nevertheless, he was a great ruler, one of the most remarkable the empire ever had. He created and nourished the myth of a wise and benevolent sovereign who was favoured by Heaven and therefore successful in his undertakings. Constantly at the service of his people, he created a peaceful empire (*pax sinica*).

The Qianlong emperor did his best to document and glorify his military exploits:

- He had huge battle paintings painted on silk to be hung in the Ziguanqge, which was designed as a war memorial. While there are 16 such paintings related to the achievements of the Turkestan campaign (1758-59), there was only one for the Taiwan campaign (1787-88). Although the latter however, combined a number of scenes.
- He had these huge paintings turned into copper-engravings; the first set in 16 sheets was engraved in Paris, the following series in Beijing. There are 76 in total for the Qianlong campaigns.
- He had 280 meritorious officers painted for display in the Ziguanqge complex.
- He had the details of the campaigns minutely documented in 'strategic plans' (*fanglue, bodogon-i bithe*), voluminous chronicles.
- He composed victory inscriptions which were erected in the respective places as well as in the Guozijian in Beijing.
- Important texts were carved in jade slabs which were strung together to form 'books' (jade books).
- He had victory hymns composed to be sung and performed at victory banquets.
- He had monographs of the newly conquered territories compiled, e.g. *Xiyu tuzhi*.
- He had a huge new map of the empire made which included the new territories (usually called *Qianlong shisanpaitu*).
- He had a hexaglot dictionary published to explain all the new and foreign names of places and people (*Xiyu tongwenzhi*).
- He had a number of temples, some Lamaist, built in Jehol to prove that he was a protector of Buddhism, especially the creed of the new Western part of the empire.
- He had the Buddhist canon printed in the four major languages of the empire.
- He compiled a collection of his many writings concerning his 'Ten Glorious Campaigns' (*Yuzhi shiwen shiquan*).
- He also had two editions of a quadrilingual general dictionary, the *Manju gisun-i buleku bithe*, printed. A pentaglot version remained unpublished.
- And he had a huge imperial library (*Siku quanshu*) with a critical catalogue distributed to seven locations throughout the empire. The preliminary necessary search for rare books provided a splendid occasion to seize and ban anti-Manchu writings.

Thus it becomes apparent that the portraits of the military heroes were but a mosaic stone in a carefully designed glorification project.

From the sources, we know that altogether probably 280 individual figures (265 are documented) were selected to be painted for the Qianlong campaigns:

Xinjiang campaign - 50 + 50
Jinchuan campaign - 50 + 50
Taiwan campaign - 20 + 30
Gurkha campaign - 15 + 15⁶

The first set comprises the more prominent heroes, the second the lesser, respectively.

The Names

Many of the brave warriors were not ethnically Chinese as can be seen from the names already. The majority were of Mongol and Manchu origins while the Chinese formed a comparatively smaller number.

The names have been a source for confusion; thus when the portrait of Janggimboo came up for auction it was advertised as the portrait of the 'Manchu general Huerzhaba'; the researchers took part of the general's title ('the resolute hero') as his name and ignored his real name completely.

Therefore the list of portraits as given in 1990⁷ is now under revision; for this purpose the Manchu spelling (Manchu has an alphabetical script) is more helpful than the Chinese rendering. In some cases the correct name will only be established when the Manchu (or Mongolian) version becomes available. (See index of names on pp. 106-107).

The Portraits

Research during the last 30 years has brought to light some good studies on the subject. However, they showed at the same time the sources are very scarce - in regards to imperial orders, the time frames, the procedure of making the portraits, the painters, the factory-like production, and the exact storage. The same applies to different versions of

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Qing dynasty, Qianlong period, circa 1760

Sotheby's New York, 31st March - 1st April 2005, lot 280

清乾隆二十五年 (傳) 金廷標《平定西域前五十功臣贊》卷 設色紙本 共十功臣

紐約蘇富比2005年3月31日 / 4月1日, 編號280



Fig. 6
Painting of Cencukjab, attributed to Ignaz Sichelbarth (Ai Qimeng, 1708-1780) and Jin Tingbiao (fl. 1757-1767), hanging scroll, ink and colour on silk, Qing dynasty, Qianlong period, dated to 1760

Sotheby's new york, 12th september 2012, lot 246

清乾隆 (傳) 艾啟蒙及金廷標《車木楚克扎布像》軸 設色絹本

《乾隆庚辰春》款

紐約蘇富比2012年9月12日, 編號246



Fig. 7
Portrait of Emperor Qianlong in Court Robe, attributed to Giuseppe Panzi (1734-1812), Qing dynasty, Qianlong period

清乾隆 (傳) 潘廷章《弘曆朝服像》軸 (局部)

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the portraits.

We are sure about the existence of three clearly distinct versions (there may be more) even if their relationship and their place in the painting and manufacturing process have been mainly a matter of intelligent guesses.

Best known are the almost life-size hanging scrolls that are very impressive and show the respective person in all his splendour, in his official robe or armour, with crossbow, sword and the insignia of rank. The *shitang* ('poetry hall') above the figures in the painting contains a poetic eulogy, either written by the emperor himself, or, for lesser heroes by high courtiers, both in Manchu and Chinese and adorned with the official oval red seal of the Qianlong emperor (*Qianlong yulan zhibao*) in between the two language versions. See a painting of Yisamu that was sold at Sotheby's Hong Kong 9th October 2007, lot 1314 (fig. 3).

Then we have some fragments of handscrolls which are, of course convenient in size, and only provide the eulogies in Chinese. In the case of some single sheets (not mounted) it is doubtful whether they were ever meant to be part of a handscroll, and one may assume that they were intended to form an album. If so, this would mean an additional version.

A handscroll showing the heroes of the Xinjiang campaign was completed by Jin Tingbiao⁸ (d. 1767) in the sixth month of 1760. The emperor personally copied the eulogies to the portraits and affixed no less than 62 seals on the scroll. One year later the painter received orders to start on the second scroll.⁹ Ten paintings from this campaign were sold at Sotheby's New York 31st March - 1st April 2005, lot 280 (fig. 4).

Another handscroll, a fragment comprising 17 portraits (sold at Sotheby's New York on 1st June 1992, lot 77) was done by Jia Quan and finished in 1779, according to the imperial catalogue *Shiqu baoji*. The date on the scroll is 1776 (which were the date of the eulogies), however.¹⁰

And lastly, we have the bust (half-length) portraits done in oil on (Korean) paper as in the present collection. They are generally approximately 70 by 50 cm in size and have captions in Manchu and Chinese but not the full eulogies.

It may be useful to recall how these portraits were painted. As of yet no Chinese sources have come to light, but we do have information in Father Amiot's biography of Fr. Attiret:¹¹

'During the whole duration of the war against the Eleuths and the allied other Tatars, as soon as the imperial troops had won a victory, i.e. had conquered a town or subdued a tribe, the painters were immediately ordered to sketch the event. Those who had the greatest share in these achievements among the high officers were selected to be represented in the pictures according to their performance. But how should one paint people who were not present? Those who were supposed to serve as models were not available; sometimes they were even in areas more than 800 miles away from the capital. But that was no obstacle! They were ordered to appear at court, and they arrived with such a speed that only the Tatars were capable of. They were ordered to come to audience on the day of their arrival. The Emperor asked them about whatever he wanted to know, had their portraits sketched and sent them back out to the army. All parties acted with such a haste that the arrival of these officers became known only after they had left already and the painters had one or two hours at most to put them on the canvas - a work which under different circumstances would have taken them two or three days.'

The task is to put these versions into a consistent and sensible context. This is complicated by the scarcity of sources which leaves us to some speculation, and also by additional information which makes the puzzle harder to solve.

According to a note dated to the 14th day of the tenth month of Qianlong 28th year of reign (1763)¹² two days earlier orders had been issued for portraits of the first Xinjiang series to be made in ink and colour on silk, its responsibilities shared by Jin Tingbiao (fl. 1757-1767), Ignaz Sichelbarth (1708-1780) and painters from the workshop for the manufacture of enamel wares. Jin was to enlarge the images of the figures from the first scroll of the handscroll into the hanging scroll format. Sichelbarth was to paint in the faces and apply colours. The second entry [19th day of the fifth month of Qianlong 29th year of reign (1764)] records only a short instruction to be observed in the production of the portraits of the fifty officials of lesser merit - the drapery folds to be first sketches for approval by painters from the Painting Academy. This change in the choice of the workforce probably signifies the Emperor's dissatisfaction with the result of similar work done by the enamel workshop painters in the portraits of the first group.¹³

The Painting of the Portraits

Reviewing the scarce evidence, the most logical pattern is as following (exemplified by the Xinjiang campaign (1758-59)):

Before 1760: The portraits were successively sketched whenever the emperor selected the respective heroes and ordered them to come to audience. These sketches were turned into bust portraits in oil, by Fr. Attiret who was the portrait specialist at the court. It may be possible that he was supported in his work by Fr. Castiglione when necessary.

1760, sixth month: Jin Tingbiao completes the first handscroll.

1761: he receives orders to start on the second one which may have been finished in 1762.

1763, tenth month: The Emperor orders the production of hanging scrolls on the basis of the first handscroll.

1764, fifth month: Decree regarding the second set of hanging scrolls based on the second handscroll.

There seems to be a contradiction in the statement by Fuchs¹⁴ that at the New Year celebrations of 1761 the large battle pictures and the portraits of the war heroes were exhibited in the Ziguangge, as indicated by an imperial poem. An explanation would be that the pictures exhibited were the bust portraits the last of which were probably only finished in 1760 at the end of the campaign. It would have been a *tour de force*, even for an absolute ruler, to have these 100 portraits turned into hanging scrolls just within a few months, while the painters were still busy with the production of the huge battle paintings on silk.

The preceding format would lead to the conclusion that the emperor was pleased with the bust portraits, which also helped with the large battle paintings by allowing the artists to insert the real likenesses of the heroes. But they were not really 'showy' enough for his war memorial. So he had Jin Tingbiao prepare a handscroll with full figures, which

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allowed him to see the portraits in context. The sequential arrangement is by rank within each section of 50. Apparently the Emperor wanted 'living' pictures and so he turned the array of heroes into a choreography - individual people turning left or right, looking you in the eye, holding their weapons, etc. While this accounts for a more vivid representation, it also causes practical problems: often the figures do not seem in agreement with human anatomy and movement, and therefore look slightly awkward. While the oil portrait perhaps showed the face gazing directly at the onlooker, the figure may turn to the left or right: a contrast not easy to harmonize.

The handscrolls allowed the Emperor to add his eulogies by looking at the whole sequence of heroes.

The next step is logical - life-size portraits with insignia and paraphernalia were much more suited to the war memorial and certainly impressive. Also in comparison with the huge battle paintings they would not just be tiny accessories that would dwindle from the onlooker's eyes.

This interpretation neatly accommodates all known facts and leads to some conclusions:

- The bust portraits in oil are the primary versions of the full-size portraits, and the master copies as far as an exact representation of the persons' faces go. Thus they are of extreme historical value. They were finished in 1760, done by Fr. Attiret.
- The handscrolls are revealed as working copies, both for the Emperor, for quick identification, and for the painters when they generated the life-size hanging scrolls. They were done by Jin Tingbiao.
- Creating the life-size portraits took almost two years. Jin Tingbiao was apparently the painter in charge, for the layout and the whole ensemble. He was supported by a team of court painters for the routine matters like drapery folds. Attiret's oil portraits were used by Ignaz Sichelbarth who carefully copied the faces into the blank spaces left for this purpose. We know from the Cemcukjab scroll¹⁵ (fig. 5) that these blank spaces carried the name of the person in Manchu in order to avoid mistakes which might easily happen when dealing with 100 pictures at a time.
- So far the hanging scrolls were dated 1760, quite understandably as the date appeared on the eulogies. But as we see from the preceding argumentation these scrolls were only finished in 1763 and 1764, respectively. Therefore the date refers only to the eulogies not to the completion of the hanging scrolls.

With regard to the eight oil portraits of meritorious officers in the present sale, it may now be confirmed that they are the primary, the earliest and most reliable version of the pictures while the hanging scrolls are to be considered a tertiary stage.

The eight portraits all belong to the second Jinchuan campaign (1771-1776), and there the first set, comprising the most prominent warriors which were later honoured by imperial eulogies. While the picture of Agöi, the leader of the campaign is not part of the collection, the next two generals in command, Fengsengge and Mingliyang, are represented, as well as Septenbaljur, Imperial Son-in-Law, and other prominent officer (the Roman numeral in front of the name refers to the campaign (III) and the Arabic numeral was written on the label in order of their importance):

- III, 2: Fengsengge
- III, 3: Mingliyang
- III, 7: Septenbaljur
- III, 9: Esentei
- III, 14: Purpu
- III, 16: Ha Guoxing
- III, 17: Ma Biao
- III, 19: Sulin

The Second Jinchuan Campaign

When a rebellion broke out in Xiao Jinchuan (Lesser Gold River Country) in Sichuan Province in 1771, the Emperor dispatched the Manchu General Wenfu from Yunnan to Sichuan to quell the uprising. He managed to pacify the area but the chief rebel escaped. In 1773 a new rebellion broke out in Xiao Jinchuan, which was reconquered despite heavy losses with the help of the Generals Fude and Mingliyang. Da Jinchuan (Greater Gold River Country) resisted the imperial forces for three years. The rebels were in an excellent defensive position owing to their stone forts, but finally with the use of cannons, cast by the Jesuit Felix da Rocha, the rebels submitted. The campaign cost 70 million silver taels and was thus twice as expensive as the previous Eastern Turkestan war.

Dating and The Painters

While the campaign was waging and only just finishing after five years of warfare in 1776, the eight pictures would have been painted simultaneously. At that time Fr. Attiret (d. 1768) and Castiglione (d. 1766) were no longer alive. So we may assume that Fr. Sichelbarth was responsible for these portraits, probably supported by Fr. Giuseppe Panzi and assistants. Panzi was good at portraits - he painted the Emperor (fig. 6), as well as Father Amiot, and the powerful official Hesen. As Fr. Sichelbarth's health was deteriorating, a good part of the work if not the lion's share may have been done by Panzi who had arrived at Beijing in 1771. The project leader for the later steps, handscrolls and hanging scrolls was apparently Jia Quan.¹⁶

Costume

Baturu is the Manchu word for Brave (from Mongolian *bagatur*), and this honour was conferred solely for active service in the field and praised by laudatory epithets. With this distinction conferred, one was allowed the right to wear the peacock feather in their hat, should the recipient not already have attained the privilege.

The peacock feather is arranged in three classes:

- The three-eyed feather was only conferred on imperial princes of the first six degrees or very distinguished individuals, not unusually for single military achievements.
- The double-eyed feather and
- the single-eyed feather, were conferred as an ordinary form of reward for public service and often obtained by purchase.

The official ranks in the civil and military service systems were indicated by the buttons on top of their hats and the embroidered rank badges. The red buttons on these paintings were made of ruby for the first rank and coral for the second rank. The military rank badges included in these paintings are the *qilin* for the first rank and the leopard for the third rank.

Court necklaces (*chaozhu*) had to be worn with court robes by members of the imperial family, princes and high dignitaries as well as officials from the 5th rank upwards and military officers from the 4th rank upwards. A *chaozhu* consists of 108 beads, based on the Buddhist 'rosary', and divided into four sections by larger beads, called *fotou* (Buddha heads); from a calabash-shaped bead *fotou ta*, (Buddha head *stupa*), an additional string hangs down on the back. Another three short strings (*jinian*, memory string) of ten beads each, are also connected and worn two on the left and one on the right. These *chaozhu* were made of a variety of materials like coral, lapis lazuli, amber, agate, tourmaline, crystal, rubies, sapphire, jade, and of course pearls. The latter, as the most precious were reserved for the emperor and the empress (dowager), and lower ranks were only allowed a very small number of them, as regulated in the statutes of the dynasty.

Earrings were usually worn by Mongol nobles, not by Chinese or Manchu officials.

The biographies of the individual figures will be discussed individually within each lot.

¹ According to the *Qianlong shilu* j. 46, after V. Veit: Die in Deutschland befindlichen Porträts der von Ch'ienlung 1754-1755 unterworfenen Öltenfürsten. *Zentralasiatische Studien* 1970, 209.

² Loehr, George R.: L'artiste Jean-Denis Attiret. *La mission française de Pékin aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*. Paris: Cathasia 1976 (Actes du Colloque international de sinologie.), 69-83.

³ Jean-Joseph-Marie: Monument de la transmigration des Tourgouths. *Mémoires concernant les Chinois* 1.1776, 405-418.

⁴ Sven Hedin: *Jehol. Kejsarstaden. Skildringer från de store Mandshukejsarnas hov*. Stockholm: Hökerberg (1931).

⁵ The campaigns the Emperor himself counted as 'glorious' were the two campaigns against the Dzungars in 1755 and 1756-1757, against the Muslims in Eastern Turkestan in 1758-1759, the two expeditions against Jinchuan in 1747-1749 and 1771-1776, against Taiwan in 1787-1788 and the two Gurkha wars in 1790-1792. See Zhuang Jifa: *Qing Gaozong siqun wugong yanjiu*. Taipei: National Palace Museum 1982. p. 646.

⁶ According to *Guochao gongshi xubian*, p. 96.

⁷ H. Walravens: 'Portraits of meritorious officers, accompanied by Manchu eulogies.' *Altaica Berolinensia. The concept of sovereignty in the Altaic world. PIAC 34.1991*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz 1993 (Asiatische Forschungen 126.), pp. 307-330.

⁸ *Guochao yuanhua lu*, 31.

⁹ *Shiqu baoji*, 36/11a-13b: 'Yubi pingding Yili Huibu wushi gongchen xiangzan.' Also: 'Qing gongting huajia Lang Shining nianpu.' *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 1988:2, p. 67.

¹⁰ Zeng Jiabao: 'Pingding Jinchuan qian wushi gongchen xiang juan canben.' *Wenwu* 1993: 10, p. 53-56.

¹¹ Henri Bernard S.J., 'Le frère Attiret au service de K'ien-long. Sa première biographie écrite par le P. Amiot, rééditée avec notes explicatives et commentaires historiques', *Bulletin de l'Université l'Aurore* III, 4. 1943, p. 438-439.

¹² 'Yubi pingding Yili Huibu wushi gongchen xiangzan'. *Shiqu baoji xubian* 36/11a-13b.

¹³ Tsang Ka Bo: 'Portraits of meritorious officials: Eight examples from the first set commissioned by the Qianlong emperor.' *Arts asiatiques* 47.1992, 72, after Nie Chongzheng: 'Tan Qingdai gongchenxiang'. *Wenwu* 1990:1, p. 67.

¹⁴ Walter Fuchs: 'Die Entwürfe der Schlachtenkupfer der Kienlung- und Taokuang-Zeit.' *Monumenta Serica* 1944, 108.

¹⁵ Sotheby's New York, 12th September 2012, lot 246.

¹⁶ See *Guochao yuanhua lu*, 39.

My Views on the Recently Emerged Qing Palace Oil Portraits Nie Chongzheng

In June 2012, when I first received images of seventeen oil portraits of the Qianlong period—portraits that Sotheby's Hong Kong recently received—and again later when I saw the originals, I felt that the portraits were both rare and valuable. Rare because oil paintings which originated in Europe and were rarely seen in China during the early period [Ming and early Qing], and valuable because the individuals depicted in the portraits had a hand in many important historical affairs of the Qing court and the appearance of these individuals was formerly nearly unknown.

The portraits in these paintings are all bust portraits and are more or less the same size. They were painted with oil pigments on a multilayer base on Korean paper. The background colour covers the entire surface, with no white space of the paper showing through. In the upper right corner of the portrait, the rank and name of the individual is written in Chinese, and in the upper left corner there appears the same content in Manchu. But all of these portraits are unsigned by their painters. From the individuals in these portraits, we can see that they were not painted at the same time, and that the artists were not the same group of painters.

For nine of these portraits—namely *The Torgut and Imperial Prince Zebekdorji (lot 149)*, *The Qosot Beile [Prince of the blood of the third degree] Buyancuk (lot 150)*, *The Qosot Beile Gungge (lot 151)*, *The Torgut Noble of the First Rank Kirib (lot 152)*, *The Torgut Noble of the First Rank Arakba (lot 153)*, *The Qosot Noble of the First Rank Monggön (lot 154)*, *The Qosot Noble of the First Rank Noohai (lot 155)*, *The Torgut Noble of the First Rank Zebekjab (lot 156)*, and *The Coros Noble of the Fourth Rank Kenze (lot 157)*—the painters probably included the court painter Ignaz Sichelbarth (Chinese name: Ai Qimeng, 1708-1780), from Bohemia.

According to historical sources, the Mongolian Torgut tribe, which had herded for nearly half a century in the Volga river basin, moved in 1771 toward the east to their ancestral pastures around Ili under the leadership of Ubashi Khan and Zebekdorji (Ubashi's son-in-law, lot 149), enduring many hardships and overcoming many obstacles along the way. When the Qianlong emperor approved this migration, it caused quite a stir for a while. The oil portrait of Ubashi, the Khan who led the Torgut tribe back to its homeland, is now housed in the Reiss-Engelhorn Museum in Mannheim, Germany (fig. 1). The whereabouts of the other portraits were until now unknown.

Among the recently emerged portraits is a portrait of the leader who led the Torgut tribe east to their homeland, The Torgut and Imperial Prince Zebekdorji, and the other portraits are all those of individuals who were leaders of the Torguts too.

From the records of the archive of the workshop of the Qing Imperial Household Department, we learn that 'On 26th November [1771], the workshop received from Director Li Wenzhao a stamped note stating that on 26th August, the eunuch Hu Shijie conveyed the following imperial command: "Have Fu Long'an [Manchu: Fulungga] et al. supervise Ai Qimeng [i.e., Ignaz Sichelbarth] to paint eight facial portraits, etc."'. The present set is the best match so far to this recorded archive. For this reason, I think that the oil portrait of Ubashi was most likely painted by the Bohemian painter Ignaz Sichelbarth. And the 'eight facial portraits' mentioned in the archive record were very

*jurgan-i aliha amban gōsa be kadalara amban.
uju jergi faššangga baturu gung uju jergi jingkini hafan Fengšengge*

English translation:
Commander of the Imperial Guard, Assistant Commander to the Left of the Border Protection Forces, President of a Ministry, Banner General, Hero of Merit, Duke of the first rank, Viscount of the first rank, Fengšengge

Fengšengge (d. 1777) was a member of the Niohuru family of the Manchu Bordered Yellow Banner, the son of the Duke Arigōn (d. 1770) who served on the Burma campaign under Fuheng. In 1760 Fengšengge became a bodyguard of the 3rd degree. In 1769 he inherited the rank of a Duke of the first degree and became Senior Assistant Chamberlain of the Imperial Bodyguard (*neidachen*). In 1772 he was ordered to proceed to Jinchuan where he became Councillor to the Military-Governor (*canzan dachen*). His military exploits in Jinchuan were very successful, and he received imperial presents and as the biography emphasized, was painted. He died in 1777 and was posthumously awarded the honorary title of Grand Guardian of the Heir Apparent (*Taizi taibao*). His posthumous name was *chengwu*.

There is a handscroll version of this painting that was part of a group of seventeen paintings sold in our New York rooms 1st June 1992, lot 77 (fig. 7). The Qianlong emperor wrote his eulogy:

Fengšengge, Pacifier of the Frontier Vice-General of the Right First Class, Conferred Title 'Dauntless and Resolute Heir to Courage Duke' and Raised One Rank to President of the Board of Revenue .

As he did not move from Yixi, this demonstrates his clear understanding of developments before they actually occur.

Thereafter, as Vice-General for the entire western region,

He inspired troops in person and at Shünkerdzung he was in charge of forces that advanced to take it.

He is a loyal minister of the State, a "Courageous Heir" to his forebears.

The Emperor further elaborates:

*During the summer of the guisi year [21th May-17th August 1773] since the Rardan [Chinese 'Cuqin' tribe of the Jinchuan Valley] rebels had colluded with the previously subdued Tsanla tribe [of the Lesser Jinchuan Valley], they surreptitiously stirred up revolt. At the time, Sengge was stationed with troops at Yixi, so I ordered him to go to Dabanzhao [Maogong district, Sichuan], which was nearby, to surround and suppress them. By the time Fengšengge received my order, though he was already aware of what was happening at Muguomu Mountain [the massacre of Qing forces in Maogong district], he had not yet received news from Agūi's [(1717-1797) Chief Area Commander] garrison, so feared that our military strength along the Chuosijiabu corridor [Tibetan "Chosgyab" and Manchu "Cosgiyab"] would be divided. However, since to send troops there would not be to our advantage, in the end he never moved forces forward. When his report reached me, I was delighted at how perceptive he was and dispatched a special order that he be rewarded and encouraged. Shünkerdzung [NE Maogong district] was strategically an extremely important place and moreover was at the rear of our forces. Fengšengge led the troops that advanced to take it, some cutting their way directly into the stronghold and others scaling ladders over the walls to enter it, thus capturing the stronghold and killing all the rebels. I was delighted at his bravery, and he certainly brought no shame to the tradition established by his forebearers the Baturu ["Conquering Hero"] Duke Eyidu [(1562-1621) [see *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*, pp. 221-222; Fengšengge was the great-grandson of Eyteng, Eyidu's younger brother.] Therefore, in addition to the rank of Duke conferred on him, the two characters Ji Yong (Heir to Courage) is added to his banner.*

Related Lots



141

AN IMPERIAL OIL PORTRAIT OF FENGSENGGE

ATTRIBUTED TO IGNAZ SICHEL BARTH (AI QIMENG, 1708-1780), ET AL.

QING DYNASTY, QIANLONG PERIOD, CIRCA 1771-1776

oil on Korean paper

the bust portrait depicting a commanding officer of the Qing empire in frontal view, dressed in a full set of armour, wearing an iron battle helmet with Sanskrit script picked-out in gilt on the brim of the helmet, the protective flaps extending down from the base of the helmet framing his youthful face enhanced by a thin mustache, his grey suit of armour studded with brass bosses with epaulettes on both shoulders and an circular iron chestplate protecting his chest, his left hand holding a vertical long wooden shaft, all against a bluish-grey background, the upper left corner inscribed vertically in Manchu ('Commander of the Imperial Guard, Assistant Commander to the Left of the Border Protection Forces, President of a Ministry, Banner General, Hero of Merit, Duke of the first rank, Viscount of the first rank, Fengsengge'), the upper left corner of the reverse attached with a yellow label inscribed *Ping[ding] liang Jinchuan gongchen xiang di er* ('The second painting from the series of meritorious officials who contributed in conquering the two Jinchuan [the major and minor]')

72.5 by 55.9 cm., 28½ by 22 in.

PROVENANCE

Dr. Wuensch, Germany, early 20th century.

A rare book dealer in Heidelberg, Germany.

E.J. Brill, Leiden, Netherlands, 1985.

LITERATURE

E.J. Brill, *Catalogue 544*, Leiden, 1985, no. 1.

HK\$3,500,000-4,500,000

US\$452,000-585,000

清乾隆約三十六至四十一年 (傳) 艾啟蒙等《豐昇額像》 油彩紙本 木框

標題：

左側滿文「定邊右副將軍一等果毅繼勇公加一等子戶部尚書豐昇額」

畫背標籤「平[定]兩金川功臣像第貳」

臉色白晰，鬚眉星目，兩頰微鼓，蓄髭。戴金屬胄，頂垂貂纓，疑綴金梵文，護頸滿佈金黃色釘。甲衣灰銀，亦飾黃釘，身前懸護心鏡，護肩接衣處鑲鐵鍊，左右下緣襯暗花邊飾。左手執長杆，右臂下垂。背景滿塗淺藍。上方左側以滿文書寫人物官銜姓名，背面左上角有土黃色標籤，上書其圖像系列及編號。

來源：

Wuensch 醫生，德國，二十世紀初

德國海德堡珍本書商

E.J. Brill，萊頓，荷蘭，1985年

出版：

E.J. Brill，《Catalogue 544》，萊頓，1985年，編號1

豐昇額（1777年卒），滿洲鑲黃旗人，姓鈕祜祿。其父尚書阿里袞（1770年卒），曾跟隨傅恒出征緬甸。乾隆二十五年（1760），豐昇額獲授「三等待衛」。三十四年（1769），襲一等公，並擢「領侍衛內大臣」。三十七年，奉命前往金川，授「參贊大臣」。豐昇額於金川戰事連番報捷，高宗遂賜賞財寶，並命人為他繪製圖像，以嘉其功。豐昇額逝於乾隆四十二年（1777），贈「太子太保」之勳，謚「誠武」。詳見《國朝耆獻類徵初編》，卷95：卿貳五十五，頁8-11。

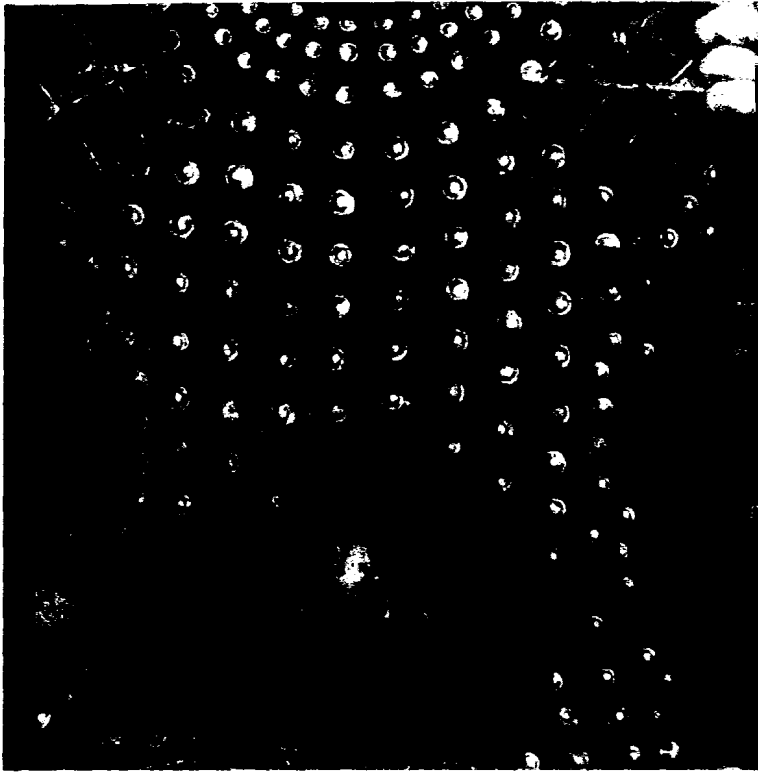
其手卷版本肖像亦見於一組十七幅功臣像圖，售於紐約蘇富比1992年6月1日，編號77（圖一）。高宗御製贊曰：「宜喜弗動（癸巳夏因促浸賊人勾通羅拉降番。潛出滋擾。時豐昇額駐兵宜喜。諭令就近赴大板昭堵勦。豐昇額得旨時已知有木果木之事。又未得阿桂軍營信息。恐將綽斯甲布一路兵力分單。徒去無益。竟未移兵前往。奏至。嘉其有議。特降旨獎勵之。）定見識機。後副西路。親勦戎衣。遜克爾宗。督兵進取。國之蕃臣。勇繼乃祖。（遜克爾宗地最險要。且在我軍之後。豐昇額督兵進攻。或斫寨而入。或梯牆而進。遂爾得弼疆賊。嘉其勇敢。無愧乃祖巴圖魯公額亦都之風。因於所襲公爵 加繼勇二字以旌之。）」



141 MANCHU INSCRIPTION



141 LABEL



141 DETAIL



FIG. 1 FENGSENGGE, HANDSCROLL VERSION SEVENTEEN MERITORIOUS GENERALS AND OFFICIALS BY JIA QUAN; DETAIL, 1779
圖一 費壽康 清乾隆四十四年 賈全《平定金川五十功臣贊》手卷(局部)

The Manchu transliteration:

Hiya kadalara dorgi amban jecen be toktobure hashô ergi aisilara jiyanggiyôn [booi] jurgan-i aliha amban gôsa be kadalara amban. uju jergi faššangga baturu gung uju jergi jingini hafan Fengšengge

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