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Recreating the Past: Guwan tu Handscrolls and Practices of Illusionism under
Emperor Yongzheng (r. 1723–35)

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Recreating the Past:
***Guwan tu* Handscrolls and Practices of**
Illusionism under Emperor Yongzheng
(r. 1723–35)

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Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD

2023

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Abstract

This thesis centres on two Yongzheng period (1723–35) handscrolls entitled *Guwan tu* 古玩圖 (Pictures of Ancient Playthings) housed in the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum. By reexamining the scrolls not solely as pictorial representations of antiquities, the thesis proposes an alternative approach to the scrolls through reintroducing them as material objects actively engaged with their spatial surroundings and socio-cultural milieus. Resituating them within the context of Qing image-making practices and object consumption, the thesis examines the scrolls' position in relation to the canons of painting and objects prevailing under Emperor Yongzheng.

An iconological-iconographical study focusing on the subject of the scrolls is further conducted in an attempt to reveal the identities of the depicted *guwan* in relation to extant objects similar in types. Through this study, the thesis presents the classification guidelines embedded in the *Guwan tu*, while calling attention to the complicated interrelationship between varied art objects attributed to different temporal layers in the history of Chinese material culture.

Finally, the thesis delves into the provenience and provenance of the *Guwan tu* and the depicted objects, proposing the association between the scrolls, the painted *guwan*, and Yuanmingyuan, the imperial garden complex cherished by Emperor Yongzheng. Through an intensive cross-media investigation of the paintings in juxtaposition with textual and pictorial records of Yuanmingyuan, the thesis aims to elucidate how and why the *Guwan tu* series, as a painting project, was initiated in conjunction with the vigorous construction projects and practices of illusionism launched by the emperor in the imperial garden.

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Image from Zhongguo guojia tushuguan 中國國家圖書館, ed., *Guojia tushuguan cang yangshi Lei tudang: Yuanmingyuan Juan chubian*, 國家圖書館藏樣式雷圖檔：圓明園卷初編 [Preliminary Compilation of the Yuanmingyuan Volume of the Yangshi Lei Archives in National Library of China] (Beijing: Guojia tushuguan chubanshe, 2016), vol. 2, 38 (017-0001-01)

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Image from Hou Yi-li 侯怡利, 'Cong bogu ge kan Qianlong huangdi de wenwu baozhuang' 從博古格看乾隆皇帝的文物包裝 [From Curio Shelf (Boguge) to the Qianlong Emperor's Packaging of Artworks], in *Pinpai de gushi—Qianlong huangdi de wenwu shoucang yu baozhuang yishu* 品牌的故事——乾隆皇帝的文物收藏與包裝藝術 [Story of A Brand Name: The Collection and Packaging Aesthetics of Emperor Qianlong in the Eighteenth Century], ed., Yu Pei-chin (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 2017), 237, fig. 17

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Right: Vase decorated with spiralling tendrils (apocryphal reign mark of the Xuande period), dated to the Kangxi period (1662–1722), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, 14.9 x 10.2 cm National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC (1972.43.9)

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All four images published in Wu Hung, ‘Emperor’s Masquerade: “Costume Portraits” of Yongzheng and Qianlong’, *Orientalism* 26, no. 7 (1995): 31-2

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Introduction

In the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, two handscrolls entitled *Guwan tu* 古玩圖 (*Pictures of Ancient Playthings*, PDF, X.01, E.59-1911) are displayed alongside a diversity of art objects associated with the Qing imperial taste.¹ Dated to the 6th (1728) and the 7th year (1729) of the Qing Emperor Yongzheng's reign (1723–35), the two scrolls stand out in monumental proportions, with the PDF scroll measuring 62.5 cm in width and approximately 2000 cm in length, while the V&A scroll reaches 64 cm in width and 2648 cm in length.² Meanwhile, what often garner the most attention are their illusionistic demonstrations of a parade of objects varied in materials, including ceramic, jade, bronze, wood, and precious stones, against a blank background.

Primarily drawn to the high degree of 'realism' achieved in the rendering of the objects, present-day audiences have expressed special interest in the provenance of the depicted objects and appreciated the paintings as the key to the grand collection of antiquities belonging to the rather mysterious Yongzheng emperor. Earlier scholars have, in turn, engaged themselves in examining the works in relation to Qing imperial collecting and cataloguing practices, albeit mostly focusing on those initiated by the succeeding Emperor Qianlong (r. 1736–95). At the same time, they have also put efforts into identifying the depicted *guwan* with surviving pieces from the former Qing imperial collection, hoping to unveil the potential functions and meanings of the scrolls.

¹ In this thesis, the *Guwan tu* handscroll in the British Museum will be referred to as the PDF scroll. The scroll in the Victoria and Albert Museum will be abbreviated as the V&A scroll. When the two scrolls are discussed as a collective whole, they will be referred to as the *Guwan tu*.

² 'Handscroll', The British Museum, accessed 1st February 2024, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/A_PDF-X-01; 'Pictures of Ancient Playthings', Victoria and Albert Museum, accessed 1st February 2024, <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O119952/pictures-of-ancient-playthings-painting/>.

Viewing the *Guwan tu*

This predilection towards the contents of the scrolls had already become discernible from the early 20th century, when the scrolls were first presented to audiences outside of the imperial court. Upon the arrival of the V&A scroll in London at the dawn of the 20th century, the painting attracted much attention among scholars and collectors of Asian art, who would gather in gentlemen's clubs and share insights on artworks newly acquired or viewed in others' collections. Comments and interpretations exchanged within this intellectual circle became the earliest accounts of the *Guwan tu* and often showed an inclination to prioritise the depicted art objects in the sphere of visual attention. As early as 1902, a group of members from the Union Club, a social gentlemen's club established in 1799–1800 and based at the present-day Canada House on Trafalgar Square from 1824 to 1924, had the chance to view the V&A scroll and were 'enchanted with the beauty of the drawing and of the objects'.³ This comment reveals that in the beholders' minds, the 'attentional priority' was mainly granted to the vividly illustrated objects, along with the painting style that generated the illusionistic optical effect.⁴

After ten years, the scroll was purchased by the museum and was marked as 'a pictorial inventory, of quite unusual size, of the art treasures formerly in the Si Ling tombs' in the

³ This information is from a notecard from the Union Club included in the museum acquisition files for the V&A handscroll. The card shows a short message written to a Mr Glennie by Basil H. Soulsby (1864–1933), who began to work in the British Museum in 1892. In his message, Soulsby mentioned an individual named Mr Salting, a possible reference to George Salting (1835–1909) and praised the value of the painting by suggesting 'Mr Salting would probably pay any sum asked up to several hundred pounds [to purchase the piece]'. Furthermore, he conveyed his intention to keep the scroll for a while longer and show it to a Mr Burgess, which may refer to James Burgess (1832–1916), a contemporaneous British archaeologist and Indian art specialist. The card contains the date of 7 February 1902, thus indicating the V&A scroll was brought back to London before or in 1902 and was presented to a group of intellectuals and experts in Asian arts.

'Union Club', London Metropolitan Archives Collection Catalogues, accessed 12th April 2023, https://search.lma.gov.uk/scripts/mwimain.dll/144/LMA_OPAC/web_detail/REFD+A~2FUNC?SESSIONSEARCH

⁴ Ellen K. Levy, 'An Artistic Exploration of Inattention Blindness', from *Brain and Art*, eds. Idan Segev, Luis M. Martinez, and Robert J. Zatorre (Lausanne: Frontiers Media SA, 2014), 25.

museum acquisition file. This record introduced the function of the scroll for the first time as a pictorial inventory and highlighted its oversize format as a painting.⁵ The attention, however, soon returned back to the content, as the record went on presenting a connoisseurly analysis of the objects. Specifically, the record pointed out the ceramic wares in the scroll were of great historical and artistic values, identified a number of them as Song pieces and dated one blue-and-white piece to the Xuande reign (1426–35) of the Ming dynasty.⁶ What is more, the total bid for the purchase of the work proposed by the museum, that is, £262.10, was calculated based on a unit price of ‘around £1 per drawing [of object]’, which was deemed reasonable because of the work’s documentary and aesthetic value.⁷ This detail, again, demonstrates how spectators at the time would perceive each depicted object as an independent work of art and treat them as faithful representations of archaic art objects.

The same visual process also took place in the viewing of the PDF scroll. In 1986, the scroll was brought to audience in London through an exhibition on Chinese rare books in the Percival David Foundation. The exhibition catalogue highlighted the scroll’s association with the former Qing imperial collection and extended the discussion to the formal characteristics of various painted objects. In addition, the catalogue also pointed out that many painted ceramics could be matched with the imperial-quality wares in the PDF Collection. What is more, it suggested that the scroll was a unique piece of visual evidence that unveiled holdings

⁵ This description of the scroll was adopted by its former owner, Captain J. S. Rivett-Carnac, and was recorded in one of the meeting minutes (Form 272 herewith for Transmission) in the acquisition files. The minute was written by E. F. Strange, possibly referring to Edward Fairbrother Strange (1862–1929), who began to work as a curator in the museum in 1889. For information about Edward Strange, see: Anthony Burton, ‘Cultivating the First Generation of Scholars at the Victoria and Albert Museum’, *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 14, no. 2 (2015): 154-55, accessed 12th November 2019, <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/summer15/burton-on-first-generation-of-scholars-at-victoria-and-albert-museum>.

⁶ Minute: Form 272 herewith for Transmission, written by E. F. Strange, 12 September 1910. *Guwan tu* Acquisition Files, accessed in the V&A Archives on 31st October 2019.

⁷ *Ibid.*

of the imperial collection prior to the Qianlong period.⁸ Nevertheless, the provenance of the scroll and its acquisition are much less well documented than the V&A one.

These early accounts demonstrate the perceptual tendency to detach the depicted *guwan* from the picture plane, while emphasising the indexical relation between certain material objects, presumably once present at the Qing court, and their images in the scrolls.⁹ This visual approach remains influential and is adopted in contemporary museum displays of the scrolls and reproductions of their images. Due to the monumental scale of the scrolls and conservation concerns, both the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum display only one part of the two scrolls at a time and unroll other scenes periodically. Photographic and digital copies of the paintings provided in the V&A Guard Book and online museum catalogues are also divided into sections, many of which position their borders in the middle of the depicted objects and split the images of the objects into halves.

This mode of display is reminiscent of the traditional manner of viewing a handscroll, that is, to unroll part of the scroll at a time and view the painting section by section. Meanwhile, in the museum context, the unrolled part of the scroll is enclosed in the display case and presented as a static two-dimensional painting distant from its audience. Consequently, the continuous movement of the scrolls as a collective whole in conjunction with the traditional viewing process fails to be realised. Moreover, the current display mode predetermines the scope of the unrolled painting sections and does not allow beholders to

⁸ Roderick Whitfield, 'GUWAN TU (Scroll of Antiquities)', *Chinese Rare Books in the P.D.F.* (London: Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, 1987), 15.

⁹ W. J. T. Mitchell, 'Preface: Figures and Grounds', *Image Science: Iconology, Visual Culture, and Media Aesthetics* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2015), xi-ii.

observe each section as interconnected ‘sub-frame’.¹⁰

When audiences view the scrolls, or browse the digital images on the museum websites, they would not be able to observe the scrolls in a continuous manner, or to experience their enormous sizes and coherent compositions. What they can see, or are directed to see, is an assemblage of vividly rendered pictures of objects, echoing with the porcelains, imperial robes, and display cabinets positioned next to the handscroll in the galleries. In viewing the scrolls as sectioned pictures, the material nature of the scrolls has been undermined, while the dominant status of the depicted objects over the picture plane has been further solidified. What is more, the fundamental identity of the *Guwan tu* as oversize handscroll paintings created at the Qing court has also been overlooked during this process.

***Guwan tu* in Literature**

Since the late 20th century, the *Guwan tu* handscrolls have triggered a number of scholarly investigations, which continued to employ the object-based approach and commented on their form, purpose of production, and symbolic significance. Meanwhile, most of the existing literature was not primarily dedicated to the paintings, but rather adopted them as visual evidence, either showing differences between the collecting activities under Emperor Qianlong and his father, or demonstrating how Emperor Yongzheng engaged with his possessions following his personal aesthetic tastes.

Judging from their formal likeness, along with the information given by the title-slips, scholars proposed that the two scrolls were part of a huge set of handscrolls featuring at least

¹⁰ Wu Hung, ‘The “Night Entertainment of Han Xizai”’, *The Double Screen: Medium and Representation in Chinese Painting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 58-61.

3500 art objects from the imperial collection of Emperor Yongzheng. Parallels between the image of a *Ru* bowl and an actual ware in the PDF collection, as well as that of the Ming Xuande jar and a piece in the Palace Museum in Beijing (BPM), have often been addressed.¹¹ In addition, scholars also tried to introduce textual evidence into the conversation by matching the depicted images with textual descriptions of objects from primary Qing imperial texts.¹² The most frequently consulted text would be the *Neiwufu zaobanchu gezuo chengzuo huoji qingdang* 內務府造辦處各作成做活計清檔 (Archival Records from the Workshops of the Imperial Household Department, hereinafter referred to as *Huojì dang*).

This series of archives comprises a vast collection of documents pertaining to varied tasks assigned to over 60 imperial workshops supervised by the Imperial Household Department. The Department itself was established in 1693 under the Kangxi emperor (r. 1662–1722) and assumed a vital role in handling miscellaneous matters relevant to the daily life of the Qing imperial household up until the end of the dynasty.¹³ Extensive records unveil details regarding the manufacture, repairing, and storage of assorted imperial objects, including *guwan*, in different workshops following the emperors' commissions. The current research also benefits from consulting these records, especially those dated to the Yongzheng period, and aims to present a contextualised study of the *Guwan tu* based on textual evidence

¹¹ Roderick Whitfield, 'Ceramics in Chinese Painting', in *Imperial Taste: Chinese Ceramics from the Percival David Foundation*, ed. Suzanne Kotz (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1989), 131; Shane McCausland, 'The Emperor's Old Toys: Rethinking the Yongzheng (1723–35) *Scroll of Antiquities* in the Percival David Foundation', *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* no. 66 (2001): 67-68; Regina Krahl, 'Art in the Yongzheng period: Legacy of an Eccentric Art Lover', *Oriental Art* 36, no. 8 (2005): 65.

¹² Yu Pei-chin 余佩瑾, 'Shanzhi liuguang ce de huizhi ji xiangguan wenti' 《琺瑯流光》冊的繪製及相關問題 [The Making of the *Shanzhi liuguang* Album and Related Issues], *Gugong wenwu yuekan* 故宮文物月刊 [The National Palace Museum Monthly of Chinese Art] 404 (2016): 51; Ming Wilson, 'Emperor Yongzheng's Repository of Jades', *Arts of Asia* 50, no. 3 (2020): 32-39.

¹³ The First Historical Archives of China and Chinese University of Hong Kong Art Museum (hereafter shortened as FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum), eds., 'Qianyan' 前言 [Foreword], *Qinggong neiwufu zaobanchu dang'an zonghui* 清宮內務府造辦處檔案總匯 [The General Collection of Archival Records from the Qing Imperial Household Department Workshops], vol. 1 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2005), 1-4.

discovered in the archives.

Besides the objects, each scroll demonstrates one type of special item—an unoccupied throne against a screen with images of objects for the PDF scroll and two sets of embellished display cabinets for the V&A scroll. These unique items often served as entry points for interpretative analyses on the functions and symbolic meanings of the two scrolls in relation to the Qing imperial collecting practices. Given the presence of the display cabinets and the supposedly close connection between the scrolls and the imperial collection, the scrolls were often described as catalogues or inventories of antiquities stored or displayed within the palace compounds. This interpretation echoes with the earliest comment on the function of the V&A scroll in the acquisition files and remains predominant to the present day. For instance, the recent study by Wilson has proposed a series of possible pairings between images of jade objects in the *Guwan tu*, textual records from the *Huoji dang*, and extant pieces mainly from the National Palace Museum in Taipei (NPM). The study is based on the premise that the depicted jades in the *Guwan tu* are part of the former Ming imperial collection inherited by the Manchu regime, dated from the Neolithic period (c. 7000–1700 BCE) up until the Ming era (1368–1644).¹⁴

At the same time, the scrolls were often discussed in juxtaposition with pre-Qing and Qing illustrated catalogues of objects produced in book and album forms, cited as a unique type in terms of its format and depiction of antiquities in a real-life setting.¹⁵ Such catalogues,

¹⁴ Wilson, 'Emperor Yongzheng's Repository of Jades', 32-36.

¹⁵ Whitfield, 'Ceramics in Chinese Painting', 125-32; McCausland, 'The Emperor's Old Toys', 65-75; Krahl, 'Art in the Yongzheng period', 65; Yu Pei-chin 余珮瑾, 'Pinjian zhi qu—shiba shiji de taoci tuce ji qi xiangguan de wenti' 品鑑之趣——十八世紀的陶瓷圖冊及其相關的問題 [The Appeal of Connoisseurship: Eighteenth Century Ceramic Manuals and Related Questions], *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 [The National Palace Museum Research Quarterly] 22, no. 2 (2004): 133-203; Yu, 'The *Shanzhi liuguang* Album', 51-53; Stacey Pierson, 'From the *Daguan lu* to the *Shiqu baoji*: Chinese Art Catalogues of the 18th Century', in *Autour des collections d'art en Chine au XVIIIe siècle, Hautes Études*

along with their embedded criteria for object selection, are believed to be closely tied to the owners' tastes and identities. In turn, catalogues of the imperial collection were especially interpreted as representations of power and demonstrations of rulers' political goals.¹⁶

Following this line of thought, the scrolls were interpreted, on the one hand, as symbols that conveyed Emperor Yongzheng's political aim of building a harmonious multi-ethnic society under his rulership. The unoccupied throne in the PDF scroll has been particularly highlighted as a representation of the emperor's ubiquitous presence in collecting and cataloguing not only art objects, but also different cultural traditions in the Chinese realm.¹⁷

On the other hand, they were also viewed as reflections of the emperor's personal taste and attitude towards art objects. Scholars, including Yu and Chiang, discussed the *Guwan tu* in comparison to the Qianlong emperor's illustrated catalogues of bronzes and ceramics. Through their comparative studies, both scholars suggested that Emperor Yongzheng engaged less with his possessions and presented less personal taste in the *Guwan tu* in contrast to his son, who fully exercised his taste and actively participated in selecting, ranking and cataloguing his art collection.¹⁸ Meanwhile, scholars, like McCausland and Krahl, commented on the *Guwan tu*'s association with the emperor's personal tastes for art and culture. McCausland has specifically compared the *Guwan tu*, mainly the PDF scroll, to one

Orientales-Extrême-Orient, 8 (44), eds. Michèle Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens and Anne Kerlan-Stephens (Genève: Librairie Droz, 2008), 75; Kee Il Choi Jr, 'Ancien vs Antique: Henri-Léonard Bertin's Albums of the Qianlong Emperor's "Vases Chinois"', *Journal 18: A Journal of Eighteenth-Century Art and Culture*, accessed 3rd January 2020, <http://www.journal18.org/issue6/ancien-vs-antique-henri-leonard-bertins-albums-of-the-qianlong-emperors-vases-chinois/>.

¹⁶ Lothar Ledderose, 'Some Observations on the Imperial Art Collection in China', in *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* 13 (1978–79), 33; Cheng Yen-wen, 'Tradition and Transformation: Cataloguing Chinese Art in the Middle and Late Imperial Eras' (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2010), 2-3.

¹⁷ McCausland, 'The Emperor's Old Toys', 73-5; Whitfield, 'GUWAN TU', 15. Wu Hung has also provided a contextual discussion on the imperial throne painted in the PDF scroll, pointing out its connection with the tradition of using 'wei' 位 (seat) for symbolic representation of figures in power and suggesting the empty throne served as a mirror of the Yongzheng emperor himself as the viewer and owner of the depicted *guwan*. see Wu Hung, 'From Versailles to the Forbidden City', *The Full-Length Mirror: A Global Visual History* (London: Reaktion Books, Ltd., 2023), 1-38.

¹⁸ Yu, 'The Appeal of Connoisseurship', 144-7; Nicole Ter-Chuang Chiang, 'Reconsidering the Collection of the Qing Imperial Household during the Qianlong Reign' (PhD diss., SOAS, University of London, 2012), 132-37.

panel from the screen *Twelve Concubines of the Emperor Yongzheng* featuring a Chinese beauty enclosed by display cabinets filled with antique objects. From this comparison, he proposed the *Guwan tu* as gendered paintings that served as an entrance for the emperor into his private leisurely realm.¹⁹

The existing scholarship has given rise to a discursive image of the *Guwan tu* as a series of pictorial documents that faithfully demonstrate Emperor Yongzheng's art collection. Meanwhile, the scrolls' identities as Qing court paintings in their own rights have often been overlooked in this narrative. Subsequently, their interactions with image-making practices and trends of object consumption, promoted by different interest groups in the Qing context, have seldom been discussed.

The method of pairing images, objects, and textual descriptions, has, indeed, led to insightful discussions on the functional and symbolic roles of the *Guwan tu*, and the current research continues to adopt it as a means to penetrate the potential classification system embedded in the paintings. Meanwhile, it is important to bear in mind that these discussions remain as interpretations and cannot be taken for granted as absolute truths. It is tempting to assume the 'realistic' pictures of objects are accurate portrayals, which can be safely adopted as authentic historical evidence. As Mitchell has suggested, 'realism is not "built into" the ontology of any medium as such.'²⁰ Pictorial image, as a form of representation, has the potential to deceive the eyes especially with the aid of illusionistic painting techniques, which bring a sense of artificial 'realism' into the two-dimensional picture plane. In this sense, it can be suggested that the images of objects in the *Guwan tu* perform as 'iconic signs', whose

¹⁹ McCausland, 'The Emperor's Old Toys', 74-75.

²⁰ Mitchell, 'Realism and the Digital Image', 61-62.

painted formal and material qualities encourage beholders to link them with specific material objects in comparable forms.²¹ The identities of the depicted objects, however, remain ambiguous. As self-contained illusionistic images, the deceptive nature of the depicted *guwan* introduces the potential for alternative interpretations of their identities as well as the purpose of the *Guwan tu* scrolls themselves.

Qing Court Practices of Illusionism and the Understudied Yongzheng Emperor

The illusionistic dimension hidden in the imagery of the scrolls has first been brought up by McCausland in his discussion of a pair of polychrome jars (Fig. 2-1) from the PDF scroll, which has been identified as not ‘ancient’ in the temporal sense. Their lavish decorative patterns and polychrome palette were said to be associated with the *famille rose* enameled decoration that only appeared in late Kangxi and Yongzheng periods. The historical identity of the jars is signaled by their formal characteristics, notably the decorative landscape design depicted after the style of the celebrated late Yuan literati painter Ni Zan 倪瓚 (1301–74).²² Regina Krahl has also pointed out that some of the jade and carving objects, the *ruyi* sceptres, along with a number of functional vessels, pictured in the *Guwan tu* are likely to be contemporary Qing products and can be associated with the Kangxi emperor.²³

These observations shed lights on the aforementioned illusionistic aspect of the *Guwan tu* and challenged the long-established view of the paintings as pictorial inventories or catalogues of antiquities from the former Qing imperial collection in a special textless format.

²¹ Mitchell, ‘Four Fundamental Concepts of Image Science’, 17.

²² McCausland, ‘The Emperor’s Old Toys’, 67-68.

²³ Krahl, ‘Art in the Yongzheng Period’, 66.

In a broader sense, this stylistic characteristic speaks to the prevalent trend of creating optical illusions across the boundaries of space and media in Qing China. The trend is particularly discernible in the active practices of reproducing and imitating antiquities, recreating landscape sceneries in garden complexes, along with the mass production of illusionistic images across the surfacescapes of paintings, decorative objects, furniture, and architectural interiors at the Qing court.

Earlier scholarship in both English and Chinese languages has devoted considerable attention to this unique phenomenon and generated contextualised investigations of individual cases, like the creation of *tongjing hua* 通景畫 (scenic illusion painting) and manufacture of trompe l'oeil porcelains.²⁴ Particularly, in Chen's article on the production of trompe l'oeil porcelains from the late Yongzheng to the Qianlong period, the author provides a detailed overview of various cross-media practices of making illusionistic images taking place at the Qing court. The study is accompanied with a close examination of the terminology used to describe such illusionistic practices of reproduction and imitation in the proposed time frame based on entries from the *Huoji dang*, arguing *fang* 倣 indicates the practice of imitation, while *jia* 假 entails the connotation of changes in material and could be

²⁴ For an in-depth study of the *tongjing hua*, see Kristina Kleutghen, *Imperial illusion: Crossing Pictorial Boundaries in the Qing Palaces*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015; Zhang Shuxian 張淑嫻, 'Yangxin dian Changchu Shuwu guwan qiang de qi yuan he yan bian' 養心殿長春書屋古玩牆的起源和演變 [The Origin and Evolution of the Antique Wall in the Long Spring Study of the Mental Cultivation Hall], *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宮博物院院刊 [The Palace Museum Journal] 197, no. 3 (2018): 105-13; Wang Shiwei 王時偉, 'Juanqin zhai de tian ding hua, quanjing hua' 倦勤齋的天頂畫、全景畫 [Ceiling Paintings and Panoramas in the Studio of Exhaustion from Diligent Service], *Zijin cheng* 紫禁城 [Forbidden City], no. 8 (2011): 8-19; On *tongjing hua* in the Juanqin Studio and relevant conservation projects, see Wang Shiwei, ed., *Juanqin zhai yanjiu yu baohu* 倦勤齋研究與保護 [Research and Preservation of the Studio of Exhaustion from Diligent Service], Beijing: Zijincheng chubanshe, 2010; Chen Chih-en 陳之恩, 'Fooling the eye: trompe l'oeil porcelain in High Qing China', *Les Cahiers de Framespa* [Online], no. 31 (2019), accessed 7th June 2022, <https://doi.org/10.4000/framespa.6246>; Chen Chih-en, 'The origin, development and classification of trompe l'oeil porcelain in High Qing China', PhD Thesis, 2022.

understood as a Qing version of the trompe l'oeil effect.²⁵

In the meantime, it appears that much previous scholarship on Qing practices of illusionism, along with research on Qing imperial antiquarian projects, tends to put the focus on the Qianlong emperor, partly due to the lack of available visual and textual sources that could shed light on such practices in earlier time periods. At the same time, Emperors Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong are often discussed together under the established chronological trope as 'Kang-Qian shengshi' 康乾盛世 (prosperous age between Kangxi and Qianlong reigns) (1662–1795). The Yongzheng emperor was often addressed as an intermediary between the other two rulers, who inherited the ruling strategies established by his father and pushed one step further to the construction of a centralised imperial government, which was then fully realised under his son.²⁶ In discussions of political and cultural trends of this flourishing era, scholars tended to present a homogeneous image of the three emperors and assume they maintained similar living and working routines and habits.

This assumption could be considered partially valid, given that the Qing regime tended to develop their governmental rules and policies in a coherent manner, based on the pre-existing systems established by their predecessors. Meanwhile, the three emperors had their own agenda and personalities, which would lead to different attitudes to various social, political, and cultural affairs under their reigns. According to Torbert's studies, from the Kangxi to the Yongzheng period, the Imperial Household Department witnessed a rapid growth in its number of officials, with a rate that tripled that of the Kangxi reign. The total number of the

²⁵ Chen, 'Fooling the eye', 36-41.

²⁶ Evelyn S. Rawski, 'The "prosperous age": China in the Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong Reigns', from *China: The Three Emperors, 1662-1795* eds. Evelyn S. Rawski, and Jessica Rawson (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2005), 32-33.

officials increased by 346, which was more than the number of increases, that was 338, from the Yongzheng to the end of the Qianlong period.²⁷ In the second year of the Yongzheng period (1724), another imperial workshop was formed at the Yuanmingyuan 圓明園 (the Garden of Perfect Brightness). A documentation system for activities carried out by subdivisions of the Household Department was also developed at the time.²⁸

In this regard, the Yongzheng emperor was by no means indifferent in getting involved in manufacture of supplies for the imperial household, organising imperial holdings of objects, including the collection of antiquities and objects for daily use, as well as the making of artworks at the court. The existence of the *Guwan tu* handscrolls itself is a manifestation of the emperor's interest in initiating monumental painting projects, which could not be completed without the collaboration between various imperial workshops and administrative offices in and outside of the Imperial Household Department. The European-inspired painting style also alludes to the emperor's intent to make use of this unconventional representation mode to generate illusionistic visual effect in the imperial space. At the same time, the emergence of the Yuanmingyuan as a new 'experimental ground' for manufacturing imperial products encourages a further investigation of the relation between the making of the *Guwan tu* series and events happening in this imperial garden particularly cherished by Emperor Yongzheng.

²⁷ Preston M. Torbert, 'A General View of the Imperial Household Department: Organization', *The Ch'ing Imperial Household Department: A Study of Its Organization and Principal Functions, 1662-1796* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 1977), 29.

²⁸ Xu Shiyi 徐詩怡, 'Yong-Qian shiqi Yuanmingyuan zaobaochu chutan' 雍乾時期圓明園造辦處初探 [Preliminary Research on Yuanmingyuan Imperial Workshops during the Yongzheng and Qianlong Periods], *Lishi dang'an* 歷史檔案 [Historical Archives], no. 1 (2022): 63; Yang Boda 楊伯達, 'The Development of the Ch'ien-lung Painting Academy', from *Words and Images Chinese Poetry, Calligraphy, and Painting*, eds. Alfreda Murck and Wen C. Fong (New York and Princeton: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Princeton University Press, 1991), 335-36.

Reexamining the *Guwan tu*

As discussed above, the existing research has contributed to an understanding of the subject matter of the *Guwan tu* based on a presumption that the original models for the paintings are genuine antiquities or contemporary archaistic objects in the emperor's collection. The current thesis does not attempt to refute the outcomes of previous scholarship, but aims to propose an alternative approach to understanding the two handscrolls by reintroducing them as material objects actively engaged with their surrounding physical, social, and cultural environment. Following this primary objective, the thesis will examine the two extant *Guwan tu* handscrolls both as material objects and as pictorial representations of objects in the wider context of image-making and object consumption at the Qing court. In this study, special attention will be given to specific discursive contexts and visual trends related to the short-lived but culturally prosperous Yongzheng period.

The major research questions that will lead the discussion in this thesis include: 1) what kind of painting is the *Guwan tu* and what was its purpose? 2) What concepts and discourses inspired the making of the handscrolls, and how do the images of *guwan*, in turn, respond to them? 3) how and why was the *Guwan tu* produced and what did its imagery signify? 4) how did the Yongzheng emperor exercise his agency in creating the *Guwan tu* series and what do the paintings reveal in regard to the identity of this understated ruler? To answer these questions, the thesis will start the observation by treating the handscrolls and each depicted object as material and pictorial evidence that carry information about their own identities. Following this premise, a close visual analysis of the scrolls will be conducted in conjunction with pictorial works bearing similar material qualities and subject matters. With this

comparative analysis, the thesis aims to reconnect the scrolls with their visual culture and explore their positions in Qing court painting traditions, or, in a broader sense, in the history of making oversize handscroll paintings and pictures of objects in the Chinese realm.

At the same time, the discussion in the current thesis is based on extensive archival research involving rare books and Qing imperial documents. A range of Qing and pre-Qing textual sources that contributed to the formation of Qing discourses on painting and objects will be discussed following a philological approach, in order to reconstruct the discursive field, from which the scrolls were born. Building upon that, the thesis will further dig into the images of *guwan* in relation to extant objects with similar vessel forms and decorative designs, unveiling the convoluted referential interrelationship between the depicted *guwan*, extant objects, and relevant discursive traditions. In the meantime, the investigation of Qing imperial documents, with a focus on Yongzheng period *Huoji dang* records, is conducted in an attempt to bring the paintings back to their original production context to tackle the inquiry to the mode of thinking behind the initiative of the entire *Guwan tu* project.

Chapter Overview

With the aid of the above fundamental approaches, the thesis will be divided into five chapters to unroll the story of the *Guwan tu* handscrolls in association with Emperor Yongzheng's patronage of miscellaneous imperial products and his practices of illusionism. **Chapter one** begins by examining the multi-fold physical qualities of the *Guwan tu* in order to bring the visual attention back to the primary form of the works as oversize handscroll paintings. The first attempt to examine the *Guwan tu* from a painting perspective was

initiated by McCausland in his article on the PDF scroll. The author conducted a formal and iconographical analysis of the scroll, from the hybrid style combining Chinese, Manchu, and European painting traditions to the calligraphy on the title-slip, in the context of imperial patronage. He examined the work not just as a visual inventory of the imperial collection, but also as a ‘narrative’ painting that pictorialises the visual field of fantasy in the emperor’s mind.²⁹

This chapter will further extend the discussion by examining the *Guwan tu*’s materiality in conjunction with other pre-Qing and Qing oversize handscrolls, observing the similarities and differences in their physical qualities, subject matters, and compositions. A series of investigations on the physical structure and mounting style of the *Guwan tu* handscrolls will be conducted, from a discussion on the textile materials and decorative designs for their *baoshou* 包首 (outer wrapper) to a contextualised study on the use of paper, rather than silk, for the paintings. Based on findings in available material and textual sources, the chapter aims to uncover the archaic nature of the *Guwan tu* on the material level, while proposing thoughts on such lingering issues as the absence of texts and the scale of the *Guwan tu* series. What is more, the chapter will explore how the textless composition of the *Guwan tu* scrolls informs their distinct identity transcending beyond their assigned role as ‘tu’ 圖 (picture), which also appears in the titles of the other oversize handscrolls addressed. Building upon that, the chapter will conclude with a comparison between the *Guwan tu* and a later but most visually similar piece, the *Dajia lubu tu* 大駕鹵簿圖 (*Picture-scroll of the Grand Carriage Processional Paraphernalia*) commissioned by the Qianlong emperor, in order to unveil how

²⁹ McCausland, ‘The Emperor’s Old Toys’, 69-75.

their styles in representing the objects point to a potential difference in their purposes, but also in the identities of the depicted objects.

Chapter two continues the discussion by exploring the content of the *Guwan tu* in relation to the wider discursive and visual contexts surrounding the term *guwan* appearing on the title slips of the scrolls. The chapter will first probe into the definition of the term in the Yongzheng context by examining how it was used and what kind of objects were denoted by the term. The major sources for this investigation are the *Huoji dang* and other pre-Yongzheng imperial records of objects, which potentially served as terminology references for official documents generated during the Yongzheng reign. At the same time, the chapter will chase the root of the term in discourses on antiquities established in the mid- and late Ming periods, revealing the heterochronic nature of *guwan* and the fact that it was understood as a broad category of objects in the Qing context. By examining specific *Huoji dang* entries on arranging, refashioning, and ranking objects denoted as *guwan*, the chapter aims to reveal how the depicted objects in the *Guwan tu* would be involved in the imperial life at Emperor Yongzheng's court.

Based on findings from the archives, the chapter will present a stylistic analysis of what the current research proposes as 'portraits of objects' presented in the *Guwan tu* in juxtaposition with a range of pictures of individualised objects across varied pictorial surfaces. Both pre-Qing and Qing pictures of objects will be discussed in order to demonstrate a shift in mode of representation, which presumably corresponded to a growing interest in achieving formal resemblance that reached its culmination in the Qing period. By reconstructing the visual context of the *Guwan tu*, the thesis aims to argue the handscrolls are

by no means stand-alone creations but are part of a wider trend in producing illusionistic pictures of objects emerging between the Kangxi and Yongzheng periods. It is, in fact, the combination of both the oversize handscroll format and the illusionistic portrayal of objects that makes the scrolls stand out among both categories of paintings.

Building upon the discussions above, **Chapter three** will further dig into the less pronounced aspect of the *Guwan tu*, that is, the embedded selection criteria and spatial structure that brought order into the assemblage of objects spreading across the picture plane. Then, to provide a more focused discussion, a case study on the ceramic-like *guwan* images in conjunction with extant objects in similar types will be presented. By examining their formal features and intended chronological attributions, the chapter aims to explore the pseudo-curatorial choices made by the emperor, which determined the subject of the paintings, while examining the role of mid- and late Ming connoisseurship discourses in the making of the *Guwan tu*.

Furthermore, the chapter will delve into the compositional layout of the paintings, particularly the V&A scroll, and its potential connection with Emperor Yongzheng's frequent commissions of display cabinets for *guwan* at the court. The discussion will end with a comparative study between the *Guwan tu* and the ceramic albums produced under Emperor Qianlong, which has been carried out by previous scholars, but often with a focus on the ceramic albums. By bringing attention to their different formats and ways of arranging the objects in the picture plane, the chapter argues that the *Guwan tu* possibly took on a different role that extended beyond a pictorial inventory upon its completion during the Yongzheng reign. The spatial layout hidden in the void space represented by the blank background could

also be linked with certain locations at the court of the Yongzheng emperor, which then leads to the next Chapter that explores the association between the *Guwan tu* and the Yuanmingyuan.

Chapter four aims to further link the pictorial space of the *Guwan tu* with real-life imperial compounds and explore the provenience— the original location or possible findspot— of the two existing *Guwan tu* handscrolls, along with the depicted *guwan*.³⁰ Built upon McCausland and Yu’s findings regarding the association between the *Guwan tu* and the Yuanmingyuan, this chapter will present more evidence yielded from the V&A museum acquisition files, *Huoji dang*, drawings of the Yuanmingyuan layout housed in the National Library of China, but also from the depicted *guwan* themselves. Specific *Huoji dang* entries addressing objects sent to the Yuanmingyuan will be studied in close conjunction with the depicted *guwan*. Through this cross-media investigation of the paintings with textual and pictorial records of the Yuanmingyuan, the chapter aims to propose the potential connection between the PDF scroll and the Xifeng xiuse 西峰秀色 (Majestic Sunset-Tinted Peaks of the West Hills) complex, as well as the V&A scroll and the site of Lianhua guan 蓮花館 (Lotus Lodge). Under this premise, the chapter attempts to further dig into the numerous construction and decoration projects, initiated by the emperor in the imperial garden complex from the beginning of his reign, and explore how the *Guwan tu* came into being alongside these projects.

Chapter five aims to push the discussion further onto a metaphysical level by examining how the imagery of the *Guwan tu* serves to symbolise the characteristics of the space inside

³⁰ Rosemary A. Joyce, ‘From Place to Place: Provenience, Provenance, and Archaeology’ in *Provenience: An Alternate History of Art*, edited by Gail Feigenbaum and Inge Reist (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2012), 48-54.

the Yuanmingyuan. The heterochronic and anachronic features of the imagery will be reintroduced as a reflection of Emperor Yongzheng's commissions of displaying, rearranging, reproducing, and imitating antiquities associated with the Yuanmingyuan. At the same time, the chapter will discuss the illusionistic nature of the *guwan* images and suggest the possibility that the original models of some depicted objects might not be authentic antiquities. To elaborate on this argument, the chapter will observe a number of archaized Qing objects that share similar formal features with the *guwan* images, but also point out the difficulty in matching the *guwan* images with specific items claimed to be part of the former Qing imperial collection, as the images often could maintain a valid referential relationship with multiple pieces.

Extending beyond the realm of antiquities, the chapter will further explore how the illusionistic dimension presented by the *Guwan tu* could be projected onto the design concept of the Yuanmingyuan complex as well as the various practices of illusionism launched by Emperor Yongzheng across the boundaries of time, material, and space. Following these examinations, the chapter will close with a discussion on the mode of thinking behind the creation of the *Guwan tu*, along with Emperor Yongzheng's expression of interest in illusionistic experiences, with reference to the concept of *wan* (play) and its connotation in the Qing context.

In regard to terminology, since the current thesis strives to keep the discussion in the Yongzheng context, the terms used to describe illusionistic practices of reproduction and imitation have been reexamined based solely on *Huoji dang* records dated to the Yongzheng period. In the Yongzheng context, the concepts of 'reproduction', 'imitation', and 'recreation'

appear to be denoted mainly under two terms, namely, *fang* 倣 and *jia* 假. The term ‘fang’ literally means ‘to reproduce’, while ‘jia’ means ‘fake’ as opposed to truth and realness.

Following the above definitions, the current chapter will use *fang* to express the meaning of reproduction and adopt *jia* as the term for ‘illusive imitation’ in the discussion. These definitions will be adopted throughout the thesis in an attempt to set a consistent tone in line with the Yongzheng context for the discussion.

In short, the current thesis aims to present a comprehensive study on the two existing *Guwan tu* handscrolls, while introducing a wider range of research sources and proposing a new intermedia approach for the study of the *Guwan tu* by highlighting the material and spatial dimensions embedded in the paintings. Furthermore, by presenting a contextualised study of the handscrolls in their original discursive, visual, and spatial contexts, the thesis strives to uncover the identity of the scrolls in association with Emperor Yongzheng’s active interactions with the imperial workshops and, subsequently, contribute to the understanding of the understudied Yongzheng reign.

Chapter One

Unrolling the handscrolls: A Turn to Materiality

As the depicted *guwan* remain under the spotlight, the physical aspects of the *Guwan tu* are often overlooked by the viewers, who have come too close to see the works in their entirety. In light of this dilemma, the current chapter shifts the attention to the materiality of the scrolls as an entry point to the investigation of their identity. The *Guwan tu* will be reintroduced as an imperial product engaging with prevailing material discourses that guided the production of paintings at the Yongzheng court. Through a contextual analysis of the scrolls' mounting materials and painting medium, the chapter aims to argue that the material characteristics of the scrolls convey an archaic spirit and serve to complement the depicted subject matter. This, in turn, alludes to an interest in generating a temporal illusion by merging the past with the present, which will become more evident in later chapters on the content of the scrolls.

At the same time, the paintings will be examined in the wider context concerning the use of oversize handscrolls at the Qing court, particularly during the Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong reigns. The central inquiry revolves around the court's specific intentions behind employing this traditional painting format and the types of subject matters chosen for depiction. Through a comparative examination, the study attempts to reveal the similarities and divergences between the *Guwan tu* to other oversize handscrolls in terms of their material features and subject matters. Taking the diversity in genres among these paintings into account, the discussion seeks rather to explore the underlying trend in the Qing court's application of the oversize handscroll. In doing so, the chapter aims to demonstrate how the *Guwan tu* speaks to the tradition of using handscrolls as pictorial documents, but also

distinguishes itself through its depiction of individualised *guwan* and the interplay between its materiality and subject matter.

Mounting Fabrics and Designs

When viewing the two scrolls, the initial material one encounters would be the decorative textiles employed for the mounting. Both the PDF and the V&A scrolls are wrapped in broad *baoshou* 包首 (outer wrapper) consisting of pieces of brocade and bound with silk cords, which are, then, tied to ivory clasps carved with schematic zoomorphic designs reminiscent of the *kui*-dragon motif (Fig. 1-1, 1-2). The roller ends of the two scrolls



Fig. 1-1 Ivory clasp, purple silk cord, and roller end of the V&A scroll

are similarly made of ivory, but have been dyed in green and embellished with low-relief zoomorphic patterns resembling the *kui*-phoenix motif. It was a common practice in handscroll mounting at the Qing court that the clasp and the roller end share the same material and identical, or paired, decorative patterns, which serve to convey a sense of unity and harmonious symmetry.³¹

³¹ Hou Yan 侯雁, Xu Jianhua 徐建華, Li Xiaolou 李筱樓, 'Qingdai zhoutou jiankuang' 清代軸頭簡況 [A Brief Overview

The main decorative pattern shown on the cords of the two scrolls is commonly referred as ‘luohua liushui’ 落花流水 (fallen blossoms, flowing water), which is then combined with the auspicious ‘eight treasures’ motif, including double coins, rhinoceros horns, flaming pearl, and coral, whose origin can be traced back to the Yuan period (1271–1368). The ‘luohua



Fig. 1-2 Ivory clasp, purple silk cord, and roller end of the PDF scroll

liushui’ pattern is said to have been first invented during the Song period, inspired by literary expressions from Tang (618–907) and Song poetry.³² Moving towards the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing periods, the pattern was further popularised and appeared not just on textiles, but also extended to surfaces of various other decorative objects, including ceramics,

of Qing Dynasty Roller Ends], *Zhongguo shuhua zhuangbiao cailiao: zhoutou yanjiu* 中國書畫裝裱材料：軸頭研究 [Mounting Materials for Chinese Painting and Calligraphy: A Study on Roller Ends] (Beijing: Gugong chubanshe, 2014), 26.

³² Zhang Xiaoxia 張曉霞, ‘Mingdai ranzhi wenyang’ 明代染織紋樣 [Dyed and Woven Textile Designs of the Ming Dynasty], *Zhongguo gudai ranzhi wenyang shi* 中國古代染織紋樣史 [A History of Traditional Dyed and Woven Textile Designs in China] (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2016), 344-45.

lacquerwares, and even ink sticks.³³

The earliest known textual reference to the pattern can be found in *Nancun chuogeng lu* 南村輟耕錄 (Notes from a Southern Village while Resting from the Plow) written by Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀 (act. 1360–68), a literatus who lived during the transition from the Yuan to the Ming dynasty. In his account on mounting textiles observed in the Song imperial painting collection, Tao addressed a specific type named ‘zi qushui’ 紫曲水 (purple [textile] with wavy water patterns) and subsequently noted that it was commonly referred to as ‘luohua liushui’.³⁴

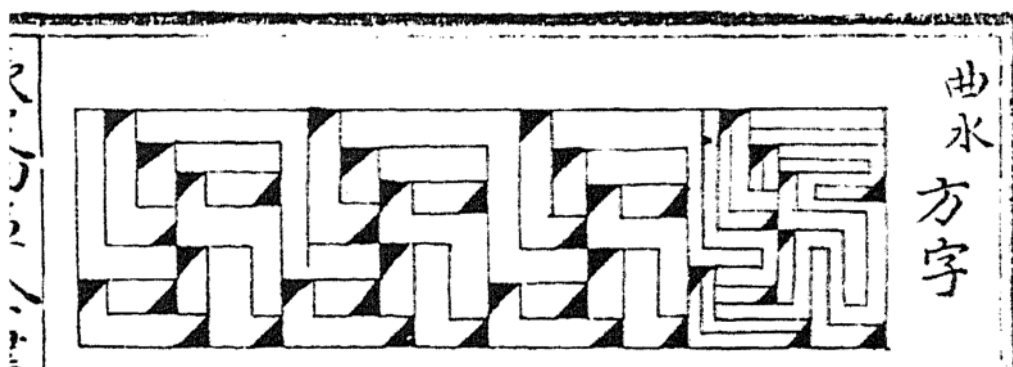


Fig. 1-3 ‘Qushui’ pattern shown in *Yingzao fashi*

³³ One such example is a cylindrical ink stick (Xin00057260) made by Hu Xingju 胡星聚 (act. 1662–1722), a renowned ink maker during the Kangxi period, currently housed in the Palace Museum in Beijing. For the image of the object, please see: <https://digicol.dpm.org.cn/cultural/detail?id=3876ea039769475089c6ddbdbd7aca79&source=1&page=1>.

³⁴ Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀 (act. 1360–68), ‘Shuhua biaoxiu: Jin biao’ 書畫標軸: 錦標 [Mounts and Roller Ends of Painting and Calligraphy: Brocaded Mounts], *Nancun chuogeng lu* 南村輟耕錄 [Notes from a Southern Village while Resting from the Plow] (China: Maoshi jigu ge, 1621–44) (Electronic reproduction. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Library Preservation, 2016; T 9153 7232), vol. 23 (seq. 428), 1b, accessed 18th April 2023, <https://id.lib.harvard.edu/curiosity/chinese-rare-books/49-990079036590203941>.

Tao’s account on the ‘luohua liushui’ pattern was later cited in Ming manuals of tastes, such as *Qing mi cang* 清秘藏 (Pure and Arcane Collecting) by the late Ming literatus Zhang Yingwen 張應文 (act. 1530–94), who addressed the *zi qushui*-patterned textile under the title ‘Xu Tang Song jinxiu’ 敘唐宋錦繡 (Discussions on Tang and Song Brocades). The author changed the note about the *zi qushui* pattern from ‘suhu “luohua liushui”’ 俗呼落花流水, or ‘colloquially referred to as “luohua liushui”’, to ‘yiming “luohua liushui”’ 一名落花流水, which means ‘alternatively named “luohua liushui”’ in this context. The latter conveys a sense of formality and official recognition of the term as a standard name for the pattern. See Zhang, ‘Xu Tang Song jinxiu’, *Qing mi cang*, vol. 2, in *Qinding Siku quanshu* (zibu shi | zajia lei si: zapin zhi shu) 欽定四庫全書 (子部十 | 雜家類四: 雜品之屬) [Imperial Commissioned Complete Library of the Four Treasuries (Masters Part 10 | Miscellaneous Schools and Writers Section 4: Miscellaneous Investigations)], 14a-b, accessed 18th April 2023, Diaolong Full-text Database of Chinese and Japanese Ancient Books.

Due to the lack of extant material evidence, the appearance of ‘zi qushui’ and its relationship with the current ‘luohua liushui’ pattern have prompted much debate. This has given rise to an argument proposing the coexistence of two variations: an abstract, geometric rendition, resembling the homonymous pattern appearing in the 12th-century architectural treatise *Yingzao fashi* 營造法式 (State Building Standards) (Fig. 1-3), and a representational version that resonates with the ‘luohua liushui’ pattern on the cords of the *Guwan tu*.³⁵

Extant textile pieces adorned with both the geometric and the representational ‘luohua liushui’ designs are mostly dated to the Ming period, as exemplified by the brocaded fragments housed in the Tsinghua University Art Museum and the BPM (Figs 1-4 and 1-5).



Fig. 1-4 Brocaded cover for *Dazang jing* 大藏經 (Great Treasury Scriptures) with floral, ‘eight treasures’, and swastika-shaped ‘Qushui’ motif, Ming period (1368–1644), Tsinghua University Art Museum



Fig. 1-5 Brocade with representational ‘luohua liushui’ design, Ming period (1368–1644), BPM

³⁵ Hua Qiang 華強 and Hua Sha 華沙, ‘luohua liushui wen kao’ 落花流水紋考 [An Investigation on the ‘Luohua liushui’ Motif], *Zhongguo meishu yanjiu* 中國美術研究 [Research of Chinese Fine Arts] 1 (2018): 130-35.

What is also intriguing is that a textile decorated with this pattern has been discovered in the *Huolang tu* 貨郎圖 (*Picture of the Knick-knack Peddler*) (Gu-hua-000090) (Fig. 1-6)



Fig. 1-6 *Huolang tu* 貨郎圖 (*Picture of the Knick-knack Peddler*), 15th–16th century, NPM

currently housed in the NPM.³⁶ The painting was recorded in the initial and the third compilation of the *Shiqu baoji* and has been attributed to the celebrated painter Su Hanchen 蘇漢臣 (act. 1120s–60s), who served at both the Northern and Southern Song (1127–1279) courts. Earlier scholarship has argued that the painting is likely to have been executed by a Ming painter after Su's style and depicts a scene from the festive market held by the imperial court.³⁷ During this performative event, court attendants and eunuchs would dress up as

³⁶ The textile in the painting is addressed in Jia Xizeng 賈璽增, and Zhao Qian 趙謙, 'Qushui wen yu luohua liushui wen zhi kaobian' 曲水紋與落花流水紋之考辯 [A Critical Investigation on the 'Qushui' and 'Luohua liushui' Motifs], *Yishu sheji yanjiu* 藝術設計研究 [Art and Design Research] 3 (2019): 61-66.

³⁷ Yinghe 英和 (1771–1840) et al., 'Song Su Hanchen *Huolang tu* yi zhou' 宋蘇漢臣貨郎圖一軸 [One scroll of Picture of the Knick-Knack Peddler by Su Hanchen of the Song Dynasty], *Qinding Shiqu baoji sanbian* (Ningshou gong cang yi) 欽定

merchants and peddlers, recreating the vibrant market scenes to provide the imperial members with an immersive experience of the lively marketplaces outside the Forbidden City. Textile items featuring this kind of pattern may have, thus, been available at the court since the Ming period and continued to be utilised during the following Qing period. The artist, possibly in a deliberate choice, incorporated one such item in the Song-style peddler painting as an anachronistic element, which could also have been recognised as archaised by Ming and Qing viewers due to the connection between the ‘luohua liushui’ pattern and the preceding ‘zi qushui’ pattern as documented in Ming connoisseurship literature.

Specifically, the ‘luohua liushui’ brocade is addressed as a contemporary product from Suzhou, renowned for its suitability for mounting paintings, in such Ming texts like *Xinzensu gegu yaolun* 新增格古要論, the newly supplemented version of the early Ming connoisseurship treatise *Gegu yaolun* (Essential Criteria of Antiques).³⁸ This account appears recurringly in later Ming-Qing literary works, including *Kaopan yushi* 考槃餘事 (Desultory remarks on furnishing the abode of the retired scholar) by the late Ming literatus Tu Long 屠隆 (1542–1605) and *Gezhi jingyuan* 格致鏡原 (Mirror of Origins Based on the Investigation of Things and Extending Knowledge) by Chen Yuanlong 陳元龍 (1652–1736), who served as

石渠寶笈三編 (寧壽宮藏 一), in *Midian zhulin Shiqu baoji hebian* 秘殿珠林石渠寶笈合編 [Beaded grove of the Secret Hall and Precious Collection of the Stone Moat (Pavilion)] (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1988), vol. 11, 3304; Richard M. Barnhart has proposed that the painting was completed by the mid-Ming court painter Lü Wenying 呂文英 (1421–1505), while others have pointed out the differences between the painting with extant works by Lü housed in the Nezu Museum in Tokyo, suggesting the current piece captures more details in regard to the texture of the Taihu rock and the loads of trinkets and sundry items on his cart. See Chen Jie-jin 陳階晉 and Lai Yu-chih 賴毓芝, eds., ‘Chuan Song Su Hanchen *Huolang tu*’ 傳宋蘇漢臣貨郎圖 [Picture of the Knick-knack Peddler attributed to Su Hanchen of the Song dynasty], *Zhuisuo Zhepai* 追索浙派 [Tracing the Che School in Chinese Painting] (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 2008), 178.

³⁸ Wang Zuo 王佐 (act. 1427), ‘Gujin (hou zeng)’ 古錦 (後增) [Ancient Brocades (with later supplement)], in *Xinzensu gegu yaolun xia* 新增格古要論 下 [Newly Expanded Essential Criteria of Antiquities II], by Cao Zhao 曹昭 (act. 14th century) and Wang Zuo (ed.) (Beijing: Zhongguo shudian, 1987), vol. 8, 3b. Comparing the two entries on ancient brocades in the newly expanded and the original versions of *Gegu yaolu*, it appears that the note on the ‘luohua liushui’ brocade was later added by Wang Zuo.

a Grand Secretary during the Yongzheng reign.³⁹ Similar attribution is also documented in a section designated for products manufactured in the Suzhou prefecture in *Qinding gujin tushu jicheng* 欽定古今圖書集成 (Imperially Commissioned Compendium of Pictures and Writings from the Past to the Present, hereafter shortened as *GJTSJC*), whose compilation was initiated during the Kangxi reign and completed under the Yongzheng emperor in 1725.⁴⁰

³⁹ For the Ming-Qing literary works that mention the ‘luohua liushui’ brocade as an appropriate mounting material for painting, see Tu Long 屠隆 (1542–1605) and Shen Fuxian 沈孚先 (ce.), ‘Biao jin’ 裱錦 [Brocade Mounts], *Chenmei gong Kaopan yushi juan zhi er* 陳眉公考盤餘事卷之二 [Desultory remarks on furnishing the abode of the retired scholar II] (1606), in *Baoyan tang miji* 寶顏堂秘籍 [The Secret Satchel from the Hall of Treasuring (the Calligrapher) Yan (Zhenqing)], ed. Chen Jiru 陳繼儒 (1558–1639) (China: Shen shi Shangbai zhai, 1573–1620) (Harvard-Yenching Library Chinese Rare Books Digitization Project-Collectanea), vol. 10 (seq. 1123), 6b, accessed 12th May 2023, <https://nrs.lib.harvard.edu/urn-3:fhcl:25591906?n=1123>; Zhu Mouyin 朱謀壘 (1584–1628), ‘Biao jin’ 裱錦, *Huashi huiyao* 畫史會要 [Essentials of a History of Painting], vol. 5, in *Siku quanshu* (zibu ba | yishu lei yi: shuhua zhi shu) 四庫全書 (子部八 | 藝術類一: 書畫之屬) [Four Treasuries (Masters Part 8 | Art Section 1: Calligraphy and Painting)], 45b, accessed 18th April 2023, Diaolong Full-text Database of Chinese and Japanese Ancient Books; Wen Zhenheng 文震亨 (1585–1645), ‘Biao jin’ 裱錦, *Zhang wu zhi* 長物志 [Treatise on Superfluous Things], vol. 5, in *Siku quanshu* (zibu shi | zajia lei si: zapin zhi shu) 四庫全書 (子部十 | 雜家類四: 雜品之屬) [Four Treasuries (Masters Part 10 | Miscellaneous Schools and Writers Section 4: Miscellaneous Investigations)], 11a, accessed 18th April 2023, Diaolong Full-text Database.

In *Gezhi jingyuan*, Chen Yuanlong incorporated the ‘luohua liushui’ brocade into the category of ‘bubo’ 布帛 (cloth and silk) and quoted the discussion about brocade mounts from *Gegu yaolun*. The early Qing scholar-official Yao Zhiyin 姚之駟 (act. 1721) listed ‘luohua liushui’ as an individual type under the category of ‘brocade and textile’ in his *Yuan Ming shi leichao* 元明事類鈔 (Collected and Arranged Writings on Yuan and Ming Affairs). Yao quoted Tu Long’s discussion about brocade mounts and, again, highlighted the ‘luohua liushui’ brocade as a product from Suzhou. See Chen, ‘Bubo lei’, *Gezhi jingyuan*, vol. 27, in *Siku quanshu* (zibu shiyi | leishu lei) 四庫全書 (子部十一 | 類書類) [Four Treasuries (Masters Part 11: Reference Books section)], 12b; Yao, ‘Luohua liushui’, *Yuan Ming shi leichao*, vol. 24, in *Siku quanshu* (zibu | zajia lei: zazun zhi shu) 四庫全書 (子部 | 雜家類: 雜纂之屬) [Four Treasuries (Masters Part | Miscellaneous Schools and Writers section: Miscellaneous Compilations)], 28b, both accessed 18th April 2023, Diaolong Full-text Database.

⁴⁰ Chen Menglei 陳夢雷 (1650–1741), et al., eds., ‘Suzhou fu wuchan kao’ 蘇州府物產考 [Investigation on Products of Suzhou Prefecture], Fangyu huibian: zhifang dian Suzhou fubu 方輿彙編: 職方典第六百八十一卷蘇州府部 [Earth/Geography Collection: Political Geography Division, vol. 681: Suzhou Prefecture], in *Qinding gujin tushu jicheng* 欽定古今圖書集成 [Imperially Commissioned Compendium of Pictures and Writings from the Past to the Present] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1934), vol. 115, 50b.

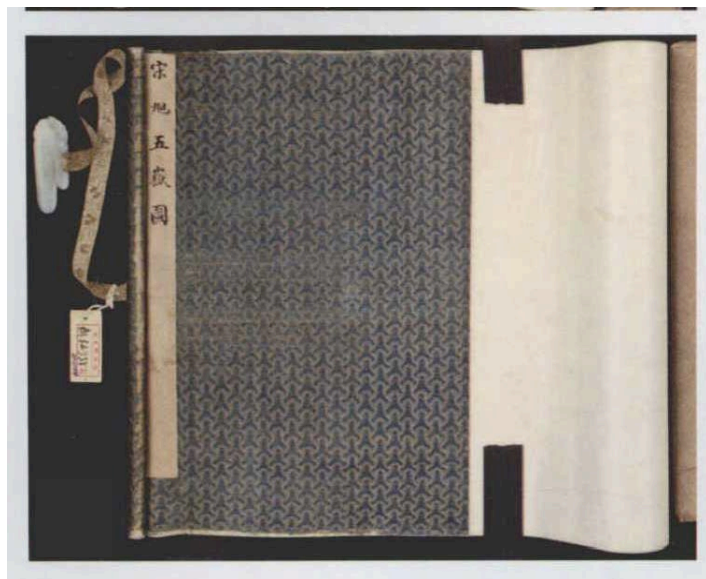


Fig. 1-7 Song Xu 宋旭 (1525–after 1606), *Wuyue tu* 五嶽圖 (*Picture of the Five Sacred Mountains*) (outer wrapper), Ming period (1368–1644), BPM

In light of the above discussion, the adoption of a ‘luohua liushui’-patterned cord for the *Guwan tu* aligns with the pre-existing Ming commentaries on the appropriate mounting textiles for paintings. At the same time, the pattern also invokes the notion of historical continuity due to its connection to the ‘zi qushui’ pattern attributed to the Song dynasty. In the meantime, it

has been suggested that the combination of the ‘luohua liushui’ pattern with the motif of the ‘eight treasures’, as shown on the cords of the *Guwan tu*, did not appear until the Qing period. In the exhibition entitled ‘Story of A Brand Name: the Collection and Packaging Aesthetics of Emperor Qianlong in the Eighteenth Century’ held at the National Palace Museum in 2017, this type of cord was regarded as an invention under the Qianlong emperor.⁴¹

The adoption of this syncretic design complicates the story and leads to the possibility that the handscrolls were remounted under Emperor Qianlong. Meanwhile, judging from their physical conditions, both handscrolls appear to have been well preserved in their original

⁴¹ Hung Sun-Hsing 洪順興, ‘Mingdai dihou banshen xiang’ 明代帝后半身像 [Half Portrait of Emperors and Empresses of the Ming Dynasty], in ‘Qianlong pinpai’ 乾隆品牌 [The Brand of Qianlong], *Pinpai de gushi—Qianlong huangdi de wenwu shoucang yu baozhuang yishu* 品牌的故事——乾隆皇帝的文物收藏與包裝藝術 [Story of A Brand Name: the Collection and Packaging Aesthetics of Emperor Qianlong in the Eighteenth Century] ed. Yu Pei-chin 余佩瑾 (Taipei: the National Palace Museum in Taipei, 2017), 192-95; Fu Dongguang 傅東光, ‘Qianlong neifu shuhua zhuanghuang chutan’ 乾隆內府書畫裝潢初探 [A Preliminary Study on the Mounting of Calligraphy and Painting at Emperor Qianlong’s Court], *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宮博物院院刊 [Palace Museum Journal] 118, no. 2 (2005): 120.

mounts from the Yongzheng period.⁴² It is possible that the Qianlong emperor ordered a replacement of the worn-out cords for the scrolls, since the cords, along with the ivory clasps, could be easily unfastened and separated from the *baoshou* 包首 (outer wrapper).⁴³ In fact, previous scholarship has pointed out that no handscroll of painting and calligraphy from the former Qing imperial collection has been so far found with their original or pre-Qing silk cords intact. Instead, new decorative cords were often added by artisans from the imperial workshop, and one of the most common designs features the combination of the ‘luohua liushui’ and the ‘eight treasures’ motifs.⁴⁴

Specifically, a decent amount of pre-Qing handscrolls from the former Qing imperial collection are accompanied by cords adorned with such design. One example is the *Wuyue tu* 五嶽圖 (*Picture of the Five Sacred Mountains*) (Xin00064335) by the Ming landscape painter Song Xu 宋旭 (1525–after 1606) housed in the BPM. Documented in the second compilation of the *Shiqu baoji*, the painting was once stored in the Qianqing gong (Palace of Heavenly Purity), a major reception hall in the Forbidden City, and has been identified as being preserved in its original outer wrapper (Fig. 1-7) dated to the Ming period.⁴⁵ The silk

⁴² Thanks to Professor Shane McCausland for sharing his opinion based on direct observation of the *Guwan tu*, which suggests the scrolls are displayed in their original mounts. I am also indebted to Mr Fan Shengli, the painting conservator from the Beijing Capital Museum, for his insights on this matter.

⁴³ Thanks to Professor Stacey Pierson for bringing this idea to my attention.

⁴⁴ Hung, ‘Mingdai dihou banshen xiang’, in *Pinpai de gushi*, 192.

⁴⁵ Wang Jie 王傑 et al., ‘Song Xu *Wuyue tu* yi juan’ 宋旭五嶽圖一卷 [One scroll of *Picture of the Five Sacred Mountains*], *Shiqu baoji xubian* 石渠寶笈續編, vol. 7 (Qianqing gong cang qi 乾清宮藏 七), in *Midian zhulin Shiqu baoji hebian*, vol. 3, 431; Other examples include the aforementioned *Lanting xiuxi tu*, which has been identified as a late Ming work after the style of the prominent mid-Ming painter Qiu Ying 仇英 (c. 1494–1552), and *Jinling shengjing tu* 金陵勝景圖 (Scenic Views of Jinling [Nanjing]) by Zou Dian 鄒典 (act. 17th century), a late Ming painter born in Suzhou. Both handscrolls maintain their original Ming outer wrapper, but the clasps and cords are in accordance with the Qing imperial style. For detailed images and relevant discussions, see Wen Jinxiang 文金祥, ‘Ming Qiu Ying (kuan) *Lanting xiuxi tu*’ 明仇英(款)蘭亭修禊圖, in ‘Gugong bowuyuan jiushi zhounian tezhan: *Shiqu baoji*—diancang pian’ 故宮博物院九十週年特展: 石渠寶笈—典藏篇 [Special Exhibition for the 90th Anniversary of the Palace Museum: Precious Collection of the Stone Moat (Pavilion)—Highlights from the Collection], accessed 18th April 2023, https://www.dpm.org.cn/vr/stone-moat/wyd_110.html; Wang Lu 王璐, ‘Gugong neifu cang shoujuan zhuangbiao qutan’ 故宮內府藏手卷裝裱趣談 [An Engaging Remark on the Mounting of Handscrolls from the Qing Imperial Collection Housed in the Palace Museum], *Yishu shichang* 藝術市場 [Art Market] 7 (2018): 67-70. The catalogue *Pinpai de gushi* also features images of silken cords and clasps of similar type,

cord attached to the wrapper, however, exhibits the syncretic pattern similar to that on the cord of the *Guwan tu*, but also to those on the cords of court paintings commissioned by the Qianlong emperor, such as the series of *Yubi zhongqiu tiezi ci* 御筆中秋帖子詞, or *Imperially-composed Mid-Autumn Manuscript*. This series consists of ten joint scrolls of painting and calligraphy in total, among which six of them are accompanied by similar cords in various colours (Fig. 1-8).⁴⁶ This, thus, suggests the possibility that such type of cord was employed as one of the standardised accessories for both earlier and contemporary handscrolls under the Qianlong emperor, even if the original mounts remained unchanged. Following this line of thought, the *Guwan tu* scrolls could have been through alterations at a later stage, wherein their cords and clasps were replaced to adhere to the standard mounting style.



Fig. 1-8 Hongli 弘曆 (r. 1736–95), *Yubi zhongqiu tiezi ci* 御筆中秋帖子詞 (*Imperially-composed Mid-Autumn Manuscript*) (outer wrappers of the scroll set), Qianlong reign, BPM

please see pp. 194-5 for details.

⁴⁶ Fu, 'Qianlong neifu shuhua zhuanghuang chutan', 125-28.

On the other hand, it may also be the case that the invention of the design took place at an earlier date. At least since the Ming period, there were already instances of syncretic decorative designs that incorporated the ‘luohua liushui’ pattern along with other motifs, notably carps and *za bao* 雜宝 (miscellaneous treasures) (Fig. 1-9). In the Qing context, the design had emerged at least since the



Fig. 1-9 (right) Satin woven with gold thread decorated with the ‘luohua liushui’, carp, and *za bao* motifs, Ming period (1368–1644), BPM

Kangxi period, as exemplified by a lidded



Fig. 1-10 (left) Jar decorated with ‘luohua liushui’ and *za bao* motifs, Grandidier Collection, porcelain with *famille verte* decoration, Musée Guimet (G5055)

famille verte jar (G5055) (Fig. 1-10) from the Ernest Grandidier (1833–1912) collection in Musée Guimet. The jar is primarily coloured in grey and adorned with intricate swirling water patterns. Against this spiralling background, three types of motifs, including flower buds, the eight treasures, and the ‘haishui jiangya’ (waves and

mountain) motif, are scattered evenly across the body of the jar.

Other objects from the Grandidier collection featuring similar syncretic designs,

including one plate, one dish, and a brush pot (G478; G1989; G3434), are also currently displayed in juxtaposition with the jar in the museum's permanent gallery for Chinese art (as shown on 25 June 2023). In addition to the 'luohua liushui' and the 'eight treasures' motifs, each of the three objects features the 'galloping horse' motif, which often appear on Kangxi period porcelain wares, further indicating the popularity and diversity of the syncretic design prior to the Qianlong period. Therefore, it is not impossible that before or in the 6th year of Emperor Yongzheng's reign, the Qing court had already started to use silk cords with such designs out of an intention to reemploy an archaic motif for a contemporary decorative scheme. In light of this, it is emerging that the mount of the *Guwan tu* was produced in

adherence to an archaic style primarily following the Ming discourse on mounting materials for painting.

Moving beyond the silk cord, the other components that form the mount of the *Guwan tu* exude an aura of restrained austerity in their decorations. Starting from the brocaded outer wrapper to the inner border silk, the entire mount features a low-saturated colour palette composed of light yellow, tawny red,

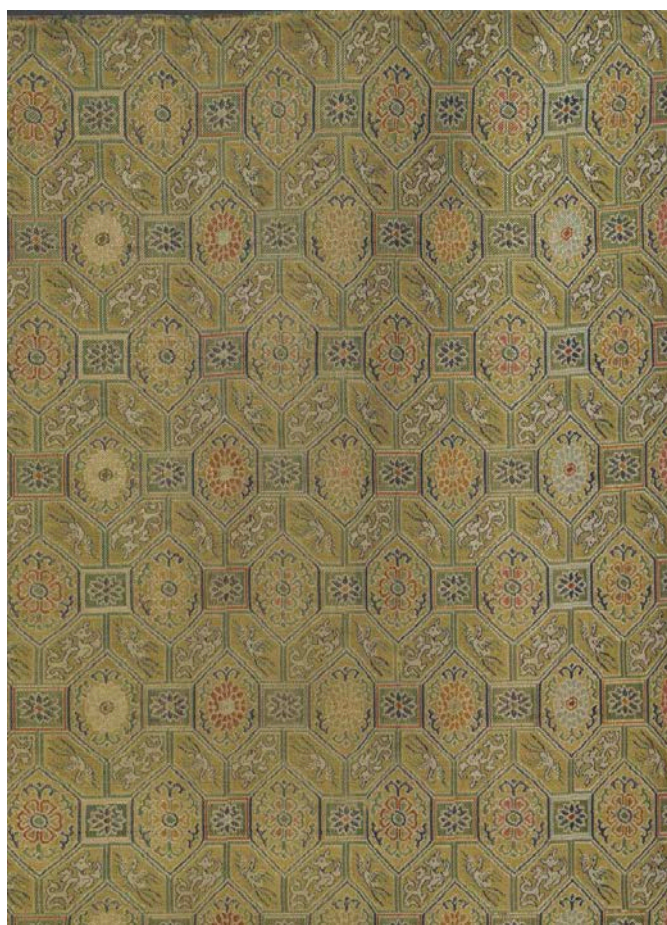


Figure 1-11 Detail of decorative patterns on the outer wrapper of the PDF scroll

as well as pale shades of blue, green, and grey, against an olive yellow ground. The decorative pattern on the wrapper (Fig. 1-11) showcases a repetition of lattice motifs, with one hexagonal medallion positioned in the centre, attached with four smaller hexagons and flanked by two rectangular panels. The central hexagonal medallion, along with the two rectangular panels, is filled with modular floral designs rendered in varied colour palettes dominated by red, yellow, and pale grey. The four subsidiary hexagonal panels, on the other hand, present two pairs of dragons and phoenixes, both of which served as common motifs for Qing imperial objects, echoing with the motifs on the clasps and roller ends.

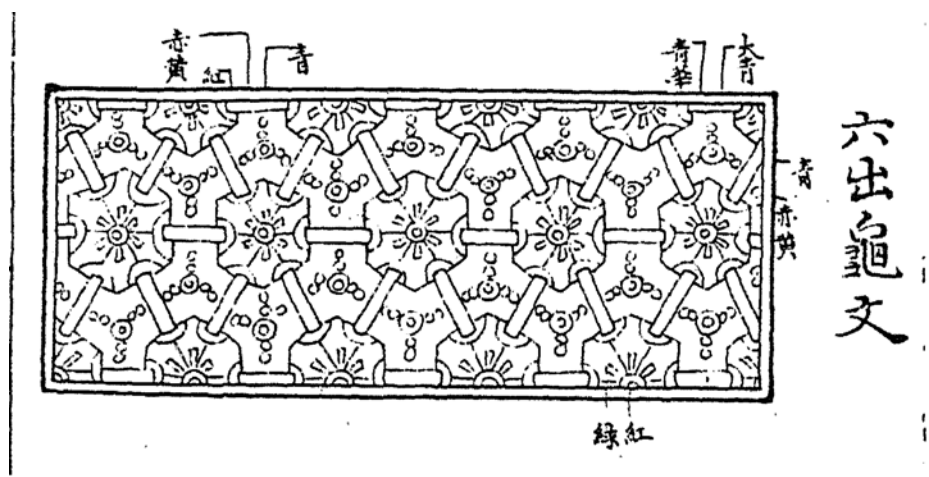


Fig. 1-12 *liuchu guiwen* from *Yingzao fashi*

This decoration is reminiscent of the tortoise-shell motif, intertwined with a hexagonal latticework composition. Both designs could be traced back to the Song dynasty, with similar prototypes, again, from the architectural treatise *Yingzao fashi*, whose pattern drawings for coloured architectural paintings have been recurrently cited by modern scholars as references to designs and motifs standardised during the Song period and adopted on various decorative

surfaces over textiles, ceramics, furniture, etc. in later times.⁴⁷ Based on the drawings in the treatise, the *liuchu guiwen* 六出龜紋 (Fig. 1-12) could be considered as a prototype for the design on the *Guwan tu*'s wrapper. The basic design was then altered by replacing the secondary triangular forms with the smaller hexagons, resulting in a larger hexagonal shape interconnected by the flanking rectangular panels enclosed with a rosette known as *tianhua* 天華, another prevalent motif attributed to the Song dynasty, which has been proposed to have originated in Central Asia and to have a prototype that emerged during the Tang period.⁴⁸



Fig. 1-13 (Upper) Brocade wrapper of *The Kangxi Emperor's Southern Inspection Tour* (The Met scroll)

The adoption of patterns from *Yingzao fashi* for the decoration of painting mounts was not uncommon at the Qing court. For instance, the *Nanxun tu* 康熙南巡圖 (*The Kangxi*

⁴⁷ For example, Mariachiara Gasparini traced both the *tianhua* and the *badayun* 八達暈, a type of geometric motif composed of octagonal grids, on textiles to the lattice pattern presented in the *Yingzao fashi*, see Mariachiara Gasparini, 'The Silk Cover of the Admonitions Scroll Aesthetic and Visual Analysis', *Ming-Qing Studies* (2013): 163. Furthermore, in Shih-shan Huang's discussion of the frontispiece of a Southern Song *Lotus Sutra* print, the author suggested that the decorative motifs applied on the balustrades surrounding the Buddha were all adopted from the *Yingzao fashi*, which became a widely distributed design manual for illustrators and painters, especially those specialised in *jiehua* painting, see Shih-shan Susan Huang, 'Early Buddhist Illustrated Prints in Hangzhou', in *Knowledge and Text Production in an Age of Print: China, 900–1400*, eds. Lucille Chia and Hilde De Weerd (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 159-60. For the redeployment of decorative patterns from the *Yingzao fashi* on ceramic surfaces, see Kung Yen-ting 孔妍婷, 'Bei Song *Yingzao fashi* zhi "yinting wen"—cong Song Yuan shiqi Jizhou yao taoci qi tanqi' 北宋《營造法式》之「銀錠文」——從宋元時期吉州窯陶瓷器談起 [Silver-Ingots-shaped Motif in the *Yingzao fashi* of the Northern Song Period—A Discussion from Ceramic Wares of the Song-Yuan Jizhou Kilns], *Gugong wenwu yuekan* 故宮文物月刊 [The National Palace museum monthly of Chinese art], no. 461 (2021): 62-84.

⁴⁸ Gasparini, 'The Silk Cover', 163, 179-95.

Emperor's Southern Inspection Tour) housed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (1979.5a-d), which belongs to a comparable oversize handscroll series commissioned by Emperor Kangxi after his second inspection tour to the south in 1689, is mounted with a pale brown outer wrapper featuring interlocking motifs in 'Y' shape formed by embroidered silver lines (Fig. 1-13). This motif, bears resemblance with *suozi wen* 瑣子紋, which forms another type of

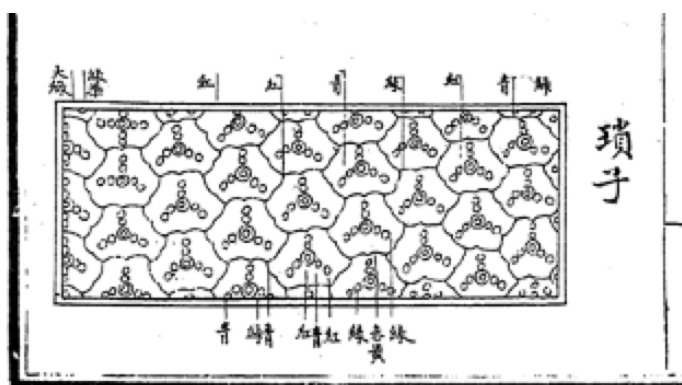


Fig. 1-14 *Suozi wen* from *Yingzao fashi*

standardised pattern recorded in the *Yingzao fashi* as a decorative design for architecture (Fig. 1-14).

These decorative patterns inspired by Song models link the

wrapper of the *Guwan tu* to an archaised type of textile now known as *songshijin*

宋式錦, that is, 'textile in Song style'. Such textile has been identified by specialists as emerging in post-Song periods and popularised in Ming-Qing China, characterised particularly by interlaced geometric compositions and recurring floral motifs.⁴⁹ Meanwhile, no trace of the term 'songshijin' has been discovered in Qing imperial records so far. Alternatively, the term 'songjin' 宋錦 often appears in records dated from the Yongzheng period onwards. For instance, on the 18th day of the tenth month in the 4th year of the Yongzheng reign (1726), the emperor commissioned an unidentified imperial textile factory to produce 21 pieces of *songjin* based on approved pattern drawings. These *songjin* were specifically prepared to be used in the production of storage bags for a collection of eighteen

⁴⁹ Gasparini, 'The Silk Cover', 183-84.

qin (zither) with quality ranks.⁵⁰ With this record, it can be inferred that while referring back to the Song dynasty in its name, *songjin* was likely to be a contemporary textile product manufactured in an imperial textile factory during the Qing period.

This conjecture can be further corroborated by evidence from the *Suzhou zhizao ju zhi* 蘇州織造局志 (Gazetteer of the Suzhou Imperial Textile Factory). The gazetteer contains an extensive catalogue that documents various textile products and fabric bolts manufactured by the factory. Among the items listed, *songjin* was classified under the category of ‘shangyong’ 上用, designating it as a specific type of textile reserved for the imperial court. The requested amount was one bolt that measured in 8 *tuo* (approximately 40 *chi*, that is, 1,420 cm), which would take 14 days to complete.⁵¹ While serving to confirm the identity of *songjin* as a Qing product, this record also signifies the specialisation of the Suzhou Imperial Textile Factory in the production of such textile.

According to an anecdote from the collected jottings of the early Qing literatus Chu Renhuo 褚人獲 (1635–after 1703), the well-respected Ji Family of Taixing County once held ten volumes of the Northern Song *Chunhua ge tie* 淳化閣帖 (*Model-Letter Compendia of the Chunhua Reign*). When the master of the household passed away, the family had to sell the work to make a living. Interestingly, the buyer—the sole individual who could afford the steep price set by the family—separated twenty pieces of mounting textiles from the

⁵⁰ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 2, 167-8. Another two mentions of *songjin* appear in the *Yangxin dian zaobanchu shouzhushu wujian qingce* 養心殿造辦處收貯物件清冊 [Ledger of Storage for the Imperial Workshops at the Hall of Mental Cultivation] compiled for the 11th year of the Yongzheng reign (1733). The addressed *songjin* vary in size and are recorded under the section of ‘jiucun’ 舊存, the initial balance of the storage. See FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 6, 244.

⁵¹ Sun Pei 孫珮 (act. 17th century), ed., ‘Duanpi yi (shangyong)’ 段疋一 (上用) [Silk Bolts, part 1 (for the imperial court)], *Suzhou zhizao ju zhi* 蘇州織造局志 [Gazetteer of the Suzhou Imperial Textile Factory], vol. 7 (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1959), 73.

compensia after purchasing the work and sold them to textile workshops in Suzhou as prototypical design models.⁵²

This specific anecdote has been quoted by scholars and textile specialists since the 20th century as an indication that *songjin* produced in Suzhou during the Qing period was directly inspired by authentic Song dynasty textiles.⁵³ Further, through observations of extant textile products and fragments, earlier scholarship has reached the consensus that *songjin* mainly pointed to the polychrome lampas decorated with Song-style geometric patterns produced by the Imperial Textile Factory in Suzhou. Numerous bundles of *songjin* would be sent to the court on a regular basis under the supervision of the factory's superintendent and were often adopted as mounting materials for court paintings.⁵⁴ In the meantime, scholars like Qian Xiaoping and Mariachiara Gasparini have pointed out that *songjin* produced in the Qing context was a refashioned product in syncretic style developed out of the decorative traditions accumulated from the preceding Tang, Song, Yuan, and Ming periods.⁵⁵

In present-day museum collections, there are a considerable number of *songjin* handscroll wrappers that were mounted, or remounted, during the Qing period, most of which have been dated to the Qianlong or later reigns. No existing textile shows the exact same decoration as the one applied to the wrapper of the *Guwan tu*. Meanwhile, analogous pieces

⁵² Chu Renhuo 褚人穫 (1635–after 1703), 'Songjin' 宋錦 [Song Brocade], *Jianhu miji* 堅瓠秘集 [Secret Collection of the Sturdy Gourd], vol. 5, in *Biji xiaoshuo daguan* 筆記小說大觀 [Comprehensive Collection of Jottings and Novels], vol. 15 (Yangzhou: Jiangsu Guangling Guji keyin she, 1983), 519 (2a).

⁵³ Chen Juanjuan 陳娟娟, 'Ming-Qing songjin' 明清宋錦 [Song-style Textiles of Ming and Qing Dynasties], *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宮博物院院刊 [Palace Museum Journal], no. 4 (1984): 16; Qian Xiaoping 錢小萍, 'Songdai zhijin de xingcheng he xingqi' 宋代織錦的形成和興起 [The Birth and Popularisation of Song Brocade], *Zhongguo songjin* 中國宋錦 [Song Brocade of China] (Suzhou: Soochow University Press, 2011), 29.

⁵⁴ Qian, 'Songdai zhijin de xingcheng he xingqi', 20-33.

⁵⁵ 'Songshijin' is originally a generic term that serves to define all kinds of textile in Song style created after the Song, starting from the Yuan period. Gasparini has pointed out the ambiguous nature of the 'Song style' in textile designs in her article, 'The Silk Cover', 161-218. For the sake of clarity, the current thesis will adopt the Qing definition for *songjin* presented by contemporaneous textual records.

featuring similar designs may serve as comparative examples, bringing valuable insights into the origins and prototypes that shaped the style of the decorative pattern on *Guwan tu*'s wrapper.



Fig. 1-15 After Qiu Ying 仇英 (c. 1494-1552), *Lanting xiuxi tu* 蘭亭修禊圖 (*Gathering at the Orchid Pavilion*) (outer wrapper and jade clasp), late Ming period (16th–17th century), BPM

To begin with, the wrapper of the *Guwan tu* exhibits a parallel with that of the *Lanting xiuxi tu* 蘭亭修禊圖 (*Gathering at the Orchid Pavilion*) (Xin00179081) (Fig. 1-15) from the BPM collection. This handscroll painting, dated to the late Ming period, was once stored in the Imperial Study inside the Forbidden City and recorded in the initial compilation of the *Shiqu baoji*.⁵⁶ The wrapper of the work has been identified as the original one produced during the Ming period, rather than a later addition.⁵⁷ Adopting an understated colour palette of pale brown and blue with a light touch of red, the Ming wrapper takes on the geometric composition formed by interwoven hexagonal shapes. The dominant motif that appears

⁵⁶ Zhang, Liang et al., 'Ming Qiu Ying *Lanting xiuxi tu yi juan*' 明仇英蘭亭修禊圖一卷 [One Scroll of *Gathering at the Orchid Pavilion* by Qiu Ying of the Ming Dynasty], *Shiqu baoji*, vol. 36, in *Siku quanshu*, 37a (location of the painting on p. 1), accessed 18th April 2023, Diaolong Full-text Database.

⁵⁷ Wang, 'zhuangbiao qutan', 68.

repeatedly is comprised of one tortoise-shell medallion containing a rounded blooming flower in the centre, similar to that on the wrapper of the *Guwan tu*. The medallion is then surrounded by six elongated hexagons filled with S-shaped patterns. In this respect, the mounting of the *Guwan tu* is likely to have been inspired by Ming handscrolls housed in the Qing imperial collection, whose mounts had already exhibited patterns and motifs developed in previous dynasties. Meanwhile, the *Guwan tu* showcases a more diverse combination of designs attributed to the pre-Qing and contemporary eras, incorporating the *tianhua* motif associated with the Tang and Song decorative traditions, while adding the representational images of dragon and phoenix in replacement of the simplified S-shaped patterns.

Fig. 1-16-1 Gold-embroidered tortoise-shell *songjin* with motifs of dragons, pythons, and ‘wanshou’ characters, Kangxi period (1662–1722), BPM



At the same time, the BPM also holds a few *songjin* of unknown function dated to the Kangxi period. One example (Gu00017692) (Fig. 1-16-1) features a combination of the tortoise-shell motif and a square panel similar to the *tianhua* motif. The structure appears to be simple, but the embroidered pattern (Fig. 1-16-2) is rendered in a more decorative manner compared to that of the *Guwan tu*. Specifically, the tortoise-shell-shaped medallions are filled with interchanging motifs of dragons and pythons, rather than the multi-lobed floral designs and linear images of dragons and phoenixes shown on the *Guwan tu*'s wrapper. The square

panels, probably a Kangxi variation of the *tianhua* motif, feature a repeated pattern of the term ‘wanshou’ 萬壽 (ten-thousand longevity) and the motif of *lingzhi* 靈芝, the fungus of immortality, in lieu of the prototypical rosette motifs. These patterns and motifs indicate that



Fig. 1-16-2 Detail showing the design of the *songjin* in Fig. 1-16-1

the textile was possibly prepared for the emperor’s birthday. The Song-style geometric pattern, in this case, was reemployed as the basic framework for the more embellished polychrome designs reserved for the Qing court.

Another comparable piece dated to the Kangxi period (Xin00137786) (Fig. 1-17) showcases an interlaced design dominated by hexagonal tortoise-shell patterns. The decorative elements, again, appear to be more varied and ornate compared to those on the *Guwan tu*’s wrapper. The central patterns are connected by floral *tianhua* motifs on four sides, while linking with four circular medallions decorated with *vajra* motifs derived from Tibetan Buddhism. The *vajra* motifs are, then, echoing with the subsidiary lotus flower heads embroidered not only inside the circular medallions but also in the hexagonal patterns. In turn, the ground pattern formed by interconnected coin motifs, which come from the ‘eight treasures’ design, connects the entire decorative scheme back with the secular realm.



Fig. 1-17 Pink grounded *songjin* with tortoise-shell and *tianhua* motifs, Kangxi period (1662–1722), BPM

While the Kangxi examples still maintain the basic design composed of geometric forms, the later Qianlong creations comparable to the *Guwan tu*'s wrapper venture outside of the conventional *songjin* form. One of the well-studied examples is the lampas wrapper (Fig. 1-18) of the *Admonitions* scroll (1903,0408,0.1) housed in the British Museum, which was remounted

onto the painting under the order of the Qianlong emperor. In her examination of the wrapper's decorative design, Gasparini has suggested the geometric structure of the pattern emulates the *badayun* 八達暈, or the octagonal latticework composition, first developed during the Northern Song period. Meanwhile, the Qing version takes on a more intricate and exaggerated form, with particular emphasis on one composite flower and two blossoms surrounded by *ruyi* cloud-shaped petals.⁵⁸



Fig. 1-18 Brocade wrapper of the *Admonitions* scroll, BM (1903,0408,0.1)

⁵⁸ Gasparini, 'The Silk Cover', 171-2.

Juxtaposed with the Kangxi and Qianlong examples, the decoration on the wrapper of the *Guwan tu* appears to fall on the subtler side of the spectrum. It employs the prototypical Song-style grid design and maintains a sense of unity by adopting a limited number of patterns. At the same time, the design shows a repeated change of colour combinations for the floral designs as the single means to engender a dynamic visual effect. With all these low-profile decorative features, the *songjin* wrappers, echoing with the archaised silk cords, serves to bring an air of archaism to the entire handscrolls.



Fig. 1-19 (left) *Tiantou* (inner wrapping) section of the V&A scroll

Fig. 1-20 (right) Detail of the *tiantou* section with the motif of ‘flying cranes and *ruyi* clouds’

This attachment to the past is further witnessed in the mounting style of the scrolls, which emulates the Song-style *Xuanhe zhuang* 宣和裝 by applying paper fringes on the upper and lower border of the scrolls in an archaised colour of copper yellow.⁵⁹ Unrolling the scrolls, one will first come across with the *tiantou* 天頭, the inner wrapping section, followed by a vertical strip of border silk and a piece of paper referred as the *yinshou* 引首

⁵⁹ The *Xuanhe zhuang* refers to the mounting style developed during the Northern Song period and particularly associated with the Huizong emperor (r. 1100–26). Fu, ‘Qianlong neifu shuhua zhuanghuang chutan’, 120.

(frontispiece), which, then, leads to the painting section. The *tiantou* section and the border silk (Figs 1-19, 1-21) are both made of twill damask in pale greyish and beige colours. This choice of light-coloured textiles conforms to the tradition of *Subiao* 蘇裱, or Suzhou mounting, popularised in the late Ming period. *Subiao* was especially praised for its use of pale-coloured damasks, because they were softer compared to the archaic black-dyed damask, a prevailing mounting textile employed by the imperial court as early as the Southern Song period, and functioned more effectively as the protective wrappings of the paintings.⁶⁰ During the Qing period, *Subiao* became a type of official mounting style, when an increasing number of experienced mounters from Suzhou had started to receive imperial commissions or entered

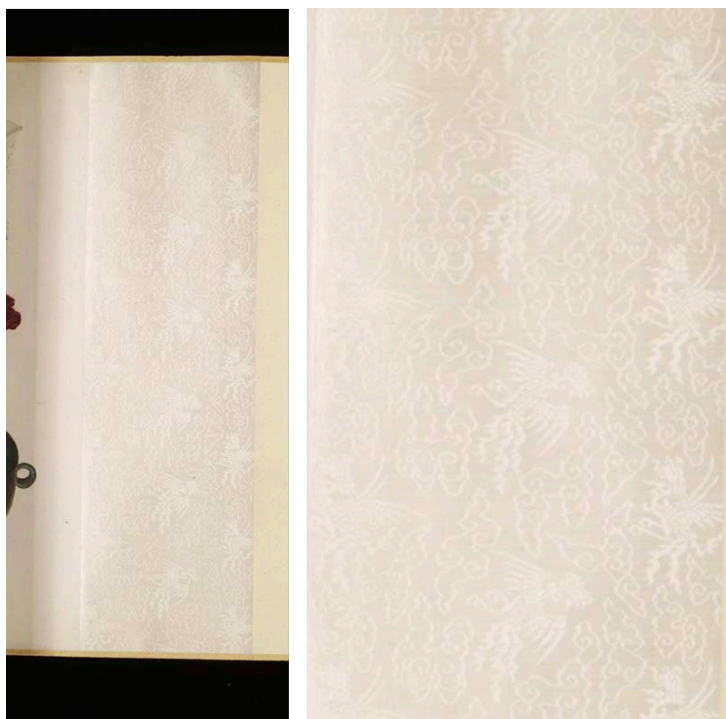


Fig. 1-21 Border silk and motif of 'flying phoenixes and *ruyi* clouds'

⁶⁰ In *Zhuanghuang zhi*, the author Zhou Jiazhou, who was also a skilled mounter himself, noted that the black damask was archaic and elegant, but since it was not durable and prone to rotting because of the black dye [made of organic materials], he would choose damasks in moon white or deep blue colour (皂綾雖古雅，皂不耐久易爛，余多用月白或深藍). See Zhou, 'Lingjuan liao' 綾絹料 [On Damask], *Zhuanghuang zhi*, 10a; for detailed discussions of *Subiao* and the black-dyed damask, see: Hsu Chao-hung 許兆宏, 'Zhuanghuang nengshi duxun Wuzhong—Ming-Qing Suzhou zhuangbiao wenhua de yingxiang' 裝潢能事 獨遜吳中——明清蘇州裝裱文化的影響 [Impact of Ming-Qing Suzhou-style Mounting Culture], *Gugong wenwu yuekan* 故宮文物月刊 [The National Palace museum monthly of Chinese art], no. 342 (2011): 117-8.

the court for service since the Kangxi reign.⁶¹

Similarly, the decorative patterns on the *tiantou* section also appear to be inspired by earlier sources. As exemplified by the V&A scroll, the *tiantou* features a combination of modular motifs of flying cranes (both upwards and downwards) (Fig. 1-20) and *ruyi* clouds, while the border silk is embroidered with flying phoenixes (to the right and upwards) (Fig. 1-21) surrounded, again, by the *ruyi* clouds.⁶² The use of both designs in an imperial context has been traced back to the Southern Tang period (937–75) based on an account from *Tuhua*



jianwen zhi 圖畫見聞誌 (Experiences in Painting), written by the Northern Song art critic Guo Ruoxu 郭若虛 (act. 1070–75).⁶³

Fig. 1-22 Sky blue brocaded cover for *Great Treasury Scriptures* with crane pattern, Ming period (1368–1644), Tsinghua University Art Museum

⁶¹ Hsu, 'Zhuanghuang nengshi', 119-121.

⁶² Based on the available images of the PDF scroll, the border silk shows a combination of phoenixes and clouds similar to that of the V&A scroll. The phoenix facing toward the right direction is the same type as the one facing upwards on the V&A scroll rather than the one facing to the right, since one of the phoenixes' three tails is folding up, instead of remaining parallel with the other two tails. This observation needs to be further verified as additional images of the scroll become accessible and, if proved to be true, this could point to the possibility that the two scrolls were mounted on different occasions using two variations of the same damask fabric.

⁶³ Gu Chunhua 顧春華, 'Zhongguo gushuhua zhuangbiao sichou wenyang xianhe wen yanjiu' 中國古書畫裝裱絲綢紋樣仙鶴紋研究 [The Study on Crane Pattern: Silk Material for Mounting Traditional Chinese Calligraphy and Painting], *Wuhan fangzhi daxue xuebao* 武漢紡織大學學報 [Journal of Wuhan Textile University] 32, no. 3 (2019): 17.

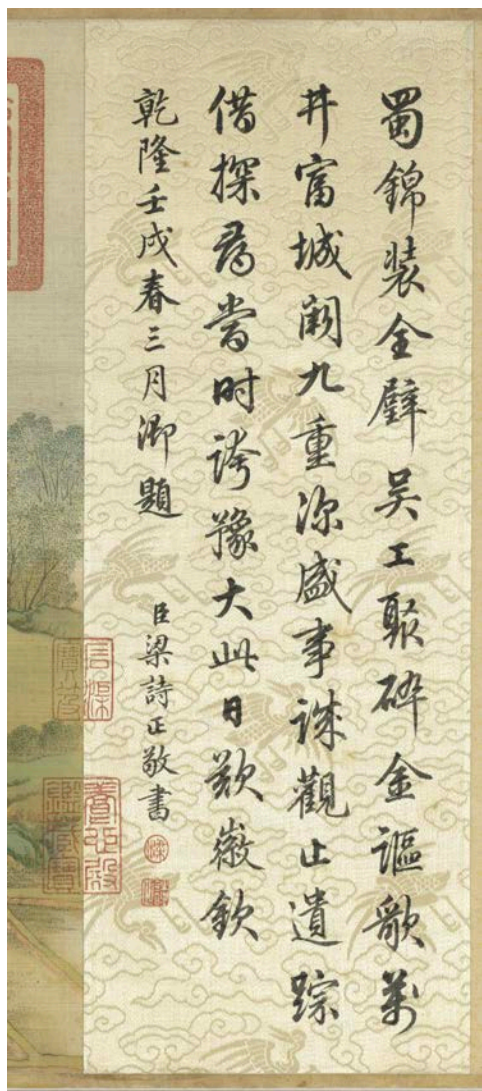


Fig. 1-23 Chen Mei 陳枚 (c. 1694–1745) et al., *Up the River During Qingming* (border silk with ‘cranes and clouds’ motif), NPM

Just like the outer wrapper, most of the direct visual sources for the decoration of the inner mounting silk available at the Qing court were presumably of Ming origin. This is evidenced by the formal similarities between the Ming and Qing renditions of the ‘crane and cloud’ motif (Figs 1-22, 1-23) with compact compositions that weave each crane into a modular cluster of elongated flowing clouds. The cranes in the Qing design, however, appear to be more dynamic: each crane on the two directions has its beak slightly opened up, with the crane facing downwards turning their heads, with a zigzag neck spine, towards the other crane flying up. This design also appears on the inscribed border silk of the Qing court version of the *Qingming shanghe tu* 清明上河圖 (*Up the River During Qingming*) (Gu-hua-001110) (Fig. 1-23). The work was completed in the 1st year of the Qianlong reign (1736), but the project itself had already begun since the 6th year of the Yongzheng reign.⁶⁴ With this detail, it could, once again, be confirmed that despite the ambiguous dating for the silk cord,

⁶⁴ Chen Yun-ru 陳韻如, ‘Zhizuo zhenjing: chonggu <qingyuan ben Qingming shanghe tu> zai yongzheng chao huayuan zhi huashi yiyi’ 製作真境：重估〈清院本清明上河圖〉在雍正朝畫院之畫史意義 [Producing a Realm of Truth: Reexamining the Art-Historical Significance of the Qing Court Version of Up the River During Qingming at the Yongzheng Painting Academy], *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 [The National Palace Museum Research Quarterly] 28, no. 2 (2010): 1-64.

the mounts of the *Guwan tu* scrolls, starting from the *tiantou* section with the ‘crane and cloud’ motif, were probably the original ones produced in the Yongzheng period.

In late Ming and Qing literati texts, both patterns were mentioned and appreciated as appropriate decorations for paintings. For instance, the ‘crane and cloud’ motif is addressed in *Zhangwu zhi* 長物志 (Treatise on Superfluous Things), following the dragon and the phoenix motifs, as suitable for embellishing the upper and lower border of a hanging scroll.⁶⁵ For the ‘phoenix and cloud’ motif, specifically, an early Qing monograph on mounting entitled *Shangyan suxin lu* 賞延素心錄 (Records of Prolonged Gratification of the Simple Heart) suggests one should use *Xuande xiao yun luan ling* 宣德小雲鸞綾, that is, twill damasks embellished with small-sized cloud and phoenix designs produced during the Xuande reign, to make frontispieces and border silks for handscrolls.⁶⁶

Based on the above examination of the mounting fabrics and their decorations, it becomes evident that the *Guwan tu* evokes a sense of archaism in its materiality, which appears to resonate with the depicted objects denoted as *guwan*. In the meantime, the two scrolls were largely in keeping with the mounting standards promoted in Ming literati manuals, possibly inspired by handscrolls from the collection of the Ming court, which became part of the Qing imperial collection after the Manchu regime overthrew the Ming dynasty.

⁶⁵ Wen, ‘Zhuangchi dingshi’ 裝褙定式 [Mounting Standards], *Zhangwu zhi*, vol. 5, 9b, accessed 18th April 2023, Diaolong Full-text Database.

⁶⁶ Zhou Erxue 周二學 (act. 1712–33), *Shangyan suxin lu* 賞延素心錄 [Records of Prolonged Gratification of the Simple Heart], in *Yang xian mingtao lu* 陽羨名陶錄 [A Record of Famous Pottery in Yang Xian], ed. Wu Qian 吳騫 (1733–1813) (Hefei: Huangshan shushe, 1992), 2a. In regard to the completion date of Zhou’s monograph, the preface written by Ding Jing 丁敬 (1695–1765), a Hangzhou artist known for his painting, calligraphy, and seal carving, was completed in the 12th year of the Yongzheng reign (1734), thus indicating that the monograph was finalised and circulated no later than that year and possibly during the Yongzheng period.

This mounting style was, indeed, not unique and had been used for handscrolls with subject matters not related to *gu*. For instance, the aforementioned *Nanxun tu* not only uses similar archaised mounting fabrics, but also adopts the *Xuanhe Zhuang* mounting style, despite the fact that the painting is meant to be a record of a contemporary event. Meanwhile, the deliberate choice of an archaised mounting over a more innovative type (Figs 1-17, 1-18), which reflects the Qing taste for exuberant polychrome designs and exaggerated motifs, signifies an intention to adhere more to the mounting materials and designs associated with earlier dynasties. In turn, this conscious decision reflects the Yongzheng emperor's interest in crafting an illusion of archaism through closely engaging with material discourses constructed in the past.⁶⁷

'Silent' Painting on Paper

Moving beyond the textiles, the *huaxin* 畫心, or the painting sections, of the two scrolls are executed on separated papers mounted together. The PDF scroll spans across 13 sheets of paper, and that of the V&A scroll extends over 17 sheets of paper.⁶⁸ For the PDF scroll, most papers are of similar sizes, ranging approximately from 165 to 190 cm in length, but two sheets of paper in the middle are narrower, each measuring more than 60 and 70 cm, while the last paper featuring the throne surpasses 90 cm. On the other hand, all the papers for the V&A scroll appear to be similar in size and measure around 130 cm each.⁶⁹ These different

⁶⁷ McCausland has addressed the Manchus' preference for polychrome in McCausland, 'The Emperor's Old Toys', 72.

⁶⁸ The number of paper sheets for the V&A scroll calculated by the author using images available on the V&A website has been confirmed according to the following article: Ricarda Brosch, 'Zaitan *Guwan tu*—Qinggong yishupin de qianshi yu jinsheng' 再探〈古玩圖〉：清宮藝術品的前世與今生 [The *Pictures of Ancient Playthings* Revisited: Life and Afterlife of A Court Painting], *Art & Collection* 373 (2023): 87.

⁶⁹ The sizes of the papers for the PDF scroll are estimated in proportion based on combined images of the two scroll and could only present a rough idea about the layout of the painting. More accurate measurements are needed for future

measurements allude to the tasks of assessing and cutting paper in required sizes prior to the painting process, followed by the time-consuming mounting process completed under the collaborative efforts of multiple personnel from the imperial workshops.

The *huaxin* is preceded by the *yinshou* section, framed by two pieces of border silk, and succeeded, at the end, by a long piece of blank paper known as *tuowei* 托尾. Normally, the *yinshou* section would be inscribed with a title or witty comment on the theme of the work, as well as varied seals belonging to the patron, later collectors, and occasionally the artist. Similarly, the *tuowei* would also be reserved for seals, marks of cataloguing, and colophons written by later collectors and commentators. The two scrolls, however, leave both sections



Fig. 1-24 Brocaded *baoshou* (outer wrapper) with title slips (Left: PDF scroll, Top: V&A scroll)



investigation, but this would require handling, which has to be restricted for these paintings for conservation reasons. The measurements of the V&A scrolls' papers are cited from the recently published article by Ricarda Brosch, the assistant curator from the Asia Department at the V&A Museum, who has observed the scroll in person, see Brosch, 'Zaitan *Guwan tu*', 87.

empty and exhibit no trace of written text or seal, except the concise titles and dates on their title slips, which seem to break the ‘silence’ of the paintings and foster varied interpretations of the *Guwan tu*’s identity.

Specifically, the dates and inventory numbers written on the title slips (Fig. 1-24), namely, *juan liu* 卷六 (scroll six) for the PDF scroll and *xia juan ba* 下 卷八 (Series B [or C], scroll eight) for the V&A scroll, suggest the potentially enormous scale of the *Guwan tu* series as a painting project that lasted for years. Previous scholarship has proposed that the character ‘xia’ indicates the V&A scroll belonged to a second, or possibly a third, series preceded by one, or two, series, and the PDF scroll, with no serial mark, was part of the initial series. Following this interpretation, the entire *Guwan tu* series would consist of at least 14 handscrolls, with 6 scrolls in the first series and 8 scrolls in the second at a minimum.⁷⁰

In the meantime, if the *Guwan tu* series is divided into multiple subseries as suggested above, it would be reasonable to position the character ‘xia’ under the main title as ‘*Guwan tu xia*’, rather than in close proximity to the inventory number, for the sake of clarity. It is also noteworthy that the character ‘xia’ appears to align with the date line, rather than with the inventory number below, and this seems to bring up the possibility that *xia* indicates the second scroll dated to the 7th year, while *juan ba* refers to the scroll number in reference to the entire *Guwan tu* series. In this case, the V&A scroll would be preceded with a *shang* 上, or initial, scroll dated to the 7th year and marked as ‘scroll seven’ following the PDF scroll, resulting in a minimum of 8 scrolls. While the total number of scrolls in the series remains a

⁷⁰ McCausland, ‘The Emperor’s Old Toys’, 68; Krahl, ‘Art in the Yongzheng period’, 65.

topic of ongoing debate, the absence of further textual traces and the use of paper, instead of silk, for the painting section give rise to the following question: would it be possible that the scrolls were unfinished works or served as the preliminary sketches for certain unknown final paintings on silk?

In regard to the absence of text or seal on the painting surface, this phenomenon does not necessarily mean the scrolls were incomplete works ready to be presented to the emperor, or any other spectators at the court. This is mainly due to the shift in mounting style that took place around the preceding Yuan and Ming dynasties. The *yinshou* section was, in fact, an invention from the Yuan period, when contemporary artists utilised this additional space to incorporate 'paratexts' that potentially served a guiding purpose and shaped the viewers' perception of the painted subject matters.⁷¹ Moving into the Ming era, the *yinshou* section was gradually transformed into a customary mounting element, a practice that was continuously adopted during the Qing period. Even if the patron, or the artist, had no intention of writing anything on the *yinshou*, a piece of paper would still be added at the beginning of the painting based more on stylistic rather than functional considerations.⁷² At the same time, it has also been suggested that the *yinshou*, along with the *tuowei*, potentially served a protective purpose, as it could widen up the diameter of the handscroll and subsequently relieve the tension that caused the creasing and cracking of the paper.⁷³ Thus, these sections would be added to the scrolls regardless of whether they were inscribed with texts or not. It is, therefore, likely that upon the completion of the *Guwan tu*, the emperor

⁷¹Zhang Hongxing, 'Re-reading Inscriptions in Chinese Scroll Painting: The Eleventh to the Fourteenth Centuries', *Art History* 28, no. 5 (2005): 621-24.

⁷² Thanks to Mr Fan Shengli from the Beijing Capital Museum for bringing this information to my attention.

⁷³ Liu, 'The Mounting Formats, Conservation, and remounting', 31.

decided not to leave any additional mark, but to direct all the attention to the depicted *guwan* spreading all over the picture plane.

One example that supports this possibility is the *Baijun tu* 百駿圖 (*Picture of One Hundred Horses*) (Gu-hua-000916) (Fig. 1-25) housed in the NPM. The scroll was created by the Italian Jesuit painter Giuseppe Castiglione (also known by his Chinese name as Lang Shining 郎世寧, 1688–1766), who started the work in the 2nd year of the Yongzheng reign (1724) and completed it in the 6th year (1728), the same year to which the PDF scroll is dated.⁷⁴ Adopting the similar oversize handscroll format as the *Guwan tu*, with 94.5 cm in width and 776.2 cm in length, the *Baijun tu* also feature minimal textual elements, except for a simple line (fig. 1-26) hidden inside the grass on the riverbank rock at the end of the painting, indicating the year of completion and the artist's name.

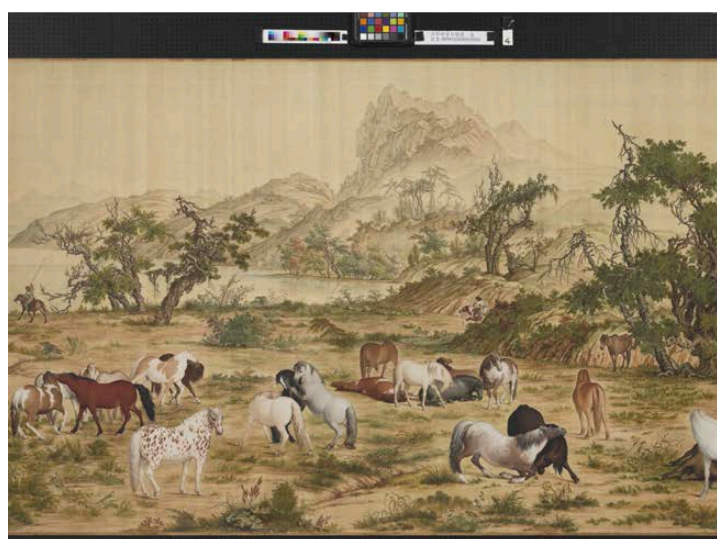


Fig. 1-25 Giuseppe Castiglione (1688–1766), *Picture of One Hundred Horses*, 1728, 51.4 x 1481 cm, NPM

⁷⁴ Nie Chongzheng, 'Lang Shining *Baijun tu* juan ji qi gaoben he moben' 郎世寧《百駿圖》卷及其稿本和摹本 [*Picture of One Hundred Horses* by Lang Shining with Its Sketches and Copies], *Qinggong huihua yu 'Xihua dongjian'* 清宮繪畫與「西畫東漸」[Painting of the Qing Court and the Influence of Western Painting] (Beijing: Zijincheng chubanshe, 2008), 249-50.



Fig. 1-26 Giuseppe Castiglione (1688–1766), *Picture of One Hundred Horses* (artist's signature), 1728, 51.4 x 1481 cm, NPM

On the other hand, considering the *Guwan tu* was originally a painting series, it is reasonable to suggest that the missing textual description, if there was any, is written on one or several separated handscrolls, and located at the very beginning and/or the end of the entire series. This composition of text and

image was not rare in the Qing context. For example, it was witnessed in the previously mentioned *Qingming shanghe tu* in the NPM collection. The painting section is preceded by a frontispiece featuring Emperor Qianlong's poem transcribed by the court official Liang Shizheng 梁詩正 (1697–1763). A four-character inscription attributed to the emperor himself is then positioned at the beginning of the painting section, describing the work as a 'beautiful jade in the realm of painting'.⁷⁵ At the end of the painting, two vertical lines denote the year of completion and the names of the artists who participated in creating the work.

⁷⁵ Wang Cheng-hua, 'One Painting, Two Emperors, and Their Cultural Agendas: Reinterpreting the Qingming Shanghe Painting of 1737', *Archives of Asian Art* 70, no. 1 (2020): 101.

As a continued convention, similar arrangement was also adopted for handscrolls created in the later years of the Qianlong reign. One such example is the *Dajia lubu tu* 大駕鹵簿圖 (*Picture-scroll of the Grand Carriage Processional Paraphernalia*) (Fig. 1-27) currently housed in the National Museum of China. The painting is not accompanied by any

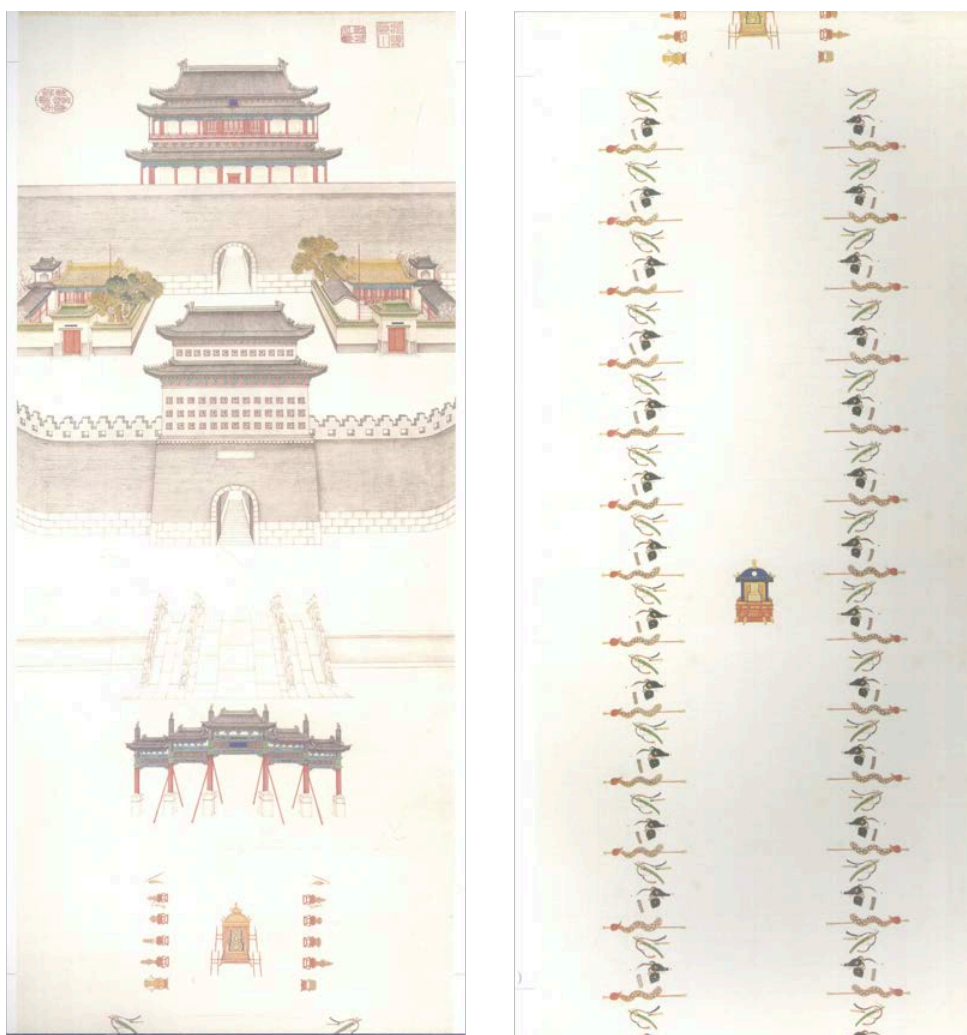


Fig. 1-27 *Picture-scroll of the Grand Carriage Processional Paraphernalia* (part), ink and colour on paper, Qianlong reign (1736–95), 49.5 x 1690 cm, National Museum of China, Beijing

explanatory texts, but concluded with an introductory essay on the production process and purpose of the scroll, along with an inventory specifying all the paraphernalia for the procession.⁷⁶ Another later example would be the set of four handscrolls, currently housed in the National Palace Museum, depicting the sericultural ceremony performed by Empress Xiaoxian (1712–48) (Gu-hua-000917 to 000920) in 1744. This handscroll series was completed under the collaboration of Castiglione and a group of Chinese court painters, including Jin Kun 金昆 (act. 1662–1746), who also participated in the project of *Dajia lubu tu*, under the Qianlong emperor.

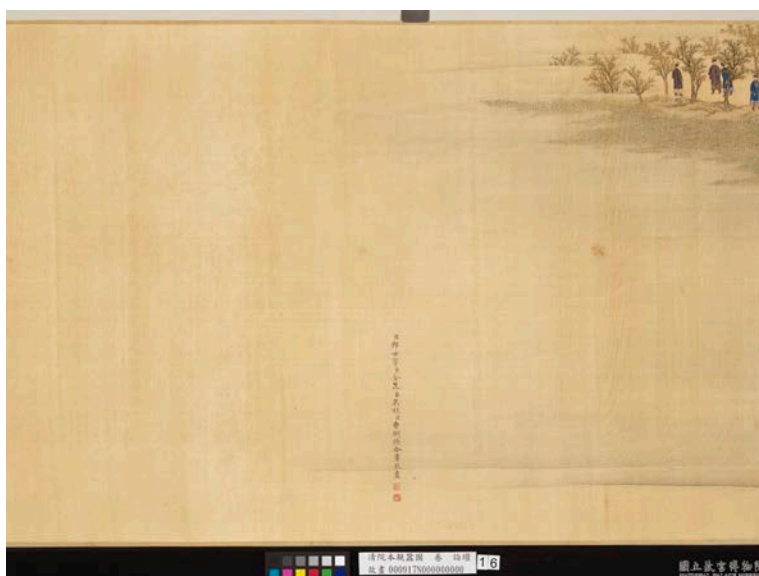


Fig. 1-28 Giuseppe Castiglione et al., *Imperial Rites of Sericulture*,
Scroll one: Arriving at the Altar (artists' signatures), NPM

Observing the textual inscription on the scrolls, one will notice that there is no trace of text at the beginning of the scrolls. As for the ending section, each scroll is inscribed with a vertical line of brief signatures (Fig. 1-28) indicating the painters in charge, while the last

⁷⁶ Lai Yu-chih 賴毓芝, “‘Tu’ yu li: Huangchao liqi tushi de chengli ji qi yingxiang’ 「圖」與禮:《皇朝禮器圖式》的成立及其影響 [‘Illustrations’ and the Rites: The Formation of Illustrated Regulations for Ceremonial Paraphernalia of the Imperial Qing Dynasty and Its Influence], *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 [The National Palace Museum Research Quarterly] 37, no. 2 (2020): 8.

scroll (Gu-hua-000920) (Fig. 1-29) is mounted with an additional *tuowei* section, which presents the emperor's colophon and imperial seal marks. With this set of scrolls, it could be further suggested that certain kinds of textual descriptions related to the content and the purpose of the *Guwan tu* could also be possibly inscribed in the *tuowei* section of the last scroll, the finale of the entire handscroll series.

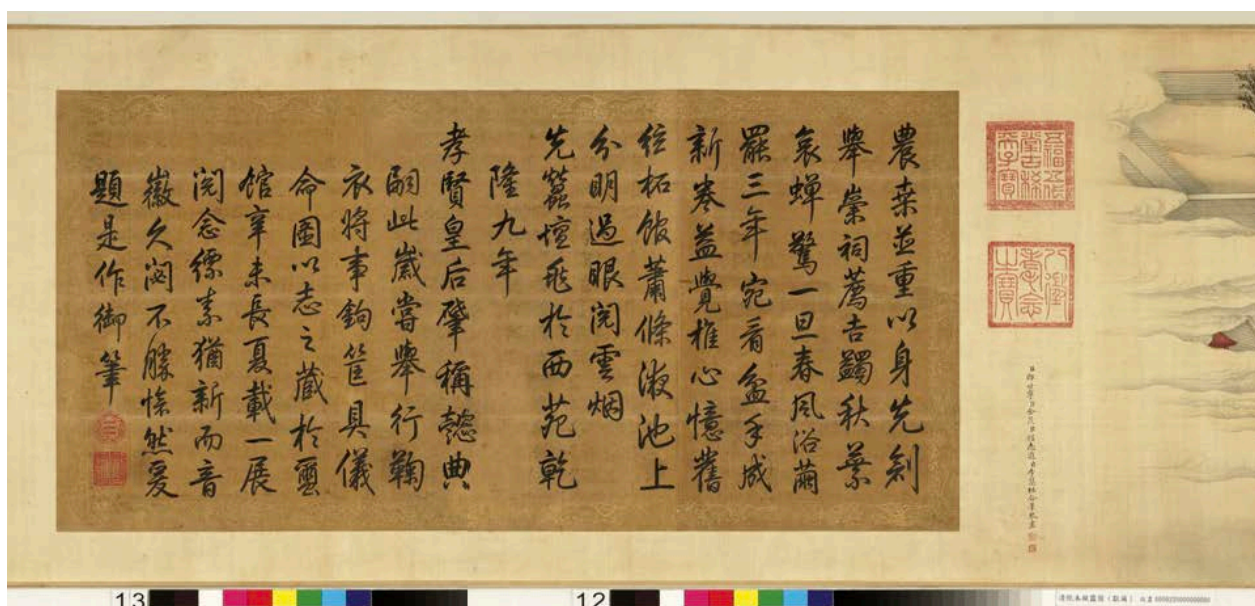


Fig. 1-29 Giuseppe Castiglione et al., *Imperial Rites of Sericulture, Scroll four: Offering Cocoons* (emperor's colophon and imperial seal marks), NPM

Then, could the *Guwan tu* be a series of meticulously rendered sketch paintings, especially given that the painting medium is paper? Indeed, the preparation of sketches on paper was part of the standardised process for creating handscroll paintings at the Qing court. In the case of the *Nanxun tu*, four and a half scrolls rendered on paper survive to the present day and have been identified as preliminary sketches for the final paintings on silk.⁷⁷ For example, the Nanjing Museum holds a sketch (Fig. 1-30) for the seventh *Nanxun tu* scroll

⁷⁷ The paper handscrolls are currently housed in the Palace Museum in Beijing, the Shenyang Palace Museum, the Nanjing Museum, and a private collection, see Nie Chongzheng, 'Qingdai gongting huihua gaoben shukao' 清代宫廷繪畫稿本述考 [An Investigation on Preliminary Sketches of Qing Court Paintings], *Qinggong huihua yu 'Xihua dongjian'*, 76.

from the University of Alberta Museum (Fig. 1-31) (2004.19.75.1; hereafter shortened as UAlberta scroll), which depicts the emperor's journey from Wuxi to Suzhou. Although

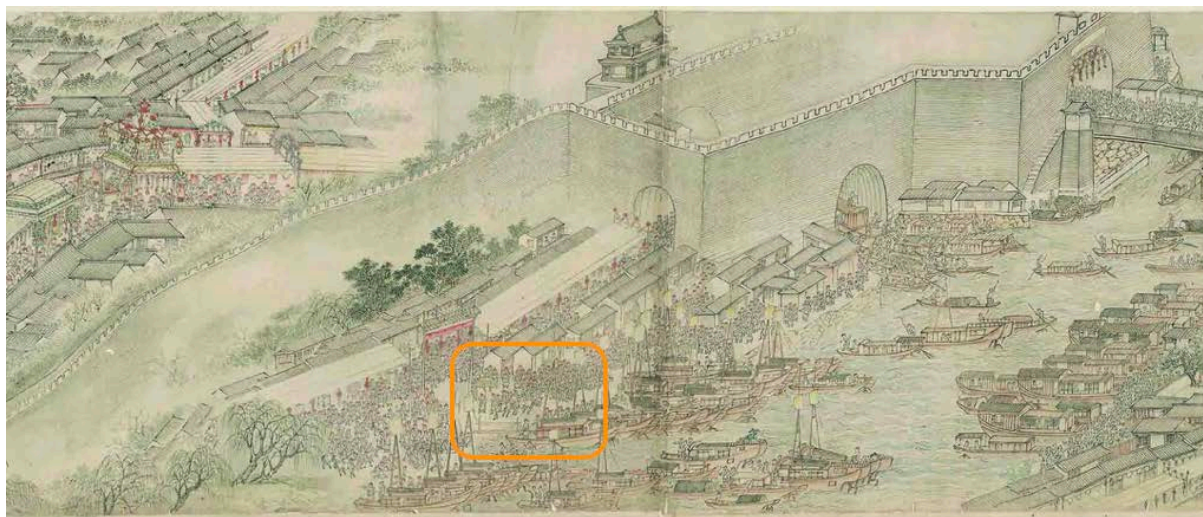


Fig. 1-30 *The Kangxi Emperor's Southern Inspection Tour, Scroll seven: Wuxi to Suzhou* (sketch), 1644–1911, 64.8 x 2966.0 cm, Nanjing Museum

Fig. 1-31 *The Kangxi Emperor's Southern Inspection Tour, Scroll seven: Wuxi to Suzhou* (part), UAlberta Museum



slightly smaller compared to the final version, the work is still qualified as monumental, with 64.8 cm in width and 2966 cm in length. Despite its identity as a preliminary sketch, the painting depicts each pictorial element, including human figures, architecture, and landscape, in great detail with modulated ink lines in combination with the *jiehua* 界畫, or ‘boundary painting’, technique, complemented by subtle colouring.



Fig. 1-32 Giuseppe Castiglione, *Picture of One Hundred Horses*, Yongzheng (1723–35)/Qianlong reign (1736–95), 94 x 789.3 cm, The Met

A paper version of the *Baijun tu* (1991.134) (Fig. 1-32) has also been discovered in the Met collection. The work is rendered in monochrome ink lines with no colour and has been recognised as a preparatory sketch due to its close resemblance to the NPM scroll. This work is currently dated to the Yongzheng reign, but scholars like Nie Chongzheng have suggested the possibility that it was an unfinished work commissioned by Emperor Qianlong in 1748. Upon reviewing a roll of an earlier *Baijun tu*, presumably the one completed under his father, the emperor asked Castiglione to paint a new version on *xuan* paper in collaboration with two Chinese court painters Zhou Kun 周鯤 (act. first half of the 18th century) and Ding Guanpeng 丁觀鵬 (1706–70).⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Nie, ‘Qingdai gongting huihua gaoben shukao’, 71-4.



Fig. 1-33 Details showing the boat in which the emperor is seated in Figs 1-30 (left) and 1-31 (right)

What distinguishes the *Guwan tu* from these two works is the difference in their colour palettes. In contrast to the much lighter colours used in the *Nanxun tu* sketch, or the complete abandonment of colour in the *Baijun tu* sketch, the vibrant and diverse palette adopted for the *Guwan tu* makes the work more akin to the final versions of these paintings, despite being executed on paper. In the meantime, it should be pointed out that in the sketch scroll for the seventh *Nanxun tu* (see Fig. 1-33 for the comparison of Figs 1-30 and 1-31), the emperor is not depicted in the painting, but represented by an ornate canopy, which is reminiscent of the empty throne in the PDF scroll.⁷⁹ Similar imagery

Fig. 1-34 Vase decorated with the design of an empty sedan chair and dragons, mid-Kangxi reign (1676–1700), Shanghai Museum



⁷⁹ Shanghai Museum displayed the preliminary sketch for the seventh *Nanxun tu* scroll loaned from the Nanjing Museum in the exhibition ‘Spring Blowing in the Wind: Jiangnan Culture Art Exhibition’ (26 May-23 August 2020). The use of the canopy to represent the emperor’s presence was pointed out by the museum researcher Gu Xianzi, see Chen Ruoxi 陳若茜, and Lu Linhan 陸林漢, ‘Xianchang: zai shangbo zoujin Jiangnan, jin liangbai wenwu chengxian “chunfeng qianli”’ 現場 | 在上博走進江南, 近兩百文物呈現 “春風千里” [On-site: Walking in Jiangnan, Nearly Two Hundred Artefacts Collectively Presenting ‘Spring Blowing in the Wind’], *The Paper*, 25 May 2020, https://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_7548708.

also appears on Qing imperial porcelains, as exemplified by a blue and white vase housed in the Shanghai museum, which features an empty two wheel sedan chair pulled by six dragons (Fig. 1-34).

These visual examples suggest that it was probably a common practice in the Qing imperial context to use designated objects as symbols of the ruler, especially in creating preliminary sketches that would be revised and treated in a loose manner. In the case of the *Guwan tu*, however, the absence of the emperor was possibly designed in the first place. The throne occupies an entire piece of paper and is situated at the centre, leaving no space for an additional portrait of the emperor. The proportional relationship between the throne and the objects would also be compromised, if the emperor's portrait is added into the composition.

In sum, judging from its rather excessive use of colours with controlled and relatively calculated execution of brushwork, it can be argued that the *Guwan tu* scrolls are finalised paintings with complete mounts featuring empty *yinshou* and *tuowei*, which were either reserved for later inscriptions or added purely for protective purpose. In the meantime, the use of paper as the medium for finalised paintings was not common in the Yongzheng context, as exemplified by the aforementioned *Baijun tu*, along with three surviving contemporaneous scrolls depicting the Yongzheng emperor's procession to the Altar of Agriculture and the surviving second scroll of *Emperor Yongzheng Delivering a Lecture at the Imperial Academy* (Gu00006631), which are all rendered on silk.⁸⁰ Then, was the use of paper as the painting medium for the *Guwan tu* a deliberate choice?

⁸⁰ The three scrolls depicting the emperor's procession to the Altar of Agriculture, commonly known as *Ji xianmang tan tu* 祭先農壇圖 (*Ceremonial at the Altar of Agriculture*), are kept in the BPM (Xin00121320), the Musée Guimet (MG21449), and the Musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac (71.1939.37.1.1).

The Choice of Paper

A *Huoji dang* entry dated to the 15th day of the sixth month in the 8th year of the Yongzheng reign (1730) provides an answer to the question above:

According to the order coming from the Yuanmingyuan, eunuchs Liu Xiwen and Wang Shougui passed his majesty's decree on the thirteenth day of the current month: sending people specialised in western-style painting to the Yuanmingyuan to paint *guwan*. There is no need to ask Lang Shining to come. Respect this.

On the first day of the seventh month, two volumes of *guwan* album leaves rendered on silk were completed and presented [to the emperor] by the supervisor-in-chief of the Imperial Household Department Haiwang. The following instruction was given: no need to paint on silk, but use paper to paint handscroll(s). Respect this.

據圓明園來帖內稱，本月十三日太監劉希文、王守貴傳旨：著畫西洋畫人來圓明園畫古玩，不必著郎石（世）寧來，欽此。

於七月初一日畫得絹古玩冊頁二冊，內務府總管海望呈覽，奉旨：不必用絹畫用紙畫手卷，欽此。⁸¹

While it cannot be asserted that the paper handscroll, or handscrolls, of *guwan* addressed above is identical to the existing two pieces, the entry does provide compelling evidence that the format and material adopted for such court paintings as the *Guwan tu* were largely at the discretion of the emperor, who would have distinct motivations for making such choices. What kind of paper, then, was employed for the making of the *Guwan tu*? What significance did the use of paper hold for the work?

For the specific type of paper used for the painting section, it has been suggested that *bangzhi* 榜紙 might be one possible choice, as a number of *Huoji dang* entries dated to the

⁸¹ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 4, 552.

Qianlong period have addressed the making of certain *jia guwan pian* 假古玩片, or imitative decorative panels of antiquities, in *bangzhi*.⁸² Observing the Yongzheng period records, *bangzhi*—sometimes specified as a type of sturdy paper available in oversized or small scale, made in tree bark or cotton and occasionally coloured in yellow—were adopted for various purposes. For instance, it could serve as writing paper for official documents, backing paper for paintings and calligraphy, but would also be used for producing pasted paper boxes and wrapping boxes of medical tablets at the Yongzheng court.⁸³

One record that suggests the possible use of *bangzhi* as painting paper is a Qianlong period report on the acquisition of ten large-sized *bangzhi*, along with other painting supplies, for Jin Kun to create a draft for the aforementioned *Dajia lubu tu*.⁸⁴ However, with the premise that the *Guwan tu* were not preliminary sketches, further evidence will be needed to justify the conjecture that *bangzhi* was adopted as the painting paper for the scrolls.

Another more plausible option would be the *xuan* paper, which appears as the required painting paper in Emperor Qianlong's commission of the new handscroll modelled on the

⁸² Thanks to Dr Chen Chih-en for proposing this possibility. Chen's unpublished article 'Reconsidering the Origins of *Yongzheng Guwantu*: from Aniconic Period to *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa Sūtra*' provided a detailed discussion regarding the use of *bangzhi* for the decorative panels based on three *Huoji dang* entries dated to the 1st year (1736), the 3rd year (1738), and the 8th year (1743) of the Qianlong reign, see Chen, 'Reconsidering the Origins of *Yongzheng Guwantu*' (unpublished manuscript, 2019), 14-16; For the entries, see *Huoji dang*, vol. 7, 379; vol. 8, 172-73; vol. 12, 32.

⁸³ On the first day of the fifth month in Year 4 (1726), the Packaging workshop received an order of ten *bao dingzi yao xia huang bangzhi* 包錠子藥匣黃榜紙 (yellow *bangzhi* for wrapping medical tablet boxes) from the Yuanmingyuan, see the entry in FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 2, 281; another entry dated to the 8th day of the fifth month in Year 10 (1732) describes the order of three *hu huang bangzhi hepai xia* 糊黃榜紙合牌匣 (yellow *bangzhi*-pasted *hepai* box) sent, again, from the Yuanmingyuan to the Packaging workshop, see vol. 5, 411; for the use of *bangzhi* as backing paper for calligraphy, see 'Yongzheng shiyi nian sanyue zaxiang maiban kupiao' 雍正十一年三月雜項買辦庫票 [Requisition tickets for the Purchase of Miscellaneous Items from the Third Month in the Eleventh Year of the Yongzheng Reign], vol. 6, 68. The ticket describes a request from the Mounting workshop of two small-sized *bangzhi*, which were ordered for the mounting of a *hengpi* imperial calligraphic work featuring the poetry composed by the Tang dynasty monk Hanshan 寒山 (act. 8th–9th century); for the use of *bangzhi* as writing paper for warehouse documents, in this case, the closure reports for June in Year 11, see 'Yongzheng shiyi nian liuyue zaxiang maiban kupiao' 雍正十一年六月雜項買辦庫票 [Requisition tickets...from June in the Eleventh Year of the Yongzheng Reign], vol. 6, 160.

⁸⁴ The First Historical Archives, 'Wei chengming hua lubu dajia quantu shoujuan maiban guang dianhua deng xiang suoxu yinliang deng shumushi deng' 為呈明畫鹵簿大駕全圖手卷買辦廣靛花等項所需銀兩等數目事等, 5th February of Year 15 in the Qianlong reign (12 March 1750), 05-08-030-000010-0018, accessed in the archives 7 January 2022.

earlier *Baijun tu*.⁸⁵ This possibility is further supported by the condition report provided by the painting conservator from the V&A in preparation for loaning the V&A scroll to the exhibition ‘La Cité interdite à Monaco vie de cour des empereurs et impératrices de Chine’ (Forbidden City in Monaco: Imperial Court Life in China) in 2017. According to the condition statement, the scroll is ‘constructed of 4 Chinese feet lengths of *xuan* paper’ and the material for the *yinshou* is described as a ‘gold speckled yellow paper’.⁸⁶ Given that the V&A and PDF scrolls were originally part of one painting series and share significant similarities in their mounting materials and styles, it can be suggested that the PDF scroll is also composed of *xuan* paper.

In the present-day context, *xuan* paper commonly refers to the paper made from blue sandalwood barks and rice stalks produced in Jing County, Anhui Province, originally under the jurisdiction of Xuan Prefecture during the Tang period, when the paper was invented.⁸⁷ Known for its whiteness, high strength, and resistance to aging as well as insect damage, the paper has been appreciated as one of the most popular brands for artistic purposes, especially paintings and calligraphic works in scroll formats, which are susceptible to damage during the frequent process of rolling and unrolling.⁸⁸ During the Tang period, the *xuan* paper was sent to the court as a tribute from the prefecture. The contemporary painter and art critic Zhang Yanyuan 張彥遠 (c. 815–c. 877) also recommended it as a brand worth stocking to

⁸⁵ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 16, 268; I am indebted to Mr Fan Shengli and the conservator from the National Art Museum of China, who also suggested the painting paper is probably one type of *xuan* paper.

⁸⁶ I am grateful to Ricarda Brosch for kindly sharing the condition report. Susan Catcher, ‘General Condition Statement’, Condition Report for Loan (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 17 May 2017), 1.

⁸⁷ Joseph Needham and Tsien Tsuen-hsuei, ‘Technology and processes of papermaking: Raw Materials for Papermaking’, *Science and Civilisation in China, Volume 5: Chemistry and Chemical Technology: Part I: Paper and Printing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 61-2, 89-90.

⁸⁸ Hilary Mullock, ‘Xuan Paper’, *The Paper Conservator* 19, no. 1 (1995): 23-30, accessed 1st March 2024, DOI: 10.1080/03094227.1995.9638410; Kenneth Starr, ‘Terms for Papers Used to Make Rubbings’, *Black Tigers: A Grammar of Chinese Rubbings* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2008), 222.

contemporary dilettantes, who could wax it in preparation for copying and imitating paintings by old masters.⁸⁹

Similar to the choice of archaised mounting fabrics, the adoption of the time-honoured *xuan* paper once again evokes an ancient spirit and further reinforces the depicted subject matter of the *Guwan tu*. To further push the discussion, the *xuan* paper manufactured in Jing County included multiple types varied in dimensions, thickness, and prepared in different treatments, such as those decorated with gold dusts and sized with glue to add strength to the paper and prevent ink and colour from running.⁹⁰ Then, what type of *xuan* paper might have been adopted for the *Guwan tu*?

In answering the above question, a survey of the Yongzheng *huoji dang* regarding the use of *xuan* paper in the imperial workshops has been conducted. Surprisingly, however, there are very few mentions of the term ‘Xuanzhi’ 宣紙 in the *Huojidang*. Records addressing the term discovered so far mostly appear in the Inventory Register of the Imperial Workshop, and always comes after *Songzhi* 宋紙, which presumably refers to paper attributed to the Song dynasty.⁹¹ According to one entry from the Archives on the Storage of the Imperial Workshop Warehouse, nine types of Xuan paper in different colours and sizes, among a total of 12 kinds, were presented to the emperor by Prince Yi 胤祥 (Yinxiang, 1686–1730) on the 15th day of the second month in the beginning year of the Yongzheng reign (1723).

⁸⁹ Zhang Yanyuan 張彥遠 (c. 815–c. 877), ‘Lun huati gongyong taxie’ 論畫體工用榻寫 [On Painting Styles, Painting Supplies, and the Making of Copies and Tracings] *Lidai minghua ji* 歷代名畫記 [Record of Famous Painters throughout the Ages], in *Congshu jicheng chubian* 叢書集成初編 [Complete Collection of Works from [Various] Collectanea: First Series], ed. Wang Yunwu 王雲五 (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1936), vol. 2, 75.

⁹⁰ Gao Futang 高弗棠, ‘Zhiye de fazhan yu shengxing’ 紙業的發展與盛行 [The Development and Prosperity of the Paper Industry], *Xuanzhi gujin* 宣紙古今 [The Past and Present of Xuan Paper] (Hong Kong: Zhonghua shuju, 2020), 85; Chuimei Ho, ‘The Cult of Writing Equipment’, in *The Arts of China after 1620*, William Watson and Chuimei Ho (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 51; Needham and Tsien, ‘Papermaking’, 73-74.

⁹¹ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huojidang*, vol. 6, 566, 763.

These pieces of paper were checked out from the Ministry of Revenue and shown to Emperor Yongzheng as the samples for 12,068 pieces of paper in the imperial holdings passed down from his father. After reviewing the samples, the new ruler ordered that the samples should be left for the imperial workshops, possibly adopted as models for future production, and the rest put into the holdings of the *Chaye ku* 茶葉庫 (lit. Tea Warehouse) of the Grand Storage Office, which stored not only tea, but also paper, pigment, incense, and wool threads.⁹²

The wording style adopted in the *Huoji dang* implies that during the Yongzheng reign, *Xuanzhi* referred to a category of paper and could be paralleled with the *Songzhi*, pointing to one specific time period. This conjecture is further evidenced by a later reference to *Xuanzhi* in a literati jotting entitled *Wufeng tang congtan* 午風堂叢談 (Collected Conversation from the Studio of Noon-time Breeze) compiled by the Qing scholar-official Zou Bingtai 鄒炳泰 (1741–1820).⁹³ In his comments on *Xuanzhi*, Zou highlighted the strength and archaic beauty of its colour, while listing a series of specific types, including imperially commissioned brands inscribed with Xuande seal marks, notably the mark of ‘Xuande wu nian zao Suxin zhi’ 宣德五年造素馨紙 (Suxin paper made in the 5th year of the Xuande reign [1430]) and notepapers in various colours.⁹⁴ This account, in turn, shares similarities with notes on paper

⁹² FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, ‘Yongzheng yuan nian zhengyue ji Zaobanchu kunei shouzhū dang’ 雍正元年正月吉造辦處庫內收貯檔 [Archives on the Storage of the Imperial Workshop Warehouse of the Auspicious First Month of the Beginning Year of the Yongzheng Reign], in *Huoji dang*, vol. 1, 237; Definition of *Chaye ku* from Yu Lunian 俞鹿年 ed., ‘Junzhu yu zongshi jigou’ 君主與宗室機構 [Monarchy and Patriarchal Institutions], *Zhongguo guan zhi dacidian* 中國官職大辭典 [Dictionary of Chinese Bureaucracy] (Hong Kong: Chung Hwa Book Co., 2020), vol. 1, 128.

⁹³ The biography of Zou Bingtai 鄒炳泰 (1741–1820) is excerpted from the Database of Names and Biographies established by the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, accessed 15th April 2022.

https://newarchive.ihp.sinica.edu.tw/sncaccgi/sncacFtp?ACTION=TQ,sncacFtpqf,SN=000036,2nd,search_simple

⁹⁴ Zou Bingtai, *Wufeng tang congtan* 午風堂叢談 [Collected Conversation from the Studio of Noon-time Breeze], vol. 4, 15a-b, from Donald Sturgeon, ed., *Chinese Text Project* (digital copy of the edition housed in the Peking University Library), accessed 15th April 2022.

produced during the Xuande reign in multiple preceding literati jottings, including the late Ming *Wuli xiaoshi* 物理小識 (Brief Notes on the Principles of Things) and early Qing *Renhai ji* 人海記 (Notes on Society).⁹⁵ In *Renhai ji*, the author Zha Shenxing 查慎行 (1650–1727) specifically incorporated *Xuande zhi* 宣德紙 as a separate entry and listed a group of papers from the imperial *Suxin* paper, *ciqing* paper 瓷青紙 (lit. ‘porcelain blue paper’), to varied coloured letter papers under it.⁹⁶

This, in turn, indicates the establishment of paper from the Xuande reign as an independent brand in early Qing China. As such, it can be suggested that *Xuanzhi* in the Yongzheng period *Huoji dang* does not solely stand for the *xuan* paper in the present-day sense. Instead, it referred to a range of papers attributed to the Xuande reign and elevated by later Ming and Qing intellectual elites, including the Jing County’ *xuan* paper produced at the time. The association between the *xuan* paper and the Xuande reign is not unexpected, since it was during this time period when the production and consumption of the *xuan* paper as a desirable painting supply reached a peak. The high demand of the paper from the imperial court and intellectual elites contributed to the development of new variations, including the previously mentioned type decorated with gold dusts but also those in larger sizes to accommodate varied needs of the artists. Moving to Qing, the *xuan* paper developed into over twenty types, a lot of which were inherited from the Xuande reign.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Fang Yizhi 方以智 (1611–71), ‘Qiyong lei’ 器用類 [Functional Vessels and Items], *Wuli xiaoshi* 物理小識 [Brief Notes on the Principles of Things], vol. 8, in *Siku quanshu* (zibu shi | zaijia lei san: zashuo zhi shu) 四庫全書 (子部十 | 雜家類三: 雜說之屬) [Four Treasuries (Masters Part 10 | Miscellaneous Schools and Writers Section 3: Miscellaneous Commentaries)], 1, accessed 18th April 2023, Diaolong Full-text Database; Zha Shenxing 查慎行 (1650–1727), ‘Xuande zhi’ 宣德紙 [Paper of the Xuande Reign], *Renhai ji juan xia* 人海記 卷下 [Notes on Society, vol. 2] (Beijing: Beijing guji chubanshe, 1989), 74.

⁹⁶ Zha, ‘Xuande zhi’, 74.

⁹⁷ Gao, ‘Zhiye de fazhan yu shengxing’, 84.

One type arguably relevant to the *Guwan tu* is the *liansi zhi* 連四紙, which is often translated as ‘fourfold paper’ and refers to a type of one-layered *xuan* paper measuring 4 *chi* in length and 2 *chi* in width.⁹⁸ The sizes of the papers for the *Guwan tu*, especially the V&A scroll, appears to be similar to that of the *liansi zhi*. In the *Huoji dang*, one type of paper described as *liansi zhi* 連四紙 appears recurrently and was often adopted as painting and mounting paper, but occasionally also used for the making of *hepai* 合牌, or pasteboard, in the same way as *bangzhi*.⁹⁹ According to one *maiban kupiao* 買辦庫票 (requisition ticket) issued on the 4th day of the sixth month in Year 11 (1733), the Painting workshop requested six *liansi zhi* applied with *nanfan* 南礬, that is, alum paste in the Southern style, or produced in the south, for the rendering of six paintings.¹⁰⁰ More specifically, on the 24th day of the ninth month of the 10th year (1732), the Painting workshop received the commission of an album of *Gengzhi tu* 耕織圖 (*Illustrations of Agriculture and Sericulture*) and subsequently requested a series of pigments, along with 50 sheets of *liansi zhi* and 4 taels of alum paste.¹⁰¹

Based on the above two records, it can be suggested that *liansi zhi*, was a fairly common type of paper for court paintings.¹⁰² The application of the alum paste made the paper stronger and less absorbent, thus suitable for works like *Gengzhi tu*, which would be rendered in rich colour and sharp ink lines to achieve precision in depicting the human figures,

⁹⁸ Nowadays, *liansi* paper also refers to a type of paper for printing made from bamboo fibres or paper mulberry, see Tsien Tsuen-Hsuein, ‘Techniques of Woodblock Printing’, *Collected Writings on Chinese Culture* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 2011), 132. In the Yongzheng context, however, *liansi* paper made from bamboo would be described specifically as *zhuliao liansi* 竹料連四, as shown in several entries in the *Huoji dang*. For instance, see the entries from the inventory of the Grand Storage Office dated to the 7th, 8th, and 10th days of the eleventh month in Year 9 (1731), vol. 5, 201-202; and a requisition ticket describing the delivery of 160 *zhuliao liansi* to the Mounting workshop issued on the 19th day of the seventh month in Year 11, vol. 6, 177.

⁹⁹ On the 6th day of the twelfth month of Year 11, the emperor commissioned the Mounting workshop to make eight pieces of *hepai* by pasting up ten layers of *liansi zhi*. See FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 5, 795.

¹⁰⁰ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, ‘*Yongzheng shiyi nian kupiao*’, in *Huoji dang*, vol. 6, 138.

¹⁰¹ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 5, 433.

¹⁰² See note 19 in Roslyn Lee Hammers, ‘The Noble Labors of the Yongzheng Emperor’, *The Imperial Patronage of Labor Genre Paintings in Eighteenth-Century China*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2021), 69-70. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429320620>.

architecture, and the variety of tools and machines involved in the illustrations. Notably, in the late Ming connoisseurship text *Zhangwu zhi*, *Jingxian liansi* 涇縣連四, that is, *liansi zhi* made in Jing County, is praised as the most sturdy kind in the present, that is, the Ming, dynasty.¹⁰³

The earlier mentioned *Shangyan suxin lu*, along with *Zhuanghuang zhi* 裝潢志 (Treatises on Mounting), a widely cited Ming monograph on mounting techniques and materials, also address the *liansi zhi* from Jing County as a proper backing paper.¹⁰⁴ With the above analysis based on the condition report and the primary textual sources, it can be inferred that the *liansi zhi* from Jing County, as one type of *xuan* paper, could be a plausible choice for the *Guwan tu* handscrolls both as painting and mounting paper. However, further investigations on the materials of both scrolls from a conservation perspective are needed to support the current argument.

In the meantime, Zhou Jiazhou made an illuminating comment in his monograph, which potentially explains why the emperor chose to use paper, instead of silk, for the rendition of the *Guwan tu*. Throughout his treatise, the author continually expressed his appreciation for the mounting techniques and materials adopted by certain precedents loosely referred to as *guren* 古人 (ancient people) or *qianren* 前人 (predecessor). One exemplary mounting work specified by the author is the handscroll in Song mounting style. Furthermore, in the section on album leaf mounting, he highlighted that the use of *liansi zhi*, and the choice of paper over silk and brocade in general, conformed to the *gushi* 古式 (archaic style), stating that:

¹⁰³ Wen, 'Zhi' 紙 [On Paper], *Zhangwu zhi*, vol. 7, 20b, accessed 15th March 2024, Diaolong Full-text Database.

¹⁰⁴ Zhou Jiazhou 周嘉胄 (1582–1658), 'Shoujuan' 手卷 [On Handscroll], 'Zhiliao' 紙料 [On Paper], *Zhuanghuang zhi* 裝潢志 [Treatises on Mounting] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2012), 7a, 9b; Zhou, *Shangyan suxin lu*, 1b.

Adopting layers of *liansi* [paper] to form the inner paper surpasses by ten times [in quality] than using outer wrappings made of twill damasks and woven silks. Simplicity on the outside but sturdiness inside was the exact intention of the ancients.

但裏紙層層用連四，勝外用綾絹十倍，朴于外而堅于內，此古人用意處。¹⁰⁵

Based on these comments, it can be inferred that paper, particularly the *liansi zhi*, was believed to be a suitable painting material in the Qing context, which would effectively perform a protective function for such imperial creations as the *Guwan tu*, especially if the scrolls were to be handled regularly. At the same time, having been identified as an approach appreciated by the ancients, the use of paper, just like the adoption of *songjin* and the *Xuanhe Zhuang* mounting style, serves to convey an archaic spirit that resonates with the content of the *Guwan tu*.

Based on the above analysis of the painting paper, together with the discussion of the mounting fabrics in the previous section, it is emerging that the *Guwan tu* was not unique in terms of its materiality, but could be positioned within a prolonged history related to the making of handscrolls and the standardised imperial mounting practices at the Qing court. At the same time, it constantly reflects back upon the past on a material level, drawing inspirations from material traditions and design repertoires of earlier dynasties, particularly the Ming, while bringing Qing elements into the scene. In this respect, the scrolls do not just serve as pictorial representations of *guwan*, but are themselves archaised as material objects.

¹⁰⁵ Zhou, 'Ceye' 冊頁 [On Album Leaf], *Zhuanghuang zhi*, 7b.

Format, Composition, and Function

As the above discussion shows, the *Guwan tu* shares considerable similarities with other oversize handscrolls from the Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong reigns in terms of their material features. This suggests that these paintings, albeit different in genres, underwent similar treatments as works sharing the same format at the imperial workshops. According to Summers, format, as a ‘culturally specific’ factor, serves to signify the distinct characteristics of an artwork with regard to its purpose, status, installation in space, and its physical relation with the artist and the viewer.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, the emperor’s deliberate choice of the handscroll



Fig. 1-35 *Horsemanship Competition for the Shunzhi Emperor* (detail showing portraits of Manchu horsemen from Bordered Yellow, Plain Yellow, and Plain White Banners), 1662, 20.3 x 1663.7 cm, The Met

format, whose history could be traced back to the Wei-Jin period (220–589) as evidenced by the late 5th/6th century *Admonitions* scroll, was itself a practice of archaism. Meanwhile, his preference for the handscroll over the album format, as described by the aforementioned entry (see p. 95), suggests a practical decision to depict the *guwan* in a coherent composition

¹⁰⁶ David Summers, ‘Introduction’, *Real Spaces: World Art History and the Rise of Western Modernism* (London: Phaidon, 2003), 28.

rather than presenting them as fragmented pictures, which demonstrates an emphasis on the interconnectedness of each object. On the other hand, as the next chapter will showcase, the meticulous portrayal of the objects' formal features alludes to a focus on their individuality. In this regard, the expansive handscroll format could effectively facilitate the presentation of all the objects as a collective whole, while reserving enough space for the rendition of each object's own characteristics.

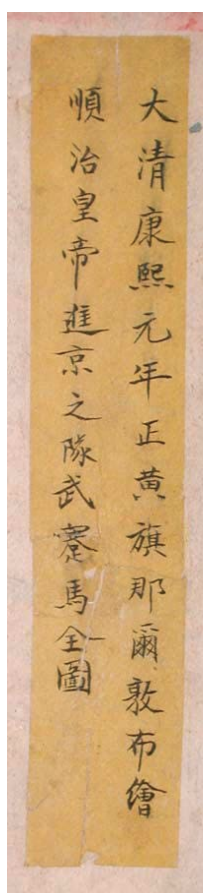


Fig. 1-36 Yellow label strip containing the name and date of the *Horsemanship* scroll

This interest in depicting a large quantity of individual subjects belonging to one category across one

single picture plane is also witnessed on an early scroll housed in the Met entitled *Shunzhi Huangdi jin Jing zhi duiwu saima quantu* 順治皇帝進京之隊武(伍)賽馬全圖 (*Horsemanship Competition for the Shunzhi Emperor*, hereafter shortened as *Horsemanship* scroll) (2002.328) (Fig. 1-35). Measuring slightly smaller compared to the *Guwan tu*, with a width of 20.3 cm and length of 1663.7 cm, it is considered as one of the earliest surviving examples of oversize handscroll painting produced at the Qing court. The yellow label strip (Fig. 1-36) at the beginning of the scroll

indicates the painting was dated to the initial year of Emperor Kangxi's reign (1662) and was created by Nardunbu 那爾敦布 (act. mid-17th century), a Manchu artist from the Plain Yellow Banner. These two pieces of basic information reveal that prior to the Yongzheng period, Manchu artists and patrons at the court has already recognised the suitability of the history-laden handscroll format for producing monumental paintings of memorable events. In

this case, the scroll served as a pictorial record of the horsemanship competition launched in celebration of Emperor Shunzhi (r. 1644–61)'s entry into Beijing, which marked the official beginning of the Manchu regime in China.

Interestingly, instead of demonstrating a panoramic scenery of the competition like the *Nanxun tu*, the painting features a diverse array of Manchu horsemen portrayed in different types of equestrian acts against a blank background (Fig. 1-35). Each portrait in the painting was originally accompanied with two labels, which specified the name of the act and the banner unit to which the rider belonged. In this case, the riders are from one of the Upper Three Banners constituted by the Bordered Yellow, Plain Yellow, and Plain White Banners, a collective military unit formulated during the Shunzhi period and controlled directly by the emperor.¹⁰⁷

The distinct compositions of the *Horsemanship* scroll and the *Nanxun tu* potentially allude to the difference in their objectives, especially when they were presented to the viewers. The *Nanxun tu* series was meant to showcase an all-encompassing view, from the emperor's perspective, of the prosperous Southern realm under benevolent governance of the Manchu regime. On the other hand, the *Horsemanship* scroll demonstrates an intention to introduce a categorical scheme and present a classified picture of a martial event tied to the Manchus' equestrian tradition, which could potentially become a pictorial guideline for future generations.

In comparison to the two works, the *Guwan tu* demonstrates a closer resemblance to the

¹⁰⁷ Davor Antonucci, 'Legitimacy and Innovation in the Chinese Imperial Tradition as Seen by the Jesuits: The Banner System', in *Empires and Nations from the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Century: Volume 1*, eds. Antonello Biagini and Giovanna Motta (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 33-34.

Horsemanship scroll in terms of its composition. Both works depict subject matters that pertain to specific categories, that is, Manchu horsemen and *guwan*, thus exhibiting taxonomies. The use of this taxonomically-oriented composition could, in fact, be traced back to the Song period (960–1279). The earliest known example is the *Dajia lubu tushu* 大駕鹵簿圖書 (*Picture-Text of the Grand Carriage Processional Paraphernalia*) (Fig. 1-37) currently housed in the National Museum of China. The painting was once held in the Qing imperial collection and recorded in the initial compilation of the *Shiqu baoji* 石渠寶笈 (*Precious Collection of the Stone Moat [Pavilion]*) as a work rendered by artists from the Song Imperial Academy.¹⁰⁸ In the 20th century, the chronological origin of the painting has been further narrowed down to the Northern Song period (960–1127) as proposed by Chen

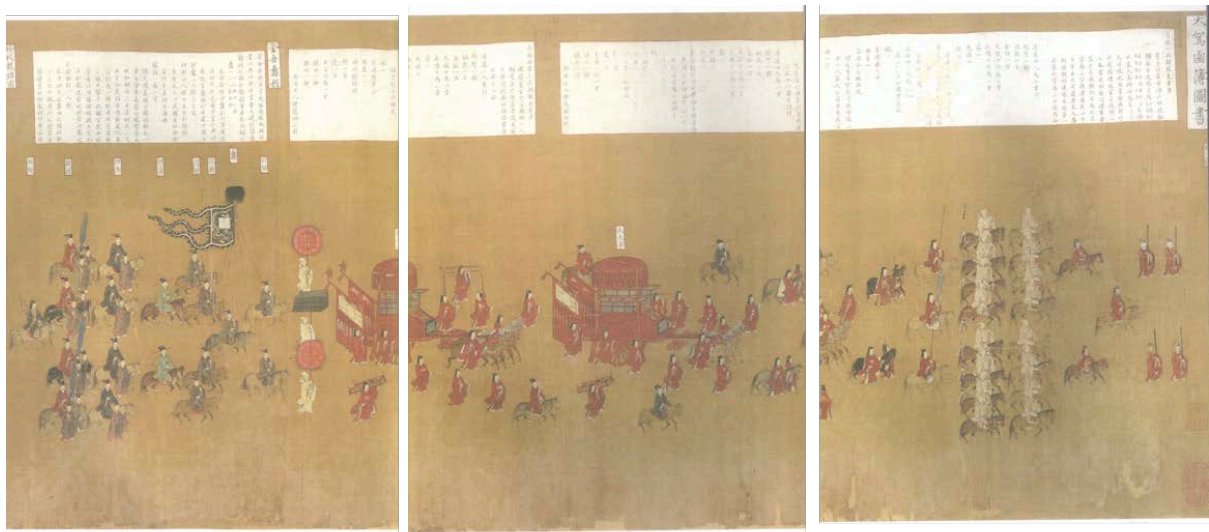


Fig. 1-37 *Picture-Text of the Grand Carriage Processional Paraphernalia* (part), Song period (960–1279), 51.4 x 1481 cm, National Museum of China, Beijing

¹⁰⁸ Zhang Zhao 張照 (1691–1745), Liang Shizheng 梁詩正 (1697–1763) et al., ‘Song Yanyou huayuan *Lubu tu yi juan*’ 宋延祐畫院鹵簿圖一卷 [One Scroll of *Picture of the Grand Carriage Processional Paraphernalia* by the Painting Academy of the Yanyou Reign of the Yuan Dynasty], *Shiqu baoji* 石渠寶笈 [Precious Collection of the Stone Moat (Pavilion)], vol. 35, in *Siku quanshu* (zibu ba yishu lei yi: shuhua zhi shu) 四庫全書 (子部八 藝術類一: 書畫之屬) [Four Treasuries (Masters Part 8 | Art Section 1: Calligraphy and Painting)], 24a-b, accessed 18th April 2023, Diaolong Full-text Database.

Pengcheng.¹⁰⁹ Measuring 51.4 cm in width and 1481 cm in length, the work presents a panoramic view of the Grand Carriage Procession accompanied with detailed textual descriptions of the ritual paraphernalia and participants involved. Earlier scholars represented by Chen and Patricia Ebrey have pointed out that the scroll functioned as a referential ‘visual aid to the procession’ based on official standards for rituals.¹¹⁰

The pictorial part of the painting has been praised for its meticulous depiction of details, but, as Ebrey has pointed out, it appears to be an ‘abbreviated’ representation of the real event—a schematic illustration that indicates the structure of the procession, instead of picturing every minute detail of the marching units.¹¹¹ The textual part, in this case, plays a

¹⁰⁹ The dating of the painting has been the subject of much controversy since the late 20th century. Patricia Ebrey explained concisely the primary cause of the debate, that is, the juxtaposition of an inscription by Zeng Xunshen 曾巽申, a Yuan dynasty (1271–1368) Confucian scholar, and a reference to Song Shou 宋綬 (991–1040), a high-ranking official and bibliophile, who had submitted a ten-volume illustrated album on the Grand Carriage Procession to Emperor Renzong (r. 1022–63), see Patricia Ebrey, ‘Taking Out the Grand Carriage: Imperial Spectacle and the Visual Culture of Northern Song Kaifeng’, *Asia Major* 12, no.1 (1999): 41-2, accessed 8th June 2022, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41645586>.

The Qing compilers dated the painting to the Song period, but only highlighted the Yuan dynasty inscription in the catalogue entry, which ambiguously credited Zeng with the authorship either of the painting, or at least of the prefaced list. This attribution has been continuously adopted as evidence in support of a Yuan dating in museum catalogues and scholarly works, such as *Zhongguo guojia bowuguan guancang wenwu yanjiu congshu: huihua juan: fengsu hua* 中国国家博物馆馆藏文物研究丛书: 绘画卷· 風俗畫 [Studies of the Collections of the National Museum of China: Vernacular Painting] ed. Zhongguo guojia bowuguan 中國國家博物館 [National Museum of China] (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2007), see the catalogue entry for the painting, 14-5; Yang zhishui 揚之水, ‘Fan yu yaqi’ 幡與牙旗 [Banner and Flag], *Cangshen yu wu de fengsu gushi* 藏身於物的風俗故事 [Folklores Hidden in Objects] (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Open Page Publishing Company/Beijing: Renmin meishu chubanshe, 2016), 57.

Meanwhile, back to the year of 1996, Chen Pengcheng 陳鵬程 proposed a Northern Song dating for the painting and suggested the inscription was later added by Zeng. According to Chen, Zeng had possibly collected the work himself and later presented to the Yuan ruler to demonstrate the structure of this traditional court ritual without revealing the identity of the work as a painting created by the defeated Song court. See Chen Pengcheng, ‘Jiu ti Dajia lubu tushu Zhongdao yanjiu—Yanyou lubu niandai kao’ 舊題《大駕鹵簿圖書· 中道》研究——“延祐鹵簿”年代考 [Study on the Work Previously Entitled *Picture-Text of the Grand Carriage Processional Paraphernalia: Midway—A Chronological Examination of the Yuan Yanyou Reign Handscroll of the Processional Paraphernalia*], *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宮博物院院刊 [Palace Museum Journal], no. 2 (1996): 76-85; Ebrey has also provided a detailed summary of Chen’s argument in her article mentioned above, see note 20 on p. 42 for further details.

Following Chen and Ebrey, later scholars like Yu-Ping Luk and Sooa McCormick have accepted this earlier date and introduced new evidence to further strengthen the argument, see Yu-Ping Luk, ‘Empresses, Religious Practice and the Imperial Image in Ming China: The *Ordination Scroll of Empress Zhang* (1493)’, PhD diss., University of Oxford, 2010, 43-44, accessed 29th April 2022, <https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:797fc7ce-34c7-4af3-a96d-928cec15098a>; Sooa McCormick, ‘Comparative and Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Chinese and Korean Court Documentary Painting in the Eighteenth Century’, PhD diss., University of Kansas, 2014, 33-38, accessed 11th February 2022, <http://hdl.handle.net/1808/16854>. Although the debate is very much unsettled, the work, for the sake of the current thesis, remains as an important early example of oversize handscrolls that contributed to the formation of this monumental painting format reserved for the upper class.

¹¹⁰ Ebrey, ‘Taking Out the Grand Carriage’, 58-62; Luk, ‘The *Ordination Scroll*’, 43.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 42-3.

significant role in explaining the intended content of the picture and serves to define the depicted paraphernalia in terms of their forms, materials, functions, and historical origins. What is more, the texts are framed in separated cartouches and collectively dominate the upper part of the scroll. The sharp contrast between the white background of each cartouche and the pale colour of the painting's silk ground further makes the texts stand out from the picture plane and suggests a need for textual information in completing the picture and fulfilling the documentary purpose of the work.

In contrast to the Song prototype, the *Guwan tu*, along with other Qing scrolls mentioned above, demonstrates a shift from the text-image composition, in which text played a dominant role in explaining the content of the pictorial image, to an image-centred representation mode. This is explicitly indicated by the change from '*tushu*' (picture-text) to '*tu*' (picture) in their titles. According to the Kangxi Dictionary, '*tu*' could be used as a verb, denoting the action of planning and scheming. As a noun, it was defined as a picture, a map, or a diagram, often associated with prophetic text or the cosmological 'Diagram of the Yellow River' *Hetu* 河圖.¹¹² According to a quote cited in the dictionary entry, which reads, 'Tuhua tiandi, pinlei qunsheng' 圖畫天地, 品類羣生, '*tu*' could also be employed to express a desire to create pictures of all things and beings in the realm for appraisal and categorisation.¹¹³ Another quote in the entry further connects '*tu*', especially pictures of the ancient, with the act of admonition.¹¹⁴ Based on these primary definitions, it can be suggested that '*tu*', on a discursive level, denoted certain types of pictorial images

¹¹² Zhang Yushu 張玉書 (1642–1711) et al., *Kangxi zidian* 康熙字典 [Kangxi Dictionary] (first published in 1716) (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1933), 1018.

¹¹³ Zhang, *Kangxi zidian*, 1018.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

characterised by three main features:

1. Involving a planning process;
2. Ingrained with certain systematic structures;
3. Serving specific purposes, such as providing visual guidance or functioning as the direct means for knowledge acquisition or as a form of admonition.

Upon reflecting on the paintings in conjunction with these definitions, one may notice that paintings like *the Nanxun tu* and *Baijun tu* particularly demonstrate the ‘planned’ aspect of ‘tu’. This is evident in their production process, where multiple oversize sketches were drafted to outline the entire compositional design, which were then subject to repeated corrections following the emperor’s instructions. Such practices were likely to have been extended to the production of the *Guwan tu* as well, especially concerning the meticulous arrangement of each depicted object, which will be discussed in Chapter three. Furthermore, the taxonomically-oriented composition of the *Guwan tu* aligns with the inherent systematic nature of ‘tu’. Meanwhile, the purpose of the scrolls remains ambiguous at this stage, particularly due to the fact that they are completely dominated by images and show no trace of texts. This distinguishes the *Guwan tu* from scrolls explicitly serving a documentary purpose, such as the *Horsemanship* scroll and the Qianlong *Dajia lubu tu*, both complemented by texts either on removable label strips or directly mounted with the painting section.

Two Pictures of Objects

Based on the above comparative studies, it can be inferred that the format of the *Guwan*

tu is not necessarily unique, but rather associated with a long-standing tradition of producing and using oversize handscrolls, established at least since the Song period and revived at the Qing court. This, however, aligns effectively with the other physical features of the *Guwan tu*, whose archaic quality, in turn, echoes with the painted subject matter, the ‘ancient playthings’. This type of dialogue between the materials utilised in the making of a painting and the subject matter depicted within it rarely occur in the history of handscrolls in China, thus further distinguishing the *Guwan tu* from its counterparts.

Among all the aforementioned oversize handscrolls, the *Dajia lubu tu* (Fig. 1-37) commissioned by the Qianlong emperor can be considered as the work that bears the closest resemblance to the *Guwan tu* due to its similar depiction of a series of objects set against a blank background. A comparison between the two paintings would, thus, provide additional insight into the function and style of the *Guwan tu*, serving as a concluding discussion for the current chapter but also an opening remark for the next chapter.

As Lai Yu-chih has pointed out, the *Dajia lubu tu* was part of the trend of employing pictures to define ritual standards, which entailed a vigorous pursuit of resemblance in representing things in images. The European-inspired painting style, then, became a favoured approach to faithfully represent formal but also the material qualities of the standardised paraphernalia.¹¹⁵ For example, in portraying the sixteen *da tongjiao* 大銅角 (large brass horn) (Fig. 1-38), one of the ritual musical instruments, the painter utilised the shadowing technique to depict the rounded tube shapes, employing varying shades of yellowish-brown colour to generate a play of light and shadow. With its adoption of European painting

¹¹⁵ Lai, ‘Huangchao liqi tushi’, 22-34.

techniques and omission of human figures and textual descriptions within the painting section, the *Dajia lubu tu* could be considered as a work inspired by the representation mode displayed in court paintings like the *Guwan tu*, which demonstrate a rather successful attempt to achieve formal and material realness by adopting European painting techniques.

Meanwhile, the *Dajia lubu tu* appears to focus more on showcasing the actual spatial layout of the paraphernalia, portraying the two parades of items in a flattened and

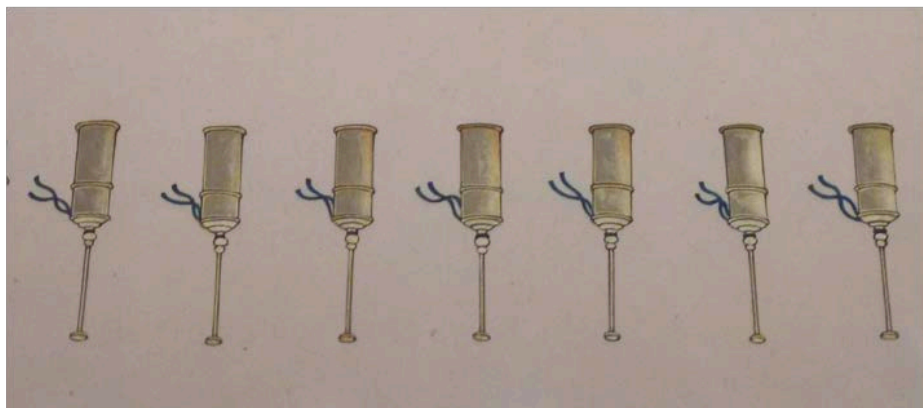
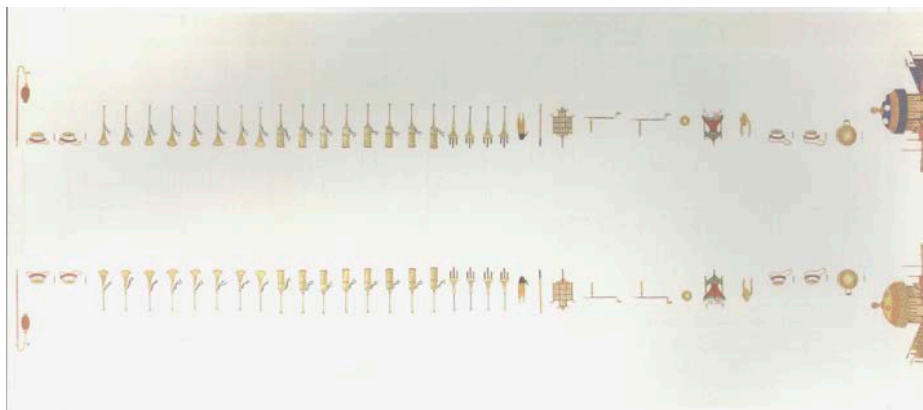


Fig. 1-38 Details of the large brass horns depicted in *Grand Carriage Processional Paraphernalia*, National Museum of China, Beijing

symmetrical manner to capture their formal appearances, while presenting how they would be arranged in the real-life situation. The illusionistic visual effect does not seem to be the focal point for this painting. Instead, it is the accurate documentation of each ritual object that matters. The entire collection of paraphernalia demonstrates an endless sense of luxury as

well as orderliness across the large-scale horizontal picture plane, which is then transformed into a two-dimensional representation of the central axis in front of the Forbidden City, where this imperial spectacle took place.

In comparison, the *Guwan tu* does seem to serve a purpose of documenting the depicted objects but without a clearly defined spatial layout. At the same time, it shows a stronger tendency to highlight the individuality of each object depicted on the picture plane, and the sense of illusionistic realism facilitated by the European painting techniques also appears to be a point for appreciation. Why, then, would the emperor choose the European-inspired style for this painting series? What exactly are these objects, and what, or where, would the blank background represent? In the following two chapters, the thesis will shift the focus to the painting style and subject matter of the two scrolls, examining how the depicted *guwan* speak for themselves and unveil their own identities in conjunction with the interwoven world of texts, images, and material objects in the Yongzheng period.

Chapter Two

Decoding *Guwan*: Textual Definitions and Stylistic Choices

One of the major reasons that makes the *Guwan tu* stand out among the oversized handscrolls created during the Qing period (1644–1911) is its subject matter, that is, a treasury of *guwan* varied in materials and chronological origins. Gradually unrolling the paintings, one would come across a parade of 222 objects, ending with the unoccupied throne, in the PDF scroll, and a total of 259 objects, accompanied by 9 rectangular cabinets and 6 throne-like cabinets, in the V&A scroll. The distinct painting style combines the traditional Chinese techniques of using precise ink lines and washes of colours with the European perspectival and shading techniques introduced by Jesuit artists at the court.¹¹⁶ Due to the high level of naturalism achieved through this hybrid painting style, scholars have been dedicated to exploring the actual identities of the depicted *guwan*, putting efforts into identifying their material and matching them with extant antiquities, especially those from the former Qing imperial collection.

Meanwhile, the illusionistic nature of the images complicates the situation. It has already been pointed out that some of the depicted objects, notably the pair of polychrome jars from the PDF scroll (Fig. 2-1),



Fig. 2-1 A pair of polychrome jars possibly from the late Kangxi (1662–1722) or Yongzheng (1723–35) period (PDF scroll)

¹¹⁶ McCausland, 'The Emperor's Old Toys', 71-2.

demonstrate styles that could be dated no earlier than the Kangxi period (1662–1722).¹¹⁷ This leads to such fundamental questions as what exactly the *Guwan tu* scrolls are depicting and why the emperor chose the European-inspired painting style for the rendition of the paintings. To answer these questions, the current chapter will examine the definition of the term *guwan* in the Yongzheng context, while reconstructing the visual history of the scrolls by observing varied pictorial images of objects produced before and during the Yongzheng period (1723–35). In doing so, the chapter aims to illuminate the position of the *Guwan tu* among Qing imperial pictures of *guwan*, but also in relation to the stylistic tradition of painting objects in China, which reflects a growing interest in creating images capable of capturing the material qualities of the depicted objects in their own right.

Setting the Stage

On the title slip of the two handscrolls, the term *guwan* 古玩 sheds light on the identity of the depicted objects as ‘ancient playthings’ from the Qing imperial collection under Emperor Yongzheng. The term itself is not uncommon and has very often been used as a generic term to denote art objects from the distant past. In particular, it is frequently adopted in commercial contexts today and points to a wide range of ‘ancient’ arts cherished in the art market, including not only objets d’art, such as bronzes, jades, ceramic wares, and lacquerwares, but occasionally also paintings and calligraphy.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ McCausland, ‘The Emperor’s Old Toys’, 67-8; Krahl, ‘Art in the Yongzheng period’, 66.

¹¹⁸ One of the literary products that demonstrates how the term *guwan* has been used in modern and contemporary commercial context is guidebook to the collecting of antiques. This type of guidebook is rooted in contemporaneous commercial contexts and is produced mainly for amateur art collectors or art investors in response to the expansion of art market and the growing popularisation of antique collecting among the general populace in China since the early twentieth century. Some of the examples include the earlier Republican period publication of *Guwan zhinan* 古玩指南 [A Guide to Antiques], and a substantial number of contemporary publications, such as *Guwan shoucang touzi jiexi* 古玩收藏投資解析

This widely accepted definition of the term has led to an anachronic interpretation of the *Guwan tu* as a pictorial representation of antiquities from the imperial collection.

Subsequently, the relationship between the images of objects and the discursive values hidden in the concise title has seldom been addressed. Despite its seemingly unique form, the scrolls are by no means ‘isolated monuments’ disengaged from their surrounding environment, as shown in the previous chapter by their connection with oversize handscrolls created in different historical periods. Moving from the format to the subject matter, the two scrolls also actively interacted with their surrounding discursive traditions and system of objects.¹¹⁹

This section, thus, aims to reconstruct the discursive context developed around the term *guwan* under the Yongzheng reign, from which the scrolls were generated. Through analysing a selection of Qing imperial records, mainly from the *Huoji dang*, the section will probe into the following questions: what was *guwan* referring to and how was it generated in reference to earlier discourses? How did the temporal concept of *gu* (ancient, past) instrumentalise the content of *guwan*? How was *guwan*, as a category of objects, treated at the Yongzheng emperor’s court according to the records, and how would that reflect the identities of the depicted objects in the *Guwan tu*?

[An Analysis of the Collecting and the Investment of Antiques], *Guwan shoucang rumen* 古玩收藏入门 [An Introduction to the Collecting of Antiques], and *Guwan shoucang jianshang quanji* 古玩收藏鉴赏全集 [The Complete Collection of Antiques for Collecting and Appreciation].

As exemplified by the publications listed above, this type of guidebook often adopts *guwan* in its title and provides general surveys of miscellaneous objects deemed as antiques, while offering connoisseurship advice and basic suggestions on how to collect and invest in the objects. The time periods covered by these guidebooks range widely from the pre-Qin period (2,100–221 BCE), sometimes even extending to the Neolithic age (10,000–2,000 BCE), to the Qing dynasty (1664–1911), but occasionally objects from the Republican era (1912–1949) are also under discussion.

¹¹⁹ Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, ‘Introduction’, *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 10.

Guwan* in Texts: The Discursive Context Surrounding the *Guwan tu

The term *guwan* does not appear as much as expected in the *Huoji dang* of the Yongzheng period. In most cases, the records describe specific items by their names, instead of using the generalised term *guwan*, to make sure the instructions sent out to each workshop were clearly articulated. Meanwhile, two detailed entries in Year 6 (1728) and Year 7 (1729), to which the two scrolls were dated, specify what the term entailed at Emperor Yongzheng's court. Given that the items addressed in the two entries show a great deal of similarity in their object types, this section will focus on examining the entry dated to Year 6 in reference to earlier and contemporaneous textual sources.¹²⁰

On the 28th day of the ninth month in the 6th year of the Yongzheng period, the Yangxin dian 養心殿 (Hall of Mental Cultivation) witnessed the relocation of a massive amount of *yuqi guwan* 玉器古玩 (jade objects and ancient playthings) originally displayed in the central bay. The emperor ordered the objects to be rearranged into groups of *baishijian* 百事件 (hundred-item curio box) and commissioned the *Xia zuo* 匣作, or Packaging workshop, to make designated lacquer chests for the assorted assemblages of objects.

On the first day of the tenth month, Haiwang 海望, the director of the Imperial Household Department, brought out a total of 643 objects on three trays. Sixteen days later, another 38 objects were presented to the emperor and were incorporated into the assemblages of *guwan* brought out on the first day of the month. The project continued into the 8th year (1730), when the supervisory eunuch Li Jiuming 李久明 brought a set of six white cups with *wucai*-style decorative designs to Haiwang, who subsequently put it into one of the *baishijian*

¹²⁰ The other entry is dated to the 6th day of the leap month of July during the seventh year (1729), see FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, 615-25.

chests following the emperor's request.¹²¹

Observing the textual descriptions, one would notice that the objects addressed in the entry display a great diversity in materials and types. Similar to the types of objects presented in the *Guwan tu*, jades, ceramics, and bronzes remain predominant in the described assemblages of *guwan*. Objects made of other materials, notably lacquer, wood, and precious stones such as coloured agate, crystal, and glass, which also appear in the *Guwan tu*, are mentioned in the text as well. In the meantime, the inclusion of handscrolls, books, and albums, even western iron locks, in the record reveals the broad nature of *guwan* as a category of objects. At the same time, the objects are all listed with detailed information that specifies their forms, physical conditions (any broken or lost parts), and later added accessories, such as wooden stands, spoons and chopsticks, along with copper inner tubes and lids.

More specifically, the jade objects listed in the record feature both functional vessels, like cups, containers, water droppers, brush washers, etc., and ornaments for display from archaic jade *jue* (slit ring) to human and animal figurines, even a piece described as *biyu doujiao* 碧玉豆角, which possibly points to an imitation of green beans crafted from green jade.¹²² What is more, the record also mentions several reproductions and imitative products modelled after antiquities under the name of *guwan*. For example, the second tray includes a *fang Hanyu yishou shuizhu* 倣漢玉異獸水注 (water dropper in the form of mythical creature after Han jade prototype) and a *shaogu sanjiao tonglu* 燒古三角銅爐, a tripod bronze censer burned with archaised colour. The water dropper was accompanied by a *Hanyu chihu gai* 漢

¹²¹ Ibid., vol. 3, 315-20.

¹²² FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, 317.

玉螭虎蓋 (Han jade lid in the form of *chi*-tiger), while the censer came with a stand made of apricot wood.¹²³ The combination of a *fang* object and a presumably authentic Han jade lid not only indicates the heterochronic nature of *guwan*, but also hints at the high degree of flexibility in handling, reusing, and altering objects for new purposes regardless of their chronological origins at the Yongzheng court, which will be discussed in detail later.

In the case of ceramics, particular historical periods and kiln sites are highlighted, in addition to decorative designs, which are described in generic stylistic terms like *qinghua baidi* 青花白地 (blue and white) or *wucai* 五彩 (lit. five colours, also known later as *famille verte*). The specified times and locations often link the described objects with canonical pieces cherished for their historical and aesthetic values. Specifically, a considerable number of objects are related to renowned kiln sites associated with the Song dynasty, including the Ge, Ding, and Jian kilns, which have been appreciated in Ming connoisseurship discourses.¹²⁴

¹²³ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, *Ibid.*, 317 (water dropper), 318 (censer). ‘Shaogu’ is a traditional technique adopted to reproduce colours of ancient jade and bronze objects. The technique was first put into use during the Song dynasty and further developed in the Ming and Qing periods. For jade objects, artisans would soak and boil them with different organic liquids, such as the extract of *hongguang cao* 虹光草 (sedum rubrotinctum) and that of catechu, and fumigate them with sawdust to imitate the red and brown patches of colours on jades. As for bronzes, the Qing approach was applying *xi lü* 西綠 (lit. western green), *dan fan* 膽礬 (chalcantite), *nao sha* 礶砂 (sal ammoniac) and other colouring agents onto the objects and burning multiple times to let the archaised greenish bronze colours reveal themselves. For the historical development of this technique and details on specific technical processes, see Wang Jiafan 王家范 and Xie Tianyou 謝天佑, eds. *Zhonghua gu wenming shi cidian* 中华古文明史辞典 [Dictionary on History of Ancient China] (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 1999), 343; Lu Dimin 路迪民 and Wang Daye 王大業, eds., ‘Gudai qingtong qi yu qingtong yezhu jishu’ 古代青銅器與青銅冶鑄技術 [Ancient Bronzes and Bronze Metallurgical Technology], in *Zhongguo gudai yejin yu jinshu wenwu* 中國古代冶金與金屬文物 [Metallurgy and Metallic Artefact in Ancient China] (Xi’an: Shaanxi kexue jishu chubanshe, 1998), 83.

¹²⁴ The Ge ware was attributed to the Song dynasty in the Qing period mainly according to Ming connoisseurs’ comments. However, based on archaeological findings and in-depth studies of primary sources, most current scholarship has reached consensus that the Ge ware was produced during the Yuan period, around the Zhizheng reign (1341–67), possibly as reproduction of the Southern Song Guan ware. See Yu Pei-chin, ‘The Qianlong Emperor’s Appreciation of “Ge Ware” and Relevant Issues’, *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* 76 (2011–12): 25–26; For Ming connoisseurship discourses on Song ceramic wares, see Cao Zhao, ‘Gu yaoqi lun’ 古窯器論 [A Discussion on Ancient Kiln Wares], *Gegu yaolun juan xia* 格古要論 卷下 [Essential Criteria of Antiquities, vol. 2], in *Siku quanshu* (zibu shi | zajia lei si: zapin zhishu) 四庫全書 (子部十 | 雜家類四: 雜品之屬) [Four Treasuries (Masters Part 10 | Miscellaneous Schools and Writers Section 4: Miscellaneous Investigations)], 1a–4a, accessed 18th April 2023, Dialong Full-text Database; Gao Lian 高濂 (1573–1620), ‘Lun Guan Ge yaoqi’ 論官哥窯器 [On Guan and Ge Wares], ‘Lun Ding yao’ 論定窯 [On Ding Ware], ‘Lun zhupin yaoqi’ 論諸品窯器 [On Wares from Various Kilns], *Yanxian qingshang jian xia juan* 燕閒清賞箋 下卷 [Notes on Things for Pure Appreciation in Life of Leisure II], in *Zunsheng bajian* 遵生八箋 [Eight Discourses on the Art of Living], Yashang zhai edition, 1591 (Microfilm. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard College Library Imaging Services, 2006), vol. 7 (seq. 806–15), 41a–49b, accessed 12th May 2023, <https://nrs.lib.harvard.edu/urn-3:fhcl:27666276>.

The names of the kilns often serve as modifiers of the objects and are addressed as ‘x yao’ ~ 窯, like ‘Ge yao’, or ‘x ci’ ~ 磁 as ‘Ding ci’, which could be interpreted as ceramics from the Ge kiln or in the Ding ware style with ambiguous chronological origins. In terms of such kilns known by their locations as the one in the Yixing County, the location would be mentioned alone.

If the objects are attributed to the imperial kilns of the preceding Ming dynasty (1368–1644), the reign names are particularly highlighted, like the *Longqing jiuyuan* 隆慶酒圓 (wine cup of the Longqing reign, 1567–72) or shortened as ‘Cheng yao’ 成窯 (imperial kiln of the Chenghua reign, 1465–87) and ‘Jia yao’ 嘉窯 (imperial kiln of the Jiajing reign, 1522–66). Similar to the jade objects, one *fang Chengyao he* 做成窯盒, that is, a reproduction of certain ceramic box from the Chenghua imperial kiln, is included in the third tray of *guwan*.

As for bronzes, the record mentions pieces in classic ritual vessel forms like *ding* 鼎 (cauldron), *you* 卣 (wine vessel), *hu* 壺 (pot), and such peculiar objects as *qinglü gutong* 青綠古銅鳩車瓶, that is, a turquoise-green ancient bronze vase in the form of a dove chariot, which is believed to have been invented in the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE).¹²⁵ The list further extends to animal figurines for display and functional vessels like censers, boxes, but also clocks, compasses, and carpenter’s squares, which are possibly of European origin.

In terms of the nomenclature for these bronze objects, the record uses the material name ‘tong’ (bronze/copper) to describe them, making reference to their colours like ‘huang tong’

¹²⁵ Berthold Laufer (1874–1934), ‘The Bird Chariot in China and Europe’, in *The Boas Anniversary Volume, Anthropological Papers Written in Honor of Franz Boas*, ed. Berthold Laufer (New York: G. E. Stechert & Co., 1906), 411, accessed 6th June 2022, <https://archive.org/details/boasanniversary00laufgoog/page/n25/mode/2up>.

黃銅 (yellow copper) and ‘qinglü’, or combining the material and colour terms like the name of the dove-chariot vase shown above, i.e. ‘qinglü gutong’. The character ‘gu’ is adopted to indicate the historicity of the described object, but specific time periods are not mentioned in most cases, except a number of censers addressed as ‘Xuan tong’ 宣銅, which points to the bronze vessels of the Xuande period (1426–35). The Ming Xuande bronzes, especially those commissioned by the imperial court, had been appreciated for their technical refinement and antique elegance in late Ming connoisseurship texts, and were later cherished as collectibles and recurrently reproduced during the Qing period.¹²⁶

In fact, the use of the generalised character ‘gu’ had already appeared in imperial texts prior to the Yongzheng period, such as *WSSDCJ*, the comprehensive record of the 1713 ceremony for Emperor Kangxi’s 60th birthday compiled in 1716. In the inventory list of gifts and offerings from princes, officials and foreign kings, many items are described loosely without specifications of their chronological origins, and simply denoted as *gu*, like *gu tong ping* 古銅瓶 (ancient bronze vase) and *gu fo* 古佛 (ancient Buddha statue).¹²⁷ A few objects, such as Ming imperial ceramics dated from the Yongle (1403–24) to the Wanli era (1573–1620), the ‘five classic [ceramic] wares’ of the Song dynasty (960–1279) canonised in the Ming period, and Song jade scholar’s utensils, are also recorded with their dates, production

¹²⁶ Regarding the late Ming discourses on Xuande bronzes, Gao Lian, for instance, presented an in-depth discussion of ‘Xuan tong’ in terms of its colour palette, vessel types, decorative designs, and functions with reference to ancient bronzes, suggesting that Xuande bronzes were characterised by their small but exquisite forms and archaic designs. See Gao, ‘Lun gu tong se’ 論古銅色 [On Ancient Bronze Colours], ‘Lun xinjiu tongqi bianzheng’ 論新舊銅器辯正 [On the Authenticity of New and Old Bronze Vessels], *Yanxian qingshang jian shang juan* 燕閒清賞箋 上卷, from *Zunsheng bajian*, vol. 7 (seq. 787-93), 21b-28a.

¹²⁷ Wang Yiqing 王奕清 (1664–1737), Wang Yuanqi 王原祁 (1642–1715), and Wang Shan 王掞 (1645–1728), eds., ‘Qingzhu wu’ 慶祝五 [Celebration Part Five], in *Wanshou shengdian chuji* 萬壽盛典初集 [The First Collection of the Imperial Birthday Ceremony], vol. 56-9, in *Siku quanshu* (shibu shisan | zhengshu lei er: yizhi zhi shu) 四庫全書 (史部十三 | 政書類二: 儀製之屬) [Four Treasuries (History Part 13 | Literature on Statecraft and Administration Section 2: Rituals and Regulations)], vol. 56, 11b (*shijia rulai gufo yi zun* 釋迦如來古佛一尊), vol. 59, 11a (*qinglü gu tong ping yi zuo* 青綠古銅瓶一座), accessed 2nd February 2020, Diaolong Full-text Database.

kilns, and formal characteristics, similar to the style of the Yongzheng period record.¹²⁸

With regard to terms indicating the historical value of the objects, ‘qinglü’ has also been identified as a signifier of archaic bronzes, with a direct reference to the colour of the patina on their surfaces.¹²⁹ The link between the ‘qinglü’ palette and the distant past was first addressed during the Yuan-Ming transition and continued to be highlighted in Ming and Qing discourses on antiquities.¹³⁰ In the Yongzheng period record, the term is adopted independently to describe objects like *qinglü tiliang you* 青綠提梁卣 (turquoise-green *you*-shaped wine vessel with handle) and *qinglü yishou yazhi* 青綠異獸壓紙 (turquoise-green paperweight in form of mythical creature), with no explicit indication of their materials and temporal attributions.

This wording style had also appeared in *WSSDCJ*, such as *qinglü kuier dun* 青綠夔耳敦 (turquoise-green *dun*-shaped cooking vessel) and *qinglü sanxi ding* 青綠三犧鼎 (turquoise-green cauldron with three animal motifs) in the section on gifts from imperial sons and grandsons. At the same time, items denoted by their materials and temporal attributions, such as *wannian qinglü tonggu* 萬年青綠銅觚 (turquoise-green bronze *gu*-shaped vessel of eternity), *gu qinglü baiyuan ping* 古青綠百圓瓶 (ancient turquoise-green rounded vase), and *han tong qinglü baiyuan zun* 漢銅青綠百圓尊 (Han bronze rounded *Zun*-shaped vessel in turquoise-green), are also included in the inventory list. The variation in nomenclature for bronze objects in the list demonstrates the potential difficulty in identifying the objects’ chronological origins, even their materials when they are described only as ‘qinglü’, given

¹²⁸ Wang, et. al., ‘Qingzhu wu’, in *WSSDCJ*, vol. 56.

¹²⁹ Chen Chih-en, ‘4.h. qinglü, jia qinglü, and fang qinglü’, in ‘Fooling the eye’, 42-49.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

the possibility that their imitations could also be referred to in this term.

It has been pointed out that ‘qinglü’ became widely adopted as an independent term for archaic bronze objects during the Qianlong period, when such terms as ‘jia qinglü’ 假青綠 and ‘fang qinglü’ 仿青綠 started to emerge to indicate imitations and reproductions of the *qinglü* objects.¹³¹ Meanwhile, these derivative terms are not present in imperial texts of the Yongzheng period. In addition to the above record of the *guwan* in the *baishijian* assemblages, several entries in the *Huoji dang* dated to the 1st year of the Yongzheng reign (1723) address such items as *Zhou qinglü Zhong Yi Fu you* 周青綠中以父卣 (Zhou qinglü ‘Zhong Yi fu’ you) (24 December) and *Han qinglü tiaohe guan* 漢青綠調和罐 (Han qinglü seasoning jar) (24 December).¹³² Therefore, it could be suggested that during the Yongzheng period, the term ‘qinglü’ began to be used individually to describe bronze objects, but information regarding the material and time would still be noted. Dynastic periods and reigns would be stressed if known to indicate the direct connection of the objects with particular historical stages. In this sense, it can be suggested that ‘qinglü’ in the discursive context of the Yongzheng period refers to a broad category including imitations and reproductions of the objects, which were later developed into two separate categories under the Qianlong emperor.

What is more, the term *gudong* 古董 was used interchangeably with *guwan* during the Yongzheng period, as evidenced by a record entry dated to the 20th day of the seventh month in the 13th year (1735). According to the entry, the emperor ordered a total of 1,023 *baishijian guwan* to be *renkan biandeng* 認看編等, that is, identified, inspected, and ranked by experts from the *Xia zuo*, and the work report in response adopted the term *gudong* in

¹³¹ Chen, ‘4.h. qinglü, jia qinglü, and fang qinglü’, 46-8.

¹³² FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 1, 223.

place of *guwan*.¹³³ At the same time, the records often mention similar types of objects using the two terms. For instance, on the first day of the fifth month in the 4th year (1726), the supervisory eunuch Cheng Guoyong 程國用 brought one *dongqing*, or eastern green, celadon censer, one white jade seal paste box, one Ge-ware basin in the form of a hibiscus, and one agate hook from the Yuanmingyuan to the *Xia zuo* and commissioned the artisans to tidy them up like the *gudong* sent in earlier.¹³⁴ Similar objects, such as *hua manao daigou* 花瑪瑙帶鈎 (polychrome-coloured agate hooks, 4th tray), *Geyao Haitang Shi Ci Xi* 哥窯海棠式磁洗 (Ge-ware hibiscus-shaped ceramic basin, later added on the 17th day of the tenth month), and *baiyu yinse he* 白玉印色盒 (white jade seal paste box, 4th tray) are all addressed under the category of *guwan* in the Year 6 record of the assorted *baishijian*.¹³⁵

Later on the 29th day of the same month, a *yangqi changfang bazu xiangji* 洋漆長方八足香幾 (eight-legged foreign lacquer rectangular incense stand) from the Yuanmingyuan was brought to the Lacquerware workshop for maintenance and was ordered to be incorporated into the *gudong* assemblages handed in earlier.¹³⁶ *Yangqi* has been identified as a term referring to lacquerwares imported from Japan, or the technique for producing Japanese-style lacquerwares. The term itself was not used before the Qing dynasty, but Japanese export lacquerwares had started to be appreciated at least since the late Ming period, often as utensils for scholars' studios.¹³⁷ Entering the Qing period, *yangqi* objects and furniture

¹³³ Ibid., vol. 6, 718; for a discussion on *renkan*, see Chiang, 'Creating the Collection as an Institutional Activity', *Emperor Qianlong's Hidden Treasure*, 51.

¹³⁴ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 1, 768.

¹³⁵ Ibid., vol. 3, 319-20. *Yinse he* is also known as *yinse chi* 印色池, which matches with the name *baiyu yinchi* 白玉印池 adopted for the white jade seal paste box in the record of 1st May. Wang Chongren 王崇人, ed., *Zhongguo shuhua yishu cidian: Zhuanke juan* 中國書畫藝術辭典·篆刻卷 [The Dictionary of Chinese Calligraphy and Painting: Seal Engraving] (Xi'an: Shanxi renmin meishu chubanshe, 2002), 72.

¹³⁶ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 1, 778.

¹³⁷ Chen Hui-hsia 陳慧霞, 'Yongzheng chao de yangqi yu fang yangqi' 雍正朝的洋漆與仿洋漆 [On the Imperial Studio's Imitation of Japanese Lacquerware During the Yongzheng Reign], *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 [The National

reached a peak of popularity and variety. At the same time, reproductions and imitations of these imported lacquerworks began to emerge at the court, especially under Emperor Yongzheng, and these contemporary products were also referred to indistinctly as *yangqi* in the record.¹³⁸

In this respect, the undated rectangular incense stand could be a Japanese lacquered furniture item passed from the former Ming imperial collection, or acquired by Qing rulers preceding the Yongzheng emperor, but could also be a Qing product emulating certain earlier prototypes. In either case, *gudong* in this context does not refer to objects from the distant past, as the term is understood nowadays, but signifies those from a very recent past, possibly the late Ming, or archaized objects made in the contemporary Qing period.

In addition to the loose temporal definition, the imperial records also demonstrate that objects referred to as *guwan* were not just for display or meant to be hidden away in storage, but were constantly altered and readopted for various functional and decorative purposes. The Year 6 entry has already demonstrated that the court would add accessories to *guwan* objects for different occasions. To list a few examples, decorative stands were often commissioned for the display of the objects, while a set of *chizhu* 匙箸 (spoon and chopstick) were usually meant for incense burning. A water pot, like the *dingci shuicheng* 定磁水盛 (Ding-ware ceramic water pot, 1st tray), would be accompanied by a bespoke spoon, in this case, a *zitan mu dujin chi* 紫檀木鍍金匙 (gilt sandalwood spoon) for water scooping.¹³⁹ What is more, the

Palace Museum Research Quarterly] 28, no. 1 (2010): 142-3; Lai Hui-min 賴惠敏, 'Suzhou de Dongyang huo yu shimin shenghuo (1736-1795) 蘇州的東洋貨與市民生活 (1736-1795) [Japanese Products and Everyday Life in Suzhou, 1736-1795], *Jindai shi yanjiusuo jikan* 近代史研究所集刊 [Bulletin of the Institute of Modern History Academia Sinica] 63 (2009): 1-48, accessed 9th June 2022, <https://doi.org/10.6353/BIMHAS.200903.0001>.

¹³⁸ Lai, 'Suzhou de Dongyang huo yu shimin shenghuo', 24-9; Chen, 'Yongzheng chao de yangqi yu fang yangqi', 146-7.

¹³⁹ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, 316.

record also mentions a *qinghua baidi ci gaiguan* 青花白地磁蓋罐, or lidded blue and white jar (1st tray), with a *tong tonggai* 銅筒蓋, that is, a copper inner tube, which transformed the object possibly into a flower vessel, like the Kangxi piece (Zhong-ci-003198) held in the National Palace Museum.¹⁴⁰

More specifically, on the 20th day of the third month in the 7th year, the emperor ordered one Han jade cylinder, which had been brought out from a *gudong ge* 古董格 (cabinet of antiquities), to be redeployed as a decorative stand for a Han jade paperweight decorated with silk-worm motifs.¹⁴¹ This record reveals that *guwan* originally serving display purposes could be altered later as utilitarian items. A sense of harmonious orderliness was also pursued here, through adopting a Han jade object as the stand for the paperweight attributed to the same material and time period. This was, in fact, a common practice in the Qing imperial context, and could also be witnessed, as discussed in the previous chapter, in the application of the same material, that is, ivory, for the roller end and the fastener for the *Guwan tu*.

In sum, the above records show that *guwan*, as a category of art objects, exhibited a high degree of flexibility and variation in time and material in the imperial context from the Kangxi to the Yongzheng period. The juxtaposition of objects attributed to the remote and recent past with contemporary reproductions and imitations of antiquities demonstrate that *gu* was not just understood as a temporal concept, but also as an aesthetic register that went beyond the limit of the standardised chronology. What qualified an object as *guwan* was not

¹⁴⁰ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, 316; Liao Baoxiu 廖寶秀, 'Tongdan chahua yun zirao: lue tan huazun, huagu yu neidan' 銅膽插花韻自饒: 略談花尊、花觚與內膽 [Self-Expression of Spiritual Resonance in Flower Arrangement with Copper Tube: Some Thoughts on *Zun*-shaped and *Gu*-shaped Flower Vases and Inner Copper Tubes], *Gugong wenwu yuekan* 故宮文物月刊 [The National Palace Museum Monthly of Chinese Art], no. 380 (2014): 33-6, other examples are also available in this article.

¹⁴¹ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, 479.

simply that it was chronologically old, but was also measured by its connection with certain archaic prototypes. At the same time, the *guwan* objects were not treated as static mementos of the past, but as functional items that played an active role in Qing court life and possessed a continuous life cycle.

The anachronic feature of *guwan* appears to resonate with the literati discourses on antiquities, along with those on the use of antiques in elite households, developed during the Ming period. From the mid- and late Ming periods, the evaluation, ranking, and canonisation of *gu* objects became scholarly activities and common forms of public cultural practices.¹⁴² At the time, the term *guwan* had already been introduced as category of objects conditioned by time and the interactive relation between human actors and the objects.¹⁴³ As Clunas has pointed out, *gu* objects in the minds of Ming connoisseurs, like Gao Lian 高濂 (1573–1620) and Wen Zhenheng 文震亨 (1585–1645), were ‘part of a continuum of moral and aesthetic discourse’.¹⁴⁴ The objects did not necessarily need to be genuinely ancient, as long as they served to engender a lofty spirit in everyday living and symbolise the self-cultivation and elegant taste of the owner. In connoisseurship literature written by Ming literati, *guwan* was used to denote ancient bronzes and jade objects attributed to the three dynasties (Xia, Shang, and Zhou) and the Han period, along with Song objects, like the Song ceramic wares that

¹⁴² Craig Clunas, ‘Things of the Past: Uses of the antique in Ming material culture’, *Superfluous Things: Material Culture and Social Status in Early Modern China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1991), 92-3.

¹⁴³ For instance, in *Caotang yaji* 草堂雅集 [Elegant Gathering in the Thatched Cottage] by Gu Ying 顧瑛 (1310–69), the author presented a biography of Tang Yuan 唐元, an erudite literatus who owned a boat filled with *tushu guwan* 圖書古玩 (pictures, writings, and *guwan*), In *Yibai zhai gao* 夷白齋稿 [Notes of the Yibai studio], the author Chen Ji 陳基 (1314–70) offers an account on the room for banquets and recreation in the household of his friend Lu Yangzheng 陸養正 and suggests zithers, books, paintings, brush rests and a tea stove, and unspecified objects within the *guwan* category have been displayed in the room and serve to represent Lu’s elegant taste. See Gu, ‘Tang Yuan’, *Caotang yaji*, vol. 12, in *Siku quanshu* (jibu ba | zongji lei) 四庫全書 (集部八 | 總集類) [Four Treasuries (Literature Part 8 | General Anthologies)], 23b.; Chen, ‘Zhenji zhai ji’ 貞吉齋記 [Record of the Zhenji Studio], *Yibai zhai gao*, vol. 24, in *Siku quanshu* (jibu | biji lei: Jin zhi Yuan) 四庫全書 (集部 | 別集類: 金至元) [Four Treasuries (Literature | Supplement Anthologies: Jin to Yuan Periods)], 7b, both accessed 2nd February 2020, Diaolong Full-text Database.

¹⁴⁴ Clunas, ‘Words about things: The language of Ming connoisseurship’, *Superfluous Things*, 80-1.

later appeared in the Yongzheng period records.¹⁴⁵ In these Qing records, the term also referred to objects dated only to the preceding Ming reigns, especially ceramics produced under the Yongle, Xuande, and Chenghua emperors.

Building upon the Ming discourses, the scope of the *guwan* category continued to expand and became more loosely defined during the Kangxi and the Yongzheng period. With this ambiguous definition of *guwan*, the content of the *Guwan tu* becomes more perplexing than it appears to be. The main issue, thus, shifts to: what would people from the Yongzheng period, especially painters working at the court, understand and visualise by the term and how would that inspire the creation of the *Guwan tu*?

***Guwan* in Images: Shift in Modes of Representation**

As demonstrated in Chapter one, the Qing court possessed ample access to a diverse range of visual, material, and textual sources inherited from previous dynasties, which the rulers were keen to redeploy for their own artistic purposes. The creation of the *Guwan tu* was particularly associated with the rich repertoire of visual images of objects related to the past, particularly those representing individual items as main subject matters. Prior to the Yongzheng reign, such images had already started to emerge and reached their culmination in production quantities and formal diversity during the Ming and Qing periods. They would appear in paintings, prints, as well as on the decorative surfaces of textiles, porcelains, and furniture, contributing to the formation of a network of discourse, imagery, and material form surrounding the concept of *guwan*.

¹⁴⁵ Clunas, 'Words about things', 81.

This section will reconstruct the visual context of the *Guwan tu* through a comparative formal analysis of selected pictures of archaic objects from both pre-Qing and Qing periods. Rather than aiming for an exhaustive survey of such pictures, the discussion seeks to reveal a historical shift in how the archaic qualities of objects were visually conveyed—from text-dependent images to self-explanatory ones that highlighted depicted objects’ formal details, a trend that peaked during the Qing period. Building upon this, the section aims to uncover the rationale behind the stylistic choice made in executing the *Guwan tu*, arguing that this choice was associated with the goal of producing faithful pictorial documents of *guwan* at the court, while coinciding with the emperor’s interest in creating pictorial illusion through experimenting with the European mode of representation.

I. An Early Pursuit of Individuality: Illustrations of Antiquities



Fig. 2-2 Ru bowl from the PDF scroll

One of the major characteristics of the *Guwan tu* is its detailed rendition of the formal and material features of the objects. Each *guwan* could stand on its own as a portrait that corresponds to one specific object held at the court. One frequently cited example is the pale blue bowl (Fig. 2-2) from the PDF scroll, whose crackles

depicted in precise ink lines have been matched with those on a 12th century Ru bowl (Fig. 2-3) (PDF.3) from the PDF collection, which once belonged to the Qing imperial collection and

bears a poem by the Qianlong emperor.¹⁴⁶ This attempt to picture single archaic objects through ink line drawing can be traced at least back to the Song period (960–1279) and the Qing image-makers were able to access such examples mainly from two types of sources: illustrated catalogues of antiquities and paintings of archaic objects in use, often as flower vessels. The pictures of objects in these sources showcase two representational trends corresponding to different purposes, but also reveal a shift in the mode of representing objects characterised by an increasing attention to individualised formal details.

The first trend marked by the popularisation of illustrated catalogues of antiquities coincided with the rise of *jinshi xue* 金石學, the study of ancient bronze and stone carvings, during the Northern Song period (960–1127). The development of this new scholarly discipline was associated with the broad movement of returning to Antiquity, which initially launched in the literary field and extended later into the world of material objects.¹⁴⁷ The initiation of the



Fig. 2-3 Bowl, Ru stoneware with copper mount, 1086–1125, BM

¹⁴⁶ McCausland, 'The Emperor's Old Toys', 67; Whitfield, 'Ceramics in Chinese Painting', 131; Yu, 'The *Shanzhi liuguang* Album', 50-51; Shane McCausland, 'Qing: Reading the "Baroque" Handscroll', *The Art of the Chinese Picture-Scroll* (London: Reaktion Books, 2023), 172.

¹⁴⁷ This call for returning to the Antiquity was primarily derived from the Confucian revival movement, or more specifically, the Classical Prose Movement initiated by the mid-Tang scholar-official Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824). In confrontation with the increasingly influential Buddhism and Daoism, Han strived to valorise Confucianism by associating it with virtuous rulers from ancient times and highlighted the link between the unadorned style of classical texts and the ancient rulers' upright characters. Inspired by Han Yu's thoughts and actions, the Northern Song scholar-official Ouyang Xiu continued fostering the use of a more cogent literary style as a tool to accurately transmit Confucian principles of social behaviours and governance. At the same time, he departed from the literary field and started to pay attention to ancient artefacts as first-hand

intellectual movement formally brought objects of *gu* onto the stage. These objects had been elevated as records that faithfully demonstrated Confucian ritual canons, which could be employed to rectify distorted interpretations of classical knowledge and flawed records of ritual vessels generated by earlier Confucian scholars.¹⁴⁸ What is more, they were also considered to be pragmatic ‘sources of solutions to contemporary problems’, such as those related to statecraft, policy-making, and public moral education.¹⁴⁹

The renowned scholar-official Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–72) and other intellectual elites in his circle, notably Liu Chang 劉敞 (1019–68), were among the earliest collectors of ancient artefacts and compilers of illustrated catalogues of antiquities. To expand their collections, the scholars would travel to search for objects, mostly ancient stone carvings and ritual bronzes, especially those with inscriptions, and create rubbings of inscriptions on the objects themselves or acquire pieces from friends and possibly also in the growing antique market.¹⁵⁰ Their collecting practices culminated in the compilation of two catalogues, that is, Ouyang’s *Jigu lu* 集古錄 (Records of Collecting *Gu*) and Liu’s *Xianqin guqi tu* 先秦古器圖 (Illustrated Record of Pre-Qin Ancient Vessels, shortened as *XQGQT*). Both catalogues were dispersed over time, with the *XQGQT* being completely lost by now. Meanwhile, relevant

material records of Confucian canons. For the Tang and Song antiquarian movements in the literary field, see Paul Rouzer, “Defenses of Literature/Literary Thought/Poetics,” from *the Oxford Handbook*, 356-8; Qian Mu 錢穆, ‘Songxue zhi xingqi’ 宋學之興起 [The rise of Song learning], *Song ming lixue gaishu* 宋明理学概述 [An Introduction to Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism], vol. 9 from *Qian Binsi xiansheng quanji* 錢賓四先生全集 [The Complete Works of Mr Qian Binsi], (Taipei: Linking Publishing Company, 1998), 1-3.

¹⁴⁸ Chen Fang-mei 陳芳妹, ‘Song gu qiwxue de xingqi yu song fanggu tongqi’ 宋古器物學的興起與宋仿古銅器 [The Rise of Sung Antiquarianism and the Imitation of Archaic Bronze], *Meishu shi yanjiu jikan* 美術史研究集刊 [Taida Journal of Art History], no. 10 (2001): 47. <https://doi.org/10.6541/TJAH.2001.03.10.02>.

¹⁴⁹ Yun-Chiahn C. Sena, ‘Ouyang Xiu’s Conceptual Collection of Antiquity’, in *World Antiquarianism: Comparative Perspectives*, eds. Alain Schnapp, Lothar von Falkenhausen, Peter N. Miller, and Tim Murray (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2013), 213-4; Chen, ‘Song gu qiwxue’, 44.

¹⁵⁰ Ronald Egan, ‘Rethinking ‘Traces’ from the Past: Ouyang Xiu on Stone Inscriptions’, *The Problem of Beauty: Aesthetic Thought and Pursuits in Northern Song Dynasty China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), 8; Paola Demattè, ‘Emperors and Scholars: Collecting Culture and Late Imperial Antiquarianism’, in *Collecting China: The World, China, and a History of Collecting*, ed. Vimalin Rujivacharakul (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2011), 166.

colophons and addenda records, along with extant rubbings of objects (or the reproductions of the rubbings) once in the two scholars' collections, have shed some light on the original forms of the works.¹⁵¹

The *Jigu lu* was completed around the 1060s, after Ouyang had engaged in collecting activities for nearly twenty years. It contained a thousand ink rubbings of inscriptions mostly from commemorative or funerary stelae dated from the Western Zhou period (1047–772 BCE) to the Five Dynasties (907–60), with a few from ritual bronzes and special objects like a Qin (221–206 BCE) iron weight.¹⁵² Over four hundred rubbings in the catalogue were accompanied with commentary colophons written by Ouyang himself.¹⁵³ The colophons, which have survived to the present day, remain the centre of scholarly investigation and vital textual references that could contribute to provenance research on ancient rubbings of inscriptions on certain unknown or lost objects. In the meantime, the pictorial aspect of the catalogue should not be neglected.

According to the Southern Song scholar-official Zhou Bida 周必大 (1126–1204), who had possibly viewed parts of the catalogue in person, the *Jigu lu* was originally created as an assemblage of scrolls with rubbings mounted at the front followed by designated colophons.¹⁵⁴ The rubbings, which were identified by Ouyang as equivalents of actual *jinshi*

¹⁵¹ Egan, 'Rethinking "Traces"', 9-10; Sena, 'Ouyang Xiu's Conceptual Collection', 216-21; Li Hsien-Chuan 李憲專, 'Ouyang Xiu suo ti sanguo zhi suidai beike bawen shilun' 歐陽修所題三國至隋代碑刻跋文試論 [A Research on Ouyang Shiu's Tablet Stone Postscript from the Three Kingdoms Era to Sui Dynasty], *Shuhua yishu xuekan* 書畫藝術學刊 [Journal of Chinese Calligraphy and Painting] 19 (2015): 226-28.

¹⁵² Ouyang Xiu, 'Qin duliang ming' 秦度量銘 [Inscriptions on Qin weight], *Jigu lu* 集古錄 [Records of Collecting *Gu*], vol. 1, in *Siku quanshu* (shibu shisi | mulu lei er: jinshi zhi shu) 四庫全書 (史部十四 | 目錄類二: 金石之屬) [Four Treasuries (History Part 14 | Catalogue Section 2: Ancient Bronze and Stone Carvings)], 18a-19a, accessed 3rd April 2020, Diaolong Full-text Database.

¹⁵³ Li, 'Ouyang Xiu', 226.

¹⁵⁴ Zhou Bida 周必大, 'Ouyang wenzhonggong *Jigu lu* houxu' 歐陽文忠公集古錄後序 [Postface of *Jigu lu* by Ouyang, Lord Wenzhong] *Wenzhong ji* 文忠集 [Collected Works of Lord Wenzhong], vol. 52, in *Siku quanshu* (jibu san | bieji lei er: Song) 四庫全書 (集部三 | 別集類二: 宋) [Four Treasuries (Literature Part 3 | Supplement Anthologies: Song Period), 5a-

objects, reproduced only the inscribed surfaces of the objects. The calligraphic texts, or pictographic ‘ink patterns’, displayed by the rubbings could be, thus, considered as indexical traces of the objects.¹⁵⁵ Moreover, the mounting served to form frames for the rubbings, recapture them as two-dimensional epigraphic images, and redefine them as the most essential part of the objects, which were very often weathered or destroyed through time. Resonating with the scholarly tone of the antique-collecting practices, the juxtaposition of images that signified the collected objects and interpretive texts was widely adopted as a common layout for object catalogues by later generations up to the Qing dynasty.

While the *Jigu lu* still paid much attention to textual traces on objects, the *XQGQT* produced by Liu Chang officially incorporated pictures of objects as essential elements in catalogues of antiquities, and has been identified as the earliest of its kind.¹⁵⁶ The catalogue recorded eleven pre-Qin inscribed bronzes collected by Liu and once contained rubbings of inscriptions on the objects, introductory texts, and, most distinctively, linear drawings of the objects.¹⁵⁷ In its preface, Liu stated that his purpose in creating the catalogue was to assist cultivated individuals appreciating *gu* in getting access to rare ritual bronzes, so that they could decipher the classical knowledge embedded in the inscriptions for the benefit of the society.¹⁵⁸

Following the circulation of Liu’s work in elite circles, catalogues with pictures of

b, accessed 3rd April 2020, Diaolong Full-text Database.

¹⁵⁵ Sena has suggested that Ouyang used the character *bei* 碑 to refer to both the rubbing and the actual stone carving in his colophon for a Tang dynasty Confucius Temple stele. Sena, ‘Ouyang Xiu’s Conceptual Collection’, 216-23.

¹⁵⁶ Pierson, ‘From the *Daguan lu* to the *Shiqu baoji*’, 76-7.

¹⁵⁷ Liu Chang 劉敞, ‘Xianqin guqi ji’ 先秦古器記 [Illustrated Record of Pre-Qin Ancient Vessels], in *Gongshi ji* 公是集 [Collected Works of Mr Gongshi], vol. 36, in *Siku quanshu* (jibu | bieji lei: Bei Song Jianlong zhi Jingkang) 四庫全書 (集部 | 別集類: 北宋建隆至靖康) [Four Treasuries (Literature | Supplement Anthologies: Northern Song Jianlong [960–63] to Jingkang [1126–27] reigns), 15a-b, accessed 3rd April 2020, Diaolong Full-text Database; Sena, ‘Ouyang Xiu’s Records of Collecting Antiquity’, 55-6.

¹⁵⁸ Liu, ‘Xianqin guqi ji’, 15b.

objects became a standard form that spoke to a growing attention to formal accuracy and authenticity in collecting and reproducing antiquities. Two of the most well-known illustrated catalogues are the *Kaogu tu* 考古圖 (Illustrations for the Investigation of *Gu*) compiled by the Confucian scholar Lü Dalin 呂大臨 (c.1047–93) in 1092 and the *Xuanhe bogu tu* 宣和博古圖 (Illustrations of Antiquities of the Xuanhe [Hall], shortened as *Bogu tu*) commissioned by Emperor Huizong of the Northern Song dynasty (r. 1100–26).

The two catalogues only survive in later copies, mostly dated to the Ming and Qing periods.¹⁵⁹ Meanwhile, both catalogues have been incorporated into massive encyclopedias compiled under Qing rulers, including the *GJTSJC* and the later *Qinding Siku quanshu* 欽定四庫全書 (Imperially Commissioned Complete Library of the Four Treasuries). The inclusion of the



Fig. 2-4 Yun shi cauldron, rubbing of inscriptions attached, and author's commentary, *Kaogu tu* by Lü Dalin 呂大臨 (c.1047–93), Yizheng tang edition

catalogues in the *GJTSJC*, which was fully completed under Emperor Yongzheng in 1726, suggests that the emperor, as well as contemporaneous officials and court painters involved in imperial image-making activities, would be aware of the standardised illustration style

¹⁵⁹ Hsu Ya-Hwei 許雅惠, 'Antiquaries and Politics: Antiquarian Culture of the Northern Song, 960-1127', in *World Antiquarianism: Comparative Perspectives*, eds. Alain Schnapp, Lothar von Falkenhausen, Peter N. Miller, and Tim Murray (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2013), 233.

adopted in what they perceived as Song catalogues of antiquities.

Examining the extant copies of the two catalogues, one would notice that the illustrations of antiquities are generally depicted in monochrome ink lines, resulting in flattened, stylised drawings that demonstrate the shapes and decorative designs of the objects. In the case of the *Kaogu tu*, the line drawings serve as pictorial records of bronze vessels and jade objects, mostly for ritual purposes, from private and the Song imperial collections. Each drawing is followed by a commentary and an annotated reproduction of inscriptions on the depicted object (Fig. 2-4).¹⁶⁰

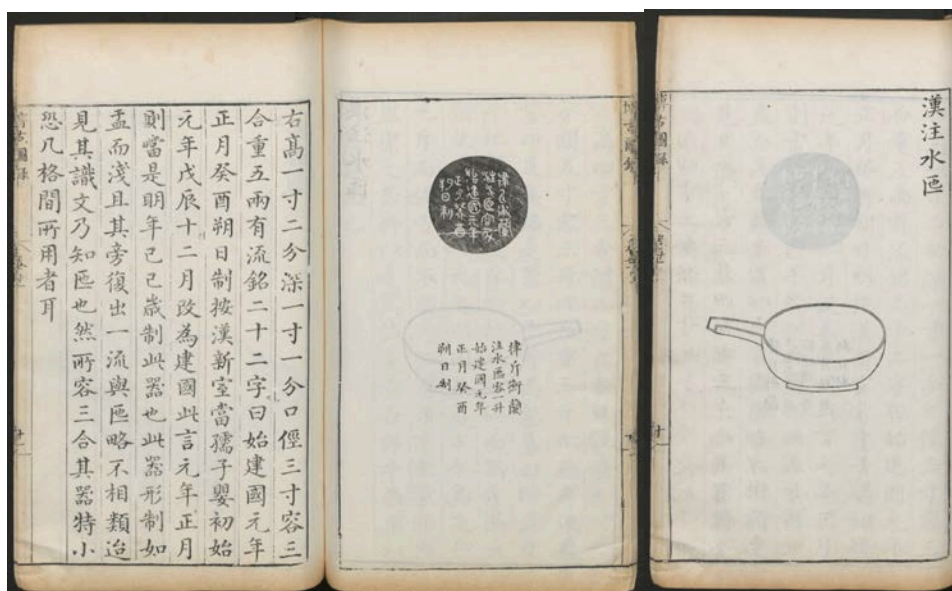


Fig. 2-5 Bronze *yi* for pouring water of the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE), *Xuanhe bogu tu*, Yizheng tang edition

¹⁶⁰ The *Siku quanshu* edition and the Yizheng tang edition (1753) displays rubbings of inscriptions on the recorded objects, while the early Ming edition held in the Harvard-Yenching Library only features transcriptions of the inscriptions, Lü Dalin and Luo Gengweng (ed.), *Kaogu tu*, 1368–1464, Harvard-Yenching Library, Harvard University, accessed 1st April 2022, <https://curiosity.lib.harvard.edu/chinese-rare-books/catalog/49-990079148010203941>.

It is hard to discover which of the two editions reflects the original catalogue in a more faithful manner. Hsu has mentioned in her essay that the *Siku quanshu* edition claimed to be a reproduction of a Song imprint. Whether this statement is genuine or not, the Qing edition is more relevant to the topic of this thesis. Thus, for consistency purposes, the thesis will use the two Qing editions in conjunction for analysis.

Around three decades later, the *Bogu tu* was completed as part of Emperor Huizong's cultural-political campaign of reviving antiquity.¹⁶¹ Similar to the *Kaogu tu*, the catalogue records the objects with line illustrations juxtaposed by transcribed rubbings of inscriptions and descriptive texts, which provide measurements and comments on the history and functions of the objects (Fig. 2-5). Meanwhile, the *Bogu tu* adopts a more systematic classification framework compared to the rather loosely defined categorical system of the *Kaogu tu*, as it divides the recorded objects into fifty-nine categories based on vessel type and chronological order. Each category is preceded by an introductory essay that proposes a generalised formal style of one specific vessel type, while commenting on its historical and ritualistic values.¹⁶²

From a visual perspective, the *Bogu tu*, along with the earlier *Kaogu tu*, called for attention to formal features of individual collectibles and formally introduced archaic objects as independent subject matters into the pictorial repertoire that had been continuously deployed by later generations. A noteworthy example particularly relevant to the *Guwan tu* is the *Guyu tu* 古玉圖 (Pictures of Ancient Jades) by the Yuan dynasty literatus and painter Zhu Derun 朱德潤 (1294–1365). Featuring pictures of 26 jade objects, the painting was originally

¹⁶¹ Existing scholarship on the *Bogu tu* in both Chinese and English language has pointed out the similarity between the *Bogu tu* and Lü's *Kaogu tu*, suggesting that the *Kaogu tu* presumably served as one of the models for the *Bogu tu* with regard to the format but also the content. Specifically, scholars including Chen Fangmei and Hsu Ya-Hwei have pointed out that the *Bogu tu* had appropriated transcriptions of inscriptions, as well as wordings and textual evidence adopted by Lü in his commentaries from the *Kaogu tu*. Moreover, several vessels in the *Bogu tu*, such as the Yun shi cauldron and the Jin Jiang cauldron originally from Liu Chang's collection, are recorded and illustrated in the *Bogu tu* in a similar manner as the *Kaogu tu*. It is likely that the compilers of the *Bogu tu* also consulted other earlier catalogues, including Ouyang's *Jigu lu* and the *Sanli tu* 三禮圖, an illustrated catalogue produced by Nie Chongyi 聶崇義 (act. after 950), which contains imagined ritual paraphernalia based on textual descriptions from the three Confucian ritual classics, the *Zhouli*, *Liji* and *Yili*. On the *Sanli tu*, see François Louis, *Design by the Book: Chinese Ritual Objects and the Sanli tu*, New York: Bard Graduate Centre, 2017. Hsu, 'Antiquaries and Politics', 237-42; Chen, 'Song gu qiwxue', 51-4; Ebrey, 'Collecting and Cataloguing Antiquities', 153-4.

¹⁶² Ebrey has provided an elaborate list of all the vessel types recorded in the *Bogu tu*, which also summaries the total number of each type of vessel from different historical periods. See the list in Patricia Buckley Ebrey, 'Collecting and Cataloguing Antiquities', *Accumulating Culture: The Collections of Emperor Huizong* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2008), 156-7.

produced as a handscroll measuring approximately 3 metres in length in 1341.¹⁶³ Each object on the scroll was accompanied by a textual description, which, as noted by Ming Wilson, was modelled after the *Kaogu tu*.¹⁶⁴

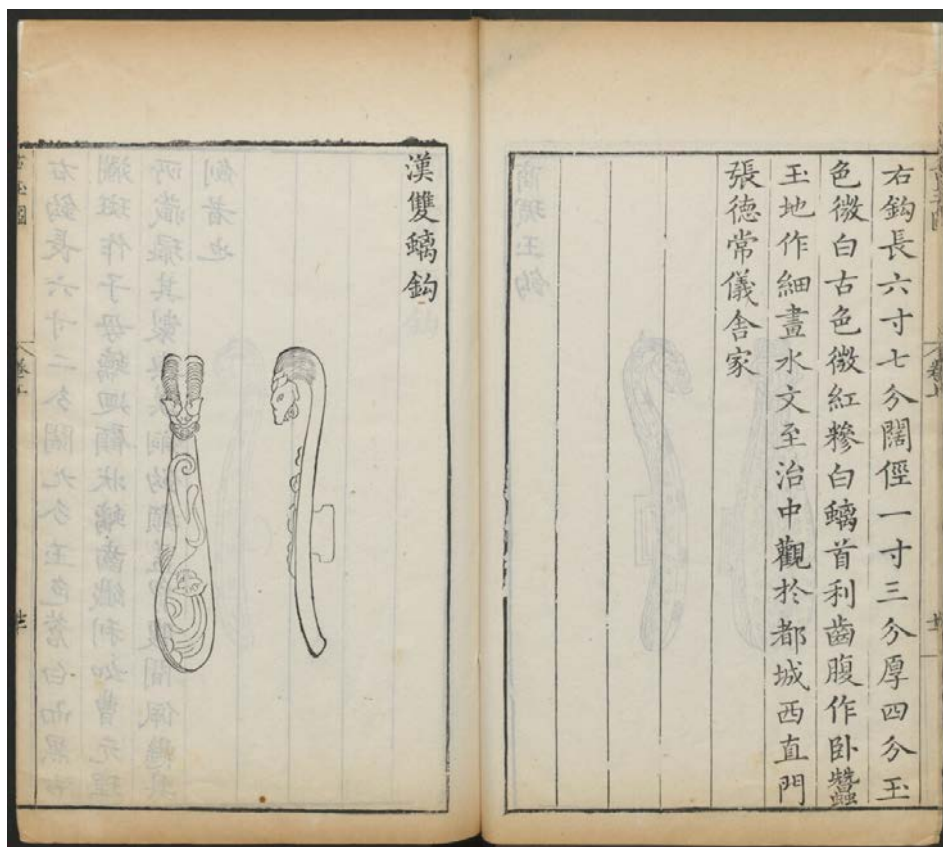


Fig. 2-6 Jade hook decorated with double chi-dragons of the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE), *Guyu tu*, Yizheng tang edition

While the scroll itself has not been discovered thus far, its printed version in book form has been widely distributed and reprinted since its initial publication during the Ming period.¹⁶⁵ The objects, as exemplified by the revised Yizheng tang edition (Fig. 2-6) of the

¹⁶³ Ming Wilson, 'The Study of Jade in China', *Chinese Jades* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2004), 84. The 1752 revised Yizheng tang version includes 31 jade objects, see Zhu Derun 朱德潤 (1294–1365), Huang Sheng 黃晟 (act. 1752), *Yizheng tang chongkao Guyu tu* 亦政堂重考古玉圖 [Revised Yizheng tang Edition of *Pictures of Ancient Jades*], in *Sangu tu*, comp. Huang Sheng (China: Huang shi Yizheng tang, 1752), vol. 1, 1a-b (seq. 1561-62), vol. 2, 1a-2a (seq. 1579-80), Harvard College Library Harvard-Yenching Library, <https://nrs.lib.harvard.edu/urn-3:fhcl:4909723>. accessed 25th March 2024.

¹⁶⁴ Wilson, 'The Study of Jade in China', 84.

¹⁶⁵ Wu Hung, 'Yongzheng moyu hu: gongting cang yu yu qi wu xi sheng de yige zonghe anli' 雍正墨玉壺：宮廷藏玉與器物寫生的一個綜合案例 [Emperor Yongzheng's Ink Jade Pot: A Comprehensive Case on Qing Imperial Jade Collection and Life Object Drawing], trans. Kexin Ma, in *The Ralph Wanger Collection of Chinese Jades* (London: Anthony Carter Ltd.,

printed catalogue, dated to 1752, are illustrated in the similar monochrome line drawing style as the Song catalogues and accompanied by texts. Interestingly, Wilson has pointed out that Zhu's descriptions place special focus on the objects' colours.¹⁶⁶ Specifically, the entry for the jade hook shown in Figure 2-6 suggests that the original jade colour bears a pale white hue, complemented with an archaised shade of white colour speckled with light red acquired gradually over time. What is more, it also presents a detailed account of the hook's form, mentioning the sharp teeth of the *chi*-dragon motif and the scrolling pattern in the shape of curled silkworm on the hook's body. Although it is hard to know to what extent the printed illustrations reflect the original images of the objects on the scroll, Zhu's interest in the materiality of the objects suggests that the original handscroll might have showcased some formal features of each jade item with close reference to the text, particularly their colours, which were not commonly included in illustrated catalogues.

With this example, it can be suggested that the use of handscroll to document archaic objects in pictorial images was not a Qing invention but could be traced at least back to the 14th century. Nevertheless, the presumed co-existence of texts and images showcased by the *Guyu tu* scroll, together with the Song illustrated catalogues, indicates that the historical value of the depicted antiquities could not be manifested solely through the images, but needed to be articulated through descriptive texts and commentaries. Resonating with the *Guyu tu* in terms of both subject matter and format, the *Guwan tu* seems to engage with the goal of pursuing accurate pictorial representations of antiquities embraced in the *Jinshi xue* tradition. Meanwhile, it demonstrates a departure from the schematic line drawing style to a

2023), 13.

¹⁶⁶ Wilson, 'The Study of Jade in China', 86.

more naturalistic and painterly mode of expression, which speaks to the second representational trend of creating paintings of individual archaic vessels in use.

II. Seeking Historicity in Form: Paintings of Archaic Utilitarian Vessels

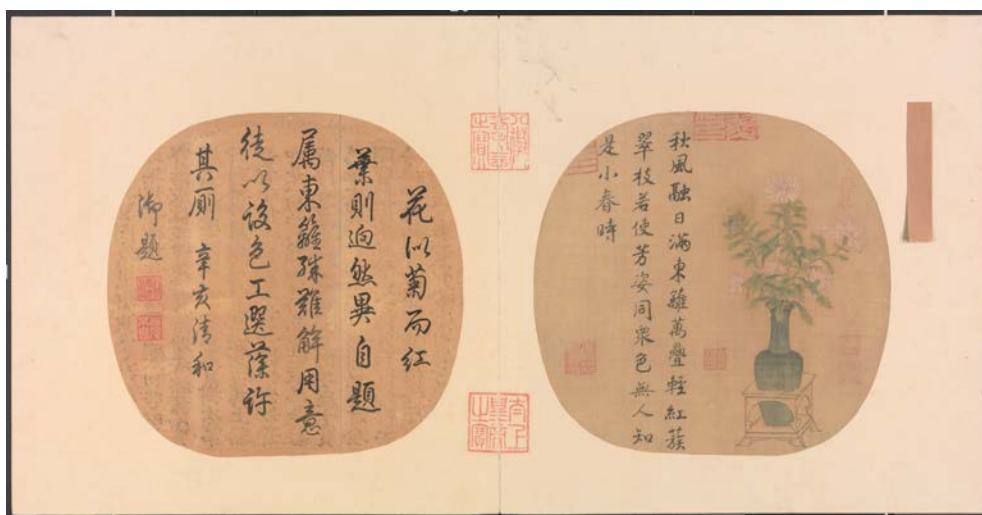


Fig. 2-7 Anonymous (attr. once to Yao Yuehua 姚月華 [act. 618–907]), *Picture of Autumn Blossom in Dan Vase*, Southern Song period (1127–1279), BPM

As discussed earlier in the chapter, *guwan* in the Yongzheng context could be employed as or refashioned into functional objects, such as flower vessels, paperweights, etc. (see pp. 118-19). This quality is, in fact, reflected by the *Guwan tu* with its meticulous depictions of vessels accompanied by accessories such as metal inner tubes and spoons, which will be further explored in the next chapter. In the meantime, the choice of portraying *guwan* in use links the scrolls with the trend of creating paintings that feature archaic utilitarian vessels—mostly vases and pots with flowers, plants, and occasionally fruit—as main subject matters.

This type of painting was popularised during the Song period, particularly under the Southern Song (1127–1279), as exemplified by a circular fan painting entitled *Danping qiuhui tu* 膽瓶秋卉圖 (*Picture of Autumn Blossom in Dan Vase*) (Gu00006152-10/10) (Fig.

2-7) held in the BPM.¹⁶⁷ The work was once in the Qing imperial collection and had been remounted under Emperor Qianlong (r. 1736–95) as part of a four-volume album series entitled *Sichao xuanzao* 四朝選藻 (*Selection of Treasures from Four Dynasties*) compiled in 1790. The album series features 40 small-scale paintings dated to the Tang, Song, Yuan, and Ming dynasties, each of which was considered exceptional in quality and accompanied by a poem composed by the emperor in the following year after the compilation of the album (1794).¹⁶⁸ Furthermore, the series is also documented in the *Shiqu baoji xubian* 石渠寶笈續編 (Sequel to the Precious Collection of the Stone Moat [Pavillion]), in which the painting has been falsely attributed to Yao Yuehua 姚月華 (act. 618–907), a Tang dynasty female poet also known for her paintings of birds and flowers.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ Inventory numbers starting with the character ‘gu’ 故 indicate the objects are either from the former Qing imperial holdings or acquired before 1949. Qiu Lian 丘濂, Zeng Yan 曾焱, Wu Liwei 吳麗璋, eds., ‘Pandian: jieli wancheng de cangpin zongmu’ 盤點：接力完成的藏品總目 [Inventory: Collection Catalogue Completed in Succession], *Gugong guanzhi* 故宮觀止 [Perfect admiration of the Palace Museum] (Beijing: Xiandai chubanshe, 2020), 27-30; Zheng Xinmiao 鄭欣淼, ‘Beijing gugong bowuyuan wenwu cangpin de qingli, chongshi yu waibo’ 北京故宮博物院文物藏品的清理 [On Organising the Collection of the Palace Museum in Beijing], *Tianfu yongcang: liang'an gugong bowuyuan wenwu cangpin gaishu* 天府永藏：兩岸故宮博物院文物藏品概述 [Eternal Collection of the Heavenly Residence: An Overview of the Collections of the Palace Museums in Beijing and Taipei] (Beijing: Forbidden City Publishing House, 2008), 72-78.

¹⁶⁸ Works attributed to Song artists, in particular, consist of 29 pieces and largely outnumber those from the other three periods; The poems have all been incorporated into the *Yuzhi shi yuji* 御製詩餘集 [Supplementary Collection of Imperial Poetry by Emperor Qianlong], vol. 11, and concluded with a commentary by the emperor himself (20b-21b), which specified the structure of the album series and the reason for its compilation. According to the commentary, the paintings were arranged in chronological order, but also based on their qualities. The series was divided evenly into 4 volumes, each labelled by one character from the mantic phrase ‘yuan heng li zhen’ 元亨利貞 derived from the *Books of Changes*. The *Danping qiuhui tu* is the last piece recorded under the title of the third album labelled by the character ‘li’, whose authorship has been attributed to Yao Yuehua (17a). For further details, see ‘Ti Sichao xuanzao ce’ 題《四朝選藻》冊 [Inscriptions for the *Selection of Treasures from Four Dynasties* Album], in Hongli, Wang Jie 王杰 (1725–1805), et al., *Yuzhi shi yuji* 御製詩餘集 [Supplementary Collection of Imperial Poetry by Emperor Qianlong], vol. 11, in *Siku quanshu* (jibu | bieji lei: Qing dai) 四庫全書（集部 | 別集類：清代） [Four Treasuries (Literature | Supplement Anthologies: Qing Period), 10a-21b, accessed 18th April 2023, Diaolong Full-text Database.

¹⁶⁹ Wang et al. ‘*Sichao xuanzao si ce*’ 四朝選藻 四冊 [*Selection of Treasures from Four Dynasties*, Four Albums], *Shiqu baoji xubian*, vol. 20 (Yangxin dian cang wu 養心殿藏 五), in *Midian zhulin Shiqu baoji hebian*, vol. 4, 1112-13. The compilers of the imperial catalogue mentioned an undated manuscript entitled *Dilou zachao* 荻樓雜抄 by an anonymous author as the reference source for the brief biography of the female artist. Chen et al., eds., ‘Mingliu liezhuan shisi’ 名流列傳十四 [Biographies of Eminent Personalities 14], *Bowu huibian: yishu dian di qibai bashi juan hua bu* 博物匯編：藝術典第七百八十卷畫部 [Encyclopedic Collection: Art Division, vol. 780: Painting], in *GJTSJC*, vol. 485, 39b; also see: Lily Xiao Hong Lee, A. D. Stefanowska et al., eds., ‘Yao Yuehua’, *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Women*, vol. 4 (Tang through Ming, 618–1644) (Armonk, NY and London: M. E. Sharpe, 2014), 552.

The presence of the painting in the specially designed album and in the imperial catalogue indicates the relatively high status of the work and suggests the style adopted for the depiction of the vase was not unknown to the Qing rulers. Observing the vase and its supporting stand, one would notice that the painter rendered the outlines with modulated ink lines similar to the illustrations in the catalogues of antiquities. Meanwhile, the painter also attempted to generate a sense of volume and depth by creating a subtle gradation of bluish green colour for the vase and representing the geometric shape of the stand. Although the resulting visual effect still appears to be schematic and slightly distorted, especially compared to the illusionistic images of objects in the *Guwan tu*, the painting signals a growing attention to formal likeness and accurate structural proportion facilitated by the use of the *gongbi* 工筆 (meticulous brushwork) technique.

The rise of the *gongbi* painting style is presumably associated with the development of *lixue* 理學, or the study of principles, with the reintroduction of the concept of *gewu zhizhi* 格物致知 (investigating things and extending knowledge) from the *Book of Rites*, one of the five Confucian Classics. The concept was brought to the centre of intellectual discussion initially by Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200), the Southern Song Neo-Confucian scholar. Zhu's intention to promote *gewu* as a means to foster moral development had been challenged later by Ming literati and Qing evidential scholars as ineffective in real-life application and subject to interpretation.¹⁷⁰ Meanwhile, the endeavour to conduct empirical examination of all things

¹⁷⁰ Benjamin A. Elman, 'The Investigation of Things (*gewu* 格物), Natural Studies (*gezhi xue* 格致學), and Evidential Studies (*kaozheng xue* 考證學) in Late Imperial China, 1600–1800', *Concepts of Nature: A Chinese-European Cross-Cultural Perspective*, eds. Hans Ulrich Vogel and Günter Dux (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 375–78; Kim Yung Sik, "'Analogical Extension' ('leitui') in Zhu Xi's Methodology of 'Investigation of Things' ('gewu') and 'Extension of Knowledge' ('zhizhi')", *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, no. 34 (2004): 42–45. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23496261>.

and events embedded in the concept of *gewu* was continuously appreciated during the Ming and Qing periods. Earlier scholars, notably Benjamin A. Elman, have highlighted the scientific aspect of *gewu* and linked the concept with the practice of natural studies.¹⁷¹ In particular, Elman has suggested the *gewu* endeavour was pursued not just in classical Confucian learning, but also in studies of exotic objects, strange creatures, and unusual phenomena under the notion of *bowu* 博物 (broad learning concerning the nature of things).¹⁷²

The growing interest in physical and material properties of things following the *gewu* ethos presumably gave rise to an increased attention to formal details in picturing objects, thus leading to the creation of the fan painting shown above, which reflects an intention to achieve ‘descriptive realism’ through capturing the formal and structural details of the vase and the stand in precise ink lines and colours.¹⁷³ In the meantime, the identity of the depicted vase remains ambiguous in terms of its material features and chronological origin. The poetic inscriptions, both the one accompanying the painting and the one on the adjacent album leaf composed by Emperor Qianlong, also reveal that the main focus of the work is the chrysanthemum blossom rather than the supplemental flower vessel.

¹⁷¹ Elman, ‘Investigation of Things’, 371-85; Kim Yung Sik cited Hu Shih’s argument on the ‘scientific spirit’ of Zhu Xi’s discourse on *gewu* and pointed out critically that Zhu indeed had redeployed this Confucian concept as a new approach to the study of things, or of nature; however, the learning process he proposed was not ‘purely intellectual’, but was subject to moral endeavours, for details of his discussion, see Kim, ‘Zhu Xi on Nature and Science’, *Questioning Science in East Asian Contexts: Essays on Science, Confucianism, and the Comparative History of Science* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 28-30. <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004265318>.

In the meantime, the current thesis will focus on how the Qing readers, mainly the intellectual elites and imperial members, took on the concept. Although Zhu’s emphasis on morality was under criticism, the fundamental ethos of *gewu* still remained visible in such scholarly disciplines as *kaozheng xue*, or evidential scholarship, and in the diverse imperial project of compiling encyclopedia and the promotion of natural and scientific studies by Qing rulers from the Kangxi emperor, see Elman, ‘Investigation of Things’, 388-93.

¹⁷² Elman, ‘Investigation of Things’, 371-74.

¹⁷³ Wen C. Fong, ‘Introspection and Lyricism: Southern Sung Painting’, *Beyond Representation: Chinese Painting and Calligraphy* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992), 256.

Liao Baoxiu has matched the vase with the *zhichui ping* 紙槌瓶 (mallet-shaped vase), which is now known as a typical ceramic form of the Song dynasty and could be found in extant collections of Northern and Southern Song ceramics nowadays.¹⁷⁴ This kind of vase was continuously adopted and refashioned in later periods and had been appreciated by Ming literati as suitable for displaying flowers in scholars' studios.¹⁷⁵ To the eyes of a Southern Song viewer, the depicted vase might not appear to be archaic, but would look visually correct in the sense that it was an appropriate vessel for the elegant elite practice of flower arranging.¹⁷⁶ It would possibly be reminiscent of the preceding Northern Song period, since the new regime brought an extensive number of skillful potters to the south in 1127 and declared the reestablishment of the old stylistic standards for ceramic production.¹⁷⁷ On the other hand, the depicted vase would qualify as a *guwan* for a Qing viewer, as long as he or she was familiar with relevant Ming connoisseurship discourses.

Compared to the illustrations of antiquities in the aforementioned catalogues, the *Danping qiuhui tu* demonstrates an early attempt to generate three-dimensional visual effect in the picture plane and a change in mode of representing archaic objects particularly for audiences at the Qing court. Meanwhile, the viewers, whether from the time the painting was created or

¹⁷⁴ Liao Baoxiu 廖寶秀, 'Guanyao danping yu e'jing ping: lüetan shuzhai huaqi zaoxing' 官窯膽瓶與鵝頸瓶: 略談書齋花器造型 [Guan-ware *Danping* and Goose-neck Vase: Some Thoughts on Shapes of Flower Vessels], *Gugong wenwu yuekan* 故宮文物月刊 [The National Palace Museum Monthly of Chinese Art] 128 (1993): 91-2; Liao Baoxiu, 'Songci: youya neilian de jijian meixue' 宋瓷: 優雅內斂的極簡美學 [Song Ceramics: The Aesthetics of Elegant Simplicity], in Deng Xiaonan 鄧小南, Yang Zhishui 揚之水, Zheng Peikai 鄭培凱, et al., *Daguan songchao: fengya meixue de shige cemian* 大觀宋朝: 風雅美學的十個側面 [Song Dynasty: Ten Aspects of Elegant Aesthetics] (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Open Page Publishing Company, 2020), 188.

¹⁷⁵ Yuan Hongdao 袁宏道 (1568–1610), 'Qiju' 器具 [Vessels], *Ping shi* 瓶史 [History of Vases] (1606), in *Baoyan tang miji* 寶顏堂秘籍 [The Secret Satchel from the Hall of Treasuring (the Calligrapher) Yan (Zhenqing)], ed. Chen Jiru 陳繼儒 (1558–1639) (China: Shen shi Shangbai zhai, 1573–1620) (Harvard-Yenching Library Chinese Rare Books Digitization Project-Collectanea), vol. 6 (seq. 661), 4b, accessed 12th May 2023, <https://nrs.lib.harvard.edu/urn-3:fhcl:25591906?n=661>.

¹⁷⁶ Thanks to Professor Pierson for pointing out this idea.

¹⁷⁷ Ye Zhi 葉寘 (act. 13th century), *Tanzhai biheng* 坦齋筆衡 [Notes from the Tranquil Study], in *Zhongguo taoci guji jicheng* 中國陶瓷古籍集成 [Collectanea of Historical Documents on Ancient Chinese Ceramics], ed. Xiong Liao 熊寥 (Nanchang: Jiangxi kexue jishu chubanshe, 2000), 25.

the Yongzheng period, would still need to equip themselves with certain amount of discursive knowledge in order to ‘read’ the vase’s historical and aesthetic values out of the overall delineated and generic image.

Moving to the Ming period, the popularity of this painting genre reached a zenith as the practice of *gewu* further extended to antiquarian research and the collecting of antiquities from the early Ming period, when Cao Zhao 曹昭 (act. 14th century) compiled the pioneering connoisseurship text *Gegu yaolun* 格古要論 (Essential Criteria of Antiquities).¹⁷⁸ During this period, paintings of archaic utilitarian vessels takes on the style of *xieyi* 寫意 (sketching the idea) characterised by the use of expressionistic brush strokes rather than precise, even ink

lines. Such style was particularly favoured by contemporaneous literati elites, as showcased by *Pinghe xiesheng* 瓶荷寫生 (*Vase of Lotus Sketched from Life*) (Gu-hua-002217) (Fig. 2-8) painted by the well-off Suzhou literatus Chen Chun 陳淳 (1483–1544) in 1541. Despite the less naturalistic style, the painting approach taken by Ming artists reflects a further attempt to use pictorial images alone as signifiers of the archaic qualities of objects. At the time, artists, who were often part of the network formed by collectors, connoisseurs, and arbiters of taste, would produce pictures of archaic vessels in line with specific tastes and



Fig. 2-8 Chen Chun 陳淳 (1483–1544), *Vase of Lotus Sketched from Life*, 1541, NPM

perception of an idealised lifestyle. They would draw inspiration from prevailing connoisseurship discourses and reassemble different formal elements derived from cherished antiquities into one hybrid image, arguably a form of illusionism in itself.

In the case of *Pinghe xiesheng*, the application of freehand ink strokes and speedy rendering of the outline and decorative details result in a simplified and flattened depiction of the vase with a dynamic and rather abstract visual effect. Meanwhile, in the catalogue published by the National Palace Museum, the vase has been described as an archaised bronze *gu*.¹⁷⁹ This judgment is presumably supported by the loosely defined vessel form and the sketch of a mythical beast's head on the bulged waist, which is indicative of the zoomorphic motif on ancient bronzes. The work is recorded in the first compilation of the *Shiqu baoji* as a first-class work originally stored in the Imperial Study at the Forbidden City, thus suggesting the Qing rulers' recognition of the style as well as the approach of assembling individual formal elements to generate images of archaic objects.¹⁸⁰

However, the monochrome, flattened image is still not enough to fully convey the material and temporal properties of the depicted vase, let alone its authenticity as an antiquity. During this period, reproductions and imitations of antiquities in original and other media could be easily acquired in the market. Such products would even be appreciated by Ming arbiters of taste, if they demonstrated the artisans' sophisticated skills in perfectly reproducing the ancient originals and capturing the spirit of *gu*.¹⁸¹ Therefore, it is possible

¹⁷⁹ Lin Lina 林莉娜, ed., 'Flower in Vases', *Pure Offerings of a Myriad Plants: Paintings on Flower Vases and Potted Scenes* (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 2018), 58.

¹⁸⁰ Zhang, Liang et al., 'Ming Chen Chun *Pinghe xiesheng*' 明陳淳瓶荷寫生 [*Vase of Lotus Sketched from Life* by Chen Chun, Ming Dynasty], *Shiqu baoji*, 68a, Diaolong Full-text Database.

¹⁸¹ Clunas, 'Things of the past', *Superfluous Things*, 104-5. Craftsmen who specialised in reproducing ancient artefacts would be admired and recorded in literati's writings. Some figures include Zhou Danquan 周丹泉, the specialist in reproducing ancient ceramics, especially Song Ding ware and vessels imitating shapes of ritual bronzes, see Lan Pu 藍浦

that the model of the depicted vase, if there was one, was a contemporary copy. Furthermore, ancient bronze *gu* was appreciated as a suitable vessel for flower arrangement in such specialist manuals like *Ping shi* 瓶史 (History of Vases) and *Ping hua pu* 瓶花譜 (Manual on Vases and Flowers).¹⁸² With this discourse in mind, the artist, as the descendant of an affluent scholar-official family, would be able to portray an imaginary flower vessel that conformed to the prevailing trend of his time based on his own knowledge of the appearance of bronze *gu* accessible in his family collection or in literati gatherings.

The complementary relation between the rich discursive tradition and pictorial images of *guwan* is further manifested in a painting of twelve *penjing* (Fig. 2-9), or potted landscapes,



Fig. 2-9 Attributed to Zhou Zhimian 周之冕 (c. 1550–1610), *Twelve Penjing*, Ming period (1368–1644), Shao-wai Lam Collection

(act. 1736–95), Zheng Tinggui 鄭廷桂 (act. 1815) et al., ‘Taoshuo zhibian shang’ 陶說雜編 上 [Miscellaneous Compilation of Accounts of Ceramics], *Jingdezhen taolu* 景德鎮陶錄 [Record of Jingdezhen Ceramics] (primarily based on the Yijing tang edition published in the 20th year of the Jiaqing reign [1815]), vol. 8, in *Zhongguo gu taoci wenxian jiaozhu* 中國古陶瓷文獻校注 [Edited and Annotated Collection of Historical Documents on Ancient Chinese Ceramics], ed. Chen Yuqian 陳雨前 et al. (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2015), 796-97.

Another well-known figure is Lu Zigang 陸子岡, a Suzhou jade carver mastering at producing objects that emulated ancient jade objects. See the discussion on jade water droppers made by Lu Zigang, which were equated with ancient bronzes, in Tu, ‘Shui zhong cheng’, vol. 10 (seq. 1153), 11a.

¹⁸² Yuan Hongdao specifically referred to old bronze *gu* collected by families in the Jiangnan area as ‘golden houses for flowers’, suggesting the vessels were not only visually appealing with their green patinas, but also functionally effective because the sandy grits on the vessels’ surfaces are ideal for cultivating flowers. See Yuan, ‘Qiju’ 器具 [Vessels], *Ping shi*, vol. 6 (seq. 660-61), 4a-b; Zhang Qiande 張謙德 (1577–1643), ‘Pin pin’ 品瓶 [Appraising Vases], *Ping hua pu* 瓶花譜 [Manual on Vases and Flowers] (based on the Baoyan tang edition) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985), 1.

attributed to Zhou Zhimian 周之冕 (c. 1550–1610), a late Ming literati painter born in Suzhou.¹⁸³ This work stands as a rare example within the broader genre of handscroll painting featuring miscellaneous flowers popularised during the Ming period, which would typically not include flower vessels.¹⁸⁴ Unlike the oversize *Guwan tu*, the painting is 30.5 cm in width and 469.3 cm in length, measuring within the size range of the typical handscrolls meant for intimate viewing. Its subject matter is, nonetheless, comparable to that of the *Guwan tu*, as both of them feature groups of individualised objects against textless, blank backgrounds. In the meantime, the style of this late Ming precedent remains in line with those of its contemporaries, highlighting the use of linear structures and the reproduction of specific formal registers of historical and aesthetic values.

Similar to the depicted objects in Chen's painting, the flowerpots are rendered in loose ink outlines, but also with pale shades of colours. The painter demonstrated the geometric shapes and volume of the flowerpots by clarifying the spatial relations between their formal parts. The gradation of the ink line colour from dark to light also engenders a sense of dynamism in the painting. Meanwhile, the painter adopted the conventional shifting perspective, as opposed to the one-point perspective invented in Europe, while tilting the flowerpots towards the spectators to showcase their interior sides, in which the *penjing* were rooted. Depicted in this slightly distorted manner, the pots appear to be stylised and simplified, floating across the picture plane against the void.

Despite the flatness of the depicted pots, however, the rhythmic composition of the

¹⁸³ I am grateful to Chih-Chieh Chang for kindly sharing her research finding on the painting, which suggests the work is a late Ming painting in the style of Zhou Zhimian, together with the entry she wrote for the forthcoming catalogue dedicated to the Shao-wai Lam Collection.

¹⁸⁴ Chang, 'Penshi qinggong tu' 盆石清供圖 [Picture of Elegant Offering of Potted Landscape and Scholars' Rock], unpublished catalogue entry, last modified 28 February 2024.

vessels and the flowering plants, whose branches protrude into the adjacent areas, alludes to the implicit spatial interconnection between each potted landscape. What is more, the artist positions a number of pots in close proximity to the border of the painting. The rockery *penjing*, which possibly adopts the rock as an organic vessel for the plants, even seems to be cut off by the edge of the scroll, with the rest of its body extending into the viewers' space.

With regard to the identities of the subject matter, Jonathan Hay has commented that the work was not a faithful 'record' of actual *penjing*, but a generic group portrait of miniature landscapes created after the artist's imagination.¹⁸⁵ In addressing the vessels, however, Hay has assigned particular material attributes—stoneware, bronze, and rock—to the depicted pots, and associated some of them specifically with *Jun*-glazed wares, and the crackled or unglazed wares from Yixing County. What is more, he has also noted that the simple forms of the vessels are 'for the most part archaistic'.¹⁸⁶

This interpretation, in fact, appears to depend primarily on pre-existing knowledge of the physical features of archaic objects appreciated in Ming connoisseurship discourses. The colour palette dominated by a light blue hue, along with the interlaced linear pattern, lobed bodies, and moulded studs, would link the vessels with Song ceramics, notably *Jun* wares, which are mentioned recurrently in Ming connoisseurship texts, beginning with the *Gegu yaolun*. The regular mentions of *Jun* ware, especially the flowerpot, in literati manuals on the art of living, like *Zunsheng bajian* 遵生八箋 (Eight Discourses on the Art of Living) and *Zhang wu zhi* 長物志 (Treatise on Superfluous Things), as a suitable vessel for growing

¹⁸⁵ Jonathan Hay, 'From Surfacedscapes to Objectscapes', *Sensuous Surfaces: The Decorative Object in Early Modern China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010), 342.

¹⁸⁶ Hay, 'From Surfacedscapes to Objectscapes', *Sensuous Surfaces*, 342.

calamuses and orchids further conforms to the image in the painting and seemingly testifies to the archaistic nature of the pots.¹⁸⁷



Fig. 2-10 Sun Kehong 孫克弘 (1532–1611), *Penjing with Flowers* with detail showing the bronze-like vessel, 1599, Poly International Auction Co. Beijing, 2022 Spring Auction, Lot. 0623, Photo courtesy of Tang Ning



In comparison to the *Twelve Penjing*, another recently published handscroll of *penjing* (Fig. 2-10) by the late Ming literatus Sun Kehong 孫克弘 (1532–1611) demonstrates an innovative approach by employing colours to signify the archaic quality of the painted object. Like the *Twelve Penjing*, Sun's painting adopts the shifting perspective and portrays a parade of 17 vessels planted with auspicious flowers, plants, and fruit, rendered still in a rather flattened manner. However, what sets the painting apart from the *Twelve Penjing* is its vibrant colour palette: each object is depicted in multiple shades of colours either in gradation or

¹⁸⁷ Gao, 'Lun zhupin yaoqi', *Zunsheng bajian*, vol. 7 (seq. 814), 49a; In his discussion of proper vessels for orchids, Wen Zhenheng suggested that one should search for old Longquan or Junzhou flowerpots in large sizes that had been formerly used in spring offerings at the imperial court. See Wen, 'Lan' 蘭 [Orchids], *Zhang wu zhi*, vol. 2, 13b.

contrasting each other to form certain decorative designs. For instance, a single-handled vessel (Fig. 2-10) is rendered with a blend of light and dark green to mimic the green patina often seen on ancient bronze vessels. This green base is then overlaid with patches of red featuring blurred borders that merges with the green background. This method of depicting corrosion on bronze vessels using speckles of colours was, in fact, also adopted by artists working on the *Guwan tu*, albeit executed in a more naturalistic manner, as shown in Figure 2-11, where the speckled colours blend with each other without standing out prominently.



Fig. 2-11 Bronze-like vessel from the PDF scroll adopting the archaising colouring technique

Meanwhile, as Tang Ning has pointed out in his article, the objects depicted on the scroll could be imagined pieces that blur the boundary between reality and illusion.¹⁸⁸ This is particularly exemplified by the image of a blue and white vessel in the shape of a double

¹⁸⁸ Tang Ning 唐寧, 'Yige (bugai) bei yiwang de wan Ming wenren: Sun Kehong de huayi ji qi shenghuo' 一個（不該）被遺忘的晚明文人：孫克弘的畫藝及其生活 [A Late Ming Literatus (ought not to be) Forgotten: Sun Kehong's Life and Painting Practice], *Art & Collection* 379 (2024): 99. I am grateful to the author for generously sharing his article and the image of the scroll.

peach planted with a branch of peach. Tang noted that the resemblance between the actual peach leaves and those painted on the vessel, rendered in the same style, might signify a deliberate artistic choice. This implies that the depiction may not have been based on direct observation of a real double peach-shaped blue and white vessel, which was presumably a rare artifact in itself.¹⁸⁹

In contrast to the Yuan dynasty text-dependent *Guyu tu*, both handscrolls mark the predilection for using pictorial elements to convey the historical value of the depicted objects. Meanwhile, established discourses and conceptual images of particular archaic objects potentially compensated for the lack of precise formal details in the depiction of the vessels. Specific formal elements highlighted by the artist would, in turn, signify such discourses and images embedded in viewers' minds and connect the pictorial images of the vessels with certain historically and aesthetically significant objects from the past. The images of the vessels, if standing on their own, remain open to varied interpretations with their ambiguous forms, and would not necessarily be imbued with the spirit of archaism, if the viewers are not familiar with the discursive and visual contexts, in which the images were produced and consumed.

In the meantime, these two works also showcase that the handscroll format, which, with its expanded picture plane, provided artists the freedom to create an implicit spatial structure by arranging objects in a rhythmic composition that emphasises the relative positions between them. This technique generates a sense of depth, even against a blank background, and was likely to have been adopted by artists rendering the *Guwan tu*, whose hidden spatial

¹⁸⁹ Tang, 'Sun Kehong', 99.

structures will be unveiled in the next chapter.

Moving into the Qing period, painting of archaic utilitarian vessels remained as a major genre cherished by the court and intellectual elites. Painters at the time, especially those associated with the imperial households, were well aware of the expressionistic mode of representation favoured by Ming literati and were evidently keen to create works in similar styles. For instance, in the *Album of Flowers* (Gu-hua-003245-00007) (Fig. 2-12) created by Chen Shu 陳書 (1660–1735), an elite female painter and a ranked noblewoman, in 1717, one



Fig. 2-12 Chen Shu 陳書 (1660–1735), ‘Vases of flowers’ from *the Album of Flowers*, 1717, NPM

of the album leaves depicts two overlapping vases in a lightly-coloured, expressionistic manner with subtly drawn ink lines and washes. Both vases are reduced to flattened surfaces. The vessel in the front is rendered with a webbed decorative design reminiscent of the crackled pattern on Song ceramics, while the one hidden behind is applied with gradient shades of green and grey, which suggest the colour of ancient bronzes.



Fig. 2-13 (right) Chen Shu, *Auspiciousness and Good Luck for the New Year*, 1735, NPM

Fig. 2-14 (left) Garlic-mouth vase with applied dragon motif, Ming Jiajing reign (1522–66), BPM

Meanwhile, a growing concern for formal likeness became more evident, as shown by Chen Shu's other painting entitled *Suichao jixiang ruyi* 歲朝吉祥如意 (*Auspiciousness and Good Luck for the New Year*) (Gu-hua-002528) (Fig. 2-13).¹⁹⁰ The painting takes on the hanging scroll format like the Ming prototype and showcases a dark blue vase with luxuriant flowers and accompanied by a combination of auspicious fruits and plants. While the rendering of the vase demonstrates the artist's mastery of the traditional ink line technique, it also manifests Chen's intention to experiment with perspective technique and colour gradation in an attempt to introduce three-dimensional effects into the paintings. The vase evokes an explicit sense of volume with its bulging body, and the application of a lighter shade of blue makes the applied coiled dragon design stand in relief against the dark blue surface. Meanwhile, the depicted vase still displays a mixture of formal characteristics derived from objects of different time periods, namely the Song-style *danping* vessel shape and the applied dragon design reminiscent of Ming porcelains, such as the Jiajing garlic-mouth vase with applied decoration of copper-red glazed dragon housed in the BPM (Fig. 2-14). This suggests that the image was likely constructed from a combination of contemporary imitations and Chen's own imagination based on her knowledge of real antiquities, similar to the practice of the aforementioned Ming artists.

¹⁹⁰ The work was dated to the last year of the Yongzheng reign (1735) and incorporated into the imperial collection at least since the Qianlong (1736–95) and Jiaqing (1796–1820) periods.

III. Pursuing Three-dimensionality: Cross-media Representations of *Guwan*

Departing from the field of painting, the Ming dynasty also witnessed a new attempt to explore three-dimensional representations of archaic objects using diverse media. This approach marked a notable step forward in the pursuit of verisimilitude before the advent of European painting techniques during the Qing period. For instance, the National Museum of China holds a pair of late Ming lacquered wardrobes with ‘bogu’ motifs (Fig. 2-15-1).¹⁹¹ Inscriptions on the wardrobes



Fig. 2-15-1 Lacquered wardrobe with 'bogu' motifs, dated to 1584 (inscription), National Museum of China

specify that they were produced in the Jiashen year of the Wanli reign (1584). On their framing borders is a combination of archaised objects (Fig. 2-15-2) formed by jade, ivory, lapis lazuli, and other precious materials in the ‘baibao qian’ (one-hundred treasure inlay)

¹⁹¹ Other late Ming examples also appear in auction houses and private collections. Two such examples would be a late Ming Huanghuali wood lacquer box with motifs of assorted objects and a wardrobe embellished with inlaid archaised objects, which are distributed across the door panels of the wardrobe. The box is currently housed in the Guanfu Museum in Beijing established based on the private collection of Ma Weidu. The wardrobe (Lot. 1091) was presented at the Autumn Auction ‘Daqi—gudai kongjian yechang’ 大器——古代空間夜場 [Large Wares: Ancient Space’ Evening Session] held by Shanghai Kuangshi (Council) Auction House in November 2017. Since the provenances of these two works are not clear, the current thesis will only list them out for reference.

technique.¹⁹² The attempt to make use of multiple materials to capture the volumetric forms of the inlaid objects shown by this example could be considered as a sign of interest in representing the three-dimensional and material qualities of objects in picture planes and in relief-decorated surfaces.



Fig. 2-15-2 Detail showing the ‘bogu’ motifs on the wardrobe



This decorative approach continued to be adopted during the Qing period, as exemplified by a Kangxi gilded *wucai* vase with applied ‘bogu’ motifs (Gu00147634) (Fig. 2-16) housed in the BPM.

Comparing to the inlaid *guwan* on the Wanli wardrobes, the archaised vessels are rendered in higher relief and more attention is paid to the distinctive decorative details

highlighted mostly in gold. The artisan also tried to capture perspective by adjusting the shape of the applied motifs. For example, in the case of the stand for the applied vase with a branch of persimmon (Fig. 2-16), its central leg is raised to a slightly higher level above the

¹⁹² Guo Huaiyu 郭懷宇, ‘Mingdai jiaju zhuangshi de tuxiang chanshi—yi wanli zhuqi baibao qian ligui wei li’ 明代家具裝飾的圖像闡釋——以萬曆朱漆百寶嵌立櫃為例 [Interpretations of Decorative Patterns on Ming Furniture: A Case Study on Wanli Lacquered ‘baibao qian’ Wardrobes], *Yishupin* 藝術品 [Art Work], No.2 (2018), 58-9.



Figure 2-16 *Wucai* enamelled vase with gilt decoration and applied 'bogu' motifs (top: detail showing the applied decoration showing a vase holding a branch of persimmon), Kangxi period (1662–1722), BPM

vase's surface than the other two flanking legs. The resulting design, thus, achieves a more accurately proportioned and illusionistic visual effect. Venturing into the Yongzheng and Qianlong periods, this practice of applying three-dimensional *guwan* motifs onto decorative surfaces became more widely appreciated, leading to frequent production of wall panels featuring applied *guwan* (Fig. 2-17) and archaised hanging vases (Fig. 2-18), which would have been installed on the walls of certain palace halls.¹⁹³ These ornaments, in turn, served to transform the entire walls into relief-decorated surfaces reminiscent of the above mentioned porcelain with the applied 'bogu' motif, but also into a blank picture plane like the

¹⁹³ The production of hanging vases also began as early as the Wanli reign. The BPM houses a Ming white-glazed hanging vase (Gu00144969) attributed to the Shiwan kilns in Foshan, Guangdong. The piece was once part of the Qing imperial holdings and could have served as a model for the production of hanging vases in the imperial workshop.



Fig. 2-17 Decorative flower-shaped hanging panel with 'bogu' motif, dated to the Qianlong period (1736–95), BPM

Fig. 2-18 Fang Guan-glazed hanging vase in archaic *cong* shape, Yongzheng period (1723–35), BPM



background of the *Guwan tu*. In parallel with these objects, whose physical presences introduced a sense of three-dimensionality to the flattened walls, the illusionistic portraits of objects in the *Guwan tu* can be similarly considered as a signifier of certain space. This issue regarding the hidden space in the *Guwan tu* will be further explored in Chapter four and five.

Another example showing the dialogue between Ming and Qing decorative pictures of *guwan* would be a set of eight silk screen panels (Gu-si-000216-223) (Fig. 2-19-1) with 'bogu' motifs originally held in the former Qing imperial collection. The screen panels are executed in the style of Yue, or Cantonese, embroidery, with each panel featuring 11 to 13 pieces of *guwan*, many of which are rendered to show how they would be used in living

context.¹⁹⁴ In addition to the conventional vessels resembling ancient bronzes and cracked ceramics, the screen also presents items like paperweights, flower vases, *ruyi* sceptre, and figurines for display, echoing with the diversity of objects presented in the *Guwan tu*.

It is also worth noting that the composition of the *Guwan tu*, that is, portraying a collection of objects, or object-related things, in an orderly manner against a light background with no text, appears again in this screen panel set, in addition to the two late Ming



Fig. 2-19-1 Embroidered screen with 'bogu' motif, silk in Yue-style embroidery, Ming period (1368–1644), NPM

handscrolls (Figs 2-9, 2-10) discussed above. Thus, it can be suggested that the format of depicting objects adopted for the *Guwan tu* was not a new invention in the Yongzheng reign, but could be traced back at least to the late Ming period.

In regard to the style of representation, the images of objects shown in the screen panels

¹⁹⁴ Yue xiu 粵繡, or Cantonese embroidery, is a generic term referring to the embroidery produced in the region of the current Guangdong Province in China. It first emerged in the Tang period and was later popularised in the mid- and late Ming periods. Two major schools of Yue embroidery are the 'Guang xiu' developed mainly from Guangzhou and the 'Chao xiu' from the city of Chaoshan. See Dorothy Perkins, 'Embroidery', *Encyclopedia of China: The Essential Reference to China, Its History and Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 143.



Fig. 2-19-2 Tripod bronze cauldron with brownish-yellow dapples (the seventh panel counting from left side in Fig. 2-19-1)

still appear to be schematic and lack of depth, but the vibrant colours of the brightly dyed threads has served rather effectively in representing the objects' material qualities. For instance, on the gradient green surface of the tripod bronze cauldron (Fig. 2-19-2) in the seventh screen panel, several dapples of brownish-yellow colours spread out evenly and presumably represent the gold inlay often applied to Xuande bronze censers. At the same time, the textured surface generated by the soft and thick

threads brings out a spontaneous light and dark contrast, engendering a sense of texture and volume for the object. A similar set of four embroidered screen panels dated to the Qing period (Fig. 2-20-1) can be found in the Tsinghua University Art Museum. The subject matter and the composition are consistent with the Ming piece, but it is clear that the Qing artisans achieved a more accurate representation of perspective and created a more natural gradation in colour, as evidenced by the two four-



Fig. 2-20-1 Screen with 'bogu' motif, Qing period (1644–1911), Tsinghua University Art Museum

legged bronze cauldrons from the two works (Figs 2-20-2 and 2-20-3).

The above examples provide evidence for the heightened appreciation for formal details in portraying *guwan* during the Ming period, which highlight the novel practice of experimenting with different media to capture the three dimensionality and the textured material qualities of *guwan*. Meanwhile, the shift in mode of representation to the illusionistic style in two-dimensional paintings had not yet taken place during this period. The similarity between the two sets of screen panels above, along with the use of applied ‘bogu’ motifs, however, strongly suggests that Qing image-makers had directly drawn inspiration from their Ming precedents in producing images of *guwan*, paralleling their redeployment of Ming connoisseurship discourses.

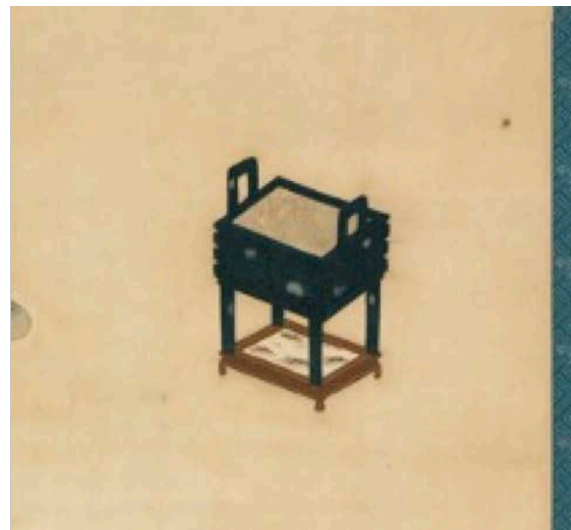


Fig. 2-20-2 (left) Four-legged bronze cauldron from the Qing screen with ‘bogu’ motif (the fourth panel counting from the left side in Fig. 2-20-1)

Fig. 2-20-3 (right) Tripod bronze cauldron with brownish-yellow dapples from the Ming screen with ‘bogu’ motif (the sixth panel)

IV. Generating Pictorial Illusion: European-style Portraits of Objects

As the quest for verisimilitude in depicting archaic objects continued into the Qing era, the Kangxi period further witnessed two important new developments: a growing interest in science and technology introduced by European Jesuits, and paintings of objects in a European-inspired style. During this period, the traditional ink line painting style continued to be adopted for court paintings of objects as shown by Chen Shu's paintings discussed earlier, but the European-inspired illusionistic style

Fig. 2-21 Banda Lisha 班達里沙 (act.1713–32), *Ginseng Blossom*, Kangxi reign (presumably after 1715), NPM



adopted for the *Guwan tu* started to come to the fore.

Very few examples of such paintings have survived to the present day, but one work entitled *Renshen hua* 人蔘(參)花 (Gu-hua-002507) (Fig. 2-21) from the NPM could serve to uncover how and for what purpose the illusionistic style was used prior to the Yongzheng period.

Presented as a hanging scroll depicting a pot of ginseng blossoms, the work is recorded in the first compilation of the *Shiqu baoji*. According to the catalogue entry, the painting was created by Banda lisha 班達里沙 (act.1713–32), also known in Wade-Giles romanisation as Pan-ta-li-sha), a rather mysterious court painter who served both the Kangxi and Yongzheng

emperors. The painting is described as a second-rank work modelled after the style of Western paintings (the term adopted in the catalogue is *fang xiyang hua* 仿西洋畫).¹⁹⁵ At the same time, the painting is among the earliest known Qing court paintings with illusionistic images of individual objects, and can be considered as a direct precursor to the *Guwan tu*.

Earlier scholarship has contributed to an understanding of the material, style, and context of the work, and it is often cited as a pioneering example of European-style paintings by Chinese court painters—a symbol of exchange between Europe and Qing China under the support of Emperor Kangxi.¹⁹⁶ The dating of the painting to the Kangxi period is mainly based on the contextual study surrounding the gold-ink inscription composed by the Kangxi emperor.¹⁹⁷ As specified in the inscription, the painting was presumably completed around 1713, when Emperor Kangxi traveled to the Rehe summer retreat and found the ginseng on the site.¹⁹⁸

The painter, Banda lisha, possibly of Manchu origin, was among the earliest pupils of the renowned Italian Jesuit painter Giuseppe Castiglione (1688–1766, known also by his Chinese

¹⁹⁵ Zhang, Liang, et al., ‘Banda lisha *Renshen hua* yi zhou’ 班達里沙人蓼花一軸 [One Scoll of *Ginseng* by Banda lisha], *Shiqu baoji*, vol. 18, in *Siku quanshu* (zibu ba yishu lei yi: shuhua zhi shu) 四庫全書（子部八 | 藝術類一：書畫之屬 [Four Treasuries (Masters Part 8 | Art Section 1: Calligraphy and Painting)], 24a, accessed 23rd April 2023, Diaolong Full-text Database.

¹⁹⁶ Nie Chongzheng, ‘Jingwu hua yu bogu tu’ 靜物畫與博古圖 [Still Life Paintings and Pictures of Antiquities], *Shoucangjia* 收藏家 [Collectors], no. 6 (1995): 60-62; Lin Lina 林莉娜, ‘Banda lisha, Jiang Tingxi *Hua renshe hua*’ 班達里沙蔣廷錫畫人蓼花 [Paintings of Ginseng Blossom by Banda lisha and Jiang Tingxi], *Gugong wenwu yuekan* 故宮文物月刊 [The National Palace Museum Monthly of Chinese Art], no. 343 (2011): 69-75; Liu Hui 劉輝, ‘Kangxi chao yang huajia: Giovanni Gheradini—jian lun Kangxi dui xiyang huihua zhi taidu 康熙朝洋畫家：杰凡尼·熱拉蒂尼——兼論康熙對西洋繪畫之態度 [Foreign Painter under the Kangxi Reign—Giovanni Gheradini with a discussion on Emperor Kangxi’s attitude towards Western Painting], *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宮博物院院刊 [Palace Museum Journal], no. 2 (2013): 37-9.

¹⁹⁷ The authorship of the inscription is specified in the entry of the *Shiqu baoji* and is further evidenced by the presence of the inscription in the *Shengzu ren huangdi yuzhi wenji* 聖祖仁皇帝御製文集 [Collection of Imperial Works by Emperor Shengzu ren (Kangxi), shortened as *RHDYZWJ*]. See Zhang Yushu 張玉書 (1642–1711), et al., ‘Rehe chan renshe...’ 熱河產人參 [Ginseng produced in Rehe...], *RHDYZWJ* 4, vol. 33, in *Siku quanshu* (jibu qi | bieji lei liu: Guochao) 四庫全書（集部七 | 別集類六：國朝） [Four Treasuries (Literature Part 7 | Supplement Anthologies Section 6: Qing Period), 3a, accessed 23rd April 2023, Diaolong Full-text Database. See Lin, ‘Banda lisha’, 75; Liu, ‘Kangxi chao yang huajia’, 37.

¹⁹⁸ Lin, ‘Banda lisha’, 75-6.

name as Lang Shining 郎世寧).¹⁹⁹ Several entries in the *Huoji dang* indicate he was commissioned to create festive paintings, portraits of *meiren*, landscape paintings, and *tongjing hua* under Emperor Yongzheng, thus suggesting his mastery of traditional Chinese painting styles.²⁰⁰ His work seemed to be very much appreciated by the Yongzheng emperor, who even bestowed on him an official residence belonging to the Plain Yellow Banner in 1729 and appointed him as *huahua hujun* 畫畫護軍 (guard of painting).²⁰¹

The painter himself had studied officially under European artists. As specified by one *Huoji dang* entry dated to the 28th day of the ninth month in the first year of the Yongzheng reign, Banda Lisha and five other court painters were assigned to Castiglione to learn painting.²⁰² Meanwhile, since Castiglione did not arrive in China until 1715, it was likely that Banda lisha had begun his lesson on European painting techniques with other European artists serving at the court before the arrival of Castiglione.²⁰³

Observing the depicted pot, one will notice the clearly defined contrast between light and shadow on its body. Similar to the *Guwan tu*, the painting also features an unseen light that comes from the upper right corner of the picture plane, leaving a cast shadow on the void ground. The artist also attempted to create the illusion of depth and reproduce the three-dimensional geometric structure of the decorative stand. The resulting image, however, reveals that the artist had struggled a bit to fully figure out the accurate perspective, as the

¹⁹⁹ While Nie Chongzheng suggested Banda lisha possibly had a Manchu or Mongolian root in his article, Lin proposed that the painter was more likely to be of Manchu origin based on a *Huoji dang* record that describes Emperor Yongzheng's order to grant him an official residence in areas inhabited by the Eight Banners.

²⁰⁰ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 1, 187; vol. 2, 720; vol. 4, 126, 554; vol. 4, 549; vol. 5, 72, 429 (three entries). See contents of the entries in Appendix (III).

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 4, 549.

²⁰² FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 1, 74.

²⁰³ Liu Hui has proposed Giovanni Gheradini as the first instructor of Banda lisha in his essay, see Liu, 'Kangxi chao yang huajia', 38.

stand still appears to be somewhat distorted, with the stand leaning towards the left and floating up above the horizontal line. What is equally significant, the artist had experimented with European painting materials and created the work in oil pigments on Korean paper applied with alum paste. The use of Korean paper was fairly common in Qing imperial oil painting practices, because the paper was praised for being sturdy and less absorbent and often adopted as an alternative to canvas.²⁰⁴

Similar to the pre-Qing prototypes, this painting still puts the focus on the plant, that is, the ginseng found in Rehe. Although it was likely that the depicted pot, along with its stand, was modelled after a particular flower vessel present at the court, the unadorned vessel surface makes it relatively hard to match the pot with one specific object, or to identify its material. Nevertheless, the painting marks an explicit turn to the illusionistic style and reflects a desire to achieve formal resemblance in representing objects on a two-dimensional picture plane, especially for documenting specific things and events deemed memorable or significant by the emperor.

This pursuit of formal resemblance continued into the Yongzheng period, when illusionistic hanging scrolls of individual objects were frequently commissioned by the emperor. These works resonate with the Ming paintings of archaic utilitarian vessels and often functioned as auspicious paintings similar to the earlier works by Chen Shu, which would be displayed in palace halls or presented as gifts during festival seasons. Many extant

²⁰⁴ Lin, 'Banda lisha', 70-1; Another court painting rendered in oil on Korean paper is a small-size imperial portrait of Chunhui, one of the consorts of Emperor Qianlong. The work was presented in the exhibition 'Arcadia World of Emperor Qianlong: An exhibition of a portrait of consort Chunhui by Giuseppe Castiglione and 18-century syncretic-style works of arts from palace' held by the Poly Art Museum in Beijing from 16 October to 2 November in 2021.

paintings of the kind were created by, or are attributed to, Castiglione.²⁰⁵ Vessels in these paintings are generally shown on decorative stands against a blank background and filled with flowers in a naturalistic manner, as if the picture is a reflection of how the vessels would be used at the court.

One such example is *Vase of Flowers* (Gu-hua-000804) (Fig. 2-22), an undated work signed by Castiglione. The detailed rendition of the form and decorative designs allows viewers to instantly pair the depicted vessel with the faceted blue-and-white vase decorated with interlaced morning glory design dated to the Xuande period, as exemplified by Figure 2-24. Interestingly, similar blue-and-white vases appear four times in the two *Guwan tu* handscrolls (Fig. 2-23). Each depicted vase is shown on a different stand and is rendered with subtle alterations in the vessel shape,

colours, and composition of the decorative motif. The recurring

images not only reflect that this type



Fig. 2-22 Giuseppe Castiglione (1688–1766), *Vase of flower*, undated (possibly during the Yongzheng reign [1723–35]), NPM

²⁰⁵ Jan Stuart, 'Timely Images: Chinese Art and Festival Display', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 167 (2011): 341; Existing paintings of this genre by the Castiglione include: the *Gathering of Auspicious Signs* (1723) housed in the National Palace Museum, Taipei, the earliest dated work by the artist, and a later version in the Shanghai museum dated to 1725; the *Auspicious Signs of the Double Fifth Festival* (1732) in the Palace Museum, Beijing; and the undated *Flowers in Vase* mentioned above. Stuart has also examined a similar kind of painting in the National Palace Museum, dedicated to the Double Fifth Festival in the style of Lang, in her essay, see the image and her discussion in 'Timely Images', 338-40.

of vase enjoyed the special appreciation of the emperor, but also match with the presence of multiple extant objects of this type in museum and auction contexts. The National Palace Museum, for example, holds 6 pieces dated to the Xuande period. Three of them are from the former imperial collection (Gu-ci-16788, 009473, 010723), but bear no reign mark. The wooden bespoke stand for one of these three vases (Gu-ci-16788) (Fig. 2-24) has survived to the present day and is inscribed with a character ‘yi’ 乙 at the centre of its bottom surface, which indicates the vase is a second-ranking object.



Fig. 2-23-1 PDF scroll, at the beginning (1st paper), close to the Xuande blue and white jar



Fig. 2-23-2 PDF scroll, towards the end, close to the imperial throne



Fig. 2-23-3 V&A scroll, towards the end, close to the throne-like cabinets



Fig. 2-23-4 V&A scroll, towards the end, after the nine rectangular cabinets

Fig. 2-23 Blue and white vases with morning glory design depicted in the PDF and V&A scrolls

Comparing the extant pieces to the images in the *Guwan tu*, however, one would find it difficult to pinpoint which object could be matched exactly with one specific image. Despite the meticulous depiction of the formal details, the images only display one side of the vases,



Fig. 2-24 Faceted blue and white vase and its bespoke stand produced during the Qing period, vase: Xuande reign (1426–35), NPM

without showing other angles, which might contain decisive information that could help with the identification, like the sloping neck, which is not discernible in the frontal view of the vase. Differences in the underglaze blue colour might not be reliable as well, since minor adjustments in tone were possible during the painting process and the colour itself would also change and become faded over time. The decorative stand could be matched to a similar type as the stand for the piece (Fig. 2-23-3) depicted in the V&A scroll. Nevertheless, the incised line around the square border of the stand specified in the painting suggests the depicted stand is not quite the same as the surviving piece. The discrepancy between the image of *guwan* and actual objects, along with the illusionistic nature of the *Guwan tu*, will be further discussed in Chapter five.

With respect to the current analysis of the *Guwan tu*'s visual context, the fact that the depicted vase could be precisely matched with one particular type of object alludes to a further predilection for faithful representations of object forms under Emperor Yongzheng. Coincidentally, the Yongzheng reign witnessed the publication of *Shixue* 視學 (The Study of Vision) by Nian Xiyao 年希堯 (1671–1738), a high-ranking scholar-official, but also an artist and amateur mathematician. He was appointed as the superintendent of the imperial kiln at Jingdezhen in 1726 and published *Shixue* with the assistance of Castiglione.²⁰⁶

The monograph was first published in 1729, to which the V&A scroll was dated, and reprinted in 1735 with an additional preface. At the end of his preface to the first edition of the monograph, Nian expressed his opinion on the everlasting debate surrounding the status of *shen* 神 (spirit) and *xing* 形 (form) in Chinese painting tradition. According to him, ‘one should not vainly follow the rambling statement that [paintings] showing “realness” is not considered “marvelous”. How could [a painting] achieve such “marvelousness” without being real in the first place’.²⁰⁷ In this remark, Nian presented a positive attitude towards the European-inspired illusionistic mode of presentation, which was criticised by contemporary scholar-artists like Zou Yigui 鄒一桂 (1686–1772). In his work *Xiaoshan huapu* 小山畫譜 (Painting Manual of Xiaoshan), Zou commented that European painters were known for their mastery in the method of trigonometry and could create paintings that generated pictorial illusion. As an example, he specifically noted that ‘in paintings of palace chambers on the

²⁰⁶ Benjamin A. Elman, ‘Natural Studies and the Jesuits’, *On Their Own Terms: Science in China, 1550-1900* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 214; Kleutghen, ‘The Study of Vision’, *Imperial illusion*, 59-60.

²⁰⁷ The original comment in Chinese goes as follows: ‘毋徒漫語人曰，真而不妙，夫不真又安所得妙哉’，from Nian Xiyao 年希堯 (1671–1738), ‘Shixue bianyan’ 視學弁言 [Preface to *The Study of Vision*], 1729, in Nian and Giuseppe Castiglione, *Shixue* 視學 [The Study of Vision], 2nd page of the preface, Bodleian copy of the 1735 edition (Douce Chin.b.2), Oxford University.

walls, you feel as if you are about to walk into them'.²⁰⁸ However, he went on criticising these paintings as craftspeople's works with 'no brushwork to speak of', thereby disqualifying them as true painting, which, according to the tradition of literati painting, would highlight the significance of 'spiritual resemblance' over 'formal likeness'.²⁰⁹

Meanwhile, Nian's attitude was presumably shared by the Yongzheng emperor as well, judging from his frequent commissions of paintings in this style, including the initiation of the *Guwan tu* project. In the preface of the 1735 edition, Nian particularly addressed *qiwu* 器物 (vessel and object) as an independent type of subject matter for painting and suggested,

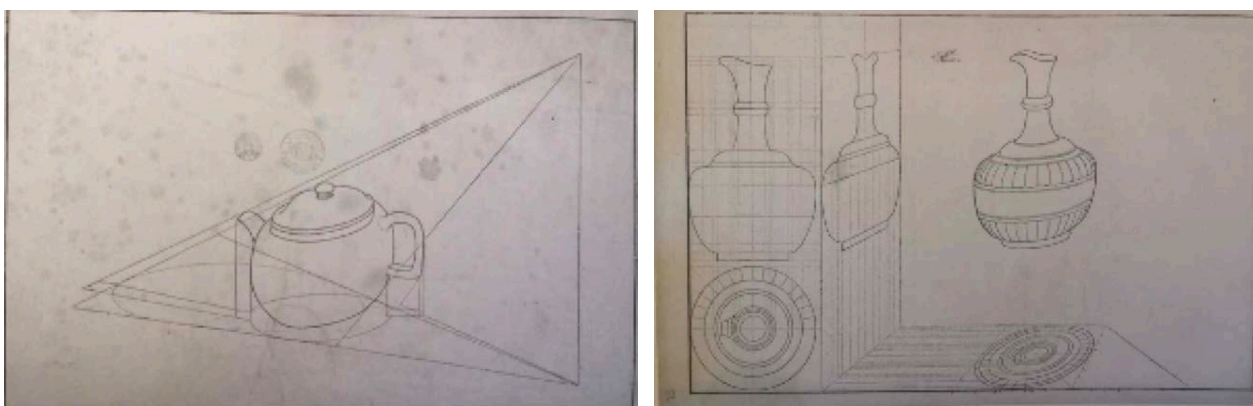


Fig. 2-25 Nian Xiyao 年希堯 (1671–1739), Diagrams showing perspectival structures of a ewer and a teapot, from *Shixue* 視學 (The Study of Vision), 1735 edition

'only by adopting the Western approach could one penetrate their principles and achieve perfection [in picturing them]'.²¹⁰ This comment echoes the concept of *gewu*, which entails the study of the essential principles of all things, but, at the same time, served to elevate the European painting technique as a means to achieve the ideal in Confucian canons.

²⁰⁸ Zou Yigui 鄒一桂 (1686–1772), *Xiaoshan huapu* 小山畫譜 [Painting Manual of Xiaoshan], translation from Lihong Liu, 'Shadows in Chinese Art: An Intercultural Perspective', in *Qing Encounters: Artistic Exchanges between China and the West*, Petra ten-Doesschate Chu, Ning Ding, with Lidy Jane Chu, eds (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2015), 202.

²⁰⁹ Zou, *Xiaoshan huapu*, 202.

²¹⁰ The relevant comment in Chinese goes as follows: '至於樓閣器物之類，欲其出入規矩毫髮無差，非取則於泰西之法萬不能窮其理而造其極'. Nian, 'Preface dated to 1735', in Nian and Castiglione, *Shixue*, 1st page of the preface.

Furthermore, he also devoted an entire section to providing guidance on how to represent various objects. Two diagrams showing perspectival structures of a ewer and a teapot (Fig. 2-25) were presented in the section, with no textual instruction to the side. The illustrations have been suggested as being modelled after specific Jingdezhen porcelains, which could be easily accessed by Nian as the



Fig. 2-26 White-glazed ewer with Yongzheng reign mark, Musée Guimet

on-site superintendent.²¹¹ The image of the ewer, in particular, could be matched with several extant white-glazed and blue and

white pieces held in museums and sold by auction houses. Two notable examples would be the one with the six-character Yongzheng reign mark from the Grandidier Collection in the Musée Guimet (G3351) (Fig. 2-26) and the one held in the BPM (Gu00149354).²¹² The illusionistic perspective drawing, in turn, might also be employed as *yang* 樣, that is, a preliminary model for the modular production of items that conformed to the ruler's specific requirements and tastes.

The examples above demonstrate that the European-inspired illusionistic style had begun to be adopted for pictures of objects at least since the late Kangxi period and gained more

²¹¹ Kleutghen, 'The Study of Vision', 75-7.

²¹² Another example was showcased in the previously mentioned exhibition 'Arcadia World of Emperor Qianlong' centring on the portrait of Consort Chunhui held by the Poly Art Museum in 2021.

attention under the Yongzheng emperor, who had continued to promote the use and the learning of this new mode of representation at the court after his father. As demonstrated in the preceding discussion, by the Yongzheng period, the Qing court had access to a diverse repertoire featuring images of *guwan* in various styles and formats. Artists involved in painting the *Guwan tu* could combine different techniques to convey the archaic qualities of the objects. For instance, they could use meticulous ink lines to render the crackle pattern on ceramic *guwan*, depict features such as the spiraling branches of the morning glory on the Xuande faceted vase with more expressive coloured lines, while adopting the archaising colouring technique employed by earlier literati artists like Sun Kehong.

Meanwhile, the special appreciation of the newly introduced illusionistic style may have been associated with the need of creating accurate pictorial documentation of objects for practical purposes, such as serving as model drawings for the production of imperial porcelains. At the same time, this trend was possibly driven by the heightened interest in using images alone to define formal and material characteristics of the depicted objects without the aid of textual descriptions on the two-dimensional picture plane.²¹³ Indeed, the introduction of the European painting technique further triggered the deconstruction of the complementary relation between text and image, allowing pictorial images to exercise their own agency in defining the identities of the depicted objects. This was never fully achieved before the Qing period, though artists from the Ming period had set the foundation for creating images of archaised objects through depicting individual visual elements laden with history. It was within this context that the *Guwan tu* handscrolls were created. The birth of

²¹³ Kleutghen, 'The Study of Vision', 70-2.

Guwan tu, thus, could be considered as the culmination of this shift from the two-dimensional, textually bound to the self-defined, illusionistic pictures of objects. The faithful depiction of the objects' physical qualities, in turn, enables further investigation of what types of objects were chosen to be depicted—a question that the next chapter aims to address.

Chapter Three

The Hidden Curatorial Touch: Selection Criteria and Spatial Layout

The preceding chapter demonstrated that *guwan* in the Yongzheng context was perceived as a loosely defined category of objects that encompasses multiple layers of temporality and extends across the boundaries of varied materials. At the court, different types of *guwan* were constantly being transported between storage, workshops, and palace halls. They were displayed, stored, but also utilised in conjunction with designated accessories, such as decorative stands, bespoke containers, spoons, and copper inner tubes, serving as active participants in the imperial space rather than static mementos of the past.

Observing these objects in conjunction with the definition of and relevant visual images related to *guwan*, such as Castiglione's painting of the Xuande (1426–35) faceted vase (Fig. 2-22), one will notice that the painted objects on the *Guwan tu* conform to the discursive category of *guwan*, featuring both archaic and archaised items displayed or used in a living context. The objects are rendered with different types of bespoke stands and portrayed with spoons, newly mounted metal covers, or gilt inner tubes, corresponding directly to the assorted *guwan* specified in the *Huoji dang*.

In the meantime, the decision to capture the precise appearances of an assemblage of *guwan* using the newly introduced European painting technique implies that a sequence of decision-making processes had occurred. These processes involved carefully selecting the objects and evenly arranging them on the picture plane of the scrolls, all of which were carried out under the directive of the Yongzheng emperor. What types of objects were, then, included in the scrolls? Why were they chosen to be painted in the first place?

Following this line of thinking, the current chapter further delves into the subject of the *Guwan tu* from an iconographical perspective and examines the hidden selection criteria and spatial arrangement behind the imagery. The painted *guwan* will be studied in association with extant objects mainly from museums that hold items associated with the former Qing imperial collection. Due to the extensive number of objects in the paintings, the chapter will focus on penetrating the identities of the depicted *guwan* through a case study on the ceramic-like objects featured in the scrolls. The rationale for prioritising ceramics as the central focus is not only based on the fact that it is one of the three predominant object mediums, alongside jade and bronze, presented in the *Guwan tu*. In addition, this particular choice stems from the recognition that the forms of different ceramic wares, including their vessel shapes and decorative designs, often speak to specific styles of different historical periods. A closeup investigation of the formal features of the depicted ceramic wares will, thus, contribute to the understanding of the object traditions embedded in the imagery of the *Guwan tu* and, in turn, unveil how the paintings responded to their surrounding discursive context and material trends.

It should also be noted that the current discussion does not attempt to argue against the effort to match the images with extant objects, but to introduce an alternative way of using this method. Instead of asserting the images match certain objects perfectly, one could see the objects as similar types to the ones represented by the *guwan* images and explore the proveniences, provenances, and potential functions of the objects. In this way, the selection criteria and classification system employed in the painting could be unveiled, and presumably lead to a deeper understanding of the purpose of the *Guwan tu*, along with the imperial

agency involved.

Ceramics in the *Guwan tu*: A Ming Taste?

Based on findings gathered from in-person and virtual fieldwork, as well as consultations with specialists in the field, the current thesis is able to present 23 newly identified image-object pairs for the PDF scroll (except the well-known Xuande jar [PDF, No. 1] and Northern Song Ru bowl [PDF, No. 25]) and 12 pairs for the V&A scroll, as presented in Appendix I.* Among all the identifiable *guwan* images, 33 of them could be matched with objects that exhibit the same formal characteristics. The remaining four *guwan* (V&A, No. 9-12) can also be connected with museum objects and excavated sherds from archaeological sites in terms of their vessel shapes and decorative motifs.

For instance, although no existing object bears a complete resemblance to it, the blue and white *meiping* (prunus vase) embellished with spiraling tendril and cloud collar designs (V&A, No. 11) can be paired with a porcelain sherd excavated at the Jingdezhen imperial kiln site in 1988. The repetitive pattern extending from the neck of the *meiping* is known as ‘lingzhi baota’ 靈芝寶塔, characterised by a stupa-like design formed by layers of fungus motifs. This particular pattern can be found on the sherd, which was originally part of the base of a blue and white jar that displays traces of the six-character reign mark of the Ming Jiajing reign (1522–66).²¹⁴ In light of this, it can be inferred that the *meiping* on the *Guwan tu*,

²¹⁴ Wan Ping 萬平, ‘Qinghua guan’ 青花罐 [Blue and white jar (Incomplete)], in *Mingdai Jiajing Longqing Wanli yuyao ciqu: Jingdezhen yuyao yizhi chutu yu gugong bowuyuan cang chuanshi ciqu duibi* 明代嘉靖隆庆万历御窑瓷器: 景德镇御窑遗址出土与故宫博物院藏传世瓷器对比 [Imperial Porcelains from the Reign of Jiajing, Longqing and Wanli in the Ming Dynasty], eds., The Palace Museum and the Archaeological Research Institute of Ceramic in Jingdezhen (Beijing: The Forbidden City Publishing House, 2018), vol. 1, 62, pl. 4.

* In-text references to the image-object pairs in Appendix I (see pp. 331-33) will first indicate which scroll the depicted *guwan* is from, followed then by the number assigned to the referenced pair. For example, the blue and white Xuande jar

regardless of the chronological origin of the modelled object, takes on a decorative style that can be attributed to no later than the Jiajing reign.

Another example is represented by the two *dou*-shaped stem bowls with underglaze blue decoration of petal-like patterns filled with unidentifiable motifs (V&A, No. 10). The painted stem bowls on the *Guwan tu* take on the same shape as the piece in the NPM collection (Guci-016772), emulating the ritual bronze *dou* (grain serving vessel). The exact same decorative pattern, however, has not been found yet. The original models for the painted vessels might also have possessed lids at certain moment in their lives, but were later accompanied with a pierced inner tube, possibly made of copper, and were likely to have been transformed into flower vessels.

Indeed, the functional aspect of *guwan* is fully exemplified in the *Guwan tu*. The PDF scroll, for instance, presents 15 sets of ceramic vessels, ranging from cups, dishes, plates, to vases, and jars, with each set portrayed as multiple pieces stacking together (PDF, No. 4 and 7) or positioned right next to one another (see PDF, No. 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 18 as examples). Specifically, the stacked blue and white bowls with the ‘children at play’ motif (PDF, No. 4) could be paired with eight bowls decorated with the same motif in the NPM collection (Guci-000051 to 000058). The original thousand-character inventory numbers introduced by the Committee for the Disposition of the Qing Imperial Possessions (hereafter shortened as the Disposition Committee) bring further insight into the nature of these bowls. The inventory number assigned to each bowl starts with ‘律 147-21’, which is then followed by the sequential number from 1 to 8, i.e., the original inventory numbers for the bowls are ‘律 147-

with lança scripts with be indicated as (PDF, No. 1) in the main text.

21-1’, ‘律 147-21-2’, and so on so forth. The initial thousand characters serve to indicate the findspot of the objects in the Forbidden City when the Disposition Committee began its investigation of the Qing imperial holdings in 1924.²¹⁵ In this case, the character ‘律’ stands for Jingyang gong 景陽宮 (Palace of Great Brilliance), a palace hall originally built in the 18th year of the Ming Yongle reign (1420) and refurbished in the 25th year of the Kangxi reign (1686). It is said that during the Qing period (1644–1911), the palace was converted from a residence of imperial concubines to a repository mainly for books and paintings, including those that would be exhibited publicly during the New Year season.²¹⁶ However, there is currently no clear indication that this change occurred before or during the Yongzheng reign (1723–35). Based on the close reading of the inventory number, it can be inferred that the eight bowls in the NPM collection are likely to be a set, which were placed together in the Jingyang gong when they were discovered by staff from the Disposition Committee. Even if these bowls were not the original model for the stacked bowls depicted in the *Guwan tu*, it can still be argued that such items from the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) would be treated as ordinary utensils and reemployed in sets at the Qing court. This, again, speaks to the utilitarian nature of *guwan*, which had been highlighted by Ming literati and continued to be

²¹⁵ Nicole Ter-Chuang Chiang, ‘Introduction’, *Emperor Qianlong’s Hidden Treasures: Reconsidering the Collection of the Qing Imperial Household* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2019), 1-2.

²¹⁶ Zheng Bangyan 鄭邦彥, ‘Wenwu zhulu guifan—zhuangkuang/Yuan diancang danwei’ 文物著錄規範—狀況/原典藏單位 [Standards for Recording Cultural Relics – Condition/Original Repository], in ‘Gugong qiwu Metadata fenxi baogao (er)’ 故宮器物 Metadata 分析報告 (二) [Analytical Report on the Metadata of objects in the Palace Museum (II)], provided by Department of Antiquities, National Palace Museum in Taipei in 28 September 2001, 16, accessed 7th February 2022, [https://metadata.teldap.tw/project/filebox/NPMqi/analysis_files/NPMqi_analysis_report\(II\).pdf](https://metadata.teldap.tw/project/filebox/NPMqi/analysis_files/NPMqi_analysis_report(II).pdf).

Wang Jiahuan 王佳桓, ‘Ming-Qing Zijin cheng’ 明清紫禁城 [Forbidden City during the Ming and Qing Eras], *Gugong gailan* 故宮概覽 [The Overview of the Palace Museum] (Beijing: Beijing Publishing Group Ltd., 2018), 123. The author points out that the *Gongxun tu* 宮訓圖 [Pictures of Palatial Rules and Instructions] commissioned by the Qianlong emperor (r. 1736-95) were once stored in this palace. The paintings consist of 12 pieces, each of which portrays one virtuous empress or consort in history. Towards the end of each year, the paintings would be displayed in the living quarters for palace women, that is, the twelve palaces on the east and west sides of the Forbidden City. See Xu Ke 徐珂 (1869–1928), ‘Gongxun tu’, in *Qingbai leichao* 清稗類鈔 教育類 [Categorised Anthology of Qing Trifles: Education] (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1917), vol. 4 (bai 稗 20), 29.

embraced in the Yongzheng context.

As shown in Appendix I, a majority of the sample ceramic-like *guwan* could be matched with objects dated to the Ming period. It should be noted, however, a fair amount of the monochrome wares in the paintings could potentially be paired with Song-style ceramics, like the Ru bowl from the PDF scroll, which has been recognised as a representation of the Ru bowl (PDF.3; PDF, No. 25 in Appendix I) in the PDF collection thanks to the parallel of the crackle lines and the copper-bound mouth rim.²¹⁷ Meanwhile, the monochrome tones and subtle formal features of the Song wares lend an air of generality to the images, especially in comparison with the polychrome wares with distinctive decorative designs.

The single-view images make the matching task even harder, as unique formal details might be hidden on the unseen sides of the objects. Viewers outside of the Qing imperial context would not be able to easily identify the depicted Song-style wares without the aid of additional images showing from other angles or supplemental textual descriptions. To shed some light on what type of Song wares are included, this case study presents one hibiscus-shaped washer in green glaze from the PDF scroll (PDF, No. 17) and one hexagonal basin from the V&A scroll (V&A, No. 3) (Fig. 3-1) as two examples. These *guwan* can be associated with two Southern Song (1127–1279) Guan wares from the NPM (Gu-ci-014018) and the BM (PDF.6) (Fig. 3-2-1 and 3-2-2), which are all said to have come from the former Qing imperial collection.²¹⁸

²¹⁷ McCausland, 'The Emperor's Old Toys', 71.

²¹⁸ The character 'Gu' 故 in the inventory number indicates the object once held in the Forbidden City, thus suggesting the object is part of the former Qing imperial collection. As for the hexagonal basin, according to the acquisition notes on the online catalogue entry, the object was recorded as 'from the Imperial Collection, Peking' by R. L. Hobson in 1934. See 'basin', British Museum Collection online, accessed 1st April 2023, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/A_PDF-6.



Fig. 3-1 Hibiscus-shaped washer in green glaze from the PDF scroll (left) and hexagonal basin from the V&A scroll (right)



Fig. 3-2-1 Hibiscus-shaped washer with celadon glaze, Guan stoneware, 12th–13th century, NPM

Fig. 3-2-2 Hexagonal basin, Guan stoneware, 12th–13th century, BM

Both pairs share a considerable amount of formal similarities, typically in terms of their lobed and hexagonal shapes, along with the cloud-shaped feet of the basin. The glaze colours, especially for the basin, however, appear to be different, with the depicted object taking on a

palmer blue palette. In regard to the washer, the pinhole visible on the interior wall resulting from a burst bubble in the glaze, together with the blackened rim, also serves to showcase the potential inconsistency between the image and the object. On the other hand, the pinhole could be situated on the concealed part of the wall in the image of the washer. This suggests that the restricted view of the objects as presented in the painting adds to the challenge of confirming the identities of the depicted *guwan* in relation



Fig. 3-3 Cracked *meiping* with a trace of glaze defect (above the stacked blue and white 'lotus' bowls in the PDF scroll)

to extant pieces. The blackened rim reveals the subtle presence of the ware's dark body beneath a thin layer of glaze, which is also not shown in the image. Alternatively, the rim could also have been painted later with brown glaze as a means of restoration, which might have taken place after the portrayal of the washer in the *Guwan tu*.²¹⁹ Meanwhile, the scrolls would often present the flaws and discernible material features of the objects, as shown by the Ru bowl and a crackled *meiping* (Fig. 3-3) depicted with a trace of glaze defect.²²⁰ Thus, the actual washer could serve to represent the type of the depicted ware, but should not be assumed as the original model for the image.

The inclusion of such Song-style ceramic wares subtly alludes to the connection between

²¹⁹ This treatment can be seen on some examples in the palace museums, but not necessarily on this piece. I am indebted to Professor Pierson for this information.

²²⁰ McCausland, 'The Emperor's Old Toys', 71.

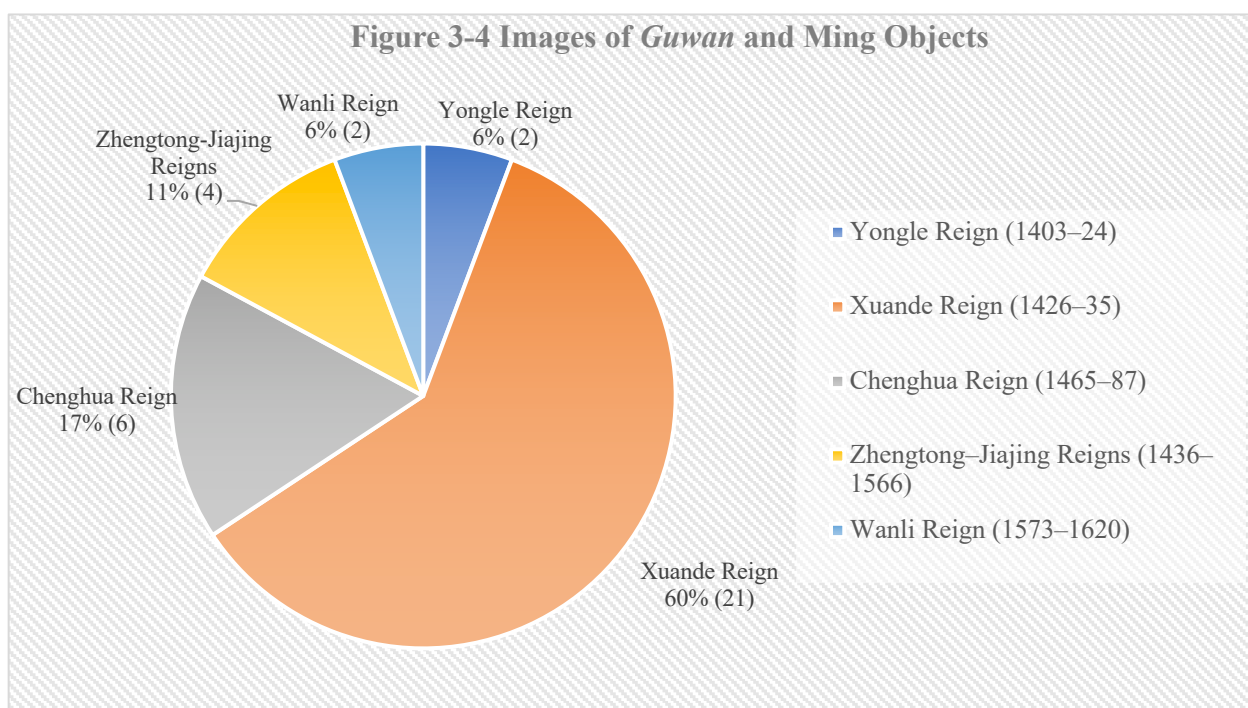
the depicted *guwan* and the Ming dynasty discourses on objects, some of which have been addressed in the previous chapter. Specifically, both the hibiscus-shaped washer and the hexagonal basin correspond to late Ming discourses on brush washers, one of the utensils for the scholar's studio. According to *Kaopan yushi* by the late Ming literatus Tu Long 屠隆 (1542–1605), hibiscus-shaped basins from the Song Guan kiln were among the most appropriate ceramic wares for brush washing. Wares in *fenqing*, or pale bluish, glaze with clearly defined crackled patterns, like the hexagonal basin, were particularly cherished.²²¹ This remark resonates with the hibiscus vessel shape and the glaze colour, with the interlaced crackles, displayed by the two depicted *guwan*, and suggests the possibility that Ming discourses on objects could have played a part in shaping the selection of objects depicted in the *Guwan tu*.

Since the Ming period, such literati discourses had often been adopted as guidance for how to pursue the literati lifestyle through consumption of specific *qiwu* 器物 (vessel and object). At the same time, they form the discursive basis that speaks to the rationale behind the choice of depicting *qiwu* that are often imbued with historical values in paintings. The *qiwu* would be painted as part of the main subject, like those in the aforementioned works such as the hanging scroll featuring the archaised vase by Chen Chun 陳淳 (1483–1544) (Fig. 2-8) and the handscroll painting of twelve *penjing* attributed to Zhou Zhimian 周之冕 (c. 1550–1610) (Fig. 2-9). Both the *gu*-shaped vase and the Jun-style pots depicted in the two works resonate with the contemporaneous discourses on suitable vessels for flower

²²¹ Tu, and Shen (ce.), 'Bixi' 筆洗 [Brush washer], in 'Qiju qifu jian' 器具起服箋 [Notes on Objects and Clothing in Everyday Life], *Kaopan yushi III*, vol. 10 (seq. 1153), 10b, accessed 12th May 2023, <https://nrs.lib.harvard.edu/urn-3:fhcl:25591906?n=1153>.

arrangement.

Hung in the patron's home for public viewing or unrolled in front of like-minded guests, the pictures of the vase and the flowerpots would be transformed into symbols of self-cultivation and elegant living, aligning with the ideal identity that the patrons aimed to project. Meanwhile, as discussed in the previous chapters, the shift in representation mode from the linear to the illusionistic style and the adoption of the oversize handscroll format indicates the purpose of the *Guwan tu* went beyond public display or representing the patrons' cultivated identity. The naturalistic portrayals of *guwan* shown on the scrolls not only allow for a clearer identification of their connection with the Ming discourses, but also convey a sense of immediacy. It demonstrates that the *guwan* were rendered based on real-life models present at the Yongzheng court, rather than being created after the painters' imagination of archaic vessels informed by their knowledge of existing literary sources and direct observations of real antiquities.



Further probing into the formal features of the sample objects in the list above, one will notice that the tendency of drawing inspiration from Ming precedents becomes more pronounced when it comes to the other 33 ceramic-like *guwan*. As shown by the chart below (Figure 3-4), over half of the sample group can be matched with items dated to the Xuande era, followed by the Chenghua era (1465–87), the two reigns most often addressed in Ming connoisseurship texts as the pinnacle periods of the production of high-quality porcelains.²²² Specifically, the late Ming literatus Shen Defu 沈德符 (1578–1642) has commented on the the Xuande and Chenghua porcelain wares in his literary jottings *Bizhou xuan shengyu* 敝帚軒剩語 (Lingering Remarks from the Humble Broom Pavilion):

The kiln products of our dynasty, featuring underglaze blue decorations on white ground with the addition of multicoloured designs, are the epitome of both the present and the past. Among them, the products of the Xuande [imperial] kiln have been highly esteemed, while nowadays the Chenghua [imperial] kiln wares start to obtain greater appreciation, even surpassing those from the Xuande kiln. This is because the rulers of the two reigns bestowed great attention to the development of art, which has greatly contributed to the refinement of craftsmanship.

本朝窯器，用白地青花，間裝五色，為今古之冠。如宣窯品最貴，今日又重成窯，出宣窯之上。蓋兩朝天縱，留意曲藝，宜其精工如此。²²³

Observing the formal features of the sample objects, it becomes evident that the Ming dynasty wares depicted in the *Guwan tu* are in line with Shen's comment, the Xuande wares are mostly blue and white porcelains, except the stem bowl decorated with the 'red fish'

²²² Stacey Pierson, 'Porcelain in Ming China (14th-17th centuries)', *From Object to Concept: Global Consumption and the Transformation of Ming Porcelain* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2013), 17-8.

²²³ Shen Defu 沈德符 (1578–1642), 'Ciqi' 瓷器 [Porcelain], *Bizhou xuan shengyu* 敝帚軒剩語 補遺 (Lingering Remarks from the Humble Broom Pavilion, with addendum), in *Congshu jicheng chubian* 叢書集成初編 [Complete Collection of Works from [Various] Collectanea: First Series], ed. Wang Yunwu 王雲五 (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1937), vol. 2, 36.

design (PDF, No. 19) and the *hewan* 合碗 (lidded bowl) with red dragon and cloud motif (PDF, No. 24). The vessel types consist of dishes decorated with animals and mythical creatures, a stem bowl, teapot, jars in large and small sizes, a vase, brush washer, water holder, tankard, as well as bowls in newly invented shapes of *gongwan* 宮碗 ('Palace' Bowl) (PDF, No. 4) and *hewan*.²²⁴ This, again, is in conformity with the discussion in the mid-Ming manual *Zunsheng bajian* by the merchant-scholar Gao Lian 高濂 (1573–1620). In the manual, the author points out a series of signature vessel types, including stem bowls, lidded pots and jars, as well as the censer, vase, plate, and dish, which are deemed to be the most abundantly produced wares in the Xuande reign.²²⁵

The 'red fish' stem bowl, in particular, is mentioned at the beginning of Gao's comment on Xuande imperial wares, in which he appreciates the vibrant red colour of the silhouetted fish motif that, in his opinion, was achieved by adding ruby powder into the glaze.²²⁶ At the same time, the inclusion of the blue and white hibiscus-shaped brush washer (PDF, No. 21) also appears to resonate with the comment on brush washers given by the eminent late Ming literatus Wen Zhenheng 文震亨 (1585–1645), who has particularly identified the hibiscus-shaped brush washer produced in the Xuande kilns as a suitable vessel aligning with the idealised literati lifestyle.²²⁷

As for the Chenghua-style porcelains, the sample objects are also in line with the Ming

²²⁴ Liao Baoxiu 廖寶秀, 'Xuande kuan qinghua shuanglong yun wen hewan (que gai)' 宣德款青花雙龍雲紋合碗 (缺蓋) [Covered bowl with underglaze-blue decoration of two dragons in pursuit of pearls and clouds (lid missing)], 'Xuande kuan qinghua yunlong wen wan' 宣德款青花雲龍紋碗 [Bowl with underglaze-blue decoration of clouds and dragons], in *Mingdai Xuande guanyao jinghua tezhan tulu* 明代宣德官窯菁華特展圖錄 [Catalogue of the special exhibition of selected Hsüan-te imperial porcelains of the Ming dynasty] (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1998), 162, pl. 54; 322, pl. 134.

²²⁵ Gao, 'Lun Raoqi 178it sui gu yao' 論饒器新窯古窯 [On Wares from Old and New (Imperial) Kilns at Jingdezhen], *Yanxian 178it suite jian*, from *Zunsheng bajian*, vol. 7 (seq. 815), 50a, accessed 12th May 2023, <https://nrs.lib.harvard.edu/urn-3:fhcl:27666276?n=815>.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Wen, 'Bixi' 筆洗 [Brush washer], *Zhang wu zhi*, vol. 7, 6b.

standards. Among all the wares attributed to the Chenghua reign, four out of six are small-sized polychrome enamelled cups in pair (PDF, No. 5, 6, 8, 9), which were praised as the signature product of the Chenghua imperial kiln by Ming literati. Gao Lian, for instance, commented on the Chenghua wares in comparison to the Xuande wares, suggesting the Chenghua *wucai* porcelain surpassed those of the Xuande reign, since its rendition of colour was subtle and delicate, evoking a sense of painterly aura (*yongse qiandan, poyou huayi* ‘用色淺淡，頗有畫意’).²²⁸ Towards the end of the Ming period, the Chenghua cups reached a peak of popularity. According *Dijing jingwu lue* 帝京景物略 (Brief Account of the Scenery in the Imperial Capital), a guidebook to Beijing published during the Chongzhen period (1628–44), the last reign of the Ming dynasty, the polychrome Chenghua cups were more superior than the blue and white ones, and a pair of



Fig. 3-5

Cups with grape vines decoration in *doucai* painted enamels (PDF scroll)
Pairing: Polychrome enamelled cups, Chenghua reign (1465–87), BPM



such cups was worth tens of thousands of coins at the market during the Longqing (1567–72) and Taichang (1620) reigns, when kiln wares from previous time periods

were highly appreciated.²²⁹ At the same time, the grapevine design showcased on one of the

²²⁸ Gao, ‘Lun Raoqi xin yao gu yao’, vol. 7 (seq. 815), 51a.

²²⁹ Liu Tong 劉侗 (act. 1634), and Yu Yizheng 于奕正 (1594–1636), ‘Chenghuang miaoshi’ 城隍廟市 [City God Temple

paired cups (PDF, No. 6) (Fig. 3-5) also appears to be a prevalent design for Chenghua porcelain. Both Gao Lian and the authors of the *Dijing jingwu lie* mentioned the ‘five-coloured’ (described as *wucai* 五彩 and *wuse* 五色 respectively) polychrome grape motif as a cherished decorative element for Chenghua kiln wares. However, they only mentioned the stem bowl with such a design in their remarks, possibly following the market trend at the time.²³⁰

In the Qing context, the above-mentioned literary works continued to be cited and shaped people’s perception of Ming dynasty porcelain wares. In this case, both *Zunsheng bajian* and *Dijing jingwu lie* were incorporated in the *GJTSJC* and made available for the emperor and officials at the court. The later compiled *Jingdezhen taolu* 景德鎮陶錄 (Record of Jingdezhen Ceramics) originally by Lan Pu 藍浦 (act. 1736–95), first published in 1815, has also quoted the Ming sources extensively and suggested that earlier scholarship on Ming porcelain often ranked the Xuande ware as the foremost product, followed by the Chenghua ware, then the Yongle ware, and finally the Jiajing ware.²³¹ Interestingly, this ranking roughly corresponds to the total number of these Ming porcelains depicted in the *Guwan tu*, that is, 21 Xuande wares, 6 Chenghua wares, and two each of the Yongle and Jiajing wares. This monograph was subsequently reprinted in the 9th year of the Tongzhi reign (1870) and the 17th year of the Guangxu reign (1891), suggesting a continuous and extensive transmission of the Ming discourses on ceramics during the Qing period.

Fair], in *Dijing jingwu lie* 帝京景物略 [Brief Account of the Scenery in the Imperial Capital], 1628-1644 (Electronic reproduction. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard College Library Imaging Services, 2011), vol. 4 (seq. 333-39), 25a-31a, accessed 12th May 2023. <https://nrs.lib.harvard.edu/urn-3:fhcl:4740481?n=338>.

²³⁰ Gao, ‘Lun Raoqi xin yao gu yao’, vol. 7 (seq. 815), 51a; Liu, ‘Chenghuang miaoshi’, vol. 4 (seq. 338), 29b.

²³¹ Lan, Zheng et al., ‘Jingdezhen lidai yaokao’ 景德鎮歷代窯考 [Investigations on Jingdezhen Kilns of Successive Dynasties], in *Jingdezhen taolu*, vol. 5, 760.

In light of the above discussion, it can be concluded that Ming connoisseurship discourses played a significant role in shaping the criteria for the selection of objects that should be included in the *Guwan tu*. The Yongzheng emperor himself was also well aware of the available Ming discourses and was willing to redeploy them as guidance for pursuing, even actualising the idealised literati lifestyle described in them. In his personal anthology *Yuexin ji* 悦心集 (Collection for Gladdening the Heart), compiled when he was still a prince, the emperor recorded accounts from Tu Long's *Kaopan yushi* and further portrayed himself



Fig. 3-6 Blue and white jar decorated with the motif of 'Jiuqiu tu' 九秋圖 (Nine flowers of autumn) (PDF scroll)

Pairing:

Upper right: Jar decorated with flowering plants, Chenghua reign (1465–87), NPM

Lower right: Jar decorated with flowering plants, Yongle reign (1403–24), BM

in painting as a literatus playing *qin* based on descriptions of the ideal setting for the performance from Tu's notes on *qin*.²³²

In the meantime, another noteworthy feature exhibited by the sample group is that there are overlaps in ceramic types between the Yongle and Xuande, Xuande and Chenghua, as well as Yongle and Chenghua reigns.²³³ For example, the blue and white jar decorated with the motif of 'Jiuqiu tu' 九秋圖 (Nine flowers of autumn) (PDF, No. 16) (Fig. 3-6) shares similarities in vessel shape and decorative design with one object (1972,0619.1.a) dated to the Yongle reign from the BM and another piece (Gu-ci-014387) with a Chenghua reign mark held in the NPM. This kind of overlap potentially indicates a recurring design approach observed in the ceramic production of the Ming dynasty, in this case, from the Yongle to the Chenghua era. Specifically, The BM piece is accompanied with a domed cover, which provides an insight into the object's original appearance. It is, therefore, possible that the jar featured in the *Guwan tu* had already lost its cover when it was portrayed.

²³² Lin Shu 林姝, 'Chuwei zhizheng yu geren xiuyang de chanwu' 儲位之爭與個人修養的產物 [A Product of the Succession Crisis and Self-cultivation], *Zijin cheng* 紫禁城 [Forbidden City], no.10 (2009): 22. For paintings of Emperor Yongzheng as a literatus playing *qin*, the album of *Emperor Yongzheng engaging in Pleasurable Events* housed in the BPM contains one example (Gu00006636-13/16). The album leaf depicts the emperor, dressed as a Han Chinese literatus, playing the *qin* in an outdoor setting. With the instrument placed horizontally on his knees, the emperor focuses his attention on melding the melodies of the *qin* with the natural sounds of the flowing stream and the wind rustling through the pine tree behind him. A full moon reveals itself amidst the outstretched branches of the pine tree, generating a serene nocturnal ambiance. Observing the painting in conjunction with the account about the ideal setting for *qin* playing in *Kaopan yushi*, one will notice that the imagery of the pine tree, the stream, and the moon are all mentioned in Tu Long's discussion, suggesting the *Kaopan yushi* was likely to be an important source of inspiration not only for creating this portrait, but also for establishing a connoisseur discourse on objects at Emperor Yongzheng's court. See Tu, 'Dui yue' 對月 [Towards the Moon], 'Lin shui' 臨水 [By the Water], vol. 10 (seq. 1140-41), 24a-b. For the album leaf, see <https://www.dpm.org.cn/collection/paint/233565.html?hl=胤禛行乐>.

²³³ Another overlap happens in the case of the blue and white tankard decorated with crested wave patterns on the neck and the blue and white vase with spiralling tendril motif. Both are from the PDF scroll. The tankard could be matched with two pieces dated to the Yongle period from the BPM (Gu00145553) and the BM (1950,0403.1). Another piece dated to the Xuande period (Xin00130160) is also housed in the BPM. For the vase with spiralling tendril motif, a comparable blue and white piece with Xuande reign mark has been discovered in the Grandidier Collection at Musée Guimet – musée national des Arts asiatiques (G5261). In the meantime, the BPM holds a green-enamelled example with similar spiralling tendril design (Gu00145677) from the former Qing imperial collection, which bears a Chenghua reign mark.



Fig. 3-7 (right) Cups with floral decoration on a red ground in overglaze polychrome enamels (in pair), NPM
 Figure 3-8 (left) Zou Yigui 鄒一桂 (1686–1772), *Nine Flowers of Autumn*, Qianlong reign (1736–95), NPM

Whether it was dated to the Yongle or the Chenghua reign, its inclusion in the *Guwan tu* reveals the agency of the Qing emperor in his selection of objects, which transcended beyond the pre-existing Ming discourses. Based on the aforementioned comments, the painted jar, whose model could either be a Yongle ware or a Chenghua blue and white ware, would not be deemed as a high-end product in the Ming context. However, what might capture the emperor's interest is the motif of 'Jiuqiu tu', an auspicious theme reintroduced during the Qing period to symbolise autumn harvest and abundant living. The motif appears recurrently on decorative surfaces, as exemplified by a pair of Yongzheng period red enamelled porcelain

cups housed in the NPM (Fig. 3-7) (Gu-ci-008663 and 008664). In addition, it was also adopted as a painting theme that can be found in works by such court painters as Zou Yigui 鄒一桂 (1686–1772) and Qian Weicheng 錢維城 (1720–72). Particularly, the scholar-official artist Zou Yigui, active under Emperor Yongzheng and Qianlong (r. 1736–95), was known for his flower paintings and had created a hanging scroll on the theme (Fig. 3-8), which were documented in the second compilation of the *Shiqu baoji*.²³⁴ In this respect, the choice of



Fig. 3-9 Mid-Ming-style Blue and white teapot with brocaded stand, possibly made of *hepai*, bearing the circular ‘shou’ character (PDF scroll)

objects for the *Guwan tu* also appears to be associated with the Qing imperial tradition of employing motifs and images with auspicious connotations as decorative elements.

In addition to the ‘Jiuqiu tu’ jar, the blue and white bowls with ‘children at play’ motifs from the PDF scroll, along with the Jiajing-style gourd-shaped vases with motifs of dragons and cranes (V&A, No. 7) in the V&A scroll, also convey the meanings of longevity, prosperity, and fortune. Even the accessories, such as the multicoloured stand for the mid-Ming-style Blue and white teapot in the PDF scroll, bear the circular ‘shou’

²³⁴ Wang et al. ‘Zou Yigui hua *Qiu*hua *jiuzhong* yi zhou’ 鄒一桂畫秋花九種一軸 [One scroll of *Nine Flowers of Autumn* by Zou Yigui], *Shiqu baoji xubian*, vol. 33 (Chonghua gong cang shi 重華宮藏 十), in *Midian zhulin Shiqu baoji hebian*, vol. 5, 1791. Like Zou Yigui, Qian Weicheng had once created a handscroll on the same theme entitled *Jiuqiu tu*, which was similarly documented in the second compilation of the *Shiqu baoji*. See Wang et al., ‘Qian Weicheng *Jiuqiu tu* yi juan’ 錢維城九秋圖一卷 [One scroll of *Nine (Flowers) of Autumn* by Qian Weicheng], *Shiqu baoji xubian*, vol. 60 (Ningshou gong cang shiqi 寧壽宮藏 十七), in *Midian zhulin Shiqu baoji hebian*, vol. 6, 3007. The Three Gorges Museum in Chongqing holds a paper scroll featuring the nine flowers of autumn, which has been attributed to the artist (acquisition number: 48247). See images of the scroll: <<http://www.3gmuseum.cn/web/cultural/toOneCultural.do?itemno=4028808a5e3b12de015e3b22ed940000&itemsonno=4024028a5e3b12de015e3b2c79340003&relicno=48247>>.

character (PDF, No. 3) (Fig. 3-9) that stands for ‘longevity’. The signature Xuande jar (PDF, No. 1) further echoes a blue and white stem bowl with Tibetan scripts (PDF, No. 10) (Fig. 3-10). This object could almost be equalled to a NPM piece (Gu-ci-005592) that also features a Lança seed syllable ‘hūm’ at the centre of the bowl’s interior. The inclusion of the jar and the stem bowl in the painting, in turn, speaks to the Qing imperial patronage of Tibetan Buddhism.

In light of the above case study, it can be concluded that the selection of objects presented by the *Guwan tu* could be considered as a reflection of the dual identity as a literati arbiter of taste and the Manchu ruler constructed by the emperor himself. The utilitarian aspect of *guwan* demonstrated by the images also alludes to the fact that the emperor would be using the depicted



Fig. 3-10 Blue and white stem bowl with Tibetan scripts (PDF scroll)

guwan vessels or appreciating them as displayed ornaments in certain spatial contexts. Just like the interconnected miniature landscapes in the two late Ming handscrolls of *penjing*, these deliberately assembled *guwan* are constantly interacting with one another and serving to transform the blank pictorial plane into a dynamic space that potentially parallels the real-life space at Emperor Yongzheng’s court.

Spatialisation and Invisible Cabinets in the *Guwan tu*

As addressed in Chapter one, the objects in both scrolls are distributed relatively evenly

across the picture plane of the PDF and V&A scrolls, spreading on 13 and 17 sheets of paper respectively without clearly defined boundaries between each other (Fig. 3-11).²³⁵

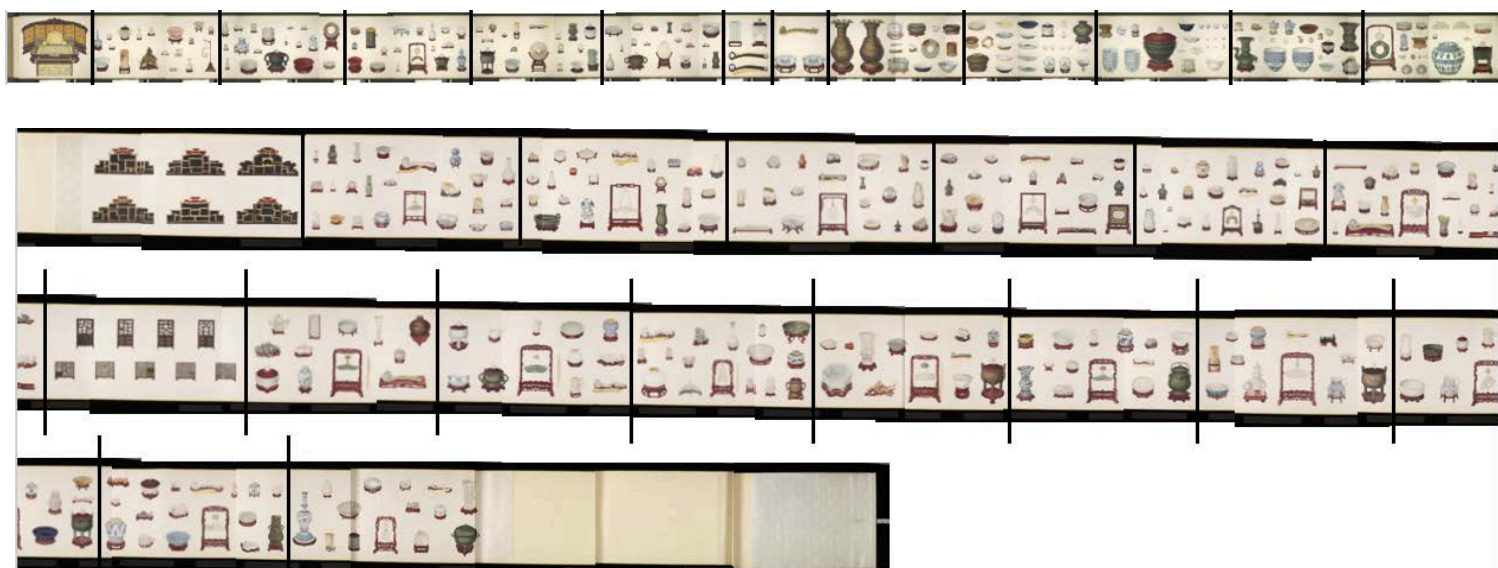


Fig. 3-11 PDF and V&A scrolls with division lines indicating the borders of each painting paper

Specifically, if a set of objects is considered as one type, 10 pieces of paper in the PDF scroll contains no more than 25 types of objects. The remaining 3 papers (the 6th, 7th, and 13th if counted from the beginning of the painting) are cut in a smaller size, with two of them mounted at the centre of the entire handscroll, representing five types of objects, and one piece rendered with the throne at the end.

In terms of the V&A scroll, one object hanging in a frame is placed approximately in the middle of each piece of paper, serving to divide the surrounding objects into separate groups. The suspended objects appear as several elongated converging points, which enable the surrounding objects to spread out in a symmetrical bell-curve shape. Interestingly, there are exactly 9 suspended objects, each surrounded by 11-16 objects, before the 9 compound cabinets, and 6 suspended objects, each with 19-24 objects around, before the 6 throne-like

²³⁵ The number of paper sheets for the V&A scroll has been confirmed according to Brosch, *Zaitan Guwan tu*, 87.

cabinets. The meticulously arranged composition implies that each group of objects portrayed on a single piece of paper was likely intended to fit within one specific cabinet.

What is more, the preceding 9 groups of objects all contain one bronze-like object. Eight such objects are positioned at the beginning of their designated groups, which signal the division of each group of objects. The utilisation of a shared colour scheme, dominated by green and brown, further transforms them into visual intermediators, which generate a rhythmic thread that links each divided section of objects together. This phenomenon is not as evident in the following 6 groups of objects presumably associated with the throne-like cabinets, as the bronze-like objects are relatively smaller in size and consequently blend in with the other items of similar dimensions within the groups.

These carefully structured compositions resonate with the making of treasure boxes and cabinets, which has often been connected to the Qianlong emperor, who was keen to rearrange archaic objects into sophisticatedly designed containers and launched several projects of organising, ranking, and cataloguing antiquities at the court.²³⁶ Meanwhile, this type of practice had already begun during the Yongzheng period, which is documented in the *Huoji dang* but also showcased by the *Guwan tu* scrolls themselves.

Except for the previously addressed entry on *guwan* dated to the 6th year (1728), the records reveal that from the 4th year (1726) to the end of the Yongzheng reign (1735), an extensive number of objects belonging to the category of *guwan* travelled frequently both in the Forbidden City and the Yuanmingyuan. They were moved in and out from different palace halls, altered, and reorganised into various cabinets with assembled objects referred to

²³⁶ On Emperor Qianlong's treasure boxes, see: Yu, ed., *Pinpai de gushi*.

as *baishijian* 百事件 (hundred-item curio box), along with *gudong ge* 古董格 (cabinet of antiquities), *bogu ge* 博古格 (cabinet for appreciating antiquities), and *baobei ge* 寶貝格 (cabinet of treasures), the designated furniture employed for the display of the objects.

In the 4th year alone, a total of five entries contains direct references to a *bogu ge* located in the Yuanmingyuan. Three of them record the emperor's commissions to the Carpentry workshop, ordering artisans to produce display stands and racks for items taken from the *bogu ge*, which include assorted Han jade objects, a Ding ware vase, a Ru ware censer, and 18 Chenghua chicken cups, all of which belong to the category of *guwan*.²³⁷ This type of workshop activity reached a peak during the 6th and the 7th year (1729), to which the two *Guwan tu* scrolls are dated.

Starting with the making of *baishijian* involving a total of 681 items in the 6th year, 9 tasks related to certain *gudong ge* and *baobei ge* in the Forbidden City and the Yuanmingyuan were carried out in the following year.²³⁸ According to the entries, the emperor was actively engaged in each task throughout the production process. He would provide specific instructions not only on how to showcase the objects in the cabinet with various bespoke stands, racks, and containers, but also on designing and renovating the cabinets to protect the displayed objects and enhance the display effectiveness.

For instance, on the 5th day of the fourth month, the emperor commented that the display rack for a *zhaowen dai* 昭文帶 in a *baobei ge* was not pleasing. Subsequently, he commissioned the Packaging workshop to produce a hollowed partition board in geometric,

²³⁷ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 2, 126-7, 130, 280. See the entries in Appendix (IV).

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 4, 9; vol. 4, 131; vol. 3, 496; vol. 4, 13; vol. 4, 133; vol. 4, 172; vol. 3, 763; vol. 4, 140; vol. 4, 141; vol. 4, 152-3. See the entries in Appendix (VIII).

rather than varied floral, shape and asked Haiwang to hang the *zhaowen dai* diagonally in the cabinet.²³⁹ Further on the 28th day of the fifth month, the emperor commissioned the

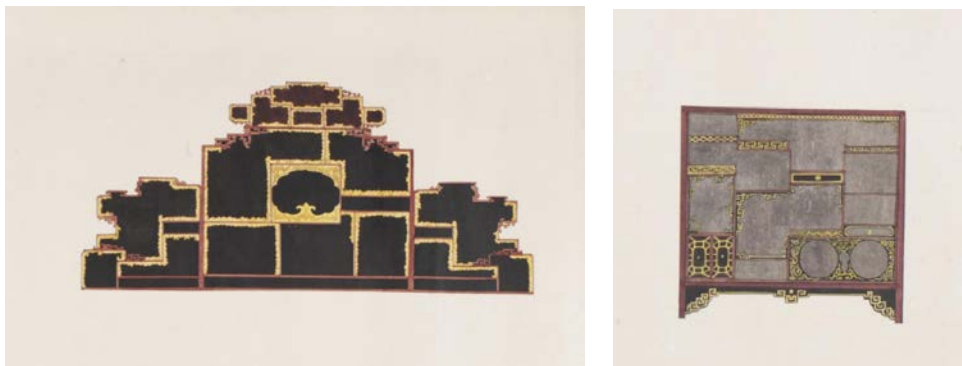


Fig. 3-12 Examples of cabinets from the V&A scroll dividing in geometric and irregular shapes

Lacquerware workshop to produce two black lacquered cabinet in replacement of the *nanmu* wooden *baobei ge* placed inside Jiuzhou qingyan 九洲清晏 (Nine Continents in Peace), the central residential complex in the Yuanmingyuan spread out on nine man-made islands. The reason for this change was that the original *nanmu* cabinet made the displayed *guwan* appear lacklustre.²⁴⁰ Furthermore, he also ordered the artisans to carve the partition boards inside the cabinet in square, circular, elliptic, or rectangular shapes, which are visualised by the cabinets depicted in the V&A scroll (Fig. 3-12).²⁴¹ In addition to commissioning the new cabinets, the emperor also asked the artisans to repair, refashion, and remake the bespoke stands and racks for the displayed *guwan*. In the meantime, he clearly instructed them to follow his guidance and prepare preliminary models for review prior to commencing production.²⁴²

The above records have shed light on the prominent use of varied display cabinets at the

²³⁹ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 4, 131.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 763.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

²⁴² *Ibid.*

Yongzheng court and the emperor's instrumental role in bringing order to the assorted *guwan*.

His attention to such details as the angle of the *zhaowen dai* in the cabinet, the shapes of the partition boards, and the cabinet's adaptability to accommodate the displayed items appropriately evokes a strong sense of curatorship, which is, in turn, reflected by the *Guwan tu* scrolls.



Fig. 3-13 (a, b) The 1st and 4th sections of the PDF scroll with imagined division lines



Fig. 3-14 (a, b) The 3rd and 16th sections of the V&A scroll with imagined division lines

The rhythmic conformation of the paintings is, after all, not a mere coincidence, but may allude to the structural division of the painted *guwan* into different compartments within certain display cabinets.²⁴³ Imagining the handscrolls themselves as a series of cabinets (Figs

²⁴³ McCausland has first proposed that the arrangement of the objects in the *Guwan tu* is imbued with a sense of rhythm, see

3-13 and 3-14), one may notice that each object could be assigned to a specific, often geometrically shaped, area on the picture plane. For the V&A scroll, the embedded layout that governs the positioning of the painted objects appears to be more distinctly defined compared to the PDF scroll, with Figure 3-14a even slightly echoing with the structure of the throne-like cabinet.



Fig. 3-15 Detail showing the nine cabinets in the middle of the V&A scroll

The presence of the 15 cabinets further supports the possibility that at least the objects in the V&A scroll were once arranged in an orderly manner inside designated cabinets. In particular, the nine cabinets in the middle represent the *gui ge* 櫃格 and *bogu ge* (Fig. 3-15), which is often referred to as *duobao ge* 多寶格 in the present day. As shown by the image, the *gui ge* is comprised of an upper section featuring open compartments and an enclosed

his discussion in 'The Emperor's Old Toys', 69.

cabinet in the lower part. This type of cabinet was developed from *shu ge* 書格 (open bookshelf) and was reserved both for rare books, painting, calligraphy, and for various *guwan* objects. The five *bogu ge*, on the other hand, appear to be more diverse in their structures, featuring drawers and individual compartments arranged at different heights. The compartments take on varied geometric but also irregular shapes, such as the one resembling a vase with a decorative stand (Fig. 3-16).²⁴⁴ The style of this

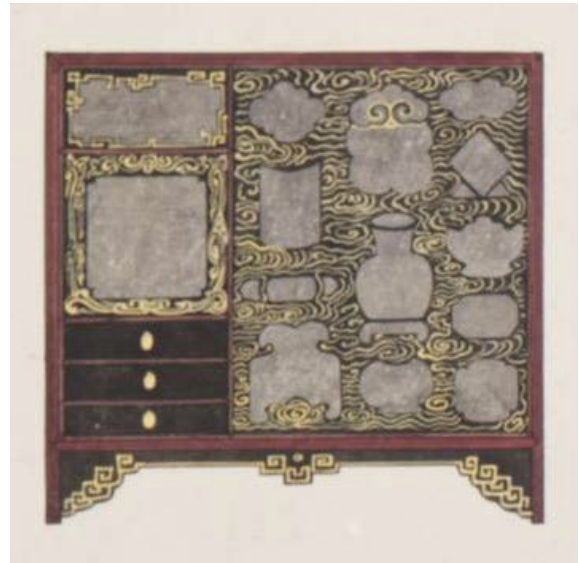


Figure 3-16 Detail showing the *duobao ge* in the V&A scroll with a compartment in the shape of a vase with its bespoke stand

kind of assorted arrangement was referred to in the Yongzheng context as “*jijin shi*” 集錦式 (style of assembling the highlights). Specifically, on the 27th day of the fourth month in the 7th year, the emperor ordered the Packaging workshop to make brocaded boxes for 29 Ru brush washers and position them meticulously in the ‘*jijin*’ style, which involved the processes of selecting the superior examples and structuring them into designated containers following their different shapes and sizes.²⁴⁵

At the same time, the use of these displayed cabinets entails the existence of a ranking system for *guwan*, which is exemplified by the previously mentioned entry dated to the 20th day of the seventh month in the 13th year (see Chapter two, pp. 116-17). According to the

²⁴⁴ Zhang Zhaoping 張兆平, ‘Shu ge, liangge gui yu bogu ge: Qinggong shuji gui ge ji gongyi’ 書格、亮格櫃與博古格：清宮書籍櫃格及工藝 [Bookshelves, Cabinets with Open Compartments, and Cabinets for Appreciating Antiquities: Qing Imperial Book Cabinets and Relevant Techniques], *Gugong wenwu yuekan* 故宮文物月刊 [The National Palace Museum Monthly of Chinese Art] 383, no. 2 (2015): 60-4.

²⁴⁵ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, 543-4.

work report in response to the emperor's request, 40 pieces of the *baishijian guwan* were marked as 'extraordinary', 80 were of the first rank, 183 were of the second rank, 228 of the third, and 390 of the fourth. An inventory record had also been generated according to the results yielded from the appraisal of experts in the workshop.²⁴⁶

What is more, there also appears to be a difference between objects assigned to a *baishijian* container and those exhibited within the cabinets of antiquities and treasures. In the Year 6 entry, the assorted *yuqi guwan* 玉器古玩 (jade objects and ancient playthings), which were ordered to be organised into groups of *baishijian*, were referred to as 'pingchang zhiwu' 平常之物, that is, 'ordinary items'.²⁴⁷ On the other hand, an entry dated to the 21st day of the third month in the 7th year contains the emperor's instruction to the Packaging workshop as follows:

Vessels in the *baobei ge* are all valuable items, but have often suffered damage due to the pressure exerted by the tightly bound stands. Ask Haiwang to carefully examine the vessels and change the original stands to new ones made of lacquer or wood if necessary. Make sure the vessels are not overly constrained to prevent any damage. Respect this.

寶貝格內器皿係緊要之物,往往被座子箍壞。器皿著海望細細查看,或換漆座,或換暖木,務使不要箍壞器皿,欽此。

Although the vessels in the *baobei ge* have not been specified in the entry, the above instruction reveals their higher status by describing them as 'jinyao zhiwu' 緊要之物 (valuable items) in contrast to the 'ordinary' *baishijian* objects. This hierarchical order is

²⁴⁶ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 6, 718.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 315.

further supported by an entry dated to the 18th day of the seventh month in the 13th year. As the entry suggests, the emperor ordered Nian Xiyao 年希堯 (1671–1738) to find a proper vessel for the empty space inside a *baobei ge* displayed at Jiuzhou qingyan.²⁴⁸ The preferred vessel types were also specified in the entry as ‘jade, bronze, or ceramic *guwan* in superior quality’.²⁴⁹

Beyond An Inventory Series

Drawing upon the discussions above, the *Guwan tu* can be described as a ‘discursive object’, as proposed by Clunas in his remarks on the interrelation between painting and picture in the Ming-Qing context.²⁵⁰ The *Guwan tu* handscrolls, as artworks with defined borders, exercise their agency and frame the *guwan* within the picture plane, prompting the depicted objects to take on new roles associated with the pseudo-curatorial choice made by the emperor. Despite the absence of explanatory texts, each depicted object on the *Guwan tu* contains valuable iconographic information. The distinct vessel shapes and decorative designs not only reveal the objects’ own identities, but also provide insight into the selection criteria formulated under the inspiration drawn from the preceding Ming literati discourses on connoisseurship and the art of living.

The spatial structure embedded in the picture plane further connects the paintings to a range of display furniture produced under the Yongzheng emperor’s meticulous instructions. This connection reaffirms that the depicted *guwan* were active participants in the daily life at

²⁴⁸ Wong Young-tsu, *A Paradise Lost: The Imperial Garden Yuanming Yuan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), 28-30.

²⁴⁹ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 6, 672.

²⁵⁰ Clunas, ‘Conclusion’, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China* (London: Reaktion Books, 1997), 184.

the court, while hinting at the existence of a systematic procedure for handling and organising imperial objects implemented under the vigilant supervision of the emperor.

In light of this additional information that the paintings can provide, it appears to be an appropriate moment to further comment on the purpose of the *Guwan tu* and revisit the idea that the scrolls were produced as catalogues or inventories of *guwan* in the imperial holdings. Similar to the *Dajia lubu tu* discussed in Chapter one, a comparable example, again, can be drawn from the following Qianlong period, that is, the illustrated albums of ceramics (Gu-hua-003652) (Fig. 3-17), with the earliest compilation dating back to 1755–56.²⁵¹

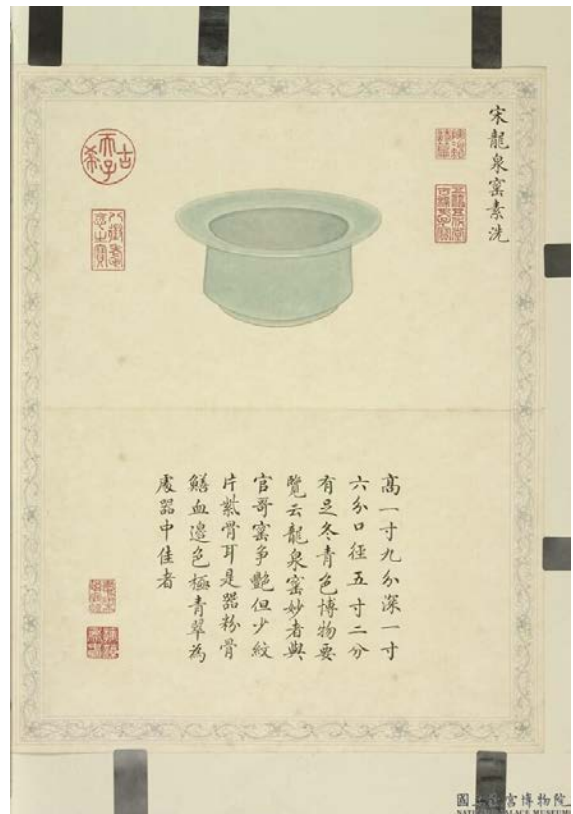


Fig. 3-17

Left: Part of the PDF scroll, with a washer in similar shape

Right: Album leaf of a Longquan ware washer, *Jingtao yungu* (*Refined Ceramics of Collected Antiquity*), Qianlong reign (1736–95), NPM

²⁵¹ Yu, 'The *Shanzhi liuguang* Album', 46.

Upon first glance, one will notice that the two works share similarities in their modes of representation. Both of them adopt the European perspective technique and shadowing approach to introduce a sense of volume to the objects, but, at the same time, present the objects at a tilted angle to show the interior, resulting in slightly distorted images. Meanwhile, the *Guwan tu* seems to adopt the shadowing technique to a greater extent compared to the ceramic album, as if the painters did not wish to sacrifice too much realism, when they adjusted the angle to show the interior of the objects. What is more, while the *Guwan tu* depicts the assemblage of objects as an entirety, the ceramic album presents each piece as an individualised object subject to investigation and appreciation, and adds an introductory text below following the style of the Northern Song illustrated catalogues of antiquities.

What is absent in the ceramic album, however, is the sense of spatialisation and immediate presence conveyed by the imagery of the *Guwan tu*. While the album takes the ceramic wares out of their living context by portraying them as isolated, timeless antiquities, the *Guwan tu* brings the depicted *guwan* back to the imperial space. The inclusion of the functional accessories, the throne, the cabinets, and even the stacking appearance of the objects suggests the connection between the depicted *guwan* with certain architectural structures within the palatial complexes.

The choices of the handscroll and the album format also indicate the different intention involved in the creation of these two works. The easily portable ceramic album with textual descriptions is more practical than the handscroll in terms of daily viewing and recording. On the other hand, the use of the oversize handscroll format, presumably the emperor's decision, effectively facilitates the presentation of a continuous composition that embodies the spatial

layout of the assorted objects. In this sense, being a documentary catalogue or inventory might be one of the functions of the *Guwan tu*, but was not necessarily the only one. This is particularly evident when considering the agency of such handscroll paintings in producing a dynamic and contextual narrative that transcends the faithful documentations of the objects' appearances required by pictorial catalogues.²⁵² In the next chapter, the thesis aims to bring the *Guwan tu* back to its birthplace and explore where exactly these objects were positioned and in which place, or what kind of space, did the *Guwan tu* represent? Building upon the investigation of the provenance and provenience of the *Guwan tu* and the depicted objects, the thesis will further investigate the question: what was the purpose of launching this monumental painting project?

²⁵² Shane McCausland and Yin Hwang, 'Editors' Introduction: The Medium and Modernity', *On Telling Images of China: Essays in Narrative Painting and Visual Culture* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2014), 20.

Chapter Four

Guwan tu and Yuanmingyuan

The last chapter concluded with a discussion of the spatial aspect of the *Guwan tu*, which pointed out that the objects depicted in the paintings were likely to be deliberately chosen and represented as interacting with certain spatial contexts within the imperial compound. The V&A scroll, in particular, demonstrates a stronger sense of space in its composition and links each assortment of *guwan* with the layout of such display cabinets then referred to as *bogu ge* 博古格 (cabinet for appreciating antiquities), *baobei ge* 寶貝格 (cabinet of treasures), or *gudong ge* 古董格 (cabinet of antiquities), which were carefully designed and installed in different palace halls at the discretion of the Yongzheng emperor (r. 1723–35). In the meantime, the imperial throne set reserved exclusively for the emperor, which consists of the throne, a corner-leg table, and a five-fold screen, also suggests a connection between the PDF scroll, the *guwan* in the painting, and the imperial space.

These observations lead to a series of questions regarding the location of the depicted objects and the paintings themselves. Where were these objects displayed, beheld, or utilised? Where were the two handscrolls originally located? What or where exactly does the blank area—the void space—in the *Guwan tu* represent? To find out the answers to these questions, the current chapter will probe into the provenance and provenience of the *Guwan tu*, along with that of the existing objects similar to the depicted *guwan*, aiming to trace the paintings' life journeys before coming to the UK and explore their relationship with the Qing imperial compound. A series of archival records that address specific objects in the *Guwan tu* will be highlighted in an attempt to unveil the relation between the depicted *guwan*, the

paintings, and the Yuanmingyuan, the grand palatial compound most cherished by Emperor Yongzheng.

***Guwan tu* in Archives**

In recent years, provenance and provenience have been promoted as effective entry points to alternative art historical narratives, draw attention to the ‘itinerised biography’ of an art object.²⁵³ The term ‘provenance’ can be understood as the ‘chain of ownership’ of the object, while ‘provenience’, originally adopted in the archaeological context, denotes the initial findspot of the object. Both type of information could serve as indexical evidence that sheds light on the object’s multidimensional life story, revealing not only the object’s original purposes and meanings, but also its surrounding physical, socio-cultural, and political contexts.²⁵⁴

In exploring the provenance and provenience of the *Guwan tu*, textual archives, including the *Huoji dang* but also museum acquisition files and auction house records, have proven to be useful sources throughout the current research. Previous scholars, notably Shane McCausland and Yu Pei-chin, have already started to delve into these sources and laid the groundwork for the study.²⁵⁵ Building upon earlier findings, the current chapter will propose new reflections on published textual evidence, while addressing a number of newly discovered archival records to further enrich the biography of the *Guwan tu*.

²⁵³ Gail Feigenbaum and Inge Reist, ‘Introduction’, *Provenance: An Alternate History of Art*, 1; Stacey Pierson, ‘The Power of Provenance: Dr Johnson’s Teapot and the Materialization of Fame’, *Transfer: Journal for Provenance Research and the History of Collection*, no. 1 (2022): 32, accessed 7th December 2022, <https://doi.org/10.48640/tf.2022.1.91511>.

²⁵⁴ Joyce, ‘From Place to Place’, 48-60; R. Lee Lyman, ‘A Historical Sketch on the Concepts of Archaeological Association, Context, and Provenience’, *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*, vol. 19, no. 2 (2012): 211-13, accessed 1st April 2022, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23256839>.

²⁵⁵ McCausland, ‘The Emperor’s Old Toys’, 65-75; Yu, ‘The *Shanzhi liuguang* Album’, 46-60.

To summarise the earlier scholarship, McCausland first proposed the connection between the V&A scroll and the Yuanmingyuan in his study of the scrolls' provenance history based on museum acquisition records and discussions with curators of the Percival David Foundation. According to the acquisition file, the V&A scroll was purchased from a Captain J. S. Rivett-Carnac, a military officer from the 16th Cavalry Regiment of the Indian Army. By then, the scroll was identified as an inventory of 'art treasures formerly in the Si Ling tombs', which has been previously identified as the mausoleum of Emperor Chongzhen (r. 1628–44), the last ruler of the Ming empire (1368–1644).²⁵⁶

Following the argument that this attribution of the scroll to the Ming period was inaccurate, McCausland highlighted that the Siling tomb is seated to the north-west of the capital, or more specifically, the Forbidden city. The fact that its location lies in the same direction as the Yuanmingyuan has led to a conjecture that the scroll might have been found in this imperial garden complex.²⁵⁷ Furthermore, it has been noted that Rivett-Carnac obtained the work in China from 'the officers of a German Column to which [he] was attached for duty, as a memento of [their] service' in 1900.²⁵⁸ During that specific year, the Yuanmingyuan was plundered a second time by members of the Eight Nation Alliance after the looting in 1860, thus suggesting a closer bond between the V&A scroll and the Yuanmingyuan.

In the meantime, recent scholarship has indicated the possibility that the Si Ling tombs may refer to the Qing Xiling, that is, the Western Tombs of the Qing dynasty (1644–1911),

²⁵⁶ Minute: Form 272 herewith for Transmission, *Guwan tu* Acquisition Files. McCausland, 'The Emperor's Old Toys', 65, footnote 1.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁸ Rivett-Carnac's Letter from Dilkusha, India (25 December 1910), *Guwan tu* Acquisition Files.

where Tailing, the mausoleum of the Yongzheng emperor, is situated.²⁵⁹ This conjecture appears to echo with an entry from the Qianlong period *Huoji dang*. As the entry goes, the Qianlong emperor (r. 1736–95) had commissioned the Carpentry workshop to produce designated *nanmu* (phoebe hungmaoensis) storage boxes for eight *guwan tu shoujuan* 古玩圖手卷 on 29th February in the 10th year of his reign (1745). After the workshop completed the task, the handscrolls were put into the boxes and displayed under a writing desk inside Tailing 太陵, which has been associated with the mausoleum of the Yongzheng emperor known in Chinese as ‘泰陵’.²⁶⁰ Assuming these scrolls belonged to the same *Guwan tu* series as the two surviving pieces, it can be suggested that part of the series, possibly including the V&A scroll, were preserved as a form of relic in a similar manner as the *Nanxun tu* under the Qianlong emperor and transformed into funerary offerings to his father.

However, it cannot be assumed that the primary purpose of the paintings was solely for funerary use. Based on Yu’s finding in the *Huoji dang*, the Qianlong emperor had asked for a viewing of some *hua guwan shoujuan* 畫古玩手卷 (handscroll[s] painted with ancient

²⁵⁹ Ricarda Brosch proposed this new reading of the Si Ling tombs in her presentation ‘The Picture of Ancient Playthings Revisited: Remediated Art for the Afterlife?’ at the Visual and Material Perspectives on East Asia workshop organised by the University of Chicago on 8 February 2023. In the presentation, Brosch cited the extensive study on the Qing Western Tombs written by Eugène Jean Paul Marie Fossagrives (1858–1937), a colonel in the French infantry, who had also conducted archaeological research. In the monograph, Fossagrives adopted the term ‘Si-ling’ to refer to all the Qing imperial tombs in the area. In the V&A acquisition file, both ‘Si Ling Tombs’ and ‘Siling Tombs’ appear in written and printed forms, thus suggesting the association between the V&A scroll and the Western Tombs. Further investigation is required to examine the extent of this spelling style’s prevalence across Europe around 1900s.

See Eugène Jean Paul Marie Fossagrives, *Si-ling: étude sur les tombeaux de l’Ouest de la dynastie des Ts’ing*, in *Annales du Musée Guimet* 31:1, Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1907; The Bibliothèque nationale de France, ‘Eugène Fossagrives’, last modified 18 April 2023, <https://data.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb10701012m>.

²⁶⁰ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 13, 252. Thanks to Dr Chen Chih-en for bringing this entry to my attention. The official name of the mausoleum was determined during the first year of the Qianlong reign and the character ‘泰’ was chosen by the emperor among six options proposed by officials of the Grand Secretariat. The name ‘泰陵’ is also used consistently in the *Qinding huangchao wenxian tongkao* 欽定皇朝文獻通考 [Imperial Commissioned Comprehensive Investigations Based on Literary and Documentary Sources of the Qing Dynasty] commissioned by the Qianlong emperor in 1747. The different characters ‘太’ adopted in the *Huoji dang* may be a typographical error, which can be observed across different entries. See discussion on how the Qing court determined the names of deceased rulers’ mausoleum in Xu Guangyuan 徐廣源, ‘Yongzheng huangdi de Tailing ji houfei lingqin’ 雍正皇帝的泰陵及后妃陵寢 [Tai Mausoleum of the Yongzheng Emperor and His Consorts], *Qing Xiling shihua* 清西陵史話 [History of the Western Tombs of the Qing Dynasty] (Beijing: Xin shijie chubanshe, 2003), 18-20.

playthings) on 9th January in the 2nd year of his reign (1737). After viewing the paintings, the emperor subsequently ordered people to travel to the Yuanmingyuan and pick up the *guwan* affixed with long yellow labels (*tie chang huangqian guwan* 貼長黃簽古玩) portrayed in the scroll(s).²⁶¹ If the handscroll(s) addressed in the entry were part of the *Guwan tu* series, it is then conceivable that the scrolls had served as inventories featuring objects within the Yuanmingyuan before their relocation to the mausoleum, where they were transformed into funerary objects.

Moreover, through direct observation of the scrolls, Jan Stuart has found traces of ‘paper tabs’ on the paintings’ surfaces, which are in line with the description of the long yellow labels in the above entry.²⁶² These ‘tabs’ could have been textual labels similar to those pasted on the *Horsemanship* scroll (see Chapter one, pp. 97-99), containing information about the depicted objects, such as their names, sizes, chronological origins, and locations within the Yuanmingyuan. In light of this discovery, it can be further confirmed that the existing two *Guwan tu* were likely to have assumed the function of pictorial inventories at least during the Qianlong reign. However, as emphasised in the previous chapter, the *Guwan tu* scrolls began their life journeys as archaised court paintings and claimed a more complicated role in generating knowledge about the institutional arrangement of *guwan* within the Yuanmingyuan under the Yongzheng emperor.

Unlike the V&A scroll, however, the acquisition of the PDF scroll appears to be less well

²⁶¹ Yu, ‘The *Shanzhi liuguang* Album’, 52; FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 7, 767. See the content of the entry in Appendix (IX).

²⁶² Jan Stuart, ‘Practice of Display: The Significance of Stands for Chinese Art Objects’, in *Bridges to Heaven: Essays on East Asian Art in Honor of Professor Wen C. Fong*, eds. Jerome Silbergeld et al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 695, footnote 5.

documented. According to the catalogue for the 1986 exhibition ‘Chinese Rare Books in the P.D.F.’, the scroll was said to be brought to the audience in London for the first time after being deposited by Lady David (Sheila Yorke-Hardy, 1914–95) in the Percival David Foundation.²⁶³ Yet, there has not been much evidence to show how the painting made its way to the UK and became part of the collection of Sir Percival David (1892–1964). One initial conjecture could be made based on David’s article on Ru ware published in the *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* in 1937.²⁶⁴ In his discussion on the Ru bowl (PDF.3), which has now been matched with the depicted Ru-style bowl in the PDF scroll, David did not mention the *Guwan tu* as a reference to further prove the direct connection between the object and the Qing court.²⁶⁵ Given that it has been a common practice to use the *Guwan tu* as visual evidence for the imperial status of certain objects, David could have cited it as a solid source, if he had access to the painting by then, since his scholarly methodology was to cite original sources whenever possible. Therefore, it is possible that he did not acquire the painting before or in 1937.

Following this conjecture, an auction sale catalogue published by Sotheby’s London in 1939 brings forth more critical insights into the matter. The catalogue features 62 Chinese porcelain and works of art, followed by 94 old English furniture and other items, which were due to be sold on 19th May. The last item among all the Chinese artworks, Lot. 62, is highlighted as a ‘very rare pictorial scroll catalogue, volume VI of the imperial collection of Yung Cheng’ once belonging to the late Dr R. E. Moorhead and the late Colonel A. H.

²⁶³ Whitfield, ‘GUWAN TU’, 1.

²⁶⁴ I am grateful to Professor Pierson for pointing this out and helping find the evidence in David’s article.

²⁶⁵ Sir Percival David, ‘A Commentary on Ju Ware’, *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* (1937): 58-9.

Moorhead, I.M.S. At the conclusion of the object description, a noteworthy piece of provenance information emerges, revealing that the scroll ‘was given by the Empress Dowager [Cixi (1835–1908)] to Colonel A. H. Moorhead, I.M.S.’²⁶⁶

Then, who is this Colonel A. H. Moorhead, I.M.S. and how did he get in contact with the Empress Dowager? The initial clue appears in his name suffix, ‘I.M.S’, which is the acronym for Indian Medical Service, a military health organisation consisting of both British and Indian medical officers employed to provide support primarily for the Indian Army.²⁶⁷

Following this clue, one can trace his name in *The Monthly Army List* published by the War Office in January 1910, appearing under the ‘Indian Medical Service’ section as a Major, which was attained on 28 July 1906.²⁶⁸ In the same list, he is mentioned as a medical officer working in the 16th Cavalry of the Indian Army



Fig. 4-1 16th Regiment of Bengal Lancers on the steps of the Temple of Heaven, Beijing, 1900, from an album of 104 photographs compiled by Sir G Richardson (1847–1931), 1897–1901. National Army Museum

²⁶⁶ Sotheby’s London, ‘Catalogue of Chinese Porcelain and Works of Art, old English Furniture, etc.’, 19 May 1939, (Jacques Doucet collections, NUM CV01766_19390519, p. 11), Bibliothèque de l’Institut National d’Histoire de l’Art, accessed 27th July 2023. <https://bibliotheque-numerique.inha.fr/idurl/1/31162>. Regina Krahl has briefly addressed this information regarding the provenance of the PDF scroll, along with former ownership of the V&A scrolls by Captain Rivett-Carnac, as evidence showcasing both scrolls once belonged to the imperial collection, see Regina Krahl, ‘The Yongzheng Emperor and the Qing Court Collection’, *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* 80 (2015–16): 122–23.

²⁶⁷ Donald McDonald, ‘The Indian Medical Service. A Short Account of Its Achievements 1600–1947’, *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine* 49, no. 13 (1956): 16.

²⁶⁸ *The Monthly Army List* (London: War Office, January 1910), 1479, accessed 27th July 2023. Public domain.

(the late 16th Bengal Lancers) stationed in Lucknow, India, which was possibly the same regiment to which Captain J. S. Rivett-Carnac belonged.²⁶⁹ Notably, under the regiment name appears a note written as ‘China, 1900’, which conforms to the fact that the 16th Indian Cavalry joined the allied force and participated in the Battle of Peking during 1900–1901 (Fig. 4-1).

The scattered pieces of information come together, as another crucial source emerges from the *Indian Medical Gazette*.²⁷⁰ Specifically, in the ‘War and Service Notes’ featured in the *Gazette* dated to May 1916, an obituary for A. H. Moorhead, or Arthur Henry Moorhead, is included in commemoration of his service. The obituary explicitly states that he served as ‘Medical Officer of the 16th Indian Cavalry’ and had participated in ‘the relief of Peking’ in 1900, after which he received a medal with clasp and became Brevet-Colonel in 1915, a year before he passed away due to injury.²⁷¹ Based on the above evidence, it can be confirmed that Moorhead went to Beijing in 1900 and acquired the PDF scroll during his stay. He might then have brought it back to India or directly to Britain no later than 1914, when he embarked for France with the same regiment and commanded a field ambulance in the 7th Meerut Infantry Division.²⁷² If the note in the Sotheby’s catalogue²⁷² is a truthful account, it is, then, possible that the PDF scroll was stored at the court, rather than being sent to the imperial mausoleum,

²⁶⁹ *Army List*, 1267. The letter written by Captain Rivett-Carnac in the V&A Acquisition Files was sent from Dilkusha, which referred to a residential area occupied by the British forces in Lucknow, the same city where Moorhead was based with the 16th Cavalry.

²⁷⁰ I am grateful to Professor Pierson for sharing this source.

²⁷¹ ‘War and Service Notes’, *Indian Medical Gazette (IMG)* 51, no. 5 (May 1916): 198. National Library of Medicine database, PMID: PMC5179804, accessed 28th July 2023. His promotion to Brevet-Colonel was publicly announced in *The London Gazette* in February 1915. See ‘Supplement to the *London Gazette*, 18 February 1915’, *Fourth Supplement to The London Gazette of Tuesday, the 16th of February 1915* (*The Gazette: Official Public Record*), 1699, accessed 27th July 2023. <https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/29074/supplement/1699/data.htm>

²⁷² ‘War and Service Notes’, *IMG*, 198; ‘Surgeon Colonel Arthur H. Moorhead’, ‘Our Heroes’ database, accessed 28th July 2023. <https://ourheroes.southdublin.ie/ServiceMan/Show/16522>.

since its birth during the Yongzheng reign.

How, then, did the scroll end up in the PDF collection? Based on Sotheby's transaction files, the scroll was purchased by Spink and Son for £210, slightly below the price of the V&A scroll, which is reasonable especially if the calculation was based on the total number of the painted objects.²⁷³ In June 1939, the scroll was on displayed publicly by the auction house 'at full length on the walls of the exhibition hall'.²⁷⁴ It is, thus, possible that David, as a client of Spink and Son, was impressed by the grand parade of objects presented in the completely unrolled painting and acquired the piece through the auction house. This, in turn, testifies the conjecture that David did not obtain the work before he wrote the article on the Ru ware in 1937. After nearly five decades, the scroll was brought to the public again as part of David's collection, beginning its journey as a museum object out of its original context.

With the above investigation, the link between the *Guwan tu* series and the Yuanmingyuan becomes evident. Moreover, Yu's findings in the *Huoji dang* further contribute to the discussion and strengthen both scrolls' connection with the imperial garden. In her article on one of Emperor Qianlong's ceramic albums entitled *Shanzhi liuguang* 埏埴流光 (Gu-za-000415), she draws attention to the entry previously mentioned in Chapter one (see p. 88), which makes a direct reference to the making of certain paper handscroll(s) depicting *guwan* following the commission of Yongzheng emperor.²⁷⁵ Drawing on the evidence that the emperor specifically ordered 'hua xiyang hua ren' 畫西洋畫人, painter(s) specialised in western-style painting, to come to the Yuanmingyuan and paint *guwan*, Yu

²⁷³ I am indebted to Zhao Haoyang, the researcher at Sotheby's London, and Professor Pierson for this information.

²⁷⁴ 'Imperial Studies in Chinese Archaeology', *Nature* 143 (1939): 1060, accessed 3rd August 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1038/1431060a0>. Thanks to Professor Pierson for sharing this source.

²⁷⁵ Yu, 'The *Shanzhi liuguang* Album', 53.

argues that the two extant *Guwan tu* could be considered as realistic pictorial representations of the imperial collection housed in the Yuanmingyuan, just as the handscroll(s) described in the entry.²⁷⁶

Reexamining the context of the aforementioned entry on the viewing of *hua guwan shoujuan*, it appears that the emperor's order was transmitted by the treasurer Liu Shanjiu 劉山久 and Samuha 薩木哈, a seventh-grade supervisory eunuch, to the Ruyi guan 如意館 (Studio of Fulfilled Wishes), who asked the artisans in the studio to *yubei chenglan* 預備呈覽, that is, to prepare for the imperial viewing of the scroll(s). The term 'yubei' does not appear to be a common term adopted for the daily presentation of objects and things to the emperor in the *Huoji dang*. Instead, it was only used in special occasions like festivals, birthdays of imperial family members, bestowals of gifts to foreign kings, and ritual ceremonies like the offering of incense in the Ancestral Temple, when an extensive number of utensils and objects needed to be prepared in advance.²⁷⁷ Therefore, the term carried a connotation of strenuous efforts in completing the assigned tasks, which involved the mobilisation of numerous material objects and human actors. In reference to this, the *hua guwan shoujuan* could be large in size or refer to multiple scrolls, like the *Guwan tu*, and would potentially require a considerable amount of time and effort to prepare the viewing.

Another important detail in this entry is that the workshop receiving this task was the Ruyi guan, a multipurpose studio responsible for commissions of both Chinese- and

²⁷⁶ Yu, 'The *Shanzhi liuguang* Album', 53.

²⁷⁷ Entries that adopt the term 'yubei' include: (Yongzheng reign) 19th August of the 6th year (1728): the emperor's commission of preparing birthday gifts for the wife of Prince Yi, vol. 3, 377; 19th October of the 7th Year (1729): an order from Prince Yi regarding the preparation of gifts to the king of Ryukyu, vol. 3, 671; 14th August of the 11th Year (1733): the emperor's commission of preparing gifts for princes and officials participating in the ceremony for the emperor's birthday, vol. 5, 824; (Qianlong reign), 3rd October of the 2nd year (1737): the emperor's commission of preparing candlesticks for Taimiao 太廟 (Imperial Ancestral Temple) and Fengxian dian 奉先殿 (Hall for Ancestral Worship) within the Forbidden city in accordance to the ritual etiquette established by the Yongzheng emperor in the 11th year of his reign, vol. 7, 827.

European-style paintings, pictorial designs, and varied decorative objects.²⁷⁸ In the meantime, the site name also refers to a distinct architectural complex in the Yuanmingyuan. It was located in the northeast corner of the ‘Dongtian shenchu’ 洞天深處 (Deep Vault of Heaven), an palatial compound situated to the east of the main audience hall ‘Zhengda guangming’ 正大光明 (Hall of Rectitude and Honour) and primarily designated as a school and residential space for princes during the Yongzheng period.²⁷⁹

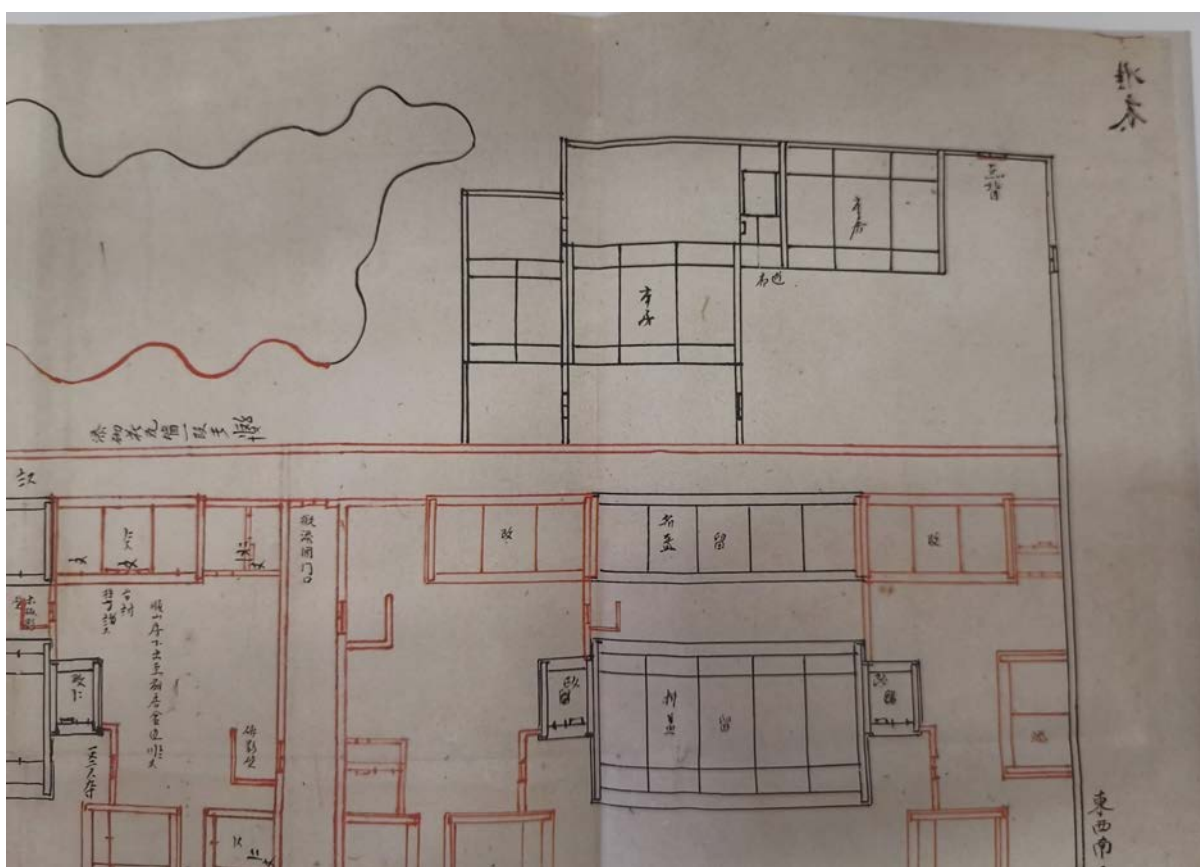


Fig. 4-2 Interior layout of Ruyi guan, in ‘Dongtian shenchu dong xi suo dipan huayang zhundi’ [Approved ground layout of east and west compounds of Dongtian shenchu], Yangshi Lei Archives, Daoguang reign (1821–50), 74.5 x 69.0 cm, National Library of China

²⁷⁸ Chiang, ‘A Repertoire of Standardised Models’, *Emperor Qianlong’s Hidden Treasures*, 99.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 99; Yang, ‘The Development of the Ch’ien-lung Painting Academy’, 336.

The preliminary drawing of the site layout (Fig. 4-2) from the Yangshi Lei 樣式雷 Archives, which contains a series of architectural drawings and models created by the imperial architects of the Lei Family, offers some insight into the interior structure of the compound. As exhibited in Figure 4-3, certain areas in the Ruyi guan had been indicated as *kufang* 庫房, or storehouses, which could have been reserved to keep materials but also

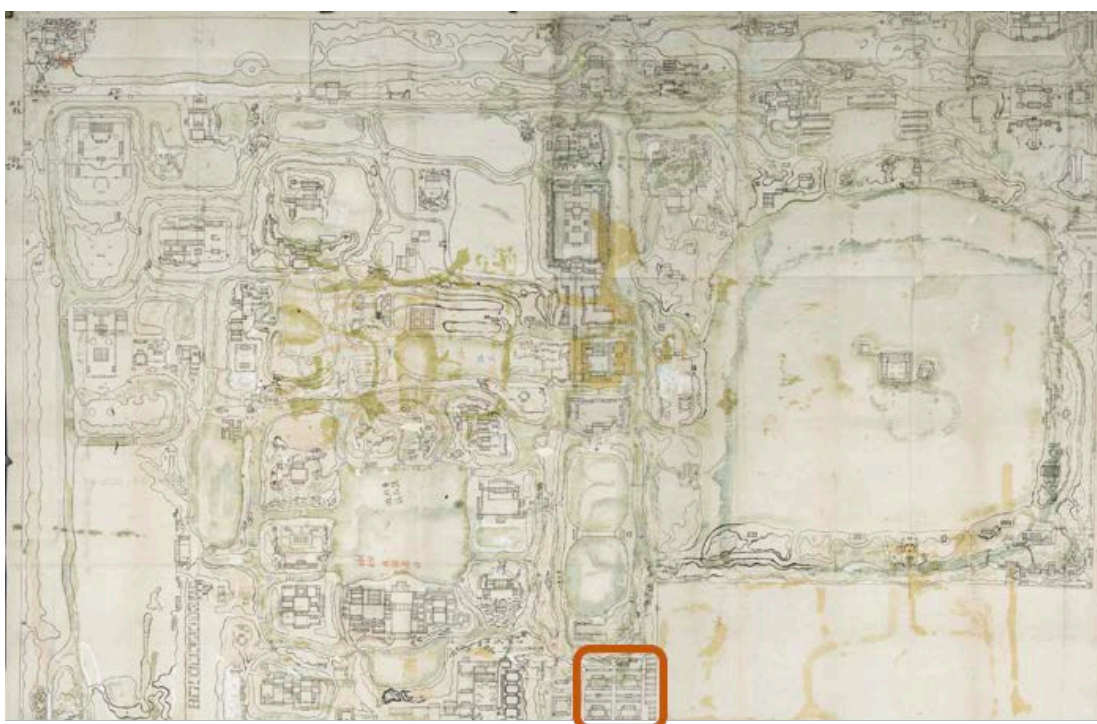


Figure 4-3
No. 1704 drawing of the full
layout of the
Yuanmingyuan,
first painted in 1779



products made by the artisans from the Ruyi guan studio. If the use of these drawings dated to the Daoguang period (1821–50) in the current discussion is considered anachronistic, the fact that the No. 1704 drawing (Fig. 4-3), which reproduces the Yuanmingyuan of the Qianlong period, shows the same spatial layout of the Ruyi guan may, to some extent, enhance the credibility of the Daoguang drawing. The No. 1704 drawing was first painted in 1779 and continued to be used as a referential record for architectural renovation in the Jiaqing (1796–1820) and Daoguang reigns. The drawing itself had been revised and altered, but the original painting layers would always be preserved and covered by another piece of paper featuring the new designs.²⁸⁰ Moreover, the Ruyi guan was painted in black inklines, which were adopted for rendering the original layout, in contrast to the red traces indicating areas planned to be altered, demolished, or added. With the evidence above, it could be suggested that the two scrolls might once have been stored in the Ruyi guan, at least at the beginning of the Qianlong reign.

It should be pointed out that whether these archival records are referring exclusively to the *Guwan tu* still remains in question. Neither of the records mentions the title of the handscrolls, which would often be specified in *Huoji dang* for the sake of clarity.²⁸¹ Nevertheless, it could still be argued that such handscrolls, which depicted *guwan* from the Yuanmingyuan in an illusionistic style, had been produced during the Yongzheng period after

²⁸⁰ Duanmu Hong 端木泓, 'Yuanmingyuan xinzheng: Qianlong chao yuanmingyuan quantu de faxian yu yanjiu' 圓明園新證——乾隆朝圓明園全圖的發現與研究 [New Evidence regarding Yuanmingyuan—The Discovery and Investigation of the Full Layout Picture of the Yuanmingyuan under the Qianlong reign]. *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宮博物院院刊 [Palace Museum Journal], no. 1, (2009): 22-36.

²⁸¹ For instance, in the entry dated to the 8th day of the second month in the 8th year of the Yongzheng reign (1730), the court painter Tangdai 唐岱 (1673–after 1752) was commissioned to create two handscrolls, with their titles specified as 'Huanghe chengqing' 黃河澄清 (The Yellow River after Clearing) and 'Qingyun xianrui' 慶雲獻瑞 (Auspicious Offerings of Five-coloured Clouds). See FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 4, 550.

the emperor's direct commission. What is more, it was likely that the paintings were kept in the Yuanmingyuan, possibly in the Ruyi guan, at certain points in their lives.

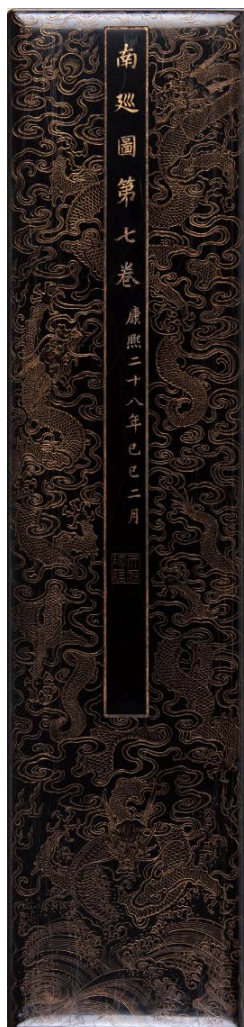


Fig. 4-4-1 Lid of the UAlberta Lacquer storage box for the Scroll seven of the *Nanxun tu*

In terms of their storage conditions, oversize handscrolls produced at the Qing court would often be accompanied with various types of well-furnished containers. For instance, the existing *Nanxun tu* 南巡圖 (*The Kangxi Emperor's Southern Inspection Tour*) possess bespoke lacquer storage boxes (Figs 4-4-1, 2), which exhibit the incised gold cloud and dragon design and are inscribed with titles, scroll numbers, and the dates when the depicted journeys of the inspection tour took place. As suggested by earlier scholarship, these storage boxes were produced under Emperor Qianlong for protective purpose, but also as a gesture of filial piety.²⁸²

For the *Guwan tu* scrolls, there is not much evidence indicating they were stored in boxes during the Yongzheng period. Based on the

previously addressed Qianlong period entry, the scrolls were treated similarly as the *Nanxun tu* and accompanied by *nanmu* storage boxes commissioned by the Qianlong emperor. The paintings were kept in the mausoleum as a

²⁸² Gugong bowuyuan 故宫博物院 [The Palace Museum], ed., 'Plate Catalog: The Packing of Painting and Calligraphy', *Qingdai gongting baozhuang yishu*, 116; The third scroll (1979.5a–d) housed in The Met and the seventh scroll (2004.19.75.2.2) in the University of Alberta Museum (UAlberta Museum) are also accompanied with bespoke lacquer boxes. The Met does not specify the production date of the box, while the UAlberta Museum attributes the item to 1698, based on the date inscribed on the box. Unfortunately, the available image of the storage box with the Qianlong dating (for the tenth scroll in the BPM) is in low resolution. In order to show the exterior inscription and decorative design, this thesis borrows the image of the box for the seventh scroll under the permission of the UAlberta Museum as an example.

representation of the deceased emperor's possessions during his lifetime, but also as a means to connect the emperor's afterlife residence with his beloved Yuanmingyuan. The storage boxes, then, were likely to be produced for the sake of keeping the paper handscrolls in a relatively dry and clean environment in the mausoleum.

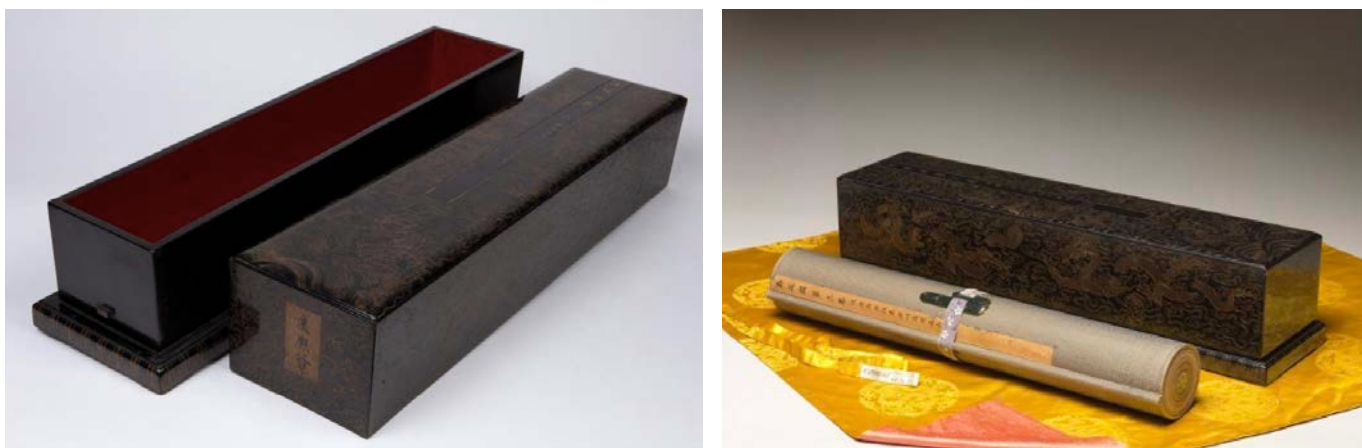


Fig. 4-4-2 Lacquer storage boxes designated for the UAlberta (left) and The Met (right) scrolls

In the context of the Yongzheng reign, though, the work might not be handled in the same way as the *Nanxun tu*, since the concept of *wan* embedded in its subject matter conveys an undertone of non-seriousness in contrast to the political connotation lying in the imagery of Emperor Kangxi (r. 1662–1722)'s inspection tour.²⁸³ By describing the handscroll(s) as *hua guwan*, the registrar of the *Huoji dang*, upon endorsement of the ruler, reinforced that the focal point of the work was the subject matter, the actual *guwan* present in the imperial compound.

As David Summers has pointed out, 'images are fashioned in order to make present in social spaces what for some reason is not present.'²⁸⁴ The images of these *guwan*, thus,

²⁸³ Hans-Georg Gadamer, 'The Ontology of the Work of Art and Its Hermeneutic Significance', *Truth and Method* (2nd edition) (London: Sheed and Ward, 1979), 101-2.

²⁸⁴ Summers, 'Images', *Real Spaces*, 252.

potentially serve as alternative provenience records that reveal the unrepresented place where the depicted objects were originally used and displayed. In the next section, the thesis will examine the images in conjunction with textual records related to specific objects in the *Guwan tu*, aiming to further consolidate the relation between the scrolls, the depicted *guwan*, and the Yuanmingyuan.

Location of the Depicted *Guwan*

The first attempt to identify traces of specific objects related to the *Guwan tu* in archives was also made by Yu Pei-chin in her article addressed above. To advance her argument that the production of the *Guwan tu* was associated with the Yuanmingyuan, Yu further digs into the Qianlong period entry on the viewing of the *hua guwan shoujuan*. Upon receiving the emperor's order to collect *guwan* in the Yuanmingyuan, Shuang Zhu 雙柱, a non-ranked *baitangga* (handyman), brought the scroll(s) to the imperial garden to select the objects on the 10th day of the initial month, and a total of 26 pieces were brought to the Forbidden City on the subsequent day by Sun Sange 孫三格.²⁸⁵ Interestingly, the entry divides the objects into 6 groups under different years of the Yongzheng reign, from the 3rd (1725) to the 7th year (1729), along with one marked as 'year unrecorded'. Yu particularly highlighted 3 objects listed under Year 6 (1728), namely, *biyu yingwu xiangqian* 碧玉鸚鵡鑲嵌 (green jade inlay decorated with paired parrots), *baiyu ruyi* 白玉如意 (white jade *ruyi* sceptre), and *hongbai manao yulan huacha* 紅白瑪瑙玉蘭花插 (red and white agate flower holder in the shape of magnolia). Each object can be paired with a *guwan* in the PDF scroll, which was also dated to

²⁸⁵ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 7, 767.

the same year.²⁸⁶

With Yu's insightful findings, the connection between the *Guwan tu* and the objects once housed in the Yuanmingyuan has been further strengthened. Meanwhile, it should be noted that most of the object descriptions in this entry appear to be rather generic, only briefly indicating the materials and the object types. The three objects pointed out by the author are particularly identifiable, because their vessel forms, decorations, and colours not only conform to the text, but also appear to be unique in the handscroll. The illusionistic mode of representation has, indeed, also contributed to the understanding of the objects' formal details, as exemplified by the naturalistic rendition of the parrots' horn-like feathers projecting from their heads and the elongated magnolia petals presented in the painting.



Fig. 4-5 White jade-like vases in *gu* shape (V&A scroll)
 Left: on the 1st paper behind the 9 cabinets in the middle
 Mid: on the 2nd paper behind the 9 cabinets
 Right: on the paper preceding the throne-like cabinets

When it comes to the V&A scroll, however, the same approach may not work as effectively as in the case of the PDF scroll, since one textual description could match with multiple pieces of objects. For example, in the case of the 6 *ruyi* sceptres described under

²⁸⁶ Yu, 'The *Shanzhi liuguang* Album', 51-2.

Year 7, several *ruyi* sceptres in the V&A scroll are rendered using hues that align with the colour palettes of green and white jades. Even for such distinct items as the *baiyu feiji huagu* 白玉飛脊花觚 (white jade *gu*-shaped flanged flower vase), 3 objects (Fig. 4-5) in the scroll could fit with this description.

With that being addressed, the object types included in the record, though lacking specific formal details, still appear to be in conformity with those depicted in the V&A scroll, which mainly features elegant utensils for scholar's studio, including jade water droppers, flower holders, and *ruyi* sceptres that would be adopted as paperweights occasionally. What is more, the record also mentions an object called *biyu fangxiang* 碧玉方響, a type of suspended percussion instrument functioning similarly as *qing* 磬 (chime).²⁸⁷ The display of jade chimes also speaks to late Ming discourses on the ideal scholarly lifestyle, which suggest that by knocking on the suspended jade chime in the studio, the master could refrain from hearing the guests' gossip on mundane affairs.²⁸⁸ This item potentially corresponds to one of the green jade chime stones depicted in the V&A scroll, and, in turn, links the scroll with one specific site in the Yuanmingyuan, that is, the Lianhua guan 蓮花館 (Lotus Lodge).

²⁸⁷ *Fangxiang* was considered a similar type of instrument as *qing* 磬 (chimestone), a ritualistic percussion instrument made of stone or jade. The *Gujin tushu jicheng* has one section dedicated solely to *fangxiang*, which contains accounts with reference to this instrument from the Tang (618–907) to Ming (1368–1644) periods. Among all the historical accounts, several Song and Ming sources, including *Yue shu* 樂書 [Book of Music] by Chen Yang 陳暘 (act. late 11th–early 12th century) and *Sancai tuhui* 三才圖會 [Illustrated encyclopedia of Heaven, Earth, and Man] by Wang Qi 王圻 (1530–1615), cited the Tang dynasty *Tongdian* 通典 [Comprehensive Compendium], which suggested the bronze *qing* adopted during the Southern Liang period (502–57) was comparable to the present-day *fangxiang*. The version quoted in the Ming *Sancai tuhui* further commented that *fangxiang* made of iron could be used as an alternative for *qing*. Chen et al., eds., 'Fangxiang bu huikao' 方響部彙考 [Investigation of *fangxiang*], *Jingji huibian: yuelü dian di yibai juan fangxiang bu* 經濟彙編：樂律典第一百卷方響部 [Economy Collection: Music Division, vol. 100: *Fangxiang*], in *GJTSJC*, vol. 738, 40a-b.

²⁸⁸ Tu, and Shen (ce.), 'Qing' 磬 [Chime], *Kaopan yushi III*, vol. 10 (seq. 1167), 24b, accessed 12th May 2023, <https://nrs.lib.harvard.edu/urn-3:fhcl:25591906>.

I. V&A scroll and Lianhua Guan



Fig. 4-6-1 White jade-like chime with a tasselled stick (V&A scroll)

The name 'Lianhua guan' first appears in the *Huoji dang* record dated to the 5th year of the Yongzheng reign (1727) and has been continuously mentioned in records for the following three years, with each entry elaborating on a series of furnishing and interior decorating projects.²⁸⁹ One of the predominant projects that lasted from Year 6 to Year 8 (1730) was the display of varied jade chimes

in certain bookshelves, which was frequently requested by the emperor especially during the 6th (7 times) and the 7th year (10 times). For Year 6, in

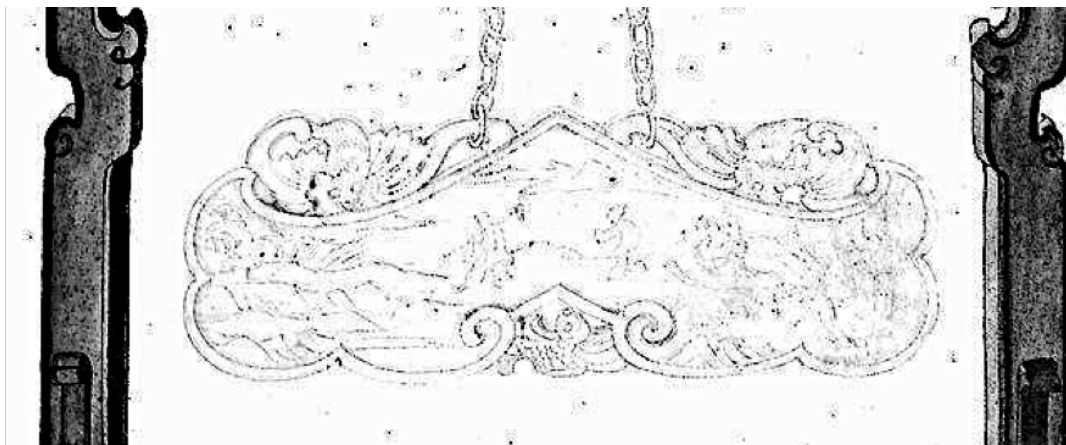


Fig. 4-6-2 Detail showing the decoration featuring two figures in landscape setting

²⁸⁹ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, Year 6: vol. 3, 350 (13 Jan); 351 (17 Jan); 354 (6 Feb); 233, 356 (7 Feb); 357 (17 Feb); 185 (30 Apr); 198 (19 Oct); Year 7: vol. 4, 3 (20 Feb); vol. 4, 208 (23 Feb); vol. 4, 209 (2 Mar); vol. 4, 4 (6 Mar); vol. 4, 213 (19 Mar); vol. 3, 714 (21 Mar); vol. 3, 716 (two entries), 757 (2 Apr); vol. 3, 716 (5 Apr); Year 8: vol. 4, 493 (6 Feb); vol. 4, 590 (17 Feb); vol. 4, 479-80 (3 Aug, this entry describes several commissions of making plaques for various palace halls in the Yuanmingyuan, including the site for viewing lotus behind Lianhua guan); Year 10: vol. 5, 418-19 (8 Mar, according to this entry, Haiwang sent one old landscape painting and a 'toughua' 透畫 bamboo painting to the Mounting workshop on this day, ordering artisans to paint two new paintings based on the old ones, remount the old and new landscape paintings, and send all the newly mounted paintings back to Lianhua guan).

particular, most of the chimes were put into a bookshelf, or a set of bookshelves, in the *yihao fang* 一號房 (Room No. 1) of the Lianhua guan, and a few of them could be paired with the ones depicted in the V&A scroll as similar types of chimes.²⁹⁰

For instance, on the 7th day of the second month, Haiwang brought out a chained white jade chime presented by Shi Liha 石禮哈 (act. 1723–47), a military official from the Han Plain White Banner and the governor of

Guangdong at the time.²⁹¹ The chime was carved with figures and inscriptions, accompanied by a *shanhu zhi jia* 珊瑚枝架, possibly an organic-shaped display rack made of coral branch. Later on the 3rd day of the ninth month, the rack was replaced by a newly made *zitan* wood rack upon the emperor's request, and the chime, together with the new rack, was displayed in the bookshelf in the *yihao fang*.²⁹²

On the same day, a fish-shaped white jade chime with a red-dyed ivory rack was also brought out



Fig. 4-7-1 Greyish-white jade fish ornament (V&A scroll)

and later displayed in the *yihao fang* by Haiwang on 3rd September.²⁹³

²⁹⁰ It should be pointed out that although the V&A scroll is dated to the 7th year, its creation process would last for years, considering its monumental scale and the diversity of its subject matters. Thus, objects featured in the painting are not necessarily restricted to those mentioned in entry dated to the 7th year, but could be the ones present in the Yuanmingyuan before that year.

²⁹¹ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, 356; The record miswrote the official's name as '石里哈', see 'Shi Liha', in *Renming quanwei renwu zhuanji ziliaoku* 人名權威人物傳記資料庫 (China Biographical Database Project [CBDB]), 0057373. Last modified 23 December 2010.

https://newarchive.ihp.sinica.edu.tw/sncaccgi/sncacftp?ACTION=TQ,sncacftpqf,SN=000595,2nd,search_simple

²⁹² FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, 356.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 233.

The descriptions of these two chimes conform partially to the white jade chime accompanied by a tasselled stick (Fig. 4-6-1) showcased on the 6th paper of the V&A scroll and another greyish-white jade fish ornament (Fig. 4-7-1) positioned before the throne-like cabinets (see Fig. 3-11 for the positions of the two objects).

The fish ornament is suspended on a red rack, suggestive of the red-dyed ivory rack. Its actual purpose as a chime may not appear to be self-evident, since it is not accompanied with a chime stick. Meanwhile, an entry dated to the 2nd day of the fourth month in the 7th year shows that objects that did not originally serve as chimes could be



transformed into ones under the orders of the emperor. In this case, the emperor asked the Carpentry workshop

Fig. 4-7-2 Grey fish-shaped chime in ‘Copying a sutra in a studio’ from the *Xingle tu* of the Yongzheng emperor, BPM

to produce racks for two Han green jade *jue* 玦 (slit disc) in *kui*-dragon shape and display them as chimes in the Lianhua guan.²⁹⁴ Furthermore, in the leaf portraying the Yongzheng emperor copying a sutra in a studio from the album of *Emperor Yongzheng engaging in Pleasurable Events*, a similar grey fish-shaped chime (Fig. 4-7-2) is displayed on a side table located at the right side of the ruler. The chime is suspended on a fully adorned lacquered chime rack, accompanied this time with the tasselled stick, which is fastened to the

²⁹⁴ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, 716.

protruding attachment on the rack designed in the shape of auspicious clouds.²⁹⁵ Evidenced by the *Huoji dang* entry and this visual image, it can be inferred that the fish ornament in the V&A scroll could also be a piece that had been refashioned into a chime and displayed in the Yuanmingyuan, possibly in the Lianhua guan.

With regard to the chime with tasselled stick, it appears to be aligned more with the description. It is hung with two gold chains on a rectangular wood-like rack and features two figures in a landscape setting (see Fig. 4-6-2 above). In the meantime, the carved inscription specified in the description is not shown in this one-perspective image. Assuming the image is representing this particular object, one could argue that the V&A scroll, along with the *Guwan tu* handscrolls in general, was not a static record of certain timeless collection of antiquities. Instead, it was closely tied with imperial acquisitions of objects from officials and reflected various practices of renewing, refashioning, and replacing objects related to the Yuanmingyuan on a daily basis.

²⁹⁵ For the detailed discussion on the jade chime and the chime rack shown in the album leaf, see Hou Yi-li 侯怡利, 'Cong bogu ge kan Qianlong huangdi de wenwu baozhuang' 從博古格看乾隆皇帝的文物包裝 [From Curio Shelf (Bogu ge) to the Qianlong Emperor's Packaging of Artworks], in *Pinpai de gushi*, 237.

Based on the above discussion, it can be argued that the V&A scroll might have a connection with the Lianhua guan and served as a pictorial representation of objects displayed in this palace building. Meanwhile, the name ‘Lianhua guan’ was only adopted under the Yongzheng emperor and its precise location has been subject to some scholarly debate. So far, considerable Chinese and English-language scholarship has equated the

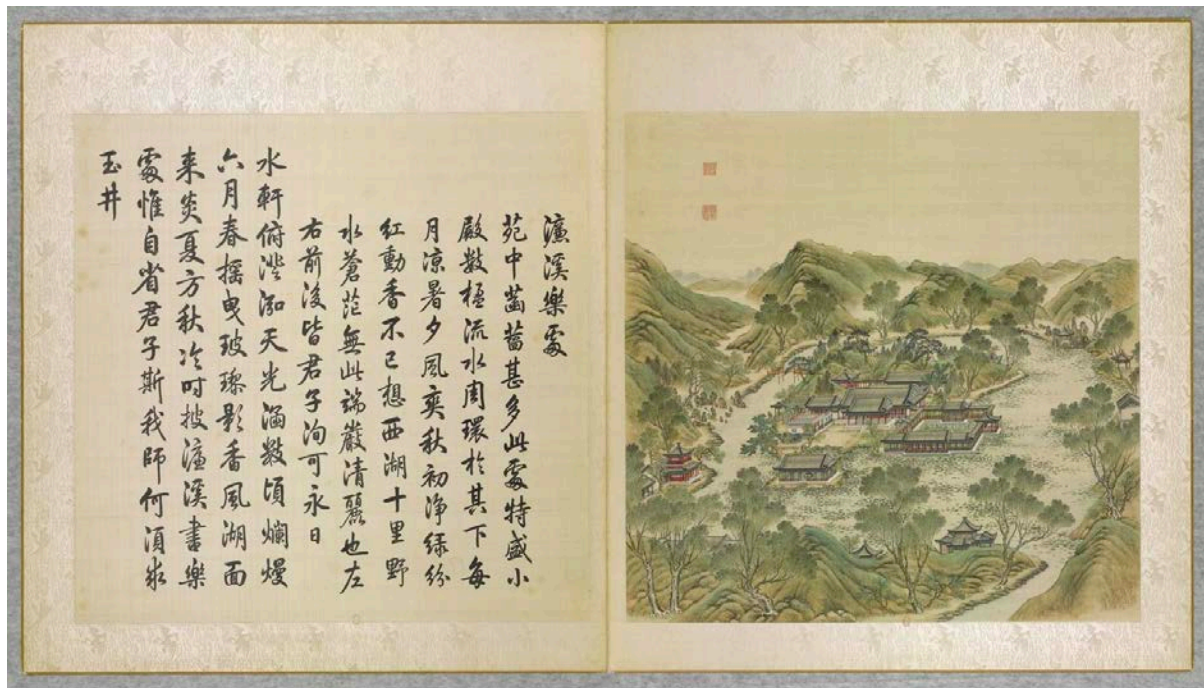


Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Fig. 4-8 Tangdai 唐岱 (1673–after 1752) and Shen Yuan 沈源 (act. 18th century), 'Changchun xianguan' (the Fairy Lodge of Eternal Spring), from the *Forty Scenes* album, 1744, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

Lianhua guan with Changchun xianguan 長春仙館 (the Fairy Lodge of Eternal Spring) (Fig. 4-8), the former residence hall of Prince Hongli, the later Qianlong emperor, bestowed by

Emperor Yongzheng in 1729, the year to which the V&A scroll is dated.²⁹⁶ The main evidence for this attribution is one *Huoji dang* entry dated to the first year of the Qianlong reign (1736), which describes the emperor's commission of a new panel inscribed with



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Fig. 4-9-1 Tangdai and Shen Yuan, 'Lianxi lechu' (Joyful Place for Mr Lian Xi), from the *Forty Scenes* album, 1744, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

'Changchun xianguan' modelled after the original one hung in the old Lianhua guan.²⁹⁷

On the other hand, Guo Daiheng has linked the Lianhua guan with the site of Lianxi lechu 濂溪樂處 (Joyful Place for Mr Lian Xi), the largest palatial compound situated in the private quarters of the Yuanmingyuan. The site is especially known for its lotus pond, as visualised in the album leaf of the *Forty Scenes of the Yuanmingyuan* (shortened as *Forty*

²⁹⁶ *Yuanming cansang* Editorial Committee, ed., *Yuanming cansang* 圓明滄桑 [The Vicissitudes of the Old Summer Palace] (Beijing: Wenhua yishu chubanshe, 1991), 115; Emily Byrne Curtis, *Glass Exchange between Europe and China, 1550–1800: Diplomatic, Mercantile and Technological Interactions* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 45. In note 20, Curtis suggested the information regarding the Lianhua guan was shared with her by John Finlay; The introduction to the Changchun xianguan presented on the official website of the current Yuanmingyuan Park mentions the site was initially named as 'Lianhua guan', see: http://www.yuanmingyuanpark.cn/cgll/zyjd/ymy/jzjqzb/201101/t20110104_4171022.html.

²⁹⁷ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 7, 109.

Scenes album) (Fig. 4-9-1).²⁹⁸ The evidence used by Guo to support her argument also comes from the *Huoji dang*. Specifically, on the 12th day of the leap third month in Year 5, the emperor asked Haiwang to sketch out designs for the interior renovation of a *sanjian wu* 三間屋 (three-bay dwelling) facing towards the waterfall located to the west of Lianhua guan.²⁹⁹



Fig. 4-9-2 Detail showing the waterfall and *sanjian wu* (dwelling of three bays) in Lianxi lechu

Interpreting the record in conjunction with the image of the compound shown in the album leaf, Guo points out that the sloping flow of water (Fig. 4-9-2) on the left (west) part of the painting represents the waterfall, and the building complex adjacent to the pond, which occupies three spatial units could be paralleled with the *sanjian wu* addressed in the record.³⁰⁰ What is more, on 3rd August in the 8th year, the emperor decided to change the name of the *Lianhua guan hou guanlian suo* 蓮花館後觀蓮所, that is, the spot for lotus viewing behind

²⁹⁸ Guo Daiheng 郭黛姮, 'Yuanmingyuan sishijing tu de jiazhi' 《圓明園四十景》圖的價值 [The Value of the Album of *Forty Scenes of the Yuanmingyuan*], *Yuanmingyuan yanjiu* 圓明園研究 [Yuanmingyuan Research], no. 35 (2016), accessed 19th July 2022. http://www.yuanmingyuanpark.cn/ymyyj/yj035/201611/t20161113_1317935.html.

²⁹⁹ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 2, 586.

³⁰⁰ Guo, 'Yuanmingyuan sishijing tu de jiazhi'.

the Lianhua guan, to Jihe xiang 芰荷香 (Fragrance of Water Caltrops and Lotus).³⁰¹ The site of Jihe xiang was later transformed under Emperor Qianlong into the currently known Duoqia ruyun 多稼如雲 (Bountiful Crops as Clouds), which is located closely behind the present-day Lianxi lechu.

Moreover, on 10th July of the same year, the emperor ordered the warehouse of the Imperial Workshops to send some telescopes of good quality to the spot facing the west waterfall in Lianhua guan and the *baosha* 抱廈, or projecting portico, of the *yihao fang*. This record further strengthens the connection between Lianhua guan and Lianxi lechu, since the image of Changchun xianguan in the *Forty Scenes* album does not appear to have any projecting portico. What is more, the record also links the *yihao fang* to the building attached with a projecting portico in the Lianxi lechu compound, and it may be possible that the *sanjian wu* facing towards the waterfall was the *yihao fang* that housed the objects portrayed in the V&A scrolls.

II. PDF Scroll and Xifeng xiuse

While the association between the V&A scroll and Lianhua guan remains a conjecture because of the uncertain correlation between the texts and images, the PDF scroll appears to have a direct connection with one specific entry from the *Huoji dang*. The record is dated to the 21st day of the eleventh month in the 6th year of the Yongzheng reign (1728), the very year when the PDF scroll was completed, and it reads as follows:

³⁰¹ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 4, 364.

On the 21st day, eunuchs Liu Xiwen and Wang Taiping sent in:
 one *yangqi* (foreign lacquer) throne inlaid with jade panels;
 one yellow silk seat cushion embroidered with golden dragons and five-coloured decorative designs;
 one gilt-couched yellow silk back cushion embroidered with miniscule pearls, motifs of dragons, corals, and symbol of *wanshou* (ten-thousand longevity) against a swastika-fret ground;
 one piece of gilt-couched yellow silk seat cushion cover embroidered with miniscule pearls and peach motifs against a swastika-fret ground...
 one jade square cauldron;
 one green jade cauldron with *zitan* wood lid and stand;
 two blue and white porcelain dishes from the Ming Chenghua kiln, accompanied by two raised stands made of *zitan* wood and holding 10 citron and Buddha's-hand fruit;
 one *dongqing* (eastern celadon) glazed milfoil stalk vase with *zitan* wood stand...
 One golden *ruyi* sceptre inlaid with 11 pieces of eastern pearls, one large and one small *luozi*, three pieces of ruby, two pieces of sapphire, held in a brocaded box;
 A pair of carved *ruyi* sceptres made of *zitan* wood, each inlaid with two pieces of white jade and held in a brocaded box...

Hereby passed on his majesty's decree: send [the above items] to Yuanmingyuan and ask the chief eunuch in the garden to display them at Xifeng xiuse.

二十一日太監劉希文、王太平交來洋漆嵌玉片寶座一分；繡五彩金龍黃緞床墊一件；繡金線萬字錦黃緞緝珠龍珊瑚萬壽靠背一件；繡金線萬字錦黃緞緝珠蟠桃座褥一件……玉方鼎一件；紫檀木蓋座碧玉鼎一件；成窯青花磁盤二件，隨紫檀木架二件，香圓（椽）佛手十個；東青筮草瓶一件，紫檀木座；紫檀邊腿畫洋金腳搭一件，隨黃宮紬繡雲福套一件；紫檀邊腿畫洋金花案一張；黃緞繡五彩金龍案圍一件；金如意一件，上嵌東珠十一顆、璣子大小二塊、紅寶石三塊、藍寶石二塊，錦匣盛；紫檀木雕刻如意二件，各嵌白玉鑲嵌二塊，錦匣盛……
 傳旨：著送至圓明園，交園內總管太監陳設在西峰秀色處，欽此。³⁰²

³⁰² FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, 159, 430.



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Fig. 4-10 Tangdai and Shen Yuan, ‘Xifeng xiuse’ (Majestic Sunset-Tinted Peaks of the West Hills), from the *Forty Scenes* album, 1744, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris



Fig. 4-11-1 Celadon *cong*-shaped vase, white jade square cauldron, and carved wooden *ruyi* sceptres with jade inlays (PDF scroll)



Fig. 4-11-2 Chenghua-style blue and white porcelain dishes on wooden stands, and gold-filigree *ruyi* sceptre inlaid with precious stones (PDF scroll)

A number of the objects mentioned above can be identified with objects in the PDF scroll and connect the painting with the site of Xifeng xiuse 西峰秀色 (Majestic Sunset-Tinted Peaks of the West Hills) (Fig. 4-10), a private residential complex particularly cherished by the Yongzheng emperor. Most of the comparable objects are depicted on the two pieces of smaller-sized paper (Figs 4-11-1 and 4-11-2) located in the middle section of the handscroll.

To begin with, the pair of blue and white dishes (Fig. 4-11-2) displayed on raised wooden stands conforms to the descriptions above, though the decorative designs of the dishes have not been specified. The painted dishes could be matched with an extant piece (Gu-ci- 016397) (Fig. 4-12-2) dated to the Chenghua reign (1465–87) from the NPM, thus further indicating the link between the image and the textual description, which demonstrates the dishes are from the Chenghua kiln. As noted in the entry, the dishes originally held 10 citrons and Buddha’s-hand fruit, a variation of citron with finger-like segments.

This note, again, speaks to the functional nature of the objects in the *Guwan tu*. At the same time, the inclusion of this pair of dishes corresponds to the late Ming taste for *xiangyuan pan* 香櫞盤 (citron dish). In *Kaopan yushi*, the author recommended the use of large blue and white dishes, among other



Figure 4-12-2 Blue and white dish with a fruiting bush and stylised flower scroll, and peony scroll outside (with reign mark), Chenghua reign (1465–87), NPM

options, and suggested 12 or 13 citrons would be enough to fill the room with a refreshing fragrance.³⁰³ This, in turn, suggests that a certain area in Xifeng xiuse, where the dishes were displayed and used, was designed to be an elegant retreat modelled after the late Ming imagery of the ideal scholarly space.

For the ‘*dongqing*-glazed milfoil stalk vase with *zitan* wood stand’, it could be matched with the *cong*-shaped vase (Fig. 4-11-1) in the painting, since ‘milfoil stalk vase’, or *Shicao ping* 蓍草瓶, was, in fact, an alternative term for the archaic *cong*-shaped vases (Gu-ci-016606) (Fig. 4-12-1). This type of vessel was popularised in the late Ming period and often mentioned by contemporary



Fig. 4-12-1 *Cong*-shaped vase with light green glaze, Guan stoneware, 12th–13th century, NPM

arbiters of taste.³⁰⁴ For instance, in his discussion on flower vases, Gao Lian listed *qingdong ci xiao shicao ping* 青東磁小蓍草瓶 (small-sized milfoil stalk porcelain vase) as one of the most appropriate vessel types for flower arrangement.³⁰⁵

³⁰³ Tu, and Shen (ce.), ‘Xiangyuan pan’ 香櫞盤 [Citron Dish], *Kaopan yushi III*, vol. 10 (seq. 1163), 20b-21a.

³⁰⁴ Hsieh Ming-Liang 謝明良, ‘Congping de bianqian’ 琮瓶的變遷 [The Development of the Tsung Vase], *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 [The National Palace Museum Research Quarterly] 23, no. 1 (2005): 429-66. Hsieh presents a few other similar examples from the Percival David Collection (PDF. 99) and the Tokyo National Museum, which have all been identified as Southern Song Guan wares.

³⁰⁵ Gao, ‘Pinghua sanshuo: pinghua zhiyi’ 瓶花參說：瓶花之宜 [Three Discussions on Flower Arrangement in Vases: The Suitable (Vessels) for Vase Flower], *Yanxian qingshang jian xia juan*, from *Zunsheng bajian*, vol. 8 (seq. 930), 2a, accessed 12th May 2023, <https://nrs.lib.harvard.edu/urn-3:fhcl:27666276>.

In terms of the *dongqing* glaze, however, Gao Lian, along with other late Ming literati like Tu Long 屠隆 (1542–1605) and Xiang Yuanbian 項元汴 (1525–90), had noted certain *qingdong ci* 青東磁, or celadon ware of the Eastern kilns, in their writings, and suggested it spoke to the intended elegant spirit in a scholar's studio.³⁰⁶ The term might be the way *dongqing*-glazed ware was referred to in their time, and was rephrased in a reverse order during the Qing period.³⁰⁷ In *Jingdezhen taolu*, the author Lan Pu 藍浦 (act. 1736–95) identified *dongqing* ware as a product of a Northern Song private kiln known as the Eastern kilns. He suggested the ware mainly featured one light and one deep celadon glaze colour and was comparable to Guan ware, but showed no crackle and appeared to be paler in colour than Guan ware.³⁰⁸ The Eastern kiln has now been recognised as the Ming name for the Longquan kilns, and certain Longquan kilns are also known to have been commissioned to manufacture Guan-style wares for the court.³⁰⁹ Thus, it could be suggested that the *cong*-shaped vase in the PDF scroll possibly represents a Longquan- or Guan-style celadon flower vessel displayed in the Xifeng xiuse.

³⁰⁶ Tu, and Shen (ce.), 'Shui zhong cheng' 水中丞 [Water Dropper], *Kaopan yushi*, vol. 10 (seq. 1154), 11b; Xiang Yuanbian 項元汴 (1525–90), Stephen W. Bushell (tr.), 'Song dongqing linghua xi' 宋東青磁菱花洗 [Tung Ch'ing Tz'ü of the Sung dynasty. Hexagonal Bowl for washing brushes, engraved with floral scrolls], *Chinese Porcelain: Sixteenth-Century Coloured Illustrations with Chinese ms. Text*, section IX (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908), fig. 71 and descriptions.

³⁰⁷ To raise another example in the *Huoji dang*, a *dongqing* water dropper in the shape of lion or persimmon (different in the commission record and responding report) is mentioned in the Year 7 entry on *baishijian guwan* (the 6th day of the leap seventh month), FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, 620; vol. 4, 146.

³⁰⁸ Lan, Zheng et al., 'Dong yao' 東窯 [Eastern kilns], 'Zhen fang guyao kao' 鎮仿古窯考 [Investigation on archaised wares from Jingdezhen], in *Jingdezhen taolu*, vol. 6, 771.

³⁰⁹ I am indebted to Professor Pierson for this information.

As for descriptions like the ‘jade square cauldron’ and the ‘green jade cauldron with *zitan* wood lid and stand’, they appear to be less defined and lacking information regarding their decorative designs. Meanwhile, one may still match them up with the white jade square cauldron (Fig. 4-11-1) next to the *cong*-shaped vase, together with the green square cauldron



Fig. 4-13 Green square cauldron next to the blue and white jar inscribed with Lança scripts and bronze-like *zun*-shaped vase in comparison (PDF scroll)

(Fig. 4-13) situated at the beginning of the entire scroll, next to the blue and white jar inscribed with Lança scripts. The reason why the material of the depicted green square cauldron could be suggestive of green jade is that the body of the cauldron, especially the edges of the flanges, is painted to imitate the translucency of jade under the invisible light that shines from the upper left side of the picture plane. This visual effect does not appear on the bronze-like objects in the scroll, which are often rendered in opaque mixture of tawny and green colours that absorbs rather than transmits the light (as demonstrated by the *zun*-shaped vase in Fig. 4-13).

Among all the items listed in the record, the *ruyi* sceptres correspond most closely with the depicted objects in the scroll. For the ‘golden *ruyi* sceptre’, thanks to the detailed description of the inlaid pearls and gemstones, it is shown that the image of the gold-filigree *ruyi* sceptre (Fig. 4-14) above the two Chenghua dishes conforms almost perfectly to the description, with 11 pearls, 3 rubies, 2 sapphires scattered evenly on the head and the handle, along with 2 unidentified gemstones, a large and a small one, corresponding with how the *luozi* 璣子 is described in the record.³¹⁰



Fig. 4-14 Detail showing the gold-filigree *ruyi* sceptre inlaid with pearls and gemstones (PDF scroll)

The material referred by *luozi* was not specified, but one can find some clues in other Qing imperial records, such as the *Qinding Huangchao wenxian tongkao* 欽定皇朝文獻通考 (Imperially Commissioned Comprehensive Investigations Based on Literary and Documentary Sources of the Qing Dynasty). In one of the chapters on trade taxes and state monopolies, the character ‘luo’ is adopted in the term ‘boluo’ 玻璣, presumably an alternative

³¹⁰ Depictions of Eastern pearls often appear in portraits of Qing imperial concubines. One such example is the Qianlong period portrait of consort Chunhui exhibited by the Poly Art Museum in 2021 (see footnote 192), whose earrings are decorated with eastern pearls. The pearls on the *ruyi* sceptre appear to be similar to those attached to the earrings in the shades of colours in use.



Fig. 4-15 Cups and bowl made of opaque glass in imitation of realgar, 1723–50, BM

term for ‘boli’ 玻璃, or glass, which had been adopted as a common material for imperial decorative objects since the Kangxi period (1662–1722).³¹¹ Going beyond textual sources, the naturalistic portrayal of the *ruyi* sceptre itself

provides additional insights worthy of consideration. Both the gemstones inlaid in the head and the handle of

the *ruyi* take on an opaque yellowish-brown hue, with the one on the handle leaning closer to the brown spectrum. This particular colour bears a resemblance to the vibrant tones found on wares crafted from realgar glass, which were mainly manufactured during the 18th century as a cross-media imitation of natural realgar.³¹² The glass usually consists of an opaque reddish-brown glass as the core and an outer layer, which takes on a warm palette consisting of bright

³¹¹ Zhang Tingyu 張廷玉 (1672–1755), et al., ‘Zhengque kao er’ 征權考 • 二 [Investigation on Taxes and Monopolies, Part 2], in *Huangchao wenxian tongkao* 欽定皇朝文獻通考 [Imperial Commissioned Comprehensive Investigations Based on Literary and Documentary Sources of the Qing Dynasty], vol. 27, in *Siku quanshu* (Shibu | zhengshu lei: tongzhi zhi shu) 四庫全書 (史部 | 政書類: 通製之屬) [Four Treasuries (History | Literature on Statecraft and Administration: Comprehensive Regulations), 28a, accessed 19th July 2022. Dialong Full-text Database. <https://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=54684&page=141&remap=gb>.

The term ‘boluo’ also appears in one of the poems that rhymes with the tune of ‘Lin jiang xian’ 臨江仙 (Immortal by the River) composed by Mao Qiling 毛奇齡 (1623–1716), a scholar and philologist living in the Ming-Qing transitional period. The line indicates ‘boluo’ as a type of wine vessel. The relevant stanza reads as: 幸得閒堂仍聚首，清樽頻把玻璃。

³¹² Xue Lü 薛呂, ‘Xionghuang se boli—Zhongguo Qingdai boli zai Ouzhou de zuizao jilu’ 雄黃色玻璃——中國清代玻璃在歐洲的最早紀錄 [Realgar-Coloured Glass: The Earliest Record of Qing dynasty Chinese Glass in Europe], *Guji yanjiu* 古籍研究 [Research on Chinese Ancient Books] 2 (2021): 96.

yellow, crimson red, and reddish tones, occasionally with a hint of green.³¹³ The realgar glass

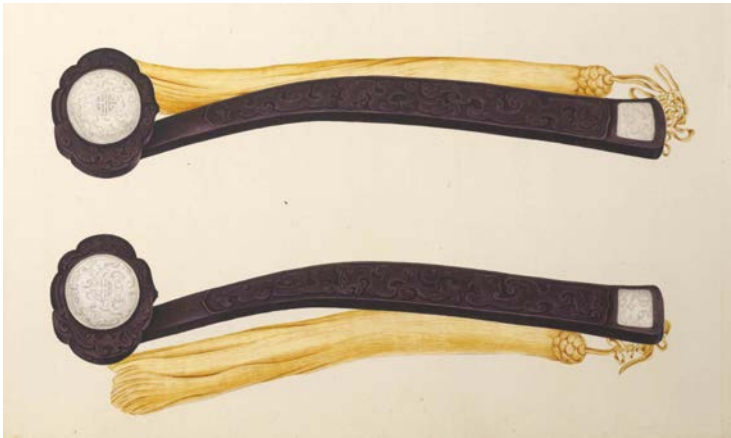


Fig. 4-16 A pair of carved *ruyi* sceptres likely to be made of *zitan* wood (PDF scroll)

produced during the Yongzheng and Qianlong periods, in particular, mainly showcases an opaque medium yellow colour intermingled with shades of orange-yellow and reddish brown.³¹⁴ The BM holds a set of four cups and a bowl made from this type of glass

(SLMisc.1695; SLMisc.1697.a-d) (Fig. 4-15) dated to 1723–50. Each item features a variety of colours, ranging from deep brown to lively red. The gradient yellowish-brown shades shown on the cups are reminiscent of the gemstones' colours, whose difference in tone also appears to be common considering the diversity of colour exhibited by the original realgar glass. Based on the above textual and material evidence, it is, therefore, possible that *luozi* on the *ruyi* sceptres referred to a type of glass, similar to the opaque realgar type, as demonstrated in the painting.

What is more, the 'pair of carved *ruyi* sceptres made of *zitan* wood, inlaid with two pieces of white jade' matches with the *ruyi* sceptres (Fig. 4-16) under the *cong*-shaped vase and the white square cauldron. Each sceptre is inlaid with one round jade panel inscribed with the circular character of 'shou' (longevity) on the head and a rectangular jade panel decorated with a zoomorphic motif on the tail. The handles and the areas surrounding the jade

³¹³ Xue, 'Realgar Glassware', 96-7.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 98.

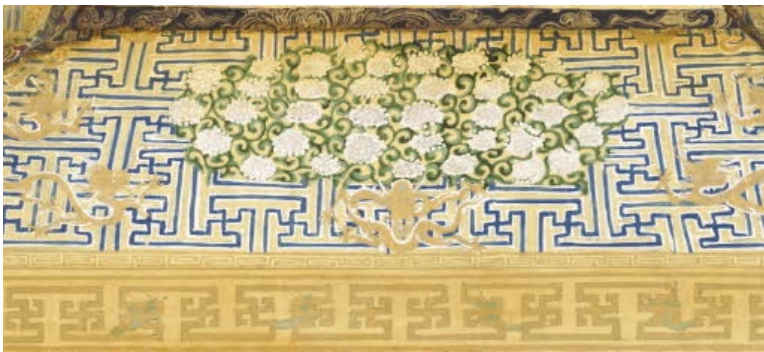


Fig. 4-18 Panel with
Flowers in Vase and
Scholar's Objects,
18th century, The Met



panels on the heads of the sceptres are painted with carved designs reminiscent of the schematic *chi*-tiger motif.

More interestingly, the imperial throne set (Fig. 4-17) also appears to align with some of the items described in the entry. Notably, both the throne and the side table adopt a palette reminiscent of the foreign-style, or Japanese-style, black lacquer and gilt-painted designs, which echoes with Emperor Yongzheng's particular taste for *yangqi* furniture and objects. The



Fig. 4-17 Imperial throne set (PDF scroll)

throne itself features a number of rectangular jade panels and corresponds to the description of the ‘*yangqi* throne inlaid with jade panels’. In regard to the seat cushion cover, the swastika-fret ground is identifiable in the image. For the miniscule pearls, an 18th-century embroidered panel featuring a flower in vase and some scholarly utensils (2007.402) (Fig. 4-18) could serve as an example of such decoration. In the panel, groups of tiny pearls are adopted to represent the white petals of the flower, serving to engender a sense of dynamism and three-dimensionality. Zooming into the details of the cushion cover in the PDF scroll, one will notice that a single cluster of pearls is visualised by a rounded patch rendered with numerous white dots. The patches, spread evenly on a green background formed by interconnected swirling tendrils, can also be regarded as representations of the peach motifs mentioned in the record. Based on this observation, it can be inferred that the throne set did not just serve as a symbol of the absent ruler, but could also be seen as one individual object, just like all the other *guwan*, ordered to be displayed in Xifeng xiuse that year.

In conjunction with the above discussion, another entry dated to the 25th day of the eighth month in the same year further suggests that two *zitan mu baoxiang nanmu you chouti bogu shu ge* 紫檀木包鑲楠木有抽屜博古書格 were completed on 5th September, after the emperor gave his approval for the preliminary model, and were sent to Xifeng xiuse for installation, possibly in a newly built *sanjuan fang* 三卷房 as mentioned in the beginning of the entry.³¹⁵ The furniture mentioned above probably refers to a type of multi-purposed *bogu ge* with open bookshelves and enclosed drawers made of *nanmu* covered with *zitan* wood. The *sanjuan fang* could also be associated with the Hanyun zhai 含韻齋 (Studio of Rhythmic

³¹⁵ See the content of the entry in Appendix (VI).

Consonance), a five-room-wide grand palace hall within Xifeng xiuse and the only building that was crowned with three-slope joined roofs in the complex, as shown in the *Forty Scenes* album (Fig. 4-10). It was, thus, possible the objects depicted in the PDF scroll, or at least part of them, were selected to be displayed in certain *bogu ge* inside the Hanyun zhai after the construction of this new palace hall in Xifeng xiuse.

The above discussion assists the current research in narrowing down the provenience of the two *Guwan tu* scrolls, along with the depicted objects, to two particular sites in the Yuanmingyuan, namely Lianxi lechu and Xifeng xiuse. The interaction between the paintings, records, and extant objects further reveals the identity of the depicted *guwan*, with regard to how they would participate in the daily life of the emperor at Yuanmingyuan. What is more, it also restates Emperor Yongzheng's appreciation of late Ming aesthetic discourses on objects, demonstrating that these discourses had potentially played an important part in the design concept of the private quarters in the Yuanmingyuan. This, then, leads to the following questions: why would the emperor commission paintings of objects inside these two palatial compounds, and how would painters at the court complete this painting project?

Construction in Yuanmingyuan and the Birth of the *Guwan tu*

As demonstrated in Chapter two, the Manchu rulers preferred to use the illusionistic style to generate accurate pictorial records for things and events. In turn, selected objects rendered in this style would often serve as indexes that evoke certain memorable events. In the case of *Ginseng Blossom* (Fig. 2-21), for example, the painting of the pot with the ginseng flower served as a memento of Emperor Kangxi's summer tour to Rehe and his rather bitter

experience with the use of the herb.³¹⁶ Following this thread of thought, would the two *Guwan tu* handscrolls, with the selection of objects depicted, also serve as records of certain events in the Yuanmingyuan at the time?

Based on the *Huoji dang* and earlier scholars' findings, the Xifeng xiuse complex was established in the 6th year and was among the earliest scenic sites constructed under the Yongzheng emperor.³¹⁷ The project of furnishing and embellishing the interior of the Lianhua guan, on the other hand, lasted at least from the 5th to the 8th year. The records addressed above reflect part of the final construction stage, that is, the decoration projects undertaken inside the palace halls at the two compounds. Dated within this time range, the two *Guwan tu* were possibly produced before and throughout the projects, as this type of oversize handscrolls would generally take years to complete under the collaborative efforts of a group of court painters.

Although specific records on the production process of the *Guwan tu* have not been discovered yet, imperial records and studies on such well-documented oversize handscrolls as the Qianlong period *Dajia lubu tu* (Fig. 1-33) could provide some insight into how the *Guwan tu* came into being. According to Lai Yu-chih, the handscroll of *Dajia lubu tu* was created side by side with the design and manufacture of new ritual paraphernalia for the imperial procession of the Winter Ceremony, instead of after the event. The entire painting project lasted for 5 years (1748–53) and involved the processes of drafting out sketches by lead painters, presenting them to the emperor for review, creating the ink drawings on silk,

³¹⁶ Lin, 'Banda lisha', 75-6.

³¹⁷ Zheng Xinmiao 鄭欣淼 and Zhu Chengru 朱誠如, eds., *Zhongguo Zijincheng xuehui lunwen ji* 中國紫禁城學會論文集 [Collection of Essays: From the Imperial Palace Research Society], vol. 5, part 1 (Beijing: Zijincheng chubanshe, 2007), 66.

and then applying colours.³¹⁸

As mentioned in Chapter one, the practice of drawing preliminary sketches had been implemented as early as the Kangxi reign in the project of the *Nanxun tu* series, during which the lead painter Wang Hui 王翬 (1632–1717) created a number of preliminary sketches on paper.³¹⁹ These sketches are reduced in size compared to the final versions, like the one housed in the BPM, which measures 2131.3 cm in length and 66.3 cm in width, almost the same size as the *Guwan tu*.³²⁰ Therefore, the painter would devote considerable time and effort to work on these sketches, which were due to be submitted to the emperor for review. These sketches themselves were subject to constant revisions upon the emperor's requests and would be made into multiple copies before the final layouts were confirmed.³²¹

Returning to the *Dajia lubu tu*, specifically in the 14th year of the Qianlong reign (1750), the court painter Jin Kun 金昆 (act. 1662–1746) completed a draft scroll modelled after a *Yizhang ce* 儀仗冊 (*Album of Ceremonial Paraphernalia*) brought to him two years earlier. The work measured five *zhang* and six *chi* (approx. 1988 cm) in length and one *chi* with six *cun* (approx. 56.8 cm) in width, which, similar to the sketch for the *Nanxun tu*, appeared to be substantial in size as a preliminary version.³²² According to the report on the purchase of painting supplies and pigments for the drafting, the responsible personnel bought the materials for the first *zhen* 幀, which presumably referred to a beginning section of the painting, measuring around one fifth of the entire handscroll.³²³ This indicates that in painting

³¹⁸ Lai, “‘Tu’ yu li”, 23.

³¹⁹ Nie Chongzheng 聶崇正, ‘Qingdai gongting huihua gaoben shukao’, *Qinggong huihua yu Xihua dongjian*, 62-83.

³²⁰ Nie, ‘Gaoben’, 67-9, see the image of the sketch in juxtaposition with the final version on page 69 in the book.

³²¹ See Nie's discussion on *fenben* 粉本 (copy) of the preliminary sketches for *Nanxun tu* in Nie, ‘Gaoben’, 68.

³²² This thesis takes the following equations for the measurement of painting in the Qing context: 1 *zhang* equals to 355 cm, 1 *chi* to 35.5 cm, and 1 *cun* to 3.55 cm. FH Archives, ‘Wei chengming hua lubu dajia quantu’, 05-08-030-000010-0018.

³²³ *Ibid.*

this type of oversize handscroll, whether the sketches or the final version, the painter would render the work in sections. Each of the sections would, then, be mounted together possibly by specialist artisans from the Mounting workshop.

These accounts, together with Lai's research, on the production processes of oversize handscrolls at the Kangxi and Qianlong courts can contribute to the understanding of how the *Guwan tu* might have been created under the Yongzheng emperor. Assuming the two current scrolls were the final versions, one could, then, argue for the potential existence of several preliminary sketches. The albums of *guwan* rejected by the emperor and revised later into a paper handscroll could very well be considered as a form of preliminary sketch subject to the emperor's approval.³²⁴

Given the style of the *Guwan tu*, it can be argued that the court painters involved in the rendering of the handscroll series would have a certain degree of knowledge of European painting traditions. The Manchu painter Banda lisha 班達里沙 (act. 1713–32), for example, could be a suitable person for the task. Given that he had already begun his study of European painting during the Kangxi reign, he might have been considered senior under Emperor Yongzheng and have the opportunity to work on large imperial painting projects that required participants to be familiar with European painting techniques. Thus, it was possible that Banda lisha, with his skills in painting objects in the illusionistic style, also contributed his expertise to the project.

In terms of how the painters could access objects in the Yuanmingyuan as models, one *Huoji dang* entry dated to the 1st year of the Qianlong reign could shed some light on this.

³²⁴ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol 4, 552.

The entry suggests four painters including Zhang Weibang 張為邦 (act. 18th century) were originally painting *guwan pian* 古玩片 in Shenliu dushu tang 深柳讀書堂 (Reading Hall Deep Inside the Weeping Willow) in the Yuanmingyuan. Noticing there was one more year before the scheduled deadline for the project, the emperor permitted the four painters to live in the Reading Hall until they finished the work.³²⁵ This record demonstrates a rather high level of flexibility with regard to the entry to the imperial garden as long as it was agreed upon by the ruler. Judging from the date of the entry, it can be inferred that the painters had started to work on the *guwan pian* under the Yongzheng emperor, who unfortunately did not live to witness the final completion of the task. It was, thus, possible that the court painters working on the *Guwan tu* project would also have come into the Yuanmingyuan following the Yongzheng emperor's order. After arriving in the garden, the painters would probably stay there for months and travel to specific halls to paint objects in situ on separate pieces of paper.

Alternatively, the objects could also be brought to designated workshops. For example, on the 7th day of the twelfth month in the 3rd year of the Yongzheng reign, the emperor ordered Giuseppe Castiglione (1688–1766, Ch. Lang Shining 郎世寧) to paint after a *lügan mafei junyao gang* 驢肝馬肺鈎窯缸, that is, a Jun-ware jar glazed in the colour of 'donkey's liver and horse's lungs'. The jar was sent to the Painting workshop for Castiglione by Haiwang and subsequently returned with the completed painting on the 28th day of the same month.³²⁶ On another occasion, the emperor asked Prince Yi to bring a potted orchid grown

³²⁵ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 7, 182.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 575; The metaphorical term for the Jun ware glaze colour appears in *Nanyao biji* 南窯筆記 (Notes on the Southern Kilns), which was possibly published during the Yongzheng or Qianlong period. The term was likely derived and rephrased from descriptions made by Ming literati. For example, Gao Lian addressed one type of Jun ware colours as 'zhugan se' 豬肝色, that is, the colour of pig's liver, and suggested it was a result of a firing failure, thus addressed in a vulgar name. Gao, 'Lun zhupin yaoqi' 論諸品窯器 [On Various Kiln Wares], *Yanxian jian*, from *Zunsheng bajian*, vol. 7 (seq. 814), 49a.

with concentric petals to the Painting workshop for Jiang Tingxi 蔣廷錫 (1669–1732), a high-ranking official and celebrated court painter, to create a work modelled after it.³²⁷ Thus, for the *Guwan tu*, it is possible that, the objects were sent to certain workshops, possibly the Ruyi guan, where painters would observe the details of the objects and work on different sections of the paintings. Either way, the production of the two or more *Guwan tu* scrolls would entail an extensive mobilisation of people and objects in and outside of the Yuanmingyuan, possibly from the beginning to the 6th and 7th years of the Yongzheng reign.

Another noteworthy detail is that objects, such as the gold-filigree and carved wooden *ruyi* sceptres, were stored in bespoke brocaded boxes when they were sent to Xifeng xiuse.



This phenomenon is also addressed in an entry related to the arrangement of a *bogu ge* in the Yuanmingyuan dated to the 4th year (1726). On 19th April, the eunuch Du Shou 杜壽 sent 12 storage boxes from the *bogu ge* designated for a range of *guwan*, including a Han green jade brush holder, a Ding ware vase with coiling strings, and a Ru ware censer, to the Packaging workshop for repair.³²⁸

These accounts, thus, suggest the possibility that

Fig. 4-19 Unidentified court painter, 'A lady contemplating on Antiquities' from the *Twelve Concubines of the Emperor Yongzheng*, 1723–35, BPM

³²⁷ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 1, 186; Lien-che Tu, 'Jiang Tingxi', In *Eminent Chinese of the Qing Period* (Berkshire Publishing Group, 2018), accessed 9 June 2022. <https://www-oxfordreference-com.ezproxy.soas.ac.uk/view/10.1093/acref/9780190088019.001.0001/acref-9780190088019-e-290>.

³²⁸ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 2, 280. See Appendix (IV) for the content of the entry.

some objects in the *Guwan tu*, especially those without stands, like the stacked bowls and Chenghua-style cups, were once stored in certain decorative containers. The containers would then be displayed on shelves or cabinets inside the Yuanmingyuan, as shown by the black-lacquer-like box in the cabinet behind the court lady in one of the *Twelve Concubines of Emperor Yongzheng* screen panels (Fig. 4-19). The objects were likely to be kept hidden, until they were brought out upon the emperor's request. In this sense, the *Guwan tu* does not simply portray the objects as how they would be displayed, concealed, or utilised in real-life situations, but also aims for a full-scale demonstration of every object present within the palatial complex, regardless of whether they were openly exhibited or hidden in storage boxes.

From the above discussion, the link between the two *Guwan tu* handscrolls and the Yuanmingyuan has been further consolidated. At the same time, it can be concluded that the scrolls were not just some illustrated inventories of antiquities in the imperial collection, but served more as pictorial records of the objects in the decorative programmes for the newly constructed or renovated palatial compounds inside the imperial garden. Meanwhile, painters involved in the *Guwan tu* project did not adopt the conventional composition of continuous scenery often seen in earlier and contemporaneous court documentary paintings.³²⁹ Instead,

³²⁹ Some examples include the Kangxi period *Nanxun tu*, the Yongzheng period *Baijun tu* 百駿圖 (*Picture of One Hundred Horses*), and *Ji xiannong tan tu* 祭先農壇圖 (*Ceremonial at the Altar of Agriculture*). The BPM scroll (Xin00121320) depicts the emperor's procession to the Altar to pay homage to the God of Agriculture, while the Guimet one (MG21449) presents the scene of symbolic ploughing.

For the scroll in the collection of the Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac (71.1939.37.1.1), it is possible that the scroll is depicting the scene inside the Qingcheng gong 慶成宮 (Hall for Celebrating Accomplishment [of the Ritual]), the only complex that contains two halls in the compound dedicated for the Altar of Agriculture, judging from the structure of the depicted palatial complex, which includes a front and a back hall. The palace was originally known as Zhai gong 齋宮 (Palace for Abstinence) before the new name was given by Emperor Qianlong in the 20th year of his reign (1755) and it was used to hold celebratory banquets after the completion of the ritual.

Similar to the *Guwan tu*, the painting style, in this case, incorporating both the *jiehua* and the European perspective and shadowing techniques, allows for a close reading of the depicted scene in conjunction with real-life architecture within the Xiannong tan compound, which enhances the viewers' comprehension of the specific setting and moment portrayed in the

the focus was on the objects selected to be used and appreciated by imperial members who once resided in or visited the two compounds, including the emperor himself, as well as his consorts and children, notably Hongli, the future Qianlong emperor. Although handscrolls featuring assorted *guwan* against a blank background had already appeared in the late Ming period, the reason behind this deliberate choice of reemploying this composition for the *Guwan tu* is well worth further examination. In the next chapter, the thesis will delve into the mode of thinking behind this rather ambitious painting practice and present a discussion on how the depicted objects in the *Guwan tu* serve to define the space of the Yuanmingyuan.

painting and facilitates the reconstruction of the ritual event carried out during the Yongzheng reign. For details about the structure of the palace and its function, see Zhu Yizun 朱彝尊 (1629–1709), Yu Minzhong 於敏中 (1714–79), Yinglian 英廉 (1707–83) (ed. And ex.) et al., ‘Chengshi (waicheng zhongcheng)’ 城市 (外城中城) [City (Outer Middle City)], *Qinding rixia jiuwen kao* 欽定日下舊聞考 [Imperial Commissioned Investigations on Old Anecdotes (of the Capital)], vol. 55, in *Siku quanshu* (shibu | dili lei: duhui junxian zhi shu) 四庫全書 (史部 | 地理類: 都會郡縣之屬) [Four Treasuries (History | Geography: Cities, Prefectures, and Counties)], 31a-32a; ‘Gengji’ 耨耨 [The imperial ploughing ceremony], Yuntao 允禔 (1686–1763) et al., *Qinding da Qing huidian* 欽定大清會典 [Imperial Commissioned Collected Statutes and Substatutes of the Great Qing], vol. 71, in *Siku quanshu* (shibu | zhengshu lei: tongzhi zhi shu), 15b.

Chapter Five

A Constructed Space of Antiquity

The previous chapter demonstrated that the *Guwan tu* handscrolls were most likely to be a series of pictorial representations of archaistic objects featured in particular palatial compounds at Yuanmingyuan. The sites corresponding to the two existing scrolls, that is, Xifeng xiuse 西峰秀色 (Majestic Sunset-Tinted Peaks of the West Hills) and Lianhua guan 蓮花館 (Lotus Lodge), are both situated in the northern part of the imperial garden. This area constituted the residential zone of the garden, a more private and leisurely quarter compared to the southern part, where the main audience hall and various administrative offices were located. One can, thus, posit that the scrolls reflect the emperor's perception of an ideal imperial retreat, which was carefully tailored in accordance with late Ming discourses on the elegant literati lifestyle and Qing imperial decorum for decorative objects. The objects in the *Guwan tu*, in turn, serve collectively as a mirror showing part of an idealised image of the Yuanmingyuan developed in the mind of the emperor. What exactly, then, does this image look like?

Based on previous observations on the distinct characteristics shown by the depicted *guwan*, this chapter will extend the discussion to the Yuanmingyuan and explore what aspects of the Yuanmingyuan were unveiled through the *Guwan tu*. By revisiting the illusionistic nature of the *guwan* images in conjunction with the concept of *gu* and *wan*, the chapter will examine a series of reproduction, imitation, and recreation practices initiated by the Yongzheng emperor (r. 1723–35) inside the Yuanmingyuan. Building upon this, the chapter aims to explore the symbolic relationship between the *Guwan tu* and the Yuanmingyuan,

shedding some light on how objects once present in the Yuanmingyuan served to define its space.

Heterochronicity and Anachronism: An Archaistic Retreat

As addressed in Chapter two, one characteristic of the *Guwan tu* is the juxtaposition of objects attributed both to the distant and recent pasts and to the contemporary Qing period (1644–1911). This heterochronic feature ties to the loosely defined temporal concept of *gu* in the context of the Yongzheng reign, which points to an imaginative past comprised of multiple temporal layers. Given that the depicted objects were once present in the private quarters of the Yuanmingyuan, the paintings hint at the anachronic nature of the living space in the Yuanmingyuan. One could imagine the residence halls filled with *guwan*, which collectively transformed the garden into a heterochronic space, where the Qing court established connections with preceding dynasties. Here, the screen panel showing the court lady contemplating *guwan* (Fig. 4-19) could be brought up again as a visual example of such an intimate living space enclosed by the prominent display cabinets, where the past and the present merge together.

Projecting these two temporal features, i.e., the anachronic and heterochronic characteristics, of the *Guwan tu* on events happening in the Yuanmingyuan, one would notice that such time-oriented practices involving the relocation, alteration, and reorganisation of *guwan* took place regularly inside the imperial garden. The records addressed in the last two chapters have shed light on how *guwan* in the Yuanmingyuan could be transformed into objects for different purposes and framed in the well-ordered, structured space inside varied

display cabinets. Seemingly scattering across the picture plane with no limitation, the depicted objects in the *Guwan tu* also appear to follow an intrinsic geometric structure, like a *bogu ge* with invisible sectional borders (Figs 3-14 and 3-15), in which objects of different chronological origins were fitted into one space.

Interestingly, it has been suggested that the layout of the Yuanmingyuan itself was also designed in the ‘jijin shi’ 集錦式, or style of assembling the highlights.³³⁰ Each palatial compound could be considered as one independent garden complex, which, in turn, consisted of numerous signature landscapes that could be enjoyed as individual sceneries. The palatial compounds were not constructed symmetrically, but were interconnected through pathways, bridges, and corridors. As Zhou Wei-quan has pointed out, these architectural structures were often designed in an intricate manner, serving as an ‘invisible thread’ that allowed visitors to travel from one complex to another swiftly, while enjoying the spontaneous shift in sceneries.³³¹

This layout design resonates with the composition of the *Guwan tu*. Just like the independent complexes, each depicted object could be considered as an individual highlight, which had passed through a rigorous selection process carried out by the Imperial Household Department under the directive of the emperor himself. Valued for their historical significance and aesthetic appeal, the individuality of the objects was especially emphasised when they were displayed on bespoke stands or stored in designated boxes. In the meantime, the implied geometric layout and relatively even spacing between each object give rise to a

³³⁰ Zhou Wei-quan 周維權, ‘Lüetan Bishu shanzhuang he Yuanmingyuan de jianzhu yishu’ 略談避暑山莊和圓明園的建築藝術 [Some Thoughts on the Architecture of the Bishu Shanzhuang and the Yuanmingyuan]. *Wenwu cankao ziliao* 文物參考資料 [Cultural Relics], no. 6 (1957): 9.

³³¹ Zhou, ‘Lüetan’, 9.

sense of visual continuity and harmony, which was possibly what the emperor intended, that is, bringing order to the past and the present.

As the scrolls have showcased, *guwan* was a major type of decorative item for the Yuanmingyuan. Beside displaying and using *guwan* on a daily basis, the emperor also commissioned court painters to create imitative pictures of antiquities for interior decoration in the garden complex. The screen situated behind the throne in the PDF scroll hints precisely at the presence of such decoration. At the same time, items like *bogu weiping* 博古圍屏 (folding screen with ‘hundred antiquities’ motif) were also presented by officials as gifts to the emperors, as exemplified by the list of offerings to the Kangxi emperor (r. 1662–1722) from Cao Xi 曹璽 (act. 1663–84), the superintendent of the Imperial Textile Factory at Jiangning (present-day Nanjing).³³² Such pictures are often referred as *jia gudong pian* 假古董片, *jia guwan shuge hua* 假古玩書格畫, and *guwan pian* 古玩片 in the *Huoji dang*.³³³ The *gudong pian* and *guwan pian* have been identified, in the Qianlong context (1736–95), as *hepai*, or pasteboard, *guwan*-shaped panels, while the *jia guwan shuge hua* possibly referred to a type of illusionistic picture portraying a shelved case with books and antiquities displayed.³³⁴

³³² Gugong bowuyuan Ming Qing dang’an bu 故宮博物院明清檔案部, ed., ‘Jiangning Cao Xi jinwu dan’ 江寧曹璽進物單 [List of Offerings from Cao Xi of Jiangning], *Guanyu Jiangning zhizao Cao jia dang’an shiliao* 關於江寧織造曹家檔案史料 [Historical Archives concerning the Cao Family of the Jiangning Imperial Textile Factory], (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 5-6.

³³³ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 2, 266; vol.5, 742; vol. 7, 182. There are a few variations based on these three basic terms, such as *jia gudong hua* 假古董畫 and *gudong huapian* 古董畫片. The basic terms *gudong pian* and *guwan pian* will be adopted in the thesis when referring to the decorative panels in types.

³³⁴ For the Qianlong period definition of *jia gudong pian/guwan pian*, see Chen, ‘Fooling the Eye’, 37-8.

For *jia guwan shuge*, the term is shown in an entry dated to the 14th day of the ninth month in the 11th year. Haiwang sent a commission, which was then passed to the Carpentry workshop by the foreman Wu Huazi 吳花資 (also referred to as 吳花子). The task was to create a painting of *jia guwan shuge* for An’ning gong 安寧宮 (Palace of Serenity), another palace hall in the Yuanmingyuan, see *Huoji dang*, vol. 5, 742 for details. The record did not specify the relation between the An’ning gong with the Yuanmingyuan, but as Yang Qiqian has observed, the façade tablet inscribed with ‘An’ning ju’ 安寧居 was first produced in the fourth month during the 10th year of the Yongzheng reign. On the 13th day of the tenth month, the emperor changed the word ‘ju’ to ‘gong’ and commissioned a new tablet, now showing the name of the hall as ‘An’ning

For the production of the *jia gudong pian* or *guwan pian* in the Yuanmingyuan during the Yongzheng period, the *Huoji dang* has provided some evidence for discussion. Specifically, on the 4th day of the fourth month in the 4th year (1726), the emperor sent a commission to the Painting workshop, ordering painters to create varied kinds of double-sided *jia gudong pian* for bookcases in Zhuzi yuan 竹子院 (Bamboo Court), the later Tianran tuhua 天然圖畫 (Painting of Nature) at Yuanmingyuan.³³⁵ On the 24th day of the third month in the 7th year (1729), the emperor sent an follow-up inquiry, asking why the *gudong hepai huapian* 古董合牌畫片 for bookcases attached to certain staircases were still not finished.³³⁶ These two records potentially refer to the same task, as the closure report for the earlier record suggests a total of 230 pieces of *jia gudong pian* were completed on the 10th day of the eighth month of the 7th year, 5 months after the emperor's inquiry.³³⁷ Subsequently on the 18th day of the eleventh month in the same year, the emperor ordered the installation of a series of items in Zhuzi yuan, including 9 bookshelves and 124 pieces of *guwan*. Notably, the items were accompanied with a separate inventory album when they were sent to Yuanmingyuan two days later. The appearance of the album might share some similarities with a Qianlong period example held in the National Palace Museum (NPM) (Gu-za-000554) (Fig. 5-1) entitled *Ji qiongzao* 集瓊藻 (*A Garland of Treasures*), which is the name of a *duobao ge* assembled in 1741.³³⁸ The record format adopted by the album aligns with that of the

gong'. The new tablet was completed and hung at the entrance of the hall five days later. Yang Qiqiao 楊啓樵, *Jiekai Yongzheng huangdi yinmi de miansha (zengding ben)* 揭開雍正皇帝隱秘的面紗 增訂本 [Unveil the Mystery of the Yongzheng Emperor (enlarged edition)] (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2011), 224.

³³⁵ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol.2, 266; John Finlay, 'Precedents and Parallels for the "40 Views of the Yuanmingyuan"', in "'40 Views of the Yuanmingyuan": Image and Ideology in a Qianlong Imperial Album of Poetry and Paintings', PhD diss., (Yale University, 2011), 101.

³³⁶ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, 485.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, vol.2, 266.

³³⁸ The inlaid lacquer *duobao ge* and the assorted objects are currently housed in the NPM (Gu-qi-000356). Both the name of the *duobao ge* and the production year are written in inlaid mother-of-pearl at the centre of the box's lid.

inventory list shown in the Yongzheng period *Huoji dang*, such as the Year 6 (1728) entry on the making of *baishijian* discussed in Chapter three, in which each group of objects is documented under the sequence number of its designated tray and concluded with a note on the total number of objects in the group.³³⁹

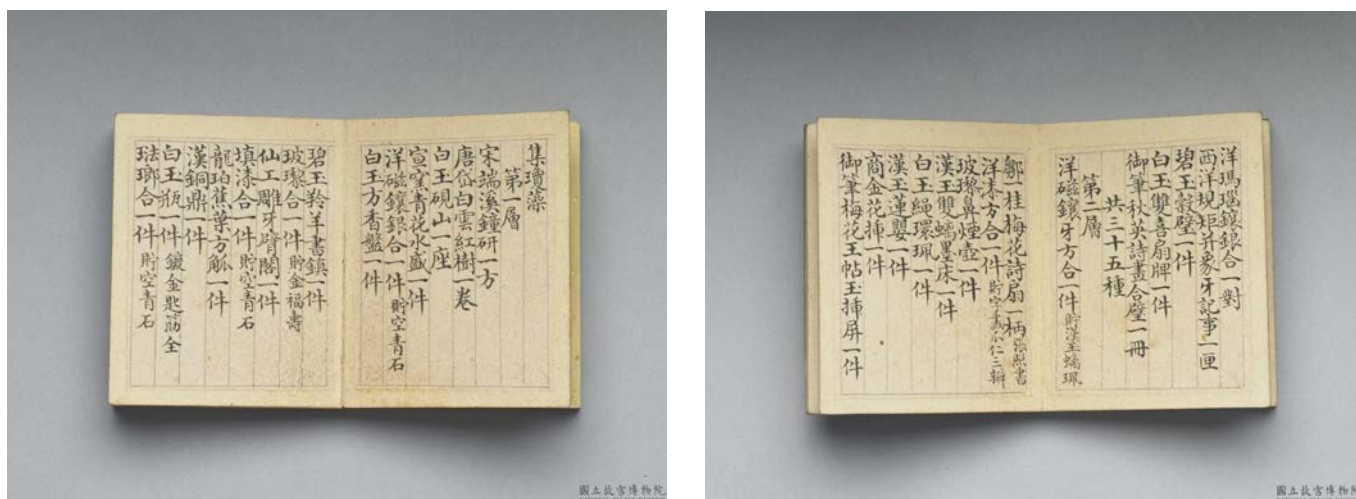


Fig. 5-1 Pages showing descriptions of objects in *Ji qiongzao* (*A Garland of Treasures*) inventory album, NPM

This thread of records primarily confirms that one type of the *jia gudong pian* in the Yongzheng period was also made in *hepai*. At the same time, it also offers an insight into the strenuous process of producing such imitative *guwan* panels, in this case, lasting for 4 years. In the meantime, it also reveals the emperor's attempt to position actual *guwan* in juxtaposition with images of *guwan* as part of the interior decorative programme in the Yuanmingyuan. What is more, the existence of an inventory album on this occasion alludes to the possibility that each palatial compound, or even each palace hall, in the Yuanmingyuan might have an inventory that documented what items were kept inside, including its holdings

³³⁹ FH Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, 315-20.

of *guwan*. Therefore, in addition to the conjecture proposed in Chapter one in response to the absence of text in the *Guwan tu*, one can also assume the potential existence of separate textual inventories specifying the identities of the depicted *guwan* under the premise that the handscrolls represent the *guwan* holdings in Xifeng xiuse and Lianhua guan.

To make the discussion more tangible, this type of wall decoration can be exemplified by the remains of an ‘antique wall’ in the Changchun shuwu 長春書屋 (Study of Eternal Spring) within the Yangxin dian (Hall of Mental Cultivation).³⁴⁰ The additional wooden panel attached to the wall features a range of recesses carved in different shapes, one of which takes the form of a slender-neck vase. Based on in-situ archaeological investigations, Zhang Shuxian proposed that the recesses were originally reserved for decorative *hepai* panels in shapes of antiquities.³⁴¹ She specifically referred to one *Huojidang* entry on the commission of a *gudong banqiang* 古董板牆 in Xifeng xiuse in the 6th year and suggested the ‘antique wall’ served as a visual example of this type of decorative wall panel popularised under the Yongzheng emperor.³⁴²

The structure of the *gudong banqiang* is specified in the entry as a two-sided wall panel decorated with inserted *hepai* pictures in imitation of antiquities and silk paintings of antiquities on the reverse side. The pictures of antiquities were first painted by the Jesuit painter Giuseppe Castiglione (1688–1766, Ch. Lang Shining 郎世寧) in *xiyang* 西洋, or Western, style and subsequently cut from the painting paper or silk. These separate pieces of *gudong* pictures would, then, be made into thickened *hepai* panels and inlaid into customized

³⁴⁰ Zhang, ‘Yangxin dian Changchun shuwu guwan qiang’, 105-113.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 109-10.

³⁴² FA Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, 305-6.

recesses on the wall.³⁴³ Notably, the emperor particularly required the artisans to make sure the *hepai* pictures were flattened to the level of the wall, and advised them to mount the pictures' borders with copper sheets, if such flatness was hard to achieve.³⁴⁴ The resulting image presented by the wall, therefore, would not be equivalent to that of the sculptural hanging vases, as the two-dimensional surface of the pictures were set in the same plane with the wall. Instead, it might be more comparable to the physically flattened but visually illusionistic image of assorted *guwan* shown in the *Guwan tu*.

What is more, Zhang also suggested a potential connection between the screen behind the throne in the PDF scroll and the 'antique wall', based on the discovery of a few traces of wallpaper with brocade patterns that remained on the wooden panel.³⁴⁵ Due to the illusionistic nature of the image, the material quality of the screen in the PDF scroll could not be easily confirmed. However, the fact that the silhouettes of the *guwan*-shaped objects on the screen display the shadow effect rooted in European painting traditions could be viewed as an indicator of the connection between the screen and the 'antique wall' in the Xifeng xiuse, as the *gudong pian* designed for the wall were rendered in European style following the emperor's order. The representation of the screen in the scroll, thus, was likely modelled after a five-fold screen either decorated with inlaid illusionistic pictures of *guwan*, possibly made of *hepai*, against a brocade-patterned background, or mounted with silk panels painted with *guwan* images.

As addressed in the previous chapter, the objects in the PDF scroll are also associated

³⁴³ FA Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, 306. Technique further explained in Zhang's article, 'Yangxin dian Changchun shuwu guwan qiang', 106-7.

³⁴⁴ FA Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 4, 202.

³⁴⁵ Zhang, 'Yangxin dian Changchun shuwu guwan qiang', 109-10.

with the Xifeng xiuse compound. Thus, based on the analysis above, one could even picture the interior of one or more palace halls in the compound embellished with the objects depicted in the scroll, which would be echoing the ‘antique wall’ with pictures imitating the forms of antiquities. Along with the records on the production of *jia gudong pian* for Zhuzi yuan, it is emerging that Emperor Yongzheng had an interest in constructing an archaistic world in the Yuanmingyuan with the aid of both three-dimensional *guwan* and their two-dimensional representations. In the meantime, the inclusion of *fang* objects, that is, reproductions of antiquities, in the discursive category of *guwan* indicates a potential extension of the emperor’s taste for illusionism from the two-dimensional pictorial world to the realm of material object.

Fake or Real: Reproduction, Imitation and Recreation in Yuanmingyuan

One of the major reasons that cause hesitation in asserting the authenticity of objects in the *Guwan tu* is that images, the images of *guwan* in this case, can be devised to fool the eyes of their spectators and conceal the real identities of the objects they were modelled upon, which are either actual antiquities or their reproductions. The illusory nature of images was recognised by Qing contemporaries and has been demonstrated in one anecdote on the misidentification of a fake bronze rubbing by the later scholar-official and collector Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764–1849).³⁴⁶ According to the story, one of Ruan’s pupils bought a flatbread on his way to the imperial examination and was drawn by the resemblance of the bread’s dappled back surface to inscriptions on ancient bronzes. Amused by this illusionistic visual

³⁴⁶ Xu, ‘Ruan Wenda de wei zhongding ming’ 阮文達得偽鐘鼎銘 [Ruan Wenda Acquiring Fake Rubbings of Inscriptions on Bronzes], *Qingbai leichao jianshang shang* 鑒賞上 [Connoisseurship I], vol. 31 (bai 72), 187.

effect, he made a rubbing of the back surface and sent it to Ruan Yuan, suggesting it was copied from an undated but precious ancient bronze. Deceived by the rubbing, Ruan initiated vigorous discussions on the authenticity of the bronze within his intellectual circle and concluded that it was a cauldron documented in the *Xuanhe bogu tu*.³⁴⁷

In this account, the 'flatbread' rubbing was transformed into an indexical image of the imagined bronze cauldron, but also as the reproduction of a bronze rubbing, which was visually similar enough to deceive the eyes of the experienced collector. At the same time, Ruan's interpretation of the rubbing was conditioned by his knowledge of earlier sources for antiquarian investigations and connoisseurly discourses. This, in some senses, echoes with the continuous efforts in matching the painted objects in the *Guwan tu* with particular antiquities, including the current thesis. Meanwhile, it should be noted that pictorial images, as subjective representations of their referents, could be tailored to the image-makers' purposes and altered in terms of how, and to what extent, they would 'adhere to the referent[s]'.³⁴⁸

In the context of the Yongzheng reign, the implementation of illusionistic painting techniques and the emperor's endorsement of observational painting practices suggest an attempt to attain visual resemblance, not only on formal but also on material levels, in representing objects. Nevertheless, the images of *guwan*, along with their referents, i.e., objects in the Yuanmingyuan, were all placed at the emperor's disposal. According to the previously mentioned entry on the commission of a painting after the 'donkey's liver and horse's lungs' Jun-ware jar, the emperor particularly asked Castiglione to slightly extend the

³⁴⁷ Xu, 'Ruan Wenda de wei zhongding ming', 187.

³⁴⁸ Mitchell, 'Realism and the Digital Image', 61-2.

height and narrow the top and bottom of the jar in the painting.³⁴⁹

In relation to this entry, an image-object pair recently discovered by Wu Hung also demonstrates the existence of the emperor's intervention in generating the illusionistic images of objects presented in the *Guwan tu*. In his article, Wu matches an ink jade pot belonging to the Chicago collector Ralph Wanger with an object from the PDF scroll (Fig. 5-2).³⁵⁰ Observing the image in juxtaposition with the object, one will notice that the looped

The image cannot be reproduced due to copyright reasons. Please see the object published in Wu, 'Yongzheng moyu hu', 29.



Fig. 5-2

Left: Ink jade pot, dated to the Yuan period (1271–1368), Ralph Wanger Collection, Chicago

Right: Jade pot depicted on the PDF scroll

finial attached to the lower right side of the pot's body is noticeably tilted up in order to showcase the decorative design on the flat surface, which features a pair of carved archaic 'swallowing beast' motifs in the shapes of tigers' heads.³⁵¹ This kind of distortion in perspective can be observed in the other images of objects in the *Guwan tu*, notably the blue

³⁴⁹ FA Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 1, 575.

³⁵⁰ Wu, 'Yongzheng moyu hu', 10-49.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 32-35.

and white jar attributed to the Xuande period (1426–35) (PDF, No. 1 in Appendix I) and the Ru bowl (PDF, No. 25 in Appendix I), and has been recognised as a conventional approach for drawings and illustrations of antiquities in such catalogues as Qianlong emperor's ceramic album (Fig. 3-17).³⁵²

Based on the above *Huoji dang* entry and the visual evidence, it can be inferred that in producing images of objects at the court, the forms, sizes, and possibly the decorations of the objects were all subject to change based on the specific orders of the Qing emperors. The resulting images, thus, could not be completely trusted as faithful representations of any original objects. Following this logic, it may also be possible that from the beginning, the models for some of the *guwan* images were not genuine antiquities, but their reproductions.

In terms of the nomenclature for such practices of illusionism under the Yongzheng emperor, the *Huoji dang* mainly adopts the term *fang* 倣 and *jia* 假 to convey the concepts of 'reproduction', 'imitation', and 'recreation'. Similar to the modern definition, *fang* still takes on the meaning of 'reproduction', more specifically, to make copies after certain prototypical models. In the *Huoji dang*, entries that address objects denoted as *fang* would usually specify their particular models according to the following three factors:

1) identifiable production sites or reign periods, such as *fang Ge yao* 倣哥窯 (reproduction of wares from Ge kiln) and *fang Xuan yao* 倣宣窯 (reproduction of ware from [the imperial] kiln of the Xuande reign);

2) material qualities, such as *fang hanyu* 倣漢玉 (reproduction of Han jade), *fang danhong se ci chayuan* 倣淡紅色磁茶圓 (reproduction of pale-red porcelain tea cup), and

³⁵² McCausland, 'The Emperor's Old Toys', 71.

fang Jingtai falang 倣景泰琺瑯 (reproduction of enamelware of the Jingtai reign [1450-57]);³⁵³

3) functions, for instance, on 16 March in the 7th year, the emperor commissioned the Jade workshop to alter four Han jade *zhaowen dai* 昭文帶 by inlaying them into *zitan* wood, so that they could be reproduced to serve as paperweights (*fang yazhi yong* 倣壓紙用). The *zhaowen dai*, officially known as *zhi* 璣 in the Han context, was originally designed as a functional ornament attached to the sheath of a sword.³⁵⁴

On the other hand, *jia* is associated more with the concept of ‘imitation’, which does not refer to faithful replicas, but bears the connotation of inventiveness and illusive realness. In this sense, the term could be understood as ‘imaginative transformations’ based on but also transcending the forms and materials of the exemplary models.³⁵⁵ In the Yongzheng context, *jia* was not adopted as frequently as *fang*, and was typically employed in illusionistic practices that involved shifts from three- to two-dimensionality, or cross-media metamorphoses. For example, on 10th June in the 4th year, the emperor requested the Painting Workshop to paint some *jia shu* 假書 (imitative pictures of books) onto a bamboo bookcase.³⁵⁶

³⁵³ FA Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 2, 112 (*fang danhong se ci chayuan*, 13 December, Year 4); vol. 3, 133 (*fang hanyu*, 28 September, Year 6), 105 (*fang jingtai falang*, 23 July, Year 6).

³⁵⁴ Ibid., vol. 3, 472; Li Ling 李零, ‘Cai Jixiang, Examination and Verification of the Late Zhou Silk Manuscript’, *The Chu Silk Manuscripts from Zidanku, Changsha (Hunan Province), Volume 1: Discovery and Transmission*, trans. and ed. Lothar von Falkenhausen (Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2020), 71.

³⁵⁵ Frederick Burwick, ‘Mimesis of the Mind’, *Mimesis and Its Romantic Reflections* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 97; Paul Duro, ‘Why Imitation, and Why Global?’, in *Theorizing Imitations in the Visual Arts: Global Contexts* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), 8-29.

³⁵⁶ FA Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 1, 781.

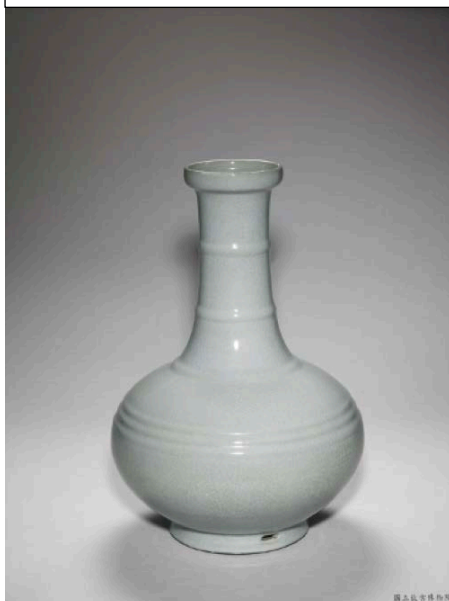
I. Reproduction of Antiquities

In October 2015, a special exhibition on the Tricentennial of Castiglione's Arrival in China was held by the two palace museums in collaboration. Scholars involved in the exhibition matched the vase depicted in *Gathering of Auspicious Signs* (Fig. 5-3-1) by Castiglione in the 1st year of the Yongzheng reign (1723) with a Yongzheng period celadon vase (Zhong-ci-005521) (Fig. 5-3-2). The vase bears archaic string patterns and has been identified as an imitation of Song (960–1279) Guan and Ru wares in its glaze colour and vessel form. Compared to two surviving Song Guan wares in the both museums (NPM: Gu-



Fig. 5-3-1 Giuseppe Castiglione, *Gathering of Auspicious Signs*, 1723, NPM

Fig. 5-3-2 Celadon Vase, 1723–35, NPM



ci-017379,

BPM:

Gu00145394) (Fig. 5-3-3), this Yongzheng period vase could be considered as a *fang* product, rather than a *jia* imitation, in the Yongzheng context, as it intends to generate a close copy of the Song piece, while subtly adjusting the form to a more balanced version by enlarging the belly and painting a more evenly applied glaze. Given that such a *fang* piece would be considered

as a *guwan* under Emperor Yongzheng, the depicted vase in Castiglione's painting, then, could be a representation of a contemporary Qing reproduction of certain Song vases.

The situation, however, becomes more complicated when one observes the details of the painted vase in conjunction with extant Song wares and the Yongzheng period production. The vase in the painting is rendered with long extending crackle lines that are not visible in



Fig. 5-3-3

Left: Celadon-glazed vase with linear pattern, Guan stoneware, 12th–13th century, NPM

Right: Celadon-glazed vase with linear pattern, Guan stoneware, 12th–13th century, BPM

the Yongzheng piece, whose surface features, instead, an interlaced web of enclosed crackles in irregular shapes. The two Song pieces, on the other hand, bear similar crackle lines as the depicted vase, but the belly shapes and the positions of the string patterns appear to be different. The NPM piece displays a more rounded belly, closer to the depicted vase, with a slightly lower foot compared to the BPM piece. The BPM piece, in turn, shares similarities with the depicted vase with its higher foot and its thickened mouth rim subtly tapering inward in the middle, which is not inherited by the Yongzheng piece. Based on these observations, it can be suggested that at Emperor Yongzheng's court, antiquities could be deconstructed into clusters of formal and material elements (vessel forms, decorative motifs, colours, textures...) imbued with historical and aesthetic values. These elements would, then, be rearranged for reproductions of the antiquities and the making of varied *guwan* images, which featured a combination of formal and material elements derived from multiple antiquities and their contemporary *fang* products.

Would this complex phenomenon also happen in the case of the *Guwan tu*? As addressed in Chapter three, there are four similar Xuande-type vases with morning glory motifs (PDF, No. 2) (Fig. 2-23) in the two scrolls and they are associated with multiple Ming dynasty (1368–1644) pieces in the two palace museums. For their reproductions, the NPM holds one piece dated to the Qing period (Zhong-ci-003772) (Fig. 5-4-1) and a pair of imitative pieces with Yongzheng reign marks (Zhong-ci-000565-566) (Fig. 5-4-2), which employ the original vessel shape but take on a different decorative design. For the reproduction piece, the museum catalogue suggests that the morning glory on this object is rendered in a more upright and centralised manner in contrast to the slightly slanted,

spontaneously positioned flower painted on the Ming prototype (Gu-ci-16788) (Fig. 2-24).

Furthermore, the accompanying swirling tendrils appear to turn inward to a greater extent than those on the Ming piece.



Fig. 5-4-1 Fang 'morning glory' vase (no reign mark), 1644–1911, NPM



Fig. 5-4-2 Imitative 'morning glory' vase, 1723–35, NPM



Fig. 5-4-3 Faceted 'morning glory' vase (no reign mark), Xuande reign (1426–35), NPM

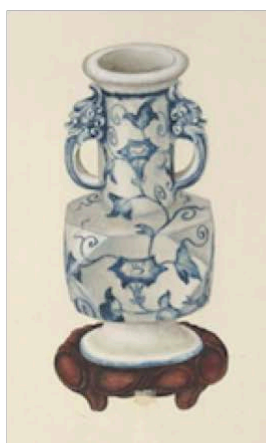


Fig. 5-4-4 Depicted vases with similar decorative features as the Qing reproduction (upright morning glory blooms and more inwardly turned tendrils) (Left: PDF scroll; Right: V&A scroll)

It should be noted, however, the motifs on the multiple Xuande pieces are themselves rendered in varied ways, including one piece (Gu-ci-009473) (Fig. 5-4-3) showing the upright morning glory blooms and more inwardly turned tendrils similar to those on the Qing piece. Moreover, these two features can also be witnessed on the vases depicted in both scrolls (PDF: 1st paper, V&A: 15th paper) (Fig. 5-4-4). Considering the aforementioned commission for the Jun jar painting and the distinct distorted formal features shown by some of the depicted *guwan*, it is not unreasonable to suggest the emperor would request the painters to alter the forms of the modelled objects when portraying them according to the imperial taste, which was presumably reflected by the Qing reproduction piece.

What is more, reproductions of antiquities were commonly used and displayed in the Yuanmingyuan, as confirmed by another *Huoji dang* entry dated to the 6th year. The entry lists 22 types of *fang* vessels, all of which are reproductions of wares from certain ceramic kilns, including Guan, Ru, Ding, Dongqing, Longquan, and Xuan (Xuande imperial) kilns, alongside other items denoted solely by the names of the kilns, which were presumably deemed to be authentic antiquities.³⁵⁷ The vessels were sent to the Lacquerware workshop and the artisans were commissioned to produce a lacquered stand for a selection of ten items, starting from making wooden stands to draft out preliminary designs. Seven out of the ten selected wares are denoted with the term *fang*. Upon completion of the task in the following year, the vessels were all sent to the Yuanmingyuan and displayed on their newly made stands in Jiuzhou qingyan 九洲清晏 (Nine Continents in Peace), the central residential compound in

³⁵⁷ FA Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, 214. Dongqing kiln, which has been recognised as a Ming name for the Longquan kiln, was described as a separate kiln site in the *Huoji dang*.

the Yuanmingyuan constructed on nine artificial islets.³⁵⁸

With this record, it is revealed that reproductions of antiquities were treated in the same way as the originals and would be displayed side by side with the originals inside the imperial garden. Therefore, it was likely that some depicted objects in the *Guwan tu* were modelled after certain Qing reproductions displayed in the Yuanmingyuan. In fact, besides the morning glory vases, the current study is able to present a few additional examples (see

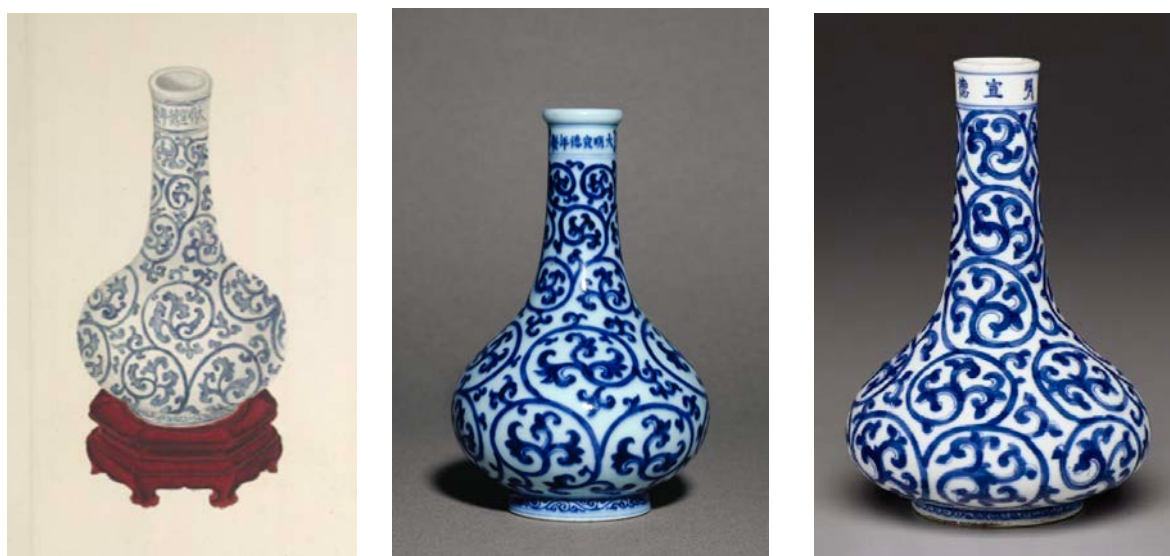


Fig. 5-5

Left: Blue and white vase decorated with spiralling tendrils (inscribed with Xuande reign mark around the neck) (PDF scroll)

Middle: Vase decorated with spiralling tendrils, dated to the 17th century, Grandidier Collection, Musée Guimet

Right: Vase decorated with spiralling tendrils (apocryphal reign mark of the Xuande period), dated to the Kangxi period (1662–1722), National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC

³⁵⁸ FA Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 3, 214. See the content of the entry in Appendix (V).

Appendix [II]) of Qing reproductions associated with the objects in the *Guwan tu*.³⁵⁹ Notably, the PDF scroll features a blue and white vase (Fig. 5-5, left) decorated with spiralling tendrils and inscribed with a band of Xuande reign mark below its mouth rim. So far, one visually similar piece has been discovered in the Grandidier collection at Musée Guimet (G5261) (Fig. 5-5, middle). A few green and yellow enamelled examples with Chenghua reign marks are also housed in the BM (1953,0509.1), BPM (Gu00145677), and NPM (*Gugong chenghua ciqi jingxuan*, pl. 157, p. 260).³⁶⁰

Interestingly, the Réunion des Musées Nationaux online catalogue dates the Guimet vase to the 17th century, instead of the Xuande reign, suggesting the possibility that the piece might be a reproduction of the Xuande vase manufactured during the late Ming or early Qing period. Since the catalogue does not specify the reason for this judgment, further hands-on investigation will be needed to confirm the dating. In the meantime, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC holds a Kangxi period vase (1972.43.9) (Fig. 5-5, right) inscribed with a band of apocryphal Xuande reign mark under its mouth rim, which was possibly meant to be a reproduction of certain Xuande prototype(s), similar to the vase depicted on the PDF scroll, once present at the court.

The bulging body of this piece is bottom heavy and less rounded, but the tendril design appears to be similarly dense as those on the vase depicted in the *Guwan tu* and the Guimet piece, different from the simplified, less curly design applied to the later enamelled vases

³⁵⁹ The list in Appendix (II) also includes a few imitative examples, such as the red-enamelled devotional water vase, which was possibly modelled after Ming pieces or pre-Qianlong reproductions held at the court. The red devotional vase also appears in *Hongli Viewing Painting*, which refers both to the Ming prototype but also to contemporary Qing decorum of adopting this type of vase for Buddhist offering, which corresponds to the theme of the painting.

³⁶⁰ Scholars have pointed out these are probably later pieces inscribed with Chenghua reign marks, as there have not been any archaeological discoveries of any similar objects or sherds from the Chenghua levels at Jingdezhen, but it does not necessarily mean this type of ware was not produced during the Chenghua period and there is a possibility that something similar may be unearthed in future excavations. I am indebted to Professor Pierson for this information.

attributed to the Chenghua period (1465–87). What distinguishes the Kangxi reproduction from the depicted vase and the Guimet piece is the style of the reign mark. The expanded spacing between each character shown on the Kangxi vase does not conform to the condensed Xuande style, which has been copied faithfully by the Guimet piece, if considering it as a 17th-century reproduction.

The presence of the reproductions, together with the inclusion of the vase in the *Guwan tu*, suggests an interest in this particular Xuande ware at least from the Kangxi to the Yongzheng periods. This persistent interest could lead to the practice of manufacturing multiple reproductions emulating the vase's shape and decorative designs, some of which could have been displayed in the Yuanmingyuan and served as models for painting. If the model for the depicted vase was, after all, a reproduction like the Kangxi piece, the court painter could still render the reign mark following the style exhibited by the authentic Xuande piece under the emperor's endorsement, so that the depicted vase would be perceived by later viewers as an authentic piece imbued with historical value.

Another example in the PDF scroll would be the stem bowl decorated with red 'fish' design (Fig. 5-6-1), a typical type of Xuande ware often seen in different museum collections and auction sales. The PDF collection itself holds two reproductions of the kind (PDF.628, PDF.C.616) dated to the Kangxi period, both of which are decorated in underglaze copper red and bear apocryphal Xuande reign marks on the interior sides. Juxtaposed with the image and the Xuande pieces, one of the Kangxi stem bowls (PDF.628) (Fig. 5-6-2) appears to have less flared sides compared to the Xuande ones, and this feature is represented in the image



Fig. 5-6-1 Xuande-type stem bowl decorated with copper red/overglaze red enamelled fish (three fish) designs (PDF scroll)



Fig. 5-6-3 Stem bowl with underglaze-copper red 'three fish' design (with Xuande reign mark), Xuande reign (1426–35), NPM



Fig. 5-6-2 *Fang* stem bowl with underglaze copper red 'three fish' design (apocryphal Xuande reign mark), dated to Kangxi period (1662–1722), BM



Fig. 5-6-4 *Fang* stem bowl with underglaze copper red 'three fish' design (apocryphal Xuande reign mark), dated to Kangxi period (1662–1722), BM

presented by the scroll. However, the bottom of the bowl section in the image shows a more levelled appearance, reminiscent of one NPM piece (Gu-ci-016521) (Fig. 5-6-3), in contrast to the rounded and more sharply curved sides of the Qing piece. The ‘fish’ design also exhibits features from both Xuande and Kangxi products. The rounded body and tail fin link the image with the Xuande piece, but the clearly defined ventral fins seem to be a feature that the Qing ruler would prefer to highlight,

as shown in the other PDF example (PDF,C.616) (Fig. 5-6-4). The ‘fish’ design on another Xuande piece from the NPM (Gu-ci-003295) (Fig. 5-6-5) appears to be similar to the one on the depicted stem bowl, but the brightness of the red colour resulting from its overglaze iron enamel indicates the



Fig. 5-6-5 Stem bowl with overglaze red ‘three fish’ design, Xuande reign (1426–35), NPM

difference. The subtle and paler outline of the fish on the depicted cup suggests the possibility that the model for the image was decorated in underglaze copper red.

The side-by-side comparisons above demonstrate that in pictorialising *guwan* in the Yuanmingyuan, both the original antiquities and their reproductions could be adopted as visual models for the court painters. The formal details derived from the antiquities feature as building blocks that represented historicity, with those from the reproductions serving as references to the imperial tastes and standards for objects. The illusionistic style, indeed, assisted in achieving formal and, to some extent, material likeness in generating pictorial

representations of objects in the Qing imperial context. Meanwhile, the active practices of reproducing not only antiquities but also their reproductions in two- and three-dimensional forms make it hard to confirm whether the depicted objects in the *Guwan tu* were modelled after authentic antiquities or their reproductions. Similar to the heterochronic aspect discussed above, this blurry boundary between originals and reproductions, or the real and the unreal, demonstrated by the ambiguous *guwan* images also appears to be reflected by the Yuanmingyuan with regard to its design and the numerous practices of illusionism happening inside.

II. Imitation of materials

Besides displaying antiquities in juxtaposition with reproductions in the same materials and decorative pictures of *guwan* inserted in the wall, the emperor further pushed the limit of his illusion *game* by using other materials to create imitations of antiquities. On 1st June in the 5th year (1727), a commission of storage boxes for *gudong* was passed to the Packaging workshop by Haiwang. There were plans to display these *gudong* in some bookcases in the *yihao fang* 一號房 (Room No. 1) of the Lianhua guan 蓮花館 (Lotus Lodge), the same room where the jade chimes associated with the V&A scroll were displayed.

What is intriguing is, out of the concern that real *gudong* would be too heavy for the bookcases, the emperor asked the artisans to use materials like wood burr or the pith of a plant known as *tongcao* 通草 (*tetrapanax papyrifera*) to create some *wanqi* 玩器 (objects for play) as alternatives. Some of the *gudong* made reference to such familiar types of objects, like:

ageli tai jia manao tian lu 阿格里胎假瑪瑙天鹿

(imitative agate celestial deer in wood burr);

zhitai jia junyao ci shiliu zun 紙胎假鈞窯磁石榴罇

(imitative Jun-ware ‘pomegranate’ vase in paper presumably made of *tongcao*);

hepai tai jia ci juhuaban shi pan 合牌胎假磁菊花瓣式盤

(pasteboard imitative chrysanthemum-petal-style dish).³⁶¹

After finishing the commission in the 7th year, these imitations of *gudong* were placed into the newly made storage boxes upon the emperor’s initial request and displayed in the bookcases at Lianhua guan. A similar practice of cross-media imitation also took place in Xifeng xiuse. On the 29th day of the first month in the 7th year, the Carpentry workshop received an imperial commission sent from the Yuanmingyuan, asking them to produce a wooden stand for a porcelain bucket decorated with imitative designs resembling *huali* rosewood grains. After the workshop completed the task on 12th August, the porcelain bucket was sent to the Xifeng xiuse compound by Haiwang for display.³⁶²

From these two cases, a new category of objects known as *wanqi* comes to light, and imitations of *gudong* were considered as one type of object in this category at the Yongzheng emperor’s court. The term does not come up very often in Yongzheng period *Huoji dang*, but there is one entry dated to the 2nd day of the sixth month in the 5th year, when four pieces of *wen du li na* 溫都里那 stones were presented to the emperor in Yuanmingyuan, who subsequently ordered that they be used to make bowls or *wanqi*.³⁶³ *Wen du li na* has been

³⁶¹ FA Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 2, 724. See the full content of the entry in Appendix (V).

³⁶² Ibid., vol. 3, 444. One extant example of such porcelain bucket is housed in the NPM (Gu-ci- 006715).

³⁶³ FA Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol., 477.

identified as the name for the glittering aventurine glass, which was first introduced to the court during the Kangxi period.³⁶⁴ Based on this record, it is emerging that *wanqi* referred to a broad spectrum of objects for pleasure across the boundaries of time and material. Having been denoted by the character ‘wan’, *guwan*, along with their reproductions and imitations, were likely to be part of the larger *wanqi* category, which also included contemporary products for pleasure.

III. Recreation of Scenery

Extending beyond the realm of objects, the imperial garden further resonates with the illusionistic dimension of the *Guwan tu* in its construction design. As the late Qing scholar Wang Kaiyun 王闓運 (1833–1916), exclaimed in his poem dedicated to the Yuanmingyuan,

[who could say the Jiangnan landscape is spectacular], when the very heavens and earth were transported to rest in miniature within the embrace of our Lord.

誰道江南風景佳，移天縮地在君懷。³⁶⁵

³⁶⁴ The glittering effect resulted from the copper particles dissolved into the molten glass, and some scholars have equated the *wen du li na* stone with the more well-known *jinxing boli* 金星玻璃 (‘golden star’ glass), which was another term adopted from the Yongzheng period and more frequently used since the Qianlong period onwards. See Peter Y. K. Lam 林業強, ‘General Technical Terms’, *Hongying yaohui: Li Jingxun cang qingdai boli* 虹影瑤輝：李景勳藏清代玻璃 [Elegance and Radiance: Grandeur in Qing Glass: The Andrew K. F. Lee Collection] (Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong Art Museum, 2000), 379; Emily Byrne Curtis, ‘Glass: “Pieces as Beautiful as Our Aventurine”’, *Glass Exchange Between Europe and China, 1550-1800: Diplomatic, Mercantile and Technological Interactions* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 67-80.

The name *wen du li na* has been identified by earlier scholars as the transliteration of the foreign term ‘aventurine’, which is derived from the Italian term ‘avventura’. There have been debates surrounding whether the Chinese transliteration was based on the French term ‘aventurine’ or the Italian term ‘avventurina’ that refers to the ‘golden star’ glass. Li Jing, in particular, has presented arguments to support the conjecture that the term originates from Italian, since the ‘golden star’ glass was first invented by artisans in Murano Island in Italy and the terminology adopted by local glass workshops was widely circulated when local artisans migrated to other European countries, see her analysis in Li Jing 李靜, “‘Wen du li na’ kao: zuowei bolaipin de Qingdai jinxing boli” “溫都里納”考——作為舶來品的清代金星玻璃 [An Investigation on *wen du li na*: the Qing Dynasty ‘Golden Star’ Glass as Imported Product], *Meishu yanjiu* 美術研究 [Art Research] no. 1 (2018): 111-15; for the discussion on the French origin of the Chinese transliteration, see Yang Naiji 楊乃濟, ‘Yi fu na’ he ‘wen du li na’ deng zhi dang’an chazheng “依弗哪”與“溫都里納”等之檔案查證 [Investigation on Archives related to the Terms ‘yi fu na’ and ‘wen du li na’], *Honglou meng xuekan* 紅樓夢學刊 [Honglou meng Studies], no. 2 (1985): 236-44.

³⁶⁵ Translation by Geremie Barmé, in ‘The Garden of Perfect Brightness, A Life in Ruins’, 125.

This poem makes a direct reference to the miniature artificial landscapes in the garden recreated after renowned gardens and natural sceneries in the Jiangnan region, especially those repeatedly highlighted in Chinese intellectual traditions.³⁶⁶ The Kangxi and Qianlong emperors are particularly known for their attachment to the Jiangnan region, exemplified by the frequent visits to the south, followed by commissions of the *Nanxun tu* series and *Nanxun shengdian* 南巡盛典 (Grand Record of the Southern Tours). This interest in interacting with the south in person and documenting benevolent imperial conducts in the region speaks not only to the emperors' personal appreciation of the region's vibrant culture, but also to their political aim of maintaining relationships with local elites and maintaining control over this economic and intellectual centre. Emperor Qianlong was especially keen to bring elements derived from Jiangnan cultural traditions into designs for imperial architecture and garden complexes, especially scenic landscapes from literati gardens in Suzhou, Hangzhou, and Wuxi.³⁶⁷

On the other hand, the Yongzheng emperor did not travel to the south after succeeding to the throne. In 1703, when he was still a prince, the emperor enjoyed a glimpse of the region during his father's fourth inspection tour to the south, and possibly obtained some inspiration from the West Lake in Hangzhou. For instance, in the 3rd year of his reign (1725), the site

³⁶⁶ Chen Baozhen 陳葆真, 'Kangxi he Qianlong erdi de nanxun ji qi dui Jiangnan mingsheng he yuanlin de huizhi yu fangjian' 康熙和乾隆二帝的南巡及其對江南名勝和園林的繪製與仿建 [The Southern Inspection Tours of the Kangxi and Qianlong Emperors and the Painting of Jiangnan Sites and the Imitation of Jiangnan Gardens], *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 [The National Palace Museum Research Quarterly] 32, no. 3 (2015): 1-62; Jia Jun, 賈琚, 'Yuanming sanyuan xiefang xianxiang zonglun' 圓明三園寫仿現象綜論 [An Overview of Landscape Recreation Phenomena in the Yuanmingyuan Imperial Garden Complex], in *Yuanmingyuan xuekan* 圓明園學刊 [Journal of Yuanmingyuan], edited by Li Bo 李博 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui chubanshe, 2017), 193-209.

³⁶⁷ Chen has provided a detailed list of miniature landscapes recreated after scenic spots and literati gardens in the Jiangnan region in imperial gardens constructed under the Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong emperors, see Appendix II in Chen, 'Kangxi he Qianlong', 40-6.

Pinghu qiuyue 平湖秋月 (Autumn Moon Over a Calm Lake), for which the emperor had specially composed a poem after ascending the throne, was constructed to emulate one of the Ten Scenes of West Lake.³⁶⁸ The Ten Scenes of West Lake (shortened as Ten Scenes hereafter) is an itinerary first mentioned in *Fangyu shenglan* 方輿勝覽 (Comprehensive Overview of the Realm), a Southern Song geographical survey composed by the literatus Zhu Mu 祝穆 (d. 1255).³⁶⁹ It appeared recurrently in later literary works, paintings, and illustrated albums in Ming-Qing China, serving as a conventional theme imbued with historical and aesthetic meanings, but also reflecting a ‘collective [cultural] memory’.³⁷⁰ The scenery of Pinghu qiuyue, in particular, was documented as the top among the Ten Scenes in *Xihu zhi* 西湖志 (West Lake Gazetteer) compiled during the Yongzheng reign (1734) by Li Wei 李衛 (1688–1738), who was particularly favoured by the emperor and served as the governor of Zhejiang from 1725.³⁷¹

Notably, the gazetteer mentions that Emperor Kangxi had written a title board for the scenery in 1699 during his third Southern inspection tour. Afterwards, the board was hung on a newly constructed pavilion that was modelled after a Tang (618–907) prototype. This earlier model was addressed in later literary and pictorial sources and underwent multiple

³⁶⁸ The poem was entitled after the name of the scenery and was included in *Siyi tang ji* 四宜堂集 [Collection of the Studio for Four Seasons], which was compiled around the 12th year of his reign (1734), see editor’s comments and the poem in Feng Shulin, Feng Chunjiang, eds., *Yongzheng shici jizhu* [Annotated Collection of Emperor Yongzheng’s Poetry], (Beijing: Tuanjie chubanshe, 2014), 16, 384.

³⁶⁹ Zhu Mu 祝穆 (d. 1255), *Fangyu shenglan* 方輿勝覽 [Comprehensive Overview of the Realm], comp. Zhu Zhu 祝洙 (act. 1256), 1267 (Electronic reproduction, Washington D.C.: Library of Congress), vol 1, 7b (p.14), accessed 13th July 2022, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2021666363/>.

³⁷⁰ Stephen H. Whiteman, ‘Touring the Rear Park’, *Where Dragon Veins Meet: The Kangxi Emperor and His Estate at Rehe* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2020), 220; Duan Xiaolin, ‘The Ten Views of West Lake’, in *Visual and Material Cultures in Middle Period China*, eds. Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Susan Shih-shan Huang (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 151-90.

³⁷¹ Fu, Wanglu 傅王露 (act. 1715), Li Wei 李衛 (1688–1738), et. al., ‘Mingsheng’ 名勝 [Scenic Spots], *Xihu zhi* 西湖志 [West Lake Gazetteer], vol. 3 (Electronic reproduction. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Library Preservation, 2012), 23b, accessed 13th July 2022, <https://id.lib.harvard.edu/curiosity/chinese-rare-books/49-990080247780203941>; Li Wei’s biography is excerpted from the Database of Names and Biographies established by the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica. https://newarchive.ihp.sinica.edu.tw/sncaccgi/sncacFtp?ACTION=TQ,sncacFtpqf,SN=001937,2nd,search_simple

cycles of reconstructions and demolitions prior to the Qing period.³⁷² Accordingly, it has been posited that the whereabouts of the scenery's actual physical site, after which the compound in the Yuanmingyuan was modelled, was officially determined under Emperor Kangxi.³⁷³ In light of the available evidence, it can be suggested that the restaging of the 'Pinghu qiuyue' scenery in the Yuanmingyuan under Emperor Yongzheng was presumably based on an earlier recreation of the scenery facilitated in situ with the endorsement of his father.

The Xifeng xiuse compound associated with the PDF scroll was another site where the emperor and other relevant human actors, including the artisans, officials from the Imperial Household Department, and supervisory imperial members, unleashed their imaginations. According to *Qinding Rixia jiuwen kao* 欽定日下舊聞考 (Imperially Commissioned Investigations on Old Anecdotes [of the Capital]), Xifeng xiuse featured a scene known as 'Xiao Kuanglu' 小匡廬, that is, a miniature landscape emulating Mount Lu in present-day Jiangxi Province.³⁷⁴ At least since the Han period (206 BCE–220 CE), the mountain has garnered significant acclaim as a major landmark of cultural and spiritual significance, serving as another canonised landscape theme for literary and pictorial works created in and outside of the imperial context. The preeminent Tang poet Li Bai 李白 (701–62) had played a pivotal role in enhancing the stature of Mount Lu in the cultural and aesthetic realms through his dedicated poems that centred around the three-tiered waterfall on the mountain.³⁷⁵

³⁷² Li, 'Mingsheng', 23b.

³⁷³ Hong Quan 洪泉 and Dong Cong 董聰, 'Pinghu qiuyue bianqian tukao' 平湖秋月變遷圖考 [A Pictorial Research of the Evolution of 'Autumn Moon on Calm Lake'], *Zhongguo yuanlin* 中國園林 [Journal of Chinese Landscape Architecture], no. 8 (2012): 93-98.

³⁷⁴ Zhu and Yu (ed. And ex.) et al. *Qinding rixia jiuwen kao*, vol. 82, 7a.

³⁷⁵ See Li Bai 李白 (701–62), 'Wang Lushan pubu ershou' 望廬山瀑布二首 [Gazing at the Waterfall on Mount Lu, two poems] and 'Wang Lushan wulao feng' 望廬山五老峰 [Gazing at the Peak of the Five Aged Ones at Mount Lu], *Li Bai shixuan* 李白詩選 [Selected Poetry by Li Bai] selected and annotated by the Fudan University educational research group of classic literature (Beijing: Renmin wenzue chubanshe, 1977), 285-87.

Specifically, the layered rockwork on the west side of Xifeng xiuse has been identified as a recreation of Mount Lu, while the cascading stream coming down from the miniature mountain echoed with the renowned waterfall. It is, however, worth noting that the connection between Xifeng xiuse and Mount Lu was not specified in imperial records dated to the Yongzheng period. Conversely, the project of creating a waterfall inside the compound was, indeed, carried out under Emperor Yongzheng, indicating his interest in recreating natural sceneries in the artificially constructed garden. The method adopted by the artisans at the time was especially innovative. According to the relevant *Huojidang* entry dated to the 6th year, when the construction project of the compound reached its final stage, seven *shuifa* 水法 were manufactured based on designated preliminary models primarily approved by Prince Yi and installed at the position of the waterfall in Xifeng xiuse.³⁷⁶

Shuifa has been commonly interpreted as European-style fountains, but it could also refer to the more basic hydraulic machines and systems in the Qing context.³⁷⁷ In this case, the seven artificial fountains, powered by European-style hydraulic machinery that helped to lift the water, served to emulate the scenery of a waterfall. Even if the waterfall was not intended to be a recreation of the one on Mount Lu, the interplay between artificiality and naturalness, as demonstrated by the construction of a man-made waterfall, still generated the dichotomy between unreal and real. This interplay, in turn, further intensified the illusionistic spirit embedded in the design of the garden.

³⁷⁶ FA Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huojidang*, vol. 3, 360; Hui Zou, 'The Chinese Garden and the Concept of the Line Method', *A Jesuit Garden in Beijing and Early Modern Chinese Culture* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2011), 122.

³⁷⁷ Katsu Shingei 葛沁芸, 'Enmeien seiyō yakata ni okeru suiryoku kikai no kensetsu ni tsuite no kōsatsu' 円明園西洋楼における水力機械の建設についての考察 [On the Construction of the Hydraulic Machinery in the European Palaces of Yuanmingyuan], *Journal of Architecture and Planning of Architectural Institute of Japan* 83, no. 754 (2018): 2412-14. <https://doi.org/10.3130/aija.83.2409>.

Moving from the outside to the interior, such practices of illusionism persisted, as reflected by the depicted objects portrayed in the *Guwan tu*, while simultaneously extending beyond the realm of objects. On 23rd January of the 7th year, the emperor further commissioned Castiglione and the Manchu court painter Tangdai 唐岱 (1673–after 1752) to paint a number of decorative pictures for the *hengpi* 橫披, the horizontal crossbar above the lintel, in the Hanyun zhai 含韻齋 (Studio of Rhythmic Consonance) mentioned in the last chapter. The studio initially stood as a five-room-wide grand palace hall located within Xifeng xiuse, which occupied a total area of fifteen rooms.³⁷⁸ The *hengpi* part often took the shape of a window, or a restricted opening with interlaced structures, and would appear both within and outside on the façade of a building. According to the entry, Tangdai undertook the responsibility of producing four landscape paintings, presumed to be executed in traditional Chinese style, for the *hengpi* located to the south and the north in front of a throne inside the palace hall.

In the meantime, Castiglione was commissioned to create a series of paintings known as *chuanghu dang hua* 窗戶擋畫, which could refer either to pictures designed to be hung or, in this case, pasted onto windows as a double-sided decoration, or to illusionistic pictures of windows painted with outdoor landscapes.³⁷⁹ The paintings were ordered to be rendered in Western style, and the record particularly noted that after reviewing Castiglione's drafts of landscape painting, the emperor asked him to add some *riying* 日影, or sun shadows, to the

³⁷⁸ Liu Rong, *Jingyi yuan*, 195. The No. 1704 Drawing of the Yuanmingyuan provides a clearer image of the interior structure of the studio and shows the layout as fifteen separate rooms in different sizes.

³⁷⁹ For the modern use of *chuanghu dang hua* as a type of advertisement adopted by antique shops, see Zheng Li 鄭理, 'Rongbao zhai li huaer wang, dashan huiyan shi guobao' 榮寶齋里畫兒王 大山慧眼識國寶', in *Rongbao zhai sanbai nian jian* 榮寶齋三百年間 [Rongbao zhai in Three Hundred Years] (Beijing : Beijing yan shan chu ban she, 1992), 186.

work.³⁸⁰ This request indicates the emperor attempted to paste a *tongjing hua*, or a scenic illusion painting of mountain and water, into the palace hall. In juxtaposition with the Chinese-style landscape paintings created by Tangdai, Castiglione's illusionistic works effectively augmented the sense of artificial realness within the pseudo-natural setting of the compound. As the man-made waterfall recreated the scenery of nature, the syncretic-style landscape paintings pasted inside complemented the ambiance by revitalising the spirit of nature inside the limited space of the palace hall.

The presence of a throne inside this hall is also somewhat thought-provoking. Given that the Hanyun zhai was the main hall in the compound, it could be inferred that the throne depicted in the PDF scroll was once positioned inside this building, where certain *bogu shu ge* were also present as discussed earlier. Following this conjecture, the palace hall was very likely to be the original location of the *guwan* in the PDF scrolls, which was furnished as an idealised scholar's studio, featuring various antiquities while connecting—through the pictures of mountain and water pasted on the *hengpi*—with the landscape outside.

The later Qianlong emperor penned a poem specifically dedicated to Xifeng xiuse, expressing that the site was not overwhelmed with excessive carving decorations, but was designed to convey a lofty archaic spirit.³⁸¹ He made reference to the Tang poet Du Mu 杜牧 (803–52) in his commentary on the red leaves on the miniature Mount Lu in autumn, but also described the landscape painting by the Northern Song artist Mi Fu 米黻 (1051–1107) as an allusion to the mountain scenery after rain.³⁸² Meanwhile, almost everything inside this

³⁸⁰ FA Archives and CUHK Art Museum, *Huoji dang*, vol. 4, 122.

³⁸¹ The relevant stanza reads in Chinese as: 不雕不斷太古意。

³⁸² The relevant stanzas read in Chinese as: ‘霜辰紅葉詩思杜，雨夕綠螺畫看米’。

compound, from the waterfall, the illusionistic landscape paintings, to the displayed *guwan*, and the imitative pictures of antiquities inserted on the interior walls, conveyed a sense of artificiality. This pursuit of artificial ‘realism’ in the Yuanmingyuan found resonance in the illusionistic painting style of the *Guwan tu*, which, in its essence, reflected human agency and encapsulated the spirit of artificiality in Chinese visual culture.

At the same time, the interest in reviving objects and landscapes from an imaginative past in the present through representational forms appears to echo with the concept of *guya* 古雅 (antique-elegant) first proposed by Wang Guowei 王國維 (1877–1927).³⁸³ The concept has been reconsidered by James Watt as the core value that drove the artistic production at the Qing court. Later in McCausland’s discussion, it was invoked as an explanatory tool to penetrate the mode of thinking behind the creation of the *Guwan tu*.³⁸⁴

According to Wang, *guya* is an aesthetic quality attached to secondary formal representations of artistic forms, and it is engendered by artificial efforts, rather than through nature or innate artistic creativity.³⁸⁵ In his essay, Wang specifically cited such canonised antiquities as ancient bronzes and carved stone inscriptions, suggesting their aesthetic values were manifested mostly in secondary forms, that is, later rubbings and reproductions of the rubbings. What is more, he argued that people from different temporal layers would have their own judgments on what should be deemed as *guya*, and these judgments were

³⁸³ Wang Guowei 王國維, ‘Guya zhi zai meixue shang zhi weizhi’ 古雅之在美學上之位置 [On the Place of the Antique-Elegant in Aesthetics], *Renjian xianhua: Wang Guowei suibi* 人間閒話：王國維隨筆 [Leisurely Talks in the World: Essays by Wang Guowei] (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2011), 91-95.

³⁸⁴ James C. Y. Watt, ‘The Antique-Elegant’, in Wen C. Fong and James C. Y. Watt, *Possessing the Past: Treasures from the National Palace Museum* (Taipei, New York: the National Palace Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996), 503-53; McCausland, ‘The Emperor’s Old Toys’, 68-9.

³⁸⁵ Wang, ‘Guya’, 92.

essentially grounded in one's acquired knowledge and experiences.³⁸⁶

Based on this concept, the objects depicted in the *Guwan tu* are the secondary forms not only of antiquities present in the Yuanmingyuan, but also of certain reproductions, which, in themselves, serve as the secondary forms of their models. At the same time, the *Guwan tu* handscrolls, with their archaic physical features as discussed in Chapter one, could be considered as a collection of material forms conforming to the established discourse of *guya* taste. The entire *Guwan tu* series, therefore, is arguably a representation of Emperor Yongzheng's definition of *guya* constructed upon an accumulated repertoire of intellectual discourses and visual sources on canonised antiquities mainly deployed from the preceding Ming dynasty.

A Wonderland in the Emperor's Palm

From the above discussion, it is emerging that the cross-media production of archaistic objects was just one of many practices of illusionism at Emperor Yongzheng's court. These practices speak to the lingering concept of *wan*, which also assumes a vital role in defining the contents of the *Guwan tu* similar to the concept of *gu*. The German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900–2002) proposed an overarching definition of 'play' as a medial 'to-and-fro movement...not tied to any goal that would bring it to an end...[and] it renews itself in constant repetition.'³⁸⁷ In light of this idea, it could be argued that the frequent orders of displaying and reproducing antiquities across varied media, along with the recreations of history-laden sceneries, which went beyond the boundary of corporeal objects, all conformed

³⁸⁶ Wang, 'Guya', 93-94.

³⁸⁷ Gadamer, 'Play as the clue', 103.

to the repetitive feature of ‘play’ suggested by Gadamer.

Following this line of thinking, the Yuanmingyuan was set out as a ‘playing field’ reserved for the emperor, but also other imperial members, to immerse themselves into a constructed space imbued with the *guya* spirit.³⁸⁸ Within this space, the game participant would take on the identity of a cultivated scholar, who was not only equipped with knowledge of Chinese intellectual traditions, but also had the ability to realise the ideal style of living proposed by late Ming literati. This, in turn, ties to the act of role-playing, a *game*



Fig. 5-7-1 Unidentified court painter, ‘Hearing the stream sound’, ‘Viewing of a waterfall’ from the *Xingle tu* album, 1723–35, BPM

especially favoured by the emperor, as exemplified by the ‘costume portraits’ featuring him in disguise as a Tibetan monk, a Mongol nobleman, a European aristocrat, or as the main labouring character in the *Gengzhi tu* (*Pictures of Tilling and Weaving*) album.³⁸⁹ Observing these portraits, one will notice that most of the time he would take on the persona of a Han

³⁸⁸ Ibid., 107.

³⁸⁹ Wu Hung, ‘Emperor’s Masquerade: “Costume Portraits” of Yongzheng and Qianlong’, *Orientalism* 26, no. 7 (1995): 30–34.

Chinese literatus.³⁹⁰ He would either rest outdoors to enjoy the view of a waterfall and the sound of a flowing stream (Fig. 5-7-1) or stay indoors concentrating on reading and writing (Fig. 5-7-2).

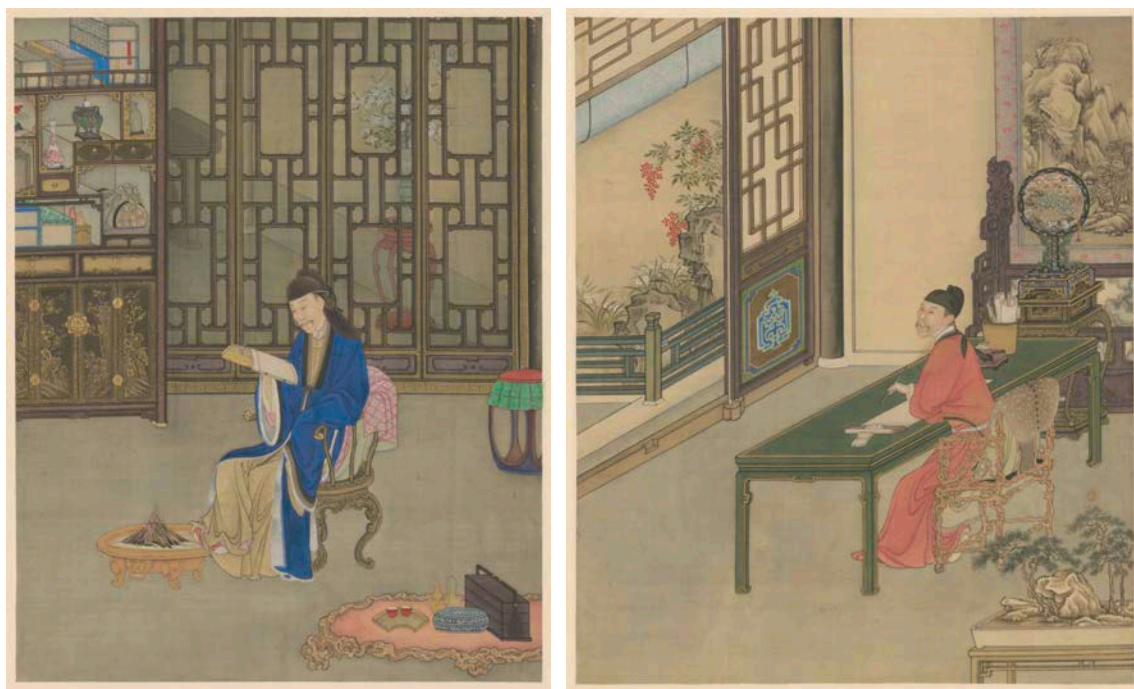


Fig. 5-7-2 Unidentified court painter, 'The emperor at reading', 'Copying a sutra in a studio' from the *Xingle tu* album, 1723–35, BPM

One of the portraits, in particular, captures the emperor sitting in a relaxed posture, engrossed in a book within a palatial residence. The cabinet behind him shares resemblance with the those depicted in the V&A scroll in terms of its irregularly framed structures. The decorative designs, painted in gold lines against the brownish-black door panels, also evoke a visual connection between the cabinet and the emperor's beloved *yangqi* furniture. Inside the cabinet, an assortment of objects, including books, scrolls, and archaic vessels, are

³⁹⁰ Wu, 'Emperor's Masquerade', 30.

displayed with their designated packaging and stands. One will also recognise a number of familiar items, such as the lidded bronze cauldron censer, the Song-style bell-shaped crackled ware, and the vase with applied dragon design reminiscent of the Jiajing piece (Fig. 2-14) discussed in Chapter two, all of which resonate with the *guwan* depicted in *Guwan tu* in terms of painting style and vessel type.

It would be challenging to ascertain whether this portrait, along with the other ones showing him as different types of literati, were inspired by the emperor's private life in the Yuanmingyuan. Yet, the emperor's interest in experiencing the scholarly lifestyle does appear to be evident in these portraits and he had, in fact, already taken some actions along these lines inside the Yuanmingyuan. The aforementioned poem by Emperor Qianlong for Xifeng xiuse also alludes to this role-playing game, as one line suggests: 'While wondering if a Chan monk meditating on the sitting platform, it would be better to see a poet enjoying himself as one peeks through the window' (疑有苾芻單上參，不如詩客窗中玩). Given that he particularly pointed out at the end of the poem that the compound was his father's favourite residence, he could have reflected upon the deceased emperor's activities at the site as an inspiration for poetic expressions.

This role-playing game, in turn, calls attention to another essential aspect of *wan*, that is, the playing experience, in this case, the visual and tangible experiences acquired through engaging with various forms of *guwan*. From the mid- and late Ming periods, the literati class had already begun to emphasise sensory experiences in appreciating objects attributed to the past following the guidelines on daily usages of archaic vessels provided in the widely distributed manuals on the idealised intellectual elite lifestyle. Collectors of antiquities would

openly display their objects and arrange *qingwan hui* 清玩會 (gathering for pure enjoyment), also known as ‘literary gatherings’, to appreciate their collections with likeminded friends.

Meanwhile, it appears that acquiring genuine pieces in the Ming period was rather difficult and rarely achieved, as a lot of them had been dispersed or destroyed over the passage of time, while increasingly more forgeries started to flood the market. At local markets and festive fairs, such as the monthly City God Temple market and the annual Qingming festival fair, *guwan* would be lined up with other commercial products, such as daily utensils and baubles for children, along the roadside.³⁹¹ Amidst the saturated market brimming with options, consumers often struggled to discern the authenticity of the *guwan* and ended up acquiring counterfeit ones at a high price. However, instead of sharing the negative attitude towards forgery held by present-day art patrons, Ming collectors would be willing to purchase high-quality fakes, observe them, and appreciate the artisans’ skills in perfectly reproducing the ancient originals and capturing the archaic spirit.

This positive attitude towards archaised reproductions and emphasis on their experiential qualities were both manifested in the Qing ruler’s *game* of illusionism. In the meantime, reflecting back on the Ming paintings of *guwan* discussed in Chapter two, one would notice the flattened, schematic pictures fail to represent the material qualities of the objects, from which the sensory experiences are triggered. The *Guwan tu* scrolls, on the other hand, are able to capture those qualities with the aid of European painting techniques. In this sense, the

³⁹¹ Shen Defu 沈德符, ‘Jifu: miaoshi riqi’ 畿輔 • 廟市日期 [Capital Region: Date of the Temple Market], *Wanli yehuo bian* 萬曆野獲編 [Unofficial Gleanings from the Wanli Era], vol. 24, ed. Qian Fang 錢枋 (n.d. Qing dynasty scholar), in *Lidai shiliao biji congkan: Yuan Ming shiliao biji* 歷代史料筆記叢刊: 元明史料筆記 [Collectanea of Historical Jottings of Successive Dynasties: Yuan and Ming] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), 613; Zhang Dai 張岱 (1597–1689), ‘Yangzhou Qingming’ 揚州清明 [Qingming Festival in Yangzhou], *Tao’an meng yi* 陶庵夢憶 [Recollections of Tao’an’s Past Dreams], vol. 5, in *Lidai shiliao biji congkan: Yuan Ming shiliao biji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2007), 66.

scrolls not only served to showcase the main characters, namely, the depicted *guwan*, in this role-playing *game*, but also aimed to capture the emperor's visual and tangible experiences of engaging with the actual *guwan* within the Yuanmingyuan and the collective past they represented.

Detached Enjoyment or Rational Contemplation

In words of the Yongzheng emperor, a recurring spatial term associated with the Yuanmingyuan is *huzhong tian* 壺中天 (heaven in a gourd). The term was employed as the content for one of his leisure seals (Fig. 5-8), which can be seen on one of the screen panels from the *Twelve Concubines of the Emperor Yongzheng* (Fig. 5-9), formerly exhibited in

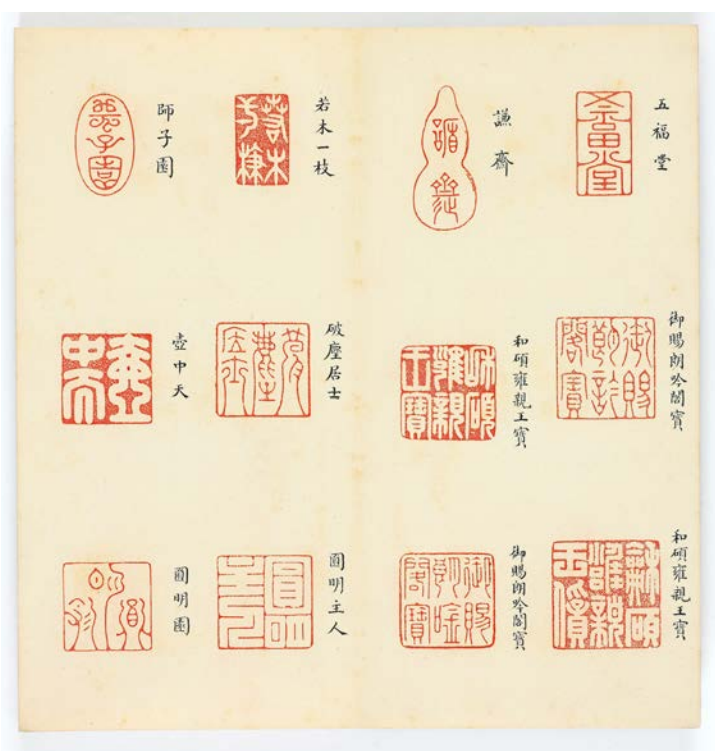


Fig. 5-8 Yongzheng *baosou*
(Complete Record of Emperor
Yongzheng's Imperial Seals),
1723–35, Musée Guimet



Fig. 5-9 Unidentified court painter, 'A lady facing the mirror' from the *Twelve Concubines of the Emperor Yongzheng*, 1723–35, BPM

Shenliu dushu tang 深柳讀書堂 (Reading Hall Deep Inside the Weeping Willow) inside the Yuanmingyuan.³⁹² The origin story behind the term comes from *Hou Han shu* 後漢書 (Book of the Later Han), the official historical record of the Eastern Han dynasty (25–220 CE), compiled by Fan Ye 范曄 (398–446) during the Liu Song era (420–79) and initially printed in the Northern Song period (960–1279).³⁹³ According to the story, *huzhong tian* is a lavish palace belonging to a transcendent Daoist immortal, graced 'with towers, belvederes, multiple-lintel gateways, covered corridors, and several dozen attendants' and nestled within a gourd.³⁹⁴ Having been banished to the mundane realm, the immortal would disguise himself as a medicine seller at the market in daytime and jump into the gourd at dusk.³⁹⁵

³⁹² Wu Hung, 'Beyond Stereotypes: The Twelve Beauties in Qing Court Art and the "Dream of the Red Chamber"', in *Writing Women in Late Imperial China*, eds. Ellen Widmer and Kang-i Sun Chang (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 338-58.

³⁹³ David R. Knechtges, Taiping Chang, eds., 'Hou Han shu', *Ancient and Early Medieval Chinese Literature: A Reference Guide, Part One* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010), 372-8.

³⁹⁴ Robert Ford Company, 'Secret Arts, Manifest Wonders', *Making Transcendents: Ascetics and Social Memory in Early Medieval China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009), 102.

³⁹⁵ Company, 'Secret Arts, Manifest Wonders', 101-2.

Another reference can be found in a text in *Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤 (Seven Tablets in a Cloudy Satchel), a Daoist canon compiled around 1028.³⁹⁶ The text mentions a Daoist practitioner named Shi Cun, who always carried a huge gourd, which enclosed a world, mirroring the mundane realm, with the sun and moon contained within it.³⁹⁷ This allusion, in turn, appears in one of the Yongzheng emperor's poems entitled 'Kou zhan' 口占 (Improvisation). In this particular piece, the emperor contemplates the passage of time and comments that 'it is only within the world inside the gourd, where time becomes boundless while distinctions between the past and present vanish' (惟有壺中日月，無今無古無休).³⁹⁸

This interest in the detached lifestyle is in line with the emperor's continuous fascination with Daoist practices, from commissioning medicinal elixirs to constructing Daoist altars in the Forbidden City and Yuanmingyuan.³⁹⁹ On a spatiotemporal level, the Yuanmingyuan, as a heterochronic 'playing field' encompassing objects attributed to multiple historical layers, appears to overlap with the transcendent *huzhong tian*. Meanwhile, a dichotomy between open and closed spaces itself gradually emerges upon conducting a comparison between the Yuanmingyuan and *huzhong tian*. The world inside the gourd conveys a sense of spatial limitedness and detachment from the worldly realm, which appears to be in conformity with Gadamer's interpretation of 'the sphere of play as a closed world...without mediation to the world of aims'.⁴⁰⁰ On the other hand, the Yuanmingyuan was by no means detached from worldly affairs in the Qing context, as it constantly served as an administrative body and

³⁹⁶ Yinzhen, 'Kou zhan' 口占 (Improvisation), *Siyi tang ji*, in *Yongzheng shici jizhu*, 404.

³⁹⁷ Yinzhen, 'Kou zhan', 404.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 403.

³⁹⁹ For instance, on the 15th day of the sixth month in Year 4, an order was sent from the Yuanmingyuan to the Lacquerware workshop, mentioning one plaque of calligraphy with imperial inscriptions was for a Daoist altar to the Dipper; on the 15th day of the tenth month in Year 8, a commission of a *dou tan* 鬥壇 (Daoist altar to the Dipper) in the West Warm Chamber of the Hall of Mental Cultivation was sent to the Leather workshop, vol. 4, 627.

⁴⁰⁰ Gadamer, 'Play as the clue', 107.

political headquarters in parallel with the Forbidden City especially during the Yongzheng reign.

Indeed, under the Yongzheng emperor, the concept of *wan* took on a non-medial connotation and was carefully tailored to fit into different discourses. For instance, in an edict issued in 1728, the emperor asked provincial officials to refrain from offering *guwan* to the court. He admonished them not to squander their stipends, offered by the court for necessities and essential public affairs, in buying *guwan* to ingratiate with him. He also made the comment that *guwan* from local markets tended to be mediocre in quality but overly priced. Subsequently, he advised the officials to concentrate on their work and refer talented people to serve in governmental posts, suggesting that such loyalty, demonstrated through effectively performing official duties, held far more value compared to the ancient jade *bi* of Mr He.⁴⁰¹

Albeit futile in reality, this type of edict delivering the same messages had been issued on multiple occasions, serving as a political rhetoric that highlighted the preciousness of loyal and dedicated officials over ordinary pieces of *guwan*. At the same time, the edict reflects that the emperor was aware of the fact that the consumption of *guwan* as material goods carried a potential association with corruption inside the government system. In another record on a corruption scandal surrounding the military commander Nian Gengyao 年羹堯 (1679–1726), *guwan* was directly addressed as a form of bribery offered by Ge Jikong 葛繼孔, the vice minister of State Ceremonial, under the order of Nian, who had promised to take Ge under his wing.⁴⁰²

⁴⁰¹ Yunlu 允祿 (1695–1767), ed., *Shizong xian huangdi shangyu neige* 世宗憲皇帝上與內閣 [Emperor Yongzheng's edicts to the Grand Secretariat], vol. 75, *E-SKQS*, accessed 5th February 2020.

⁴⁰² Yunlu, ed., *Shangyu neige*, vol. 33, *E-SKQS*, accessed 5th February 2020.

This cautious attitude towards *guwan* corresponds to the negative connotation of *wan* related to overindulgence in pleasurable sensory experiences, which would lead to ineffectiveness in fulfilling official duties and delivering benevolent governance. In his rhetoric, the Yongzheng emperor often addressed his father as a frugal role model, who had commented that *guwan*, like old ceramic wares, were merely utilitarian utensils adopted by the ancients, and should only be meant for temporary appreciation.⁴⁰³ In 1726, he particularly issued an edict to reflect upon his father's detachment from material pleasure, suggesting:

The Benevolent Emperor Shengzu, the divine ancestor [of our empire], governing the country for over sixty years, endeavored to practise frugality and pursue moderation for the sake of maintaining the welfare of his people. This was well known by his officials and subjects both in and outside of the Chinese realm.....As for [objects in] the category of *guwan* and utilitarian vessels [adopted in his palace], all of them were ordinary items, not even a single piece can be qualified as rarity or unique treasure.....After my succession to the throne, I ordered palace eunuchs to inspect all the *wanqi* [or vessels of pleasure] and to bring those worth viewing within the display objects from the summer retreat [in Chengde] and other locations. Noticing [these objects do] not even surpass the collection in my princely residence, I deeply condemn myself and hold guilty in my heart, while more sincerely admiring the supreme virtue of my sovereign father. Considering this one quality only, [it is still sufficient to claim that my father] has surpassed the ancients from the predecessors.

皇考聖祖仁皇帝，臨御六十餘年，富有四海而躬行儉德，搏節愛養，以為保惠萬民之本，此中外臣民所共知者……至於古玩器皿之屬，皆尋常及平等之物，竟無一件為人所罕見可珍奇者……朕即位後，偶令內監將大內所有玩器稽查檢點，並將避暑山莊等處歷年陳設之物其中可觀者皆取回宮中，看來較朕藩邸所藏尚屬不逮，

⁴⁰³ Yinzhen 胤禛 (1678–1735) et al., eds. *Shengzu ren huangdi tingxun geyan* 聖祖仁皇帝庭訓格言 [Aphorisms from the Familial Instructions of the Benevolent Emperor Shengzu (the Kangxi emperor)], 1730. *E-SKQS*, accessed 5th February 2020.

朕實切責於己，抱愧於心，益欽服我皇考之至德，即此一節已超越前古矣。⁴⁰⁴

The issuance of this edict, which was meant to be circulated among officials in the Grand Secretariat, served the purpose of admonition as much as being a filial gesture of homage to the Kangxi emperor. Through this cordial message, Emperor Yongzheng attempted to highlight his concern for the intrinsic detrimental effect of *guwan* on the practice of benevolent rulership and the wellbeing of the people. The alarmed stance is even manifested in the portrait of the emperor as the Chinese literatus (Fig. 5-7-2, left), in which the ruler concentrates on his reading, without laying his eyes on the *guwan* displayed in the cabinet standing in the subsidiary corner.

Meanwhile, the ubiquitous presence of *guwan* in the imperial garden alludes to the fact that the emperor's disinterestedness in acquiring sensory pleasure from viewing and touching *guwan* perhaps only existed in discourses and visual images. The unoccupied throne in the PDF scroll can be perceived as a symbol that demonstrates an underlying struggle between the sensory attachment to and spiritual detachment from material pleasure in the emperor's mind. Then, how did he, as a Manchu ruler, justify his commission of a world for 'play' in the Yuanmingyuan?

The answer to this question is tied to another definition of *wan* in the Qing context. According to the Kangxi dictionary, the character 'wan' was not just understood as certain behaviors or experiences of seeking pleasure, but also served to represent 'xi' 習, which pointed to practices of studying, investigating, and savouring, often repeatedly.⁴⁰⁵ The

⁴⁰⁴ Yunlu, ed., *shangyu neige*, vol. 49, *E-SKQS*, accessed 5th February 2020.

⁴⁰⁵ Zhang, et al., *Kangxi zidian*, 3481.

definition resonates back to the concept of *gewu zhizhi* 格物致知 (investigating things and extending knowledge) addressed in Chapter two, which was reinvigorated in the Southern Song era (1127-1279) and redeployed in Ming-Qing China for studies of material objects.

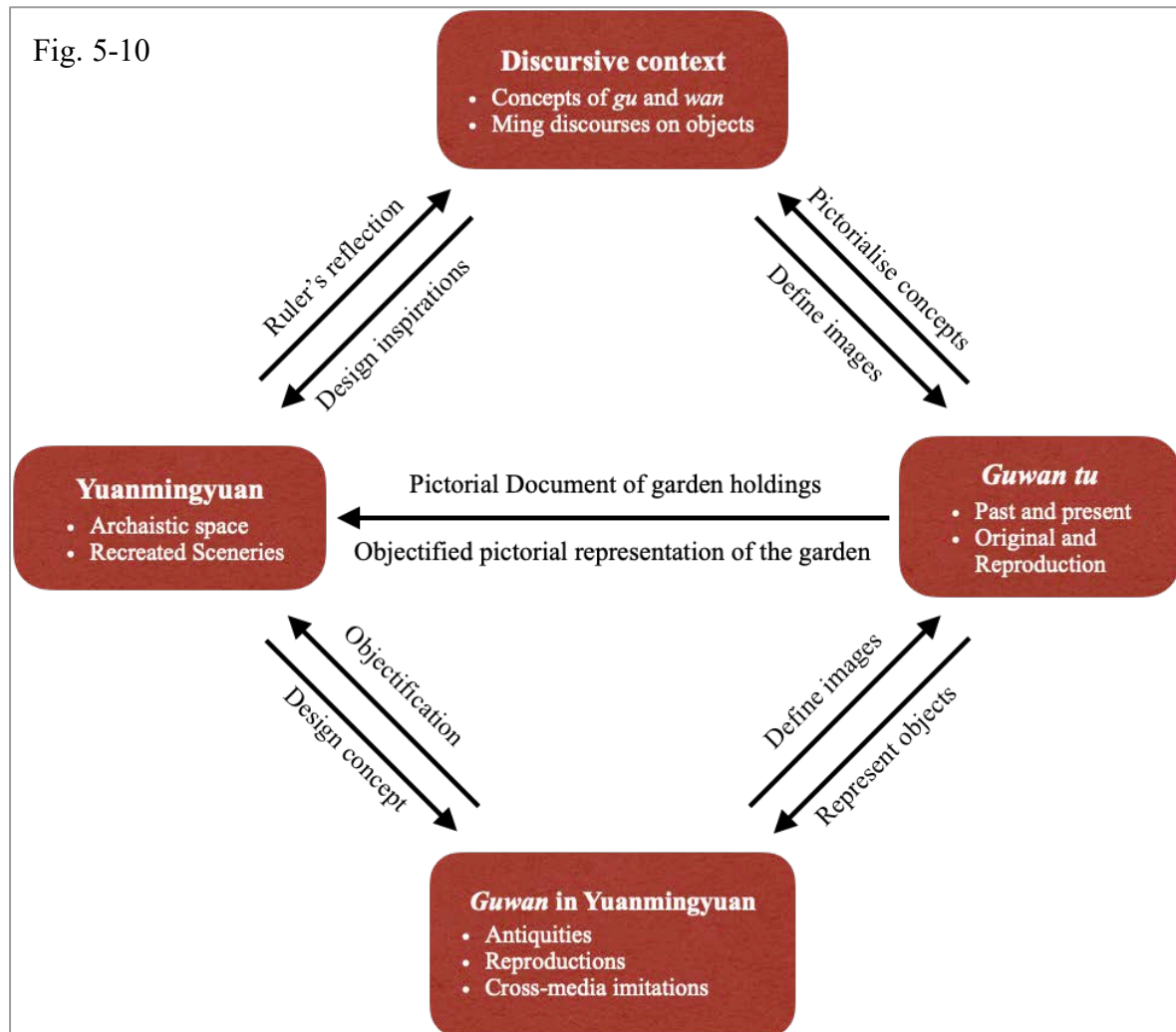
Specifically, as mentioned briefly in Chapter one, Chen Yuanlong 陳元龍 (1652–1736) compiled the categorised encyclopedia entitled *Gezhi jingyuan* under both the Kangxi and Yongzheng emperors.⁴⁰⁶ In this work, Chen reorganised the accounts on *guwan* from Ming literati's manuals into separated sections on vessels and objects for daily use and leisurely appreciation in residential areas.⁴⁰⁷ The referential relation between *gezhi* (a shortened name for *gewu zhizhi* commonly adopted in Ming and Qing contexts) in the title and the categorised *guwan* alludes to an official recognition of this category of objects as a subject worthy of empirical scholarly investigation.

In this respect, the formal and material traits of *guwan*, which served to signify historical values, became essential in justifying the action of taking pleasure in antiquities and their reproductions as a serious scholarly activity. The antiquities, along with their reproductions and imitations in different media, displayed and used in the Yuanmingyuan would be deemed as sources for contemplation on the imagined past, despite their artificial and illusionistic nature. Following this logic, the *game* of recreating canonised landscape sceneries also became legitimised as an active response to the design concept for the residential quarters of

⁴⁰⁶ The encyclopedia was compiled under the order of Emperor Kangxi and printed in 1735 under Emperor Yongzheng, Chau Y. W. 鄒穎文, ed., 'East Asian Languages Collection', *Shuhai lizhu: xianggang zhongwen daxue tushuguan zhencang zhuji* 書海驪珠：香海中文大學圖書館珍藏專輯 [From the Treasure House: Jewels from the Library of the Chinese University of Hong Kong] (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2014), 32-33; see Chen Yuanlong's brief biography in Man-kuei, Li. 'CHEN Shiguan', *Eminent Chinese of the Qing Period*. : Berkshire Publishing Group, 2018. <https://www-oxfordreference-com.ezproxy.soas.ac.uk/view/10.1093/acref/9780190088019.001.0001/acref-9780190088019-e-56>.

⁴⁰⁷ One example of the Ming literati jottings that had been divided and reorganised to fit the new categorisation system adopted in the *Gezhi jingyuan* is Tu Long's *Kaopan yushi*. In his discussion on seal, Chen incorporated Tu's note on seal paste box and mentioned that ancient jade *wanqi* (vessels of pleasure) were mostly superior than ceramic wares, except for the case of seal paste containers, when the Song Guan, Ge, Ding wares were particularly cherished. Chen, *Gezhi jingyuan*, vol. 40, 9b.

the Yuanmingyuan, that is, to construct a literati space that linked the Manchu regime with the history and cultural traditions constructed by the Han Chinese intellectual community.



In light of the discussion above, a multi-pronged cycle (Fig. 5-10) of representation, reproduction, and imitation gradually emerges from the convoluted network of interactions between the *Guwan tu*, the Yuanmingyuan, the archaistic objects inside the Yuanmingyuan, and the discourses related to the concepts of *gu* and *wan*. Primarily serving as pictorial documents of objects in the Yuanmingyuan, the *Guwan tu* handscrolls allude to the objects' ambiguous identities in terms of authenticity, thus reflecting the artificial and heterochronic

aspects of the Yuanmingyuan. In this sense, the *Guwan tu* handscrolls could be considered as objectified pictorial representations of the imperial garden, and the blank background serves to signify the constructed archaistic space inside the inner quarters of the garden complex. At the same time, the *guwan* images also serve as indexical traces of all the human participants in the emperor's illusion *game*, including, but not limited to, officials from the Imperial Household Department, court painters, and eunuchs, who would be moving in and outside of the imperial garden for this grand painting project.

Conclusion

A virtual visit to the illusionistic space of the Yuanmingyuan through the *Guwan tu* brings an end to the current thesis. Based on the discussion presented by the thesis, it is evident that the *Guwan tu* handscrolls are not as unique as present-day viewers perceive them. Instead, they were born out of a prolonged tradition concerning imperial patronage of taxonomically-oriented oversize handscrolls and production of pictures featuring individualised objects. Meanwhile, the combination of these two factors makes them stand out in both categories, while alluding to the distinctive production context and purpose of the scrolls. In an attempt to liberate the *Guwan tu* series from its presumed identity as two-dimensional pictorial representations of antiquities, the current thesis delved into the agency of the existing two scrolls in generating knowledge about their own life cycles during and beyond the reign of the Yongzheng emperor (1723–35).

As demonstrated in Chapter one, the *Guwan tu* scrolls claim their differences with other documentary oversize handscrolls by negating the conventional norm of presenting panoramic sceneries or portraying animate participants involved in the documented events. Instead, the scrolls not only exhibit the inanimate *guwan* as the main characters, but also convey the spirit of archaism through their own physicality. At the same time, while other handscrolls convey a sense of latter completeness, as if they were produced after the events as summative documents, the *Guwan tu* appear to link more with immediate moments, that is, the time when a series of interior decoration projects were carried out in the Yuanmingyuan and the depicted objects were about to be brought to the garden for use and display. In this sense, the differences between the *Guwan tu* and Emperor Qianlong (r. 1736–95)'s *Dajia*

lubu tu presented in Chapter one could be further concluded with an argument that the *Guwan tu* served less as an instructive guidebook like its counterpart, but more as a ‘photograph’ that captured the year-long construction project of palatial compounds in the imperial garden.

As an assemblage of portraits of objects, the *Guwan tu* shares similarities with other pre-Qing and Qing pictures of individual objects, in which specific formal features are highlighted as the signifiers of intended historical values of the depicted objects. In the meantime, the illusionistic mode of representation allowed the painters and the patron, i.e., the Yongzheng emperor, to embed detailed information regarding the objects’ functions, materials, and chronological origins into the images, despite the ambiguous identities of the original models. Building upon the visual information provided by the images, Chapter three proposed a different way of employing the object-based approach by examining the images as representations of one type of objects and delved into the selection criteria involved in the rendering of the *Guwan tu*.

Through the case study on the depicted ceramic-like *guwan* in conjunction with relevant textual sources and objects, it is apparent that the subject of the *Guwan tu* very much conforms to mid- and late Ming canons of objects and discourses on using archaic items to generate an ideal literati space, but also stays attuned to Qing imperial traditions of object consumption. The choice of highlighting the utilitarian aspect of the depicted *guwan*, as if in a living context, suggests the difference in purpose between the *Guwan tu* and such illustrated catalogues of objects as Emperor Qianlong’s ceramic albums. Transcending a basic function as pictorial inventories, the scrolls were proved to be active participants in courtly life during

the Yongzheng reign, as they were closely tied with imperial object acquisitions and reflected various practices of renewing, refashioning, and replacing *guwan* related to the Yuanmingyuan on a daily basis. The presence of a spatial structure hidden in the void space of the scrolls, reminiscent of the display cabinets for *guwan*, further emphasises the distinction between the *Guwan tu* and the standardised illustrated catalogues. At the same time, it also uncovers the active role of the emperor in imposing order upon imperial objects through pseudo-curatorial approaches.

The intrinsic spatial dimension further led to the discussion in Chapter four on the provenience of the *Guwan tu* scrolls and the depicted *guwan*, which strengthened the link between the paintings and the Yuanmingyuan proposed earlier. In this chapter, the thesis reexamined textual evidence addressed in previous scholarship, while introducing preliminary drawings of the garden layout as visual evidence for locating the findspot of the two surviving *Guwan tu*. It was then argued that the Ruyi guan 如意館 (Studio of Fulfilled Wishes) could be one possible location where the scrolls were stored upon their completion.

Moreover, as a number of new records related to specific objects in the *Guwan tu* have been discovered from the *Huoji dang*, the thesis further connected the PDF scroll with the Xifeng xiuse 西峰秀色 (Majestic Sunset-Tinted Peaks of the West Hills) complex, and the V&A scroll with the Lianhua guan 蓮花館 (Lotus Lodge), arguably the later Lianxi lechu 瀛溪樂處 (Joyful Place for Mr Lian Xi) compound. Both sites were located in the private residential area of the Yuanmingyuan, where a series of construction and interior decoration projects had taken place under the supervision of the Yongzheng emperor.

These findings, along with the discussion presented in the previous two chapters,

subsequently provided an answer to the initial question of the primary purpose of the *Guwan tu* handscrolls. The thesis, thus, proposes that the *Guwan tu* series is a peculiar type of documentary painting corresponding to the construction projects in the inner quarters of the Yuanmingyuan launched by the Yongzheng emperor after he succeeded to the throne, starting from the 2nd year of his reign (1724). The portraits of *guwan* served not only as representations of objects once displayed and utilised in the imperial garden, but also as indexical traces of artisans and officials from the Imperial Household Department, who worked collaboratively in response to Emperor Yongzheng's direct requests.

In the meantime, as argued in the last chapter, the handscrolls could be considered as part of the anachronic practices of illusionism initiated by the emperor in the Yuanmingyuan. The numerous commissions of *fang* and *jia* antiquities, along with the artificial recreations of canonised literati landscapes, are reflected by the illusionistic portraits of *guwan*, which points to a loosely defined category of objects attributed to multiple temporal layers. Within the intricate referential cycle concerning the *Guwan tu*, the Yuanmingyuan, and the established discourses on antiquities, the concept of *wan* (play) emerged as a key to the mode of thinking behind Emperor Yongzheng's practices of illusionism. Inspired by the definition of 'play' proposed by Gadamer, the chapter examined the connotation of this concept in the Qing context and probed into the symbolic meaning of the *Guwan tu*. It was argued that the paintings demonstrate the emperor's interest in engaging with an imagined past rooted in Han Chinese traditions. The adoption of the illusionistic representation mode should be considered as a deliberate choice, which reflected the shift in attention to visual and tangible experiences in making and viewing images of objects. During this process, the emperor was

also actively appropriating and reshaping earlier visual languages and discursive traditions for practical purposes. He was constantly adjusting his identity in the imagined Han Chinese past, his own ancestral past, and the present, while employing *guwan* and its reproductions as practical tools for legitimising the court's position as the cultural nucleus of the society. In this sense, The *Guwan tu* can also be further considered as visual manifestations of the emperor's sophisticated and philosophical understanding of identity and temporality.

In sum, based on a contextualised investigation of the two existing *Guwan tu* handscrolls from material, stylistic, and iconographical perspectives, the thesis shed light on the mysterious Emperor Yongzheng's patronage of imperial products and his vision for the Yuanmingyuan as a timeless archaistic retreat that transcended the boundaries of material, time, and space. In a broader sense, the thesis calls attention to the complicated interrelationship between varied art forms developed in the Chinese realm, when they were engaged in the cross-media projects initiated at the Qing court. At the same time, it highlights the Yongzheng reign not simply as a transitional period, but as a starting point of Qing imperial practices of illusionism. Under the Yongzheng emperor, the European style was formally incorporated into the repertoire of representation mode following the publication of *Shixue* 視學 (The Study of Vision) and regularly adopted as a means to achieve formal and material resemblances in picturing objects.

The illusionistic painting style effectively enhances the 'realness' of the depicted *guwan* as authentic antiquities, especially when the paintings are beheld outside of their original discursive context. In this process, the illusionistic images of objects fully exercise their agency and serve to define the textual term *guwan* appearing in the title slip of the scrolls.

With their predominantly visual information, the images further instrumentalise how viewers perceive the paintings, resulting in the prevailing contemporary interpretation of the *Guwan tu* as a record of Emperor Yongzheng's imperial collection of antiquities, which could be considered, after all, as an illusion itself. In this respect, the illusionistic space of the Yuanmingyuan, indeed, becomes timeless and even extends into the present-day world through the objectified imagery of the *Guwan tu*, a literal 'sensory channel' that allows viewers to glimpse the interior of the imperial garden.

Meanwhile, it should be pointed out that the current research was partially based on plausible assumptions yielded mainly from close examinations of textual and visual sources. The discussion of the *Guwan tu*'s material features, in particular, lacks evidence from direct examinations of the artworks. Thus, the proposed arguments, for instance, on the use of *liansi zhi* 連四紙 produced in Jing County, will have to remain conjectural at the current stage until more promising research is done by painting experts and conservation professionals. Meanwhile, in the hope of shedding some light on this matter, the research has reintroduced some Ming-Qing primary texts on mounting techniques and materials, and examined how they potentially inspired the creation of the *Guwan tu*, but also the development of a Qing court mounting style.

Another issue awaiting future scholarly investigation would be the afterlife of the *Guwan tu* series. Based on sources presented in this research, it can be argued that the purpose of the *Guwan tu*, at least upon its completion, was not about setting rules and standards, like the *Dajia lubu tu*, but more about commemorating the present. In the meantime, its function was, indeed, subject to change over time. It has been proposed in Chapter four that during the

Qianlong period, the scrolls, or at least part of the series, were possibly used as pictorial inventories of *guwan* in the Yuanmingyuan, and the Qianlong emperor would order objects depicted in the scrolls to be brought from the Yuanmingyuan to the Forbidden City.

At the same time, the paintings might also serve as repertoires of model *guwan* images. Later court painters could refer back to this comprehensive ‘image database’ in creating new illusionistic paintings featuring *guwan*. In fact, the current thesis was able to locate a number of objects from the *Guwan tu* in later paintings. For example, in *One or Two*, the well-studied



Fig. 6-1 Blue and white jar with Lançā scripts and its reproduction in *Shiyi shier tu* (One or Two), 1736–95, BPM

portrait of Emperor Qianlong, the blue and white jar inscribed with Lançā scripts (Fig. 6-1), and the Xuande-type vase decorated with the phoenix motif (Fig. 6-2) are depicted on the circular table located at the right corner of the picture plane. This suggests the possibility that the *Guwan tu* were used as pictorial models, even functioning as pattern books, for the rendering of objects in later court paintings, especially portraits of imperial members that often feature images of antiquities as status symbols. Furthermore, the Qianlong emperor’s request of sending eight *guwan tu shoujuan* 古玩圖手卷 to Tailing further hints at the potential transformation of the *Guwan tu* series into a form of funerary offering to the deceased Emperor Yongzheng.

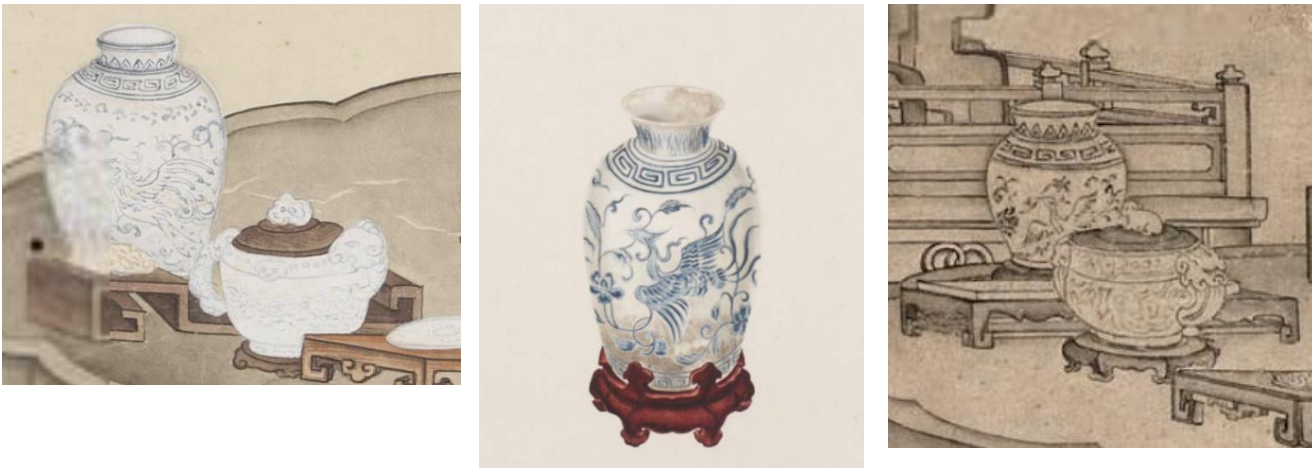


Fig. 6-2 Blue and white vase with motif of phoenixes among flowers and its possible reproductions in two versions of *One or Two* (BPM)

As the thesis reaches its concluding point, the story of the *Guwan tu*, the Yuanmingyuan, and their patron continues and will be further enriched as new art-historical and archaeological findings related to the paintings and the imperial garden come out. The alternative research angle presented in this research could contribute to the understanding of the *Guwan tu* as an active ‘player’ itself in the Chinese histories of image-making and object consumption, which also serves to demonstrate the interconnection of these two histories. Having highlighted the physical presence of the *Guwan tu*, the thesis proposes materiality as a potential key for unveiling the social and cultural history of an artwork and aims to trigger more research on Qing history of art objects from an intermedia perspective. At the same time, by reintroducing the illusionistic dimension of Qing imperial artistic practices in the Yongzheng context, it is hoped that more scholarly attention could be brought to this short but artistically vibrant period, as it holds immense potential to yield fresh insights into the early history of the now lost Yuanmingyuan.

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Appendix

I. List of Ceramic Wares from the two *Guwan tu* handscrolls and Comparable Objects

PDF Scroll	Depicted <i>Guwan</i>	Matched Object	Titles	Date	Location of Matched Object
1			Blue and white Jar with lanca scripts	Xuande reign (1426–1435)	BPM: Gu145578
2 (PDF Scroll)			Faceted vase with underglaze-blue decoration of the morning glory motif	Xuande reign	NPM: Gu-ci-016788 (accompanied by stand, no reign mark) Gu-ci-009473 (no reign mark) Gu-ci-010723 (no reign mark) Zhong-ci-003771 (with reign mark) Zhong-ci-003773 (with reign mark) Zhong-ci-003774 (no handle, with reign mark) BPM: Xin00083300 (with reign mark)
2 (V&A Scroll)					
3			Teapot with lotuses and waves decoration in underglaze blue	Mid-Ming period (15th century)	NPM: Zhong-ci-003239 (left) Zhong-ci-003238 (right; similar vessel shape but different lid)
4			Bowl with underglaze-blue decoration of the 'children at play' motif	Transitional period (around the Zhengtong [1436–49] to the Tianshun reign [1457–64])	V&A (upper): FE.35-1972 (dated to 1450-1464 [between Jingtai and Tianshun reigns]) NPM (lower): 8 pieces with very similar shape and decoration (Gu-ci-000051 to 000058) BPM: Gu00145698 (dated to the Zhengde period)
5			<i>Doucai</i> enameled cup decorated with the motif of children at play	Chenghua reign (1465–87)	BPM (right): Gu00145651/52 NPM (left): Gu-ci-003537 (Both with Chenghua reign marks)
6			<i>Doucai</i> enameled cup decorated with the grapevine motif	Chenghua reign	BPM: Gu00145653/54 (With Chenghua reign mark) (Photo taken on 6 May 2021)
7			Bowl with underglaze-blue decoration of lotus scrolls	Xuande reign (in style)	NPM: Left: Gu-ci-014949 (Xuande reign mark at the base) Mid: Gu-ci-016739 (Xuande reign mark at the base) Right: Gu-ci-013619 (Xuande reign mark at the base)
8			Blue and white cup with four branches of fruit and flowers	Chenghua reign	NPM: Gu-ci-003538
9			<i>Doucai</i> enameled cup decorated with chrysanthemum and leaves	Chenghua reign	BPM: Gu00145649/50
10			Stem bowl with underglaze-blue decoration of two dragons among lotus blossoms and Tibetan scripts	Xuande reign	NPM: Gu-ci-005592 (with reign mark)
11			Blue and white jar with <i>Chi</i> -dragon motif	Xuande reign	Capital Museum in Beijing (Thanks to Mr Huang Qinghua for sharing the image on the left) Photo on the right featuring the jar with the lid taken on 30 May 2019

12			Dish with underglaze-blue decoration of lions playing with ball	Xuande reign	NPM: Gu-ci-016443 (with reign mark)
13			Dish with underglaze-blue decoration of mythical sea creatures	No reign mark; possibly dated to the Xuande reign	NPM: Gu-ci-016651 (The museum also holds multiple pieces with the same decoration 16 have available images, all attributed to a certain official kilns 官窯 dated to the Ming dynasty)
14			Dish with underglaze-blue decoration of billows and dragons	Xuande reign	NPM: Gu-ci-016514 (with reign mark)
15			Dish with underglaze-blue decoration of dragons among lotus blossoms	Xuande reign	NPM: Gu-ci-009701 (with reign mark)
16			Blue and white jar decorated with the motif of 'Jiuqiu tu' 九秋圖 (Nine flowers of autumn)	Left: Chenghua reign Right: Yongle reign (1403–24)	Left (NPM): Gu-ci-014387 (with reign mark) Right (BM): 1972.0619.1.a
17			Hibiscus-shaped Washer with Bluish-green Glaze (Guan ware type)	Dated to the Southern Song period (1127–1279)	NPM: Gu-ci-014018
18			Blue and white dish decorated with a central fruiting bush motif and stylized flower scroll	Chenghua reign	NPM: Gu-ci-016397 (with reign mark)
19			Stem bowl decorated with copper red/overglaze red enamelled fish (three fish) designs	Xuande reign	Left (NPM): Gu-ci-016521 Right (NPM): Gu-ci-011321 (with Xuande reign mark in the interior centre)
					Left (NPM): Gu-ci-003616 Mid (NPM): Gu-ci-003608 Right (NPM): Gu-ci-003295 (overglaze red enamel) (with Xuande reign mark in the interior centre)
20			Blue and white vase with pierced handle	Xuande reign	The Metropolitan Museum of Art: 1991.253.41
21			Left: Hibiscus-shaped brush washer with underglaze-blue decoration of double phoenixes (Right: similar brush washer with dragon and phoenix motifs and lozenge-shaped medallions on the exterior)	Xuande reign	Left (BPM): Gu145552 (Photo taken on 6 May 2021) Right (NPM): Gu-ci-006779
22 (PDF Scroll)			Blue and white tankard decorated with lotus scroll and crested waves/lotus petals around the neck	Yongle and Xuande reigns	Left (BPM): Gu00145553 (dated to the Yongle reign) Right (BM): 1950.0403.1 (dated to the Yongle reign) The Palace Museum in Beijing also holds a similar tankard dated to the Xuande reign (Xin00130160).
22 (V&A Scroll)					Left (NPM): Gu-ci-014349 (with Xuande reign mark) Right (NPM): Zhong-ci-002908 (with Xuande reign mark) The Palace Museum in Beijing also holds a piece with the Xuande reign mark (Gu00143406).
23			Vase with underglaze-blue decoration of spiraling tendril motif	dated to the 17th century	Grandidier Collection at Musée Guimet - musée national des Arts asiatiques: G5261 (with reign mark)
24			'Hewan' 合碗 type bowl with red and/or underglaze-blue decoration of dragons and clouds	Xuande reign	Left (BPM): Xin00155048 (with reign mark) Right (NPM): Gu-ci-006027 (with reign mark)
25			Ru bowl with copper-bound mouth rim	Northern Song period (960–1127), dated to 1086–1125	BM: PDF.3


V&A Scroll	Depicted <i>Guan</i>	Matched Object	Captions	Date	Location of Matched Object
1			Blue and white jar with the grapevine motif	Xuande reign (?)	Upper: One similar piece is housed in the BPM (Xin00130824) Lower: Similar grapevine motif in lighter and gradient shades of blue also appear on a restored bowl excavated from the Ming imperial kiln site at the Zhushan district in Jingdezhen (the excavation lasted from 1979 to 1988). With a six-character Xuande reign mark at its base, the bowl has been dated to the Xuande reign.
2			Blue and white <i>Zan</i> -shaped vase decorated with floral, bird, and rock motifs	Wanli reign (1573–1620)	NPM: Gu-ci-011450
3			Hexagonal <i>Guan</i> basin with cloud-shaped feet	Dated to the Southern Song period	BM: PDF.6
4			Small lidded jar with underglaze-blue decoration of fungus scrolls	Xuande reign	NPM: Zhong-ci-003234 (lidded example, with reign mark)
5			Hewan' type bowl with underglaze-blue decoration of floral sprays	Xuande reign	NPM: Gu-ci-006030 (Three additional pieces described in the same term are housed in the museum, but the online catalogue does not have available images for them. Their museum numbers are as follows: Gu-ci-006029, Gu-ci-004936, Gu-ci-004938)
6			Blue and white vase with motif of phoenixes among flowers	Xuande reign	Left (NPM): Gu-ci-015360 Right (BPM): Xin00130161
7			Blue and white gourd-shaped vases decorated with motifs of cranes and dragons	Jiajing reign (1521–67)	Upper: Crane design The object appeared in an auction held by Dayi Auction House in June 2018, but it was first sold in 1996 during an auction held by Sotheby's New York (Lot 165). Later presented in the exhibition '200 Years of Chinese Porcelain: 1522-1722' organised by Marchant & Son in London in 1998, the piece was sold again by Christie's New York (Lot 1656) on 24 March 2011. S. Marchant & Son Ltd., <i>200 Years of Chinese Porcelain: 1522-1722</i> , London, 1998, cat. no. 7. Lower: Dragon design The BPM holds one example that resembles the appearance of the vase from the <i>Guan tu</i> (Gu00144500). At the same time, Sotheby's Hong Kong sold one of such vases (Lot 112) during the auction 'Important Chinese Art: A Collection of a Parisian Connoisseur, Part III' in October 2016.
8			Small lidded jar with underglaze-blue decoration of begonia flower scrolls	Xuande reign	Left (NPM): Gu-ci-016056 Right: An unlidded piece with similar decoration and Xuande reign mark at the base discovered at the imperial kiln site in the Zhushan district of Jingdezhen
9			Water holder with underglaze-blue decoration of floral scrolls	Xuande reign	The exact same object has not been discovered yet, but the <i>dou</i> -shaped stem cup on the left (NPM: Gu-ci-016772) is adorned with the same floral design, while the water holder on the right (NPM: Gu-ci-005287) shares the same vessel shape as the object on the <i>Guan tu</i> . Both objects bear the Xuande reign marks.
10			<i>Dou</i> -shaped stem bowl with underglaze-blue decoration and copper inner tube	Xuande reign (?)	Object in the same shape (NPM): Gu-ci-016772
11			<i>Meiping</i> with underglaze-blue decoration of cloud collar and spiraling tendrils designs	Jiajing reign (?)	The exact same object has not been discovered yet, but the recurring motif of 'lingzhi baota' 灵芝宝塔, which features a stupa formed by layered fungus motifs, on the sherd shares similarity with those around the neck of the vase on the <i>Guan tu</i> . The sherd itself was unearthed at the Jingdezhen imperial kiln site in 1988 and is currently housed in the Imperial Kiln Museum of Jingdezhen.
12			Brush in <i>famille verte</i> cover decorated with <i>chi</i> -dragons	Wanli reign (?)	Shanghai Museum

Illustration List

PDF Scrolls

PDF, No. 1 Jar with lanca scripts, Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, H: 28.7 cm, Diam. (mouth): 19.7 cm; lid: Diam. (mouth): 22 cm, Diam. (base): 24.7 cm, Palace Museum, Beijing (Gu145578)

PDF, No. 2 Faceted vase with morning glory motifs, Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, National Palace Museum, Taipei

Upper left (Gu-ci-016788): H: 13.8 cm, Diam. (mouth): 5.8 cm, Diam. (foot): 7.2 cm

Upper right (Gu-ci-009473): H: 14.6 cm, Diam. (mouth): 5.6 cm, Diam. (foot): 7.5 cm

Lower left (Gu-ci-010723): H: 14.3 cm, Diam. (mouth): 5.9 cm, Diam. (foot): 7.6 cm

Lower right (Gu-ci-010723): H: 13.8 cm, Diam. (mouth): 5.5 cm, Diam. (foot): 7.5 cm

PDF, No.3 Teapot with motifs of lotuses and waves, Mid-Ming period (15th century), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, National Palace Museum, Taipei

Zhong-ci-003239 (left): H: 13.8 cm, Diam. (mouth): 4.0 cm, Diam. (foot): 5.5 cm

Zhong-ci-003238 (right): H: 11.6 cm, Diam. (mouth): 4.1 cm, Diam. (foot): 5.6 cm

PDF, No. 4 Bowl with ‘children at play’ motif, Transitional period (around the Zhengtong [1436–49] to the Tianshun reign [1457–64]), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, FE.35-1972 (Upper): H: 12.2 cm, Diam. (mouth): 22.1 cm, dated to 1450–64 (between Jingtai and Tianshun reigns), Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Gu-ci-000051 (lower): H: 12.1 cm, Diam. (mouth): 22.2 cm, Diam. (foot): 7.6 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei

PDF, No. 5 Cup decorated with the motif of children at play, Chenghua reign (1465–87), porcelain with *doucai* enamelled decoration

Gu-ci-003537 (left): H: 4.7 cm, Diam. (mouth): 6.0 cm, Diam. (foot): 2.7 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei

Gu00145651 (right): 4.8 cm, Diam. (mouth): 6.0 cm, Diam. (foot): 2.7 cm, Palace Museum, Beijing

Image published in Gugong bowuyuan 故宮博物院 (Palace Museum), ed., ‘Doucai yingxi tu bei’ 鬥彩嬰戲圖杯 [*Doucai* cup decorated with the motif of children at play], in *Gugong taoci tudian* 故宮陶瓷圖典 [Ceramics of the Forbidden City] (Beijing: Forbidden City Publishing House, 2010), 168, pl. 156.

PDF, No. 6 Cup decorated with the grapevine motif, Chenghua reign (1465–87), porcelain with *doucai* enamelled decoration, H: 4.8 cm, Diam. (mouth): 5.5 cm, Diam. (foot): 2.5 cm, Palace Museum, Beijing (00145653/54)

PDF, No. 7 Bowl with lotus scrolls design, Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, National Palace Museum, Taipei

Gu-ci-014949 (Left): H: 7.8 cm, Diam. (mouth): 17.7 cm, Diam. (foot): 7.9 cm

Gu-ci-016739 (Mid): H: 7.6 cm, Diam. (mouth): 17.3 cm, Diam. (foot): 8 cm

Gu-ci-013619 (Right): H: 7.8 cm, Diam. (mouth): 17.2 cm, Diam. (foot): 7.6 cm

PDF, No. 8 Cup decorated with four branches of fruit and flowers, Chenghua reign (1465–87), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, H: 4.9 cm, Diam. (mouth): 6cm, Diam. (foot): 2.6 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Gu-ci-003538)

PDF, No. 9 Cup decorated with chrysanthemum and leaves, Chenghua reign (1465–87), porcelain with *doucai* enamelled decoration, H: 4.8 cm, Diam. (mouth): 5.5 cm, Diam. (foot): 2.5 cm, Palace Museum, Beijing (00145649/50)

PDF, No. 10 Stem bowl decorated with two dragons among lotus blossoms and Tibetan scripts, Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze-blue decoration, H: 11.7 cm, Diam. (mouth): 17.2cm, Diam. (foot): 4.7cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Gu-ci-005592)

PDF, No. 11 Jar decorated with Chi-dragon motif, Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze-blue decoration, Capital Museum in Beijing, Photo © Huang Qinghua

PDF, No. 12 Dish decorated with lions playing with ball, Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze-blue decoration, H: 4.0 cm, Diam. (mouth): 17.7 cm, Diam. (foot): 11.6 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Gu-ci-016443)

Images from Liao Baoxiu 廖寶秀, 'Xuande kuan qinghua shuangshi xiqiu wen pan' 宣德款青花雙獅戲球紋盤 [Dish with underglaze-blue decoration of two lions playing with ball], in *Mingdai Xuande guanyao jinghua tezhan tulu* 明代宣德官窯菁華特展圖錄 [Catalogue of the Special Exhibition of Selected Hsüan-te Imperial Porcelains of the Ming Dynasty] (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1998), 410-11, pl. 178.

PDF, No. 13 Dish decorated with mythical sea creatures, possibly Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze-blue decoration, H: 4.6 cm, Diam. (mouth): 20.7cm, Diam. (foot): 16.2 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Gu-ci-016651)

PDF, No. 14 Dish decorated with billows and dragons, Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze-blue decoration, H: 4.1 cm, Diam. (mouth): 18.5 cm, Diam. (foot): 11.9 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Gu-ci-016514)

PDF, No. 15 Dish decorated with dragons among lotus blossoms, Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze-blue decoration, H: 3.5 cm, Diam. (mouth): 19.4 cm, Diam. (foot): 11.9 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Gu-ci-009701)

PDF, No. 16 Jar decorated with the motif of 'Jiuqiu tu' 九秋圖 (Nine flowers of autumn) Gu-ci-014387 (Left): Chenghua reign (1465–87), H: 10.5 cm, Diam. (mouth): 8 cm, Diam. (foot): 10.7cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei
1972,0619.1.a (Right): Yongle reign (1403–24), H: 14cm (with lid), W: 12.5cm, British Museum, London, Percival David Foundation. © SOAS All rights reserved.

PDF, No. 17 Hibiscus-shaped washer, dated to the Southern Song period (1127–1279), stoneware with Bluish-green Glaze, H: 9.3 cm, Diam. (mouth): 16.9 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Gu-ci-014018)

PDF, No. 18 Dish decorated with a central fruiting bush motif and stylized flower scroll, porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, Chenghua reign (1465–87), H: 4.2 cm, Diam. (mouth): 25.4cm, Diam. (foot): 15.6 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Gu-ci-016397)

PDF, No. 19 Stem bowl decorated with copper red/overglaze red enamelled 'three fish' design, Xuande reign (1426–35)

Gu-ci-016521 (Upper left): porcelain with underglaze copper red decoration, H: 10.2 cm, Diam. (mouth): 11.8 cm, Diam. (foot): 4.7 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei

Gu-ci-011321 (Upper right): porcelain with underglaze copper red decoration, H: 10.4 cm Diam. (mouth): 15.3 cm, Diam. (foot): 4.5 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei

Gu-ci-003616 (Lower left): porcelain with underglaze copper red decoration, H: 8.7 cm, Diam. (mouth): 10 cm, Diam. (foot): 4.4 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei

Gu-ci-003608 (Lower mid): porcelain with underglaze copper red decoration, H: 8.7 cm, Diam. (mouth): 10 cm, Diam. (foot): 4.5 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei

Gu-ci-003295 (Lower right): porcelain with overglaze iron red decoration, H: 8.7 cm, Diam. (mouth): 9.9 cm, Diam. (foot): 4.6 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei

Image of Gu-ci-003295 from Liao, 'Xuande kuan fanhong sanyu wen gaozu bei' 宣德款礮紅三魚紋高足盃 [Stem cup with overglaze-red decoration of three fish], in *Mingdai Xuande guanyao jinghua tezhan tulu*, 218-19, pl. 82

PDF, No. 20 Vase with pierced handle, Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, H. 19.7 cm, Diam. 10.2 cm; Diam. (mouth): 4.8 cm; Diam. (foot): 6.4 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Stanley Herzman, in memory of Adele Herzman (New York, until 1991; donated to MMA) (1991.253.41)

PDF, No. 21 Hibiscus-shaped brush washer with dragon and/or phoenix design, Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration

Gu145552 (Left): Hibiscus-shaped brush washer decorated with double phoenixes, H: 4.5 cm, Diam. (mouth): 17.5 cm, Diam. (foot): 14.2 cm, Palace Museum, Beijing

Gu-ci-006779 (Right): Hibiscus-shaped brush washer with dragon and phoenix motifs, H: 4.8 cm, Diam. (mouth): 20.6 cm, Diam. (foot): 16.0 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei

PDF, No. 22 Tankard decorated with lotus scroll and crested waves/lotus petals around the neck, porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, Yongle (1403–25)/Xuande reign (1426–35)

Gu00145553 (Upper left): dated to the Yongle reign, H: 14.7 cm, Diam. (mouth): 8.0 cm, Diam. (foot): 4.0 cm, Palace Museum, Beijing

1950,0403.1 (Upper right): dated to the Yongle reign, H: 14cm, W: 14.2cm, British Museum, London, Percival David Foundation. © SOAS All rights reserved.

Gu-ci-014349 (Lower Left): Xuande reign, H: 13.4 cm, Diam. (mouth): 7.4 cm, Diam. (foot):

4.0 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei

Zhong-ci-002908 (Lower right): Xuande reign, H: 13.5 cm, Diam. (mouth): 7.5 cm, Diam.

(foot): 4.2 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei

PDF, No. 23 Vase decorated with spiraling tendril motif, dated to the 17th century, porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, Grandidier Collection, Musée Guimet - musée national des Arts asiatiques (G5261)

PDF, No. 24 'Hewan' 合碗 type bowl decorated with dragons and clouds, Xuande reign (1426–35)

Xin00155048 (Left): porcelain with overglaze iron red decoration, Palace Museum, Beijing

Gu-ci-006027 (Right): porcelain with overglaze iron red and underglaze blue decoration, H (with cover): 10.2 cm, H (bowl): 7.3 cm, Diam. (foot): 9.7 cm, Diam. (mouth): 17.4 cm,

National Palace Museum, Taipei

PDF, No. 25 Ru bowl with copper-bound mouth rim, stoneware, Northern Song period (960–1127), dated to 1086–1125, British Museum (PDF.3), Percival David Foundation. © SOAS All rights reserved.

V&A Scroll

V&A, No. 1 Jar with the grapevine motif

Xin00130824 (Upper): Jar with the grapevine motif, Xuande reign (1426–35) (?), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration,

Image published in Lu Minghua 陸明華, 'Mingdai Jingdezhen guanyao ciqi de jiating: Guancang Mingdai Jingdezhen guanyao ciqi zuopin gaimao' 明代景德鎮官窯瓷器的鑒定：館藏明代官窯後仿作品舉例 [Connoisseurship of Ming-dynasty Jingdezhen Imperial Porcelains: Examples of Later Reproductions of Ming-dynasty Imperial Porcelains in the Museum Collection], *Shanghai bowuguan cangpin yanjiu daxi: Mingdai guanyao ciqi* 上海博物館藏品研究大系：明代官窯磁器 [Studies of the Shanghai Museum Collections: Ming Imperial Porcelain] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2007), 291, illus. 5-7

Lower: Bowl with the grapevine motif, Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, Diam. (mouth): 27.9 cm, excavated from the Ming imperial kiln site at

Zhushan, Jingdezhen (1979–88)

Image from Ho Kam-chuen 何金泉, and Szeto Yuen-kit 司徒元傑, eds., *Jingdezhen Zhushan chutu Yongle Xuande guanyao ciqu zhanlan* 景德鎮珠山出土永樂宣德官窯瓷器展覽 [Imperial Porcelain of the Yongle and Xuande Periods Excavated from the Site of the Ming Imperial Factory at Jingdezhen] (Hong Kong: Urban Council, 1989), 252-53, pl. 85

V&A, No. 2 *Zun*-shaped vase decorated with floral, bird, and rock motifs, Wanli reign (1573–1620), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, H: 18.5 cm, Diam. (mouth): 13.1 cm, Diam. (foot): 9.3 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Gu-ci-011450)

V&A, No. 3 Hexagonal Guan basin with cloud-shaped feet, dated to the Southern Song period (1127–1279), stoneware, H: 8.5 cm, Diam.: 21.5 cm, British Museum, London (PDF.6), Percival David Foundation. © SOAS All rights reserved.

V&A, No. 4 Small lidded jar decorated with fungus scrolls, Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, H: 8.6 cm, Diam. (mouth): 6.5 cm, Diam. (foot): 7.6 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Zhong-ci-003234)

V&A, No. 5 ‘Hewan’ type bowl decorated with floral sprays, Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, H (with cover): 10.2 cm, H (bowl): 7.2 cm, Diam. (mouth): 9.4 cm, Diam. (foot): 17.2 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Gu-ci-006030)

V&A, No. 6 Vase with motif of phoenixes among flowers, Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration,
Gu-ci-015360 (Left): H: 13.2 cm, Diam. (mouth): 6.3 cm, Diam. (foot): 5.6 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei
Xin00130161 (Right): mouth rim with traces of kintsugi, Palace Museum, Beijing

V&A, No. 7 Gourd-shaped vase decorated with motifs of cranes/dragons, Jiajing reign (1521–67), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration,

Upper: Vase with the crane motif, H: 9.7 cm

Image from S. Marchant & Son Ltd., *200 Years of Chinese Porcelain: 1522-1722*, London,

1998, cat. no. 7

Gu00144500 (Lower): Vase with the dragon motif, H: 10.6 cm, Diam. (mouth): 3 cm, Diam. (foot): 4 cm, Palace Museum, Beijing

Image published in The Palace Museum and the Archaeological Research Institute of Ceramic in Jingdezhen, eds, 'Blue and white gourd-shaped vase with design of dragon and cloud', in *Mingdai Jiajing Longqing Wanli yuyao ciqu: Jingdezhen yuyao yizhi chutu yu gugong bowuyuan cang chuanshi ciqu duibi* 明代嘉靖隆庆万历御窑瓷器: 景德镇御窑遗址出土与故宫博物院藏传世瓷器对比 [Imperial Porcelains from the Reign of Jiajing, Longqing and Wanli in the Ming Dynasty], vol. 1 (Beijing: The Forbidden City Publishing House, 2018), 80, pl. 27

V&A, No. 8 Small lidded jar decorated with begonia flower scrolls, Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration

Gu-ci-016056 (Left): H (with lid): 6.8 cm, H (jar): 4.9 cm, Diam. (mouth): 3 cm, Diam. (foot): 4 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei

Right: H: 5.1 cm, excavated from the Ming imperial kiln site at Zhushan, Jingdezhen (1979–88)

Image from Ho Kam-chuen, and Szeto Yuen-kit, eds., *Imperial Porcelain of the Yongle and Xuande Periods, 174-75*, pl. 46

V&A, No. 9 Water holder decorated with floral scrolls, Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration

Gu-ci-016772 (Left): H: 13 cm, Diam. (mouth): 7.9 cm, Diam. (foot): 6.5 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei

Gu-ci-005287(Right): H: 6.8 cm, Diam. (mouth): 7.4 cm, Diam. (foot): 3.8 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei

V&A, No. 10 Lidded *dou*-shaped stem bowl, Xuande reign (1426–35), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Gu-ci-016772; same as the item on the left side in V&A, No. 9)

V&A, No. 11 Sherd of *Meiping* with cloud collar and spiraling tendril designs, Jiajing reign (1521–1567) (?), porcelain with underglaze blue decoration,










Remaining length: 11.2 cm, excavated at the Ming imperial kiln site in 1988; currently housed in the Imperial Kiln Museum of Jingdezhen

Image from The Palace Museum and the Archaeological Research Institute of Ceramic in Jingdezhen, eds, 'Blue and white jar (Incomplete)', *Imperial Porcelains*, vol. 1, 62, pl. 14

V&A, No. 12 Brush in *famille verte* cover decorated with chi-dragons, Wanli reign (1573–1620), (brush cover) porcelain with polychrome enamelled decoration, L (with brush): 26.7 cm, Shanghai Museum, Shanghai

Image from Lu, 'Shanghai bowuguan suo cang Mingdai Jingdezhen guanyao ciqi gaishu: Guancang Mingdai Jingdezhen guanyao ciqi zuopin gaimao' 上海博物館所藏明代景德鎮官窯瓷器概述: 館藏明代景德鎮官窯瓷器作品概貌 [An Overview of Ming-dynasty Jingdezhen Imperial Porcelains in the Museum Collection], *Ming Imperial Porcelain*, 67, illus. 1-98

II. List of ceramic wares from the *Guwan tu* and Reproductions/Imitations in similar forms

	Depicted <i>Guwan</i>	Reproduction/Imitation	Location of Matched Object
1 (PDF Scroll)			<p>Reproduction (Left) Qing period (1644–1911), NPM (Zhong-ci-003772)</p>
1 (V&A Scroll)			<p>Imitation (Right) Yongzheng reign (1723–35), NPM (Zhong-ci-000565 and 000566)</p>
2 (PDF Scroll)			<p>1700–1800, possibly Yongzheng reign with apocryphal Chenghua reign mark), BM (PDF.A.746) Another similar piece in the BM (1947,0712.260) has been dated to the Kangxi reign (1622–1722) and features grapevines in a lighter shade of blue compared to PDF.A.746. The BPM also houses an imitative piece (Xin00091442) dated to the Yongzheng reign. Each grape is painted in the similar rounded shape as those on the Ming prototype, which appears to be more naturalistic compared to the stylised dot-like grapes on the BM pieces.</p>
3 (PDF Scroll)			<p>Kangxi reign, PDF.628, PDF.C.616</p>
4 (PDF Scroll)			<p>Yongzheng reign, BPM (Gu00158417) Based on the General Catalogue of the Palace Museum Collection, the museum also houses 60 pieces of similar pieces dated to the Qianlong reign (1736–95) (Gu00160305-1/60 to 60/60). Since images of these objects are not available, it remains to be confirmed whether they are reproductions or imitations. Gu00153010, 00153012, and 00153014, along with Zi-taoci-00000692, are also described by the same name as the Yongzheng reproduction, among which Gu00153012 appears to be a reproduction judging from the image available in the online catalogue. See <https://digicol.dpm.org.cn/cultural/detail?id=6c34be0704464e45ad27ca64afd3947d&source=1&page=1> There are also a few Jiaqing pieces described in the same name as the Yongzheng and Qianlong pieces: Gu00154916, Gu00154917, Gu00154918, and Xin00041001. The image of Gu00154917 is available at <https://digicol.dpm.org.cn/cultural/detail?id=88c91eb9f8ec416890b5dfa7a5fd42d7&source=6>; Xin00041001 available at <https://digicol.dpm.org.cn/cultural/detail?id=109a1e9c8dde46d3a3891d0417e67d67&source=1&page=1>. One last piece dated ambiguously to the Qing period is Zi-taoci-00008231.</p>










5 (PDF Scroll)			Kangxi reign (with apocryphal reign mark of the Xuande period around the neck): National Gallery of Art (1972.43.9)	
6 (PDF Scroll)			Qing period, NPM (Gu-ci-018286)	
7 (PDF Scroll)			Kangxi reign, NPM (Gu-ci-017811) For the discussion on the dating of the object to the Kangxi reign, see Liao Baoxiu 廖宝秀, 'Fang Xuande kuan qinghua youlihong yunlong wen hewan' 仿宣德款青花釉裏紅雲龍紋合碗 [Covered bowl with underglaze-blue decoration of clouds and underglaze-red decoration of dragons (Imitating Hsüan-te reign mark, Kang-Hsi reign of Ch'ing Dynasty)], <i>Mingdai Xuande guanyao jinghua tezhan tulu</i> 明代宣德官窯菁華特展圖錄 [Catalogue of the Special Exhibition of Selected Hsüan-te Imperial Porcelains of the Ming Dynasty] (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1998), 166-67, pl. 56.	
8 (V&A Scroll)				Left: The object was dated to the Yongle reign and sold at the 'Ming: Luminous Dawn of Empire' auction (Lot 104) held by Sotheby's New York in March 2018. The piece was matched with the object painted in the V&A scroll in the lot description. See: https://www.sothebys.com/zh/auctions/ecatalogue/2018/ming-luminous-dawn-of-empire-n09837/lot.104.html Right: Qianlong reign (1736–95), NPM (Gu-ci-014412 and 014413)

Illustration List

A-PDF/V&A, No. 1 Faceted vase with morning glory motifs, porcelain with underglaze blue decoration

Reproduction: Qing period (1644–1911), H:14.2 cm, Diam. (mouth): 5.6 cm, Diam. (foot): 7.3 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Zhong-ci-003772)

Imitation:

(Left) Faceted vase with morning glory motifs, porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, Yongzheng reign (1723–35), H: 24 cm, Diam. (mouth): 7.8 cm, Diam. (foot): 12.5 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Zhong-ci-000566)

(Right) Faceted vase with morning glory motifs, porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, Yongzheng reign (1723–35), H: 24 cm, Diam. (mouth): 8.2 cm, Diam. (foot): 12.2 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Zhong-ci-000565)

A-PDF, No. 2 Cup decorated with the grapevine motif, porcelain with underglaze blue and overglaze enamelled decoration, 1700–1800, H: 4.9 cm, Diam. 7.7 cm, British Museum, London (PDF,A.746), Percival David Foundation. © SOAS All rights reserved.

A-PDF, No. 3 Stem bowl decorated with underglaze copper red ‘three fish’ design, Kangxi reign (1662–1722), porcelain with underglaze copper red decoration

PDF.628 (Left): H: 8.3 cm, Diam.: 8.1 cm

PDF,C.616 (Right): H: 9 cm, Diam.: 9.9 cm

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A- PDF, No. 4 Vase with pierced handle, porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, Yongzheng reign (1723–35), H. 19.4 cm, Diam. (mouth): 5.2 cm; Diam. (foot): 6.3 cm, Palace Museum, Beijing (Gu00158417)

A- PDF, No. 5 Vase decorated with spiraling tendril motif, porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, Kangxi reign (1662–1722), 14.9 x 10.2 cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, Harry G. Steele Collection, Gift of Grace C. Steele (1972.43.9)

A- PDF, No. 6 Vase with tubular lug handles, porcelain in celadon glaze, Qing period (1644–1911), H: 9.45 cm, Diam. (mouth): 2.1 cm, Diam. (foot): 3.2 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Gu-ci-018286)

A-PDF, No. 7 ‘Hewan’ 合碗 type bowl decorated with dragons and clouds, porcelain with underglaze blue and copper red decoration, Kangxi reign (1662–1722), H: 11.0 cm, Diam. (mouth): 17.0 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Gu-ci-017811)

A-V&A, No. 1 Devotional water vase with lotus scroll design

Left: porcelain with underglaze blue decoration, H: 31.4cm, sold at the 'Ming: Luminous Dawn of Empire' auction (Lot 104) held by Sotheby's New York on 20 March 2018

Mid: porcelain with red enamelled decoration, H: 22.1 cm, Diam. (mouth): 3.3 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Gu-ci-014412)

Right: porcelain with red enamelled decoration, H: 21.6 cm, Diam. (mouth): 3.5 cm, Diam. (foot): 12cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei (Gu-ci-014413)

III. Yongzheng period entries mentioning the Manchu painter Banda lisha 班達里沙 (act.1713–32)

Volume and Page Numbers	Date	Workshop	Entry Content
Vol. 1, 74	28 September Year 1	Records of Miscellaneous Events	二十八日怡親王諭將畫油畫烏林人佛延 柏唐阿全保 富拉他 三達里四人留在養心殿當差 班達里沙 八十 孫威鳳 王玠 葛曙 永泰六人仍歸在郎石（世）寧處學畫……
Vol. 1, 187	30 September Year 1	Mounting and Painting workshops	怡親王諭着 班達里沙 画美人画一張遵此 于十二月十七日護軍班達里沙画得美人画一張托表完
Vol. 2, 720	6 June Year 5	Painting workshop	初六日 柏唐阿班達裡沙 來說 郎中海望傳 萬字房內通景画壁書格後面畫畫二張 東西兩邊櫺窗壁子上畫畫二張 仙樓後壁書格處畫畫一張記此 於七月初一日画得 通景画壁書格後面畫二張 櫺窗壁子畫二張 萬字房仙樓畫一張 交表匠李毅 持去貼訖
Vol. 4, 126	5 November Year 7	Painting workshop	初五日郎中海望 員外郎滿毗 傳著 班達里沙 王幼學 戴恆 湯振基等四名 各画絹畫一張 記此 於十二月初四日郎中海望 員滿毗傳 著班達里沙 王幼學各再画画一張備用 記此 於十二月二十九日画得年節画六張 郎中海望呈進訖

Vol. 4, 549	9 January Year 8	Painting workshop	初九日郎中海望傳著 護軍班達里沙 畫備用山水絹畫一副 記此 於八年八月十四日將山水絹畫一副 內務府總管海望呈進訖
Vol. 4, 554	26 November Year 8	Painting workshop	二十六日內務府總管海望員外郎滿毗傳著 柏唐阿班達里沙 畫畫二付 柏唐阿王幼學與畫畫人湯振基 戴恆 每人畫畫一付 以備年節用 記此 於十二月二十九日內務府總管海望將畫畫人湯振基畫得紫微照瑞絹畫一張 戴恆畫得歲歲雙安絹畫一張 天子萬年絹畫一張 呈進訖 隨奏稱年希堯所進匠役十餘名內 好手藝得有幾名 平常的亦有幾名 意欲將好手藝選幾名留用 平常匠役仍送回原籍等語奏聞奉旨 所奏是甬將好手藝匠人選幾名留用 其平常匠人仍送回原籍 欽此
Vol. 5, 72	4 November Year 9	Painting workshop	初四日內大臣海望 員外郎滿毗傳備用畫著拜他拉布勒哈番唐岱 西洋人郎士(世)寧 柏唐阿班達里沙 王幼學 畫畫人湯振基 戴恆等各画画一副 記此 於十二月二十八日 唐岱画得湖山春曉画一張 九國圖山水冊頁一冊 郎石(世)寧画得夏山瑞靄画一張 班達里沙画得百祿永年画一張 王幼學画得眉壽長春画一張 戴恆画得錦堂如意画一張 湯振基清平萬年画一張 司庫常保首領李久明薩木哈呈進訖
Vol. 5, 429	16 March Year 10	Painting workshop (passed to <i>baitangga</i> Banda lisha)	十六日員外郎滿毗傳 萬壽備用畫著 柏唐阿班達里沙 王幼學 畫畫人湯振基 戴恆 每人各畫畫一副 記此 於十二月二十八日 柏唐阿王幼學等各画 春長如意 絹畫一張 司庫常保 首領李久明 薩木哈呈進訖
Vol. 5, 429	26 March Year 10	Painting workshop (passed to <i>baitangga</i> Banda lisha)	二十六日 畫畫柏唐阿班達里沙 來說 郎中保德傳圓明園牡丹臺後板房內東西門二扇上著畫 兩面書格畫四張 各高六尺三寸五分 寬二尺七寸五分 記此 於四月十八日畫得高六尺三寸五分 寬二尺七寸五分 牡丹臺書格畫四張 司庫常保持進貼訖

Vol. 5, 429	5 April Year 10	Painting workshop	<p>初五日員外郎滿毗傳 端陽節備用著柏唐阿班達里沙 王幼學 畫畫人戴正 戴越 張為邦 丁觀鵬等六人合畫絹畫一張 再著畫畫人湯振基 戴恆二人各畫絹畫一張備用 記此</p> <p>於四月二十九日柏唐阿班達里沙等六人合畫得午瑞圖絹畫一張 再著畫畫人湯振基 戴恆每人各畫得午瑞圖絹畫一張</p> <p>內大臣海望帶領司庫常保 首領薩木哈呈進訖奉旨著將戴恆湯振基所進之畫二張持出 欽此</p>
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IV. Year 4 entries with reference to *Bogu ge* 博古格 (cabinet for appreciating antiquities)

Volume and Page Numbers	Date	Workshop	Entry Content
Vol. 1, 755	5 April	Miscellaneous Records	<p>初五日據 圓明園來帖內稱首領太監程國用來說 太監杜壽傳 博古格內嵌玉壓紙十二件曾交過否 今着造辦處查看有無着人裡邊告訴 記此</p>
Vol. 2, 126-7	18 April	Carpentry workshop	<p>十八日據 圓明園來帖內稱太監杜壽交博古格內 漢玉有蓋觥一件 漢玉著草瓶一件 漢玉圓花罇一件 漢玉八角觥一件 漢玉雙喜璧一件 白玉夔龍觥一件 漢玉雙喜合卺觥一件 青金蓮喜洗一件 珊瑚雙鳳陳設一件 銀晶天鹿一件 漢玉照（昭）文帶十八件 成窯雞缸盃十八個 交來一對比尺寸 傳 旨將昭文帶成窯雞缸盃配架子其餘配座子欽此</p> <p>於七月二十三日得 漢玉有蓋觥一件 漢玉著草瓶一件 漢玉圓花罇一件 漢玉八角觥一件 漢玉雙喜璧一件 白玉夔龍觥一件 漢玉雙喜合卺觥一件 漢玉照（昭）文帶十八件 銀晶天鹿一件 成窯雞缸盃十八個 各配做紫檀木架座 於八月初二日得 珊瑚雙鳳陳設一件 配得紫</p>

			檀木座首領程國用持去交太監杜壽訖 於八月二十四日得 青金蓮喜洗一件 配紫檀木座首領程國用持去交太監杜壽訖
Vol. 2, 127	19 April	Carpentry workshop	十九日據 圓明園來帖內稱太監杜壽交博古格內 蜜蠟松石陳設一件 碧玉三喜觥一件 漢玉碧玉雙鳳鰲魚二件（即：漢玉雙鳳一件 碧玉鰲魚一件） 漢玉四方一統陳設一件 瑪瑙水盛一件 傳 旨蜜蠟陳設碧玉觥配做架子 漢玉鳳碧玉魚其匣內安合牌屨 其餘俱配座子欽此 於七月二十三日將蜜蠟松石陳設一件 碧玉觥一件各配紫檀木架 漢玉雙鳳一件 碧玉魚一件各安合牌屨 漢玉四方一統陳設一件 瑪瑙水盛一件各配紫檀木座海望呈進
Vol. 2, 280	19 April	Packaging workshop	十九日據 圓明園來帖內稱太監杜壽交博古格內 僧帽壺匣一個 漢玉碧玉筆格匣一個 瑪瑙海棠洗匣一個 紅白瑪瑙香罐匣一個 定窯盤線花瓶匣一個 漢玉三喜花插匣一個 白玉雙喜卮匣一個 青綠罇匣一個 玉雙鴛鴦匣一個 白玉鴛鴦匣一個 汝窯爐匣一個 土瑪瑙插屏匣一個 傳 旨俱着收拾 欽此 於七月二十三日收拾得匣子十二個 首領太監韓國用持去交太監杜壽收訖
Vol. 1, 770; Vol. 2, 130	2 May	Carpentry workshop	初二日據 圓明園來帖內稱太監杜壽交博古格內 定窯天盤花瓶一件 乳（汝？）窯爐一件 漢玉鼎一件 漢玉四方一統陳設一件 傳 旨着俱配做紫檀木座子欽此 於七月二十三日 定窯花瓶等四件各配紫檀木座四件 郎中海望呈進訖

V. Year 5 entry on the emperor's order of *wanqi* 玩器 (objects for play) in replacement of the heavy *gudong* 古董

Volume and Page Numbers	Date	Workshop	Entry Content
Vol. 2, 724	1 June	Packaging workshop	<p>初一日據 圓明園來帖內稱 五月三十日郎中海望奉旨 蓮花館一號房內兩傍書閣上甚空大 若陳設古董惟恐 沉重 爾等配做假書式匣子 其高矮隨書閣隔斷形式 匣內或用阿格里或用通草做花卉玩器 或用馬尾織做盛香花藍器皿 欽此</p> <p>於六月十一日做得馬尾花籃一件 郎中海望呈進 於七月初一日做得樹棕花籃一件 郎中海望呈進</p> <p>於七年三月十七日做得阿格里胎假瑪瑙天鹿一件 紙胎假鈎窰磁石榴罇一件 泡速香臂格一件 泡速香如意一件 泡速香筆架一件 綠胎假青金綠苗(?) 石筆架一件 黃楊木梧桐式香碟一件 阿格里胎假英石硯山一件 馬尾花籃二件 馬尾碟二件 馬尾盒子二件 樹棕花籃一件 合牌胎假硃(?) 蓮花瓣式盤四件 合牌胎假磁菊花瓣式盤四件 玻璃襯畫片象牙盒二件 象牙彩漆福壽盒四件 象牙彩漆扎斗(渣斗)二件 玳瑁罩蓋盒四件 玻璃襯畫片黃楊木盒四件 黃楊木雙層盒二件 玻璃襯畫片紫檀木盒二件 紫檀木雙層盒二件 紫檀木盒四件 嵌桂花香面烏木扇式盒二件 烏木彩漆扇式盒二件 黃楊彩漆甜瓜式盒 黃楊木竹節式彩漆盒四件 黃楊木葫蘆式盒二件 紫檀木菊花葉式盤二件 紫檀木葡萄葉式盤二件 通草果子二十件 通草花十束 通草花盆景八件 糊各色錦匣一百十二件 石青絹匣二十四件 托胎黑漆彩色圓形盤四件 托胎紫漆彩色雙蓋盤四件 托胎紅漆彩色梅花瓣式盤四件 郎中海望代領催白士秀等持進 安設在蓮花館書格內 訖</p>
Vol. 2, 477	2 June	Warehouse Archives	<p>圓明園來帖內稱 首領太監薩木哈 李九明持來 溫都裡那石大小四塊 雜色法瑯料十四塊 綠倭緞銀線邊大小箱十個 說總管太監陳福 蘇培盛 傳旨 溫都裡那石材料甚大 或做碗 或做玩器 交給海望呈樣再做 其綠倭緞銀線邊箱子有破壞處粘補收拾好了 著海望呈覽 法瑯料著收貯 欽此</p>

VI. Year 6 Entry on the making of *bogu shuge* 博古書格 (bookcase for appreciating antiquities) designated for the newly made hall with three-slope joined roofs in Xifeng xiuse 西峰秀色 (Majestic Sunset-Tinted Peaks of the West Hills)

Volume and Page Numbers	Date	Workshop	Entry Content
Vol. 3, 193-4	25 August	Carpentry workshop	<p>二十五日據圓明園來帖內稱 本月十八日做得圓明園內新蓋三卷房西峰秀色屋內靠圍屏書格合牌燙胎小樣二件 郎中保德 海望呈覽奉旨 爾等將先呈覽過的書格小樣 俱拿來朕看 欽此</p> <p>於本月十九日 將先呈覽過合牌燙胎小樣七件 郎中保德海望呈覽奉上欽定一件準做 欽此</p> <p>於九月初六日據圓明園來帖內稱 八月二十五日 郎中保德海望將本月十九日呈覽欽定準過西峰秀色靠圍屏書格燙胎小樣一件 呈覽奉旨此樣是了 靠背北邊添一高間餘架安六根棍 以備掛東西用 靠背南邊安一矮些間餘架 其中間抽屜間餘架下添一掛格 欽此</p> <p>於九月初五日做得六根棍間餘帽架一件 郎中海望帶領催白士秀安在西峰秀色 訖</p> <p>於本日又做得 三卷房西峰秀色屋內楠木靠背書格一座 通高六尺一寸 面寬一丈二尺六寸 紅豆木案一張 長四尺九寸 寬一尺 高一尺二寸 紫檀木包鑲楠木有抽屜博古書格二架 有抽屜掛格一件 有抽屜間餘一件 間餘板四塊 紫檀木帽架一件 郎中海望帶領催白士秀持進安在西峰秀色 訖</p>

VII. Year 6 entry on the manufacture of bespoke stands for reproductions of antiquities that were ordered to be displayed in Jiuzhou qingyan 九洲清晏 (Nine Continents in Peace) in the Yuanmingyuan

Volume and Page Numbers	Date	Workshop	Entry Content
Vol. 3, 214	26 May	Lacquerware workshop	<p>二十六日 太監劉希文 王太平 王守貴 交來 做大官窯四喜罇二件 做龍泉官戟耳紙槌瓶二件 做冬青窯雙環瓶一件 做冬青窯花囊一件 做宋 磁紫金釉梅瓶二件 四方雙喜罇二件 龍泉窯梅瓶一件 白釉雙環瓶 一件 做汝窯錦帶瓶一件 做龍泉窯雙圓瓶二件 法瑯烟指（胭脂）釉紙槌瓶四件 做龍泉窯八方雙管瓶八件 青花白地做宣窯梅瓶 二件 做汝窯素花觚二件 冬青花罇一件 做宣窯白釉花注壺四件 做汝窯膽瓶一件 做宣 窯青花白地七管花插一件 做宣窯白磁七管花插一件 做定窯膽瓶二件 龍泉鼓墩瓶二件 做宣窯白釉小玉壺春二件 白地五彩合卺瓶四件 做龍泉釉天球罇四件 青花白地八卦瓶一件 做龍泉窯雙圓合卺瓶大小二件 做定窯雙環瓶一 件 做定窯三喜罇一件 做定窯花囊一件 做定窯盤線瓶一件 傳旨 著配做漆架座 先將各樣的款式每樣做成木架一 件 呈覽再做 欽此</p> <p>於八月初八日 郎中海望將此內選得 法瑯胭脂（胭脂）釉紙槌瓶一件 做宣窯青花白 地七管花插一件 做龍泉窯八方雙管瓶一件 做定窯三喜罇一件 冬青花罇一件 做汝窯素花 觚一件 做大官窯雙喜罇一件 做龍泉釉天球罇 一件 白地五彩合璧瓶一件 做龍泉窯雙圓合璧 瓶一件 以上十件俱配木座架子十件 呈樣奉旨俱準漆做 欽此</p> <p>於七年六月初三日據圓明園來帖內稱 五月二十</p>

			<p>九日郎中海望奏稱 上交著配做座架磁器俱已做得 意欲擺在九洲清 晏呈覽奉旨 知道了 欽此 於六月初一日 郎中海望將以上磁器等件俱配漆 架座完 擺在九洲清晏呈上留下 訖</p>
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**VIII. Year 7 entries with reference to *gudong ge* 古董格 (cabinet of antiquities) and
baobei ge 寶貝格 (cabinet of treasures)**

Volume and Page Numbers	Date	Workshop	Entry Content
Vol. 4, 9	20 March	Jade workshop	<p>二十日郎中海望持出 漢玉臥蠶紋壓帑一件 奉旨將古董格內 替下來的漢玉圓筒配在此壓紙下做座子 用 欽此</p> <p>於十三年十月二十三日將漢玉臥蠶紋壓 紙一件 司庫常保 首領薩木哈持進交太 監毛團呈進訖</p>
Vol. 4, 131	21 March	Packaging workshop	<p>二十一日太監王太平傳旨 寶貝格內器皿係緊要之物往往被座子箍 壞 器皿著海望細細查看 或換漆座 或 換暖木 務使不要箍壞器皿 欽此</p> <p>於四月初五日 郎中海望奉旨 寶貝格內 招（昭）文帶的架子不好 著做一隔斷 板 按招文帶空處書格板將招文帶斜錯 著掛上 欽此</p> <p>於五月初八日画得寶貝格隔板 挖空紙 樣一件 郎中海望呈覽奉旨 其空不必用 各樣花空 用圓形 長圓形 方形 長方形 好 欽此</p>

			於六月二十二日做得紫檀木挖空隔板 郎中海望持進安訖
Vol. 3, 496 (baobei ge); Vol. 4, 13 (baobei shuge)	5 April	Jade workshop	初五日郎中海望持出 漢玉仙人一件 奉 旨其玉甚好 但頭頂上有眼並缺處 著玉 匠如何補做 或傍邊另配何物 得時陳設 在 寶貝格/寶貝書格 內 欽此 於十三年十月二十二日將漢玉仙人一件 司庫常保 首領薩木哈持進交太監毛團 呈進訖
Vol. 4, 133	11 April	Packaging workshop	十一日郎中海望持出 白玉甜瓜式透地 罩蓋合符花囊一件 傳旨酌量 寶貝格子 上空處配一架子 陳設在格子上用 欽此 於十三年十月初二日將白玉甜瓜式罩蓋 合符花囊一件 司庫常保 首領薩木哈持 進交太監毛團 呈進訖
Vol. 4, 172	13 May	Automaton clock [workshop]	十三日據圓明園來帖內稱 郎中海望持 出 戒指小表一件 隨子兒皮套 鑲口蜜蠟盒 一件 釘眼內有紋 奉旨 將此表著西洋人全做鐘太監對看准裝在 蜜蠟盒內 其盒子裡用紅羊皮做得時 陳 設在 寶貝格 內 欽此 於十三年九月二十四日 將戒指小表一 件 子兒皮套 蜜蠟盒盛 首領太監趙進 忠呈進訖 於十月初二日將鑲口蜜蠟盒一件 司庫 常保守太監薩木哈持去交太監毛團 呈 進訖
Vol. 3, 763	28 May	Lacquerware workshop	二十八日據圓明園來帖內稱 三月二十 三日郎中海望奉旨 九洲清晏陳設的 寶 貝格 二架係楠木的 內安古玩看著不起 色 爾照此格尺寸另做 黑漆格 二架 如隔 板雕花不能做漆的 爾將兩面隔斷板或 方形 圓形 腰圓形 長方形 酌量配合俱 挖透 其格外面口線 用紫檀木包鑲 內 做錦套 外做布面紡系裡套 再做一木套 箱 下安穿繩眼 將格內安的 瑪瑙 玉器

			<p>磁銅古玩等件 座子 架子內有應添做收拾 改做 另做者 爾照朕指示做樣呈覽 準時再做 欽此</p> <p>於四月十七日 郎中海望奏稱 奴才遵皇上旨意 欲將寶貝格內安的瑪瑙 玉 磁器古玩等件列成號數 陸續請出做成架樣 呈覽準時再做等語 奏聞奉旨准奏 欽此</p> <p>於五月二十一日 將寶貝格內安的壽字六號內白玉鳴鳳花插一件配做得銅鍍金夔鳳座木樣一件 青綠古銅有蓋罐一件 配做得銅鍍金座木樣一件 將此二件又配合得紫檀木托板鋼炕老鸛翎色架座木樣一件 郎中海望呈覽奉旨照樣準做 欽此</p> <p>於六月二十六日據圓明園來帖內稱 郎中海望傳 包鑲紫檀木邊楠木寶貝格二架著漆做 記此</p> <p>於十三年七月初十日漆做得紫檀木邊黑洋漆寶貝格二架 司庫常保呈進訖</p>
Vol. 4, 140	23 June	Packaging workshop	<p>二十三日據圓明園來帖內稱 四月二十四日將寶貝格內安的壽字十八號內漢玉招（昭）文帶二十件 做得隔板架罩安蝠式銅簧合牌樣一件 郎中海望呈覽奉旨 照樣準做黑漆的皆板要元頭素直牆銅蝠不必做泯翅 做小蝠個管住即好 欽此</p> <p>於七月初九日做得蝠式銅簧隔板架罩一件 胡常保安在寶貝格上訖</p>
Vol. 4, 141	23 June	Packaging workshop	<p>二十三日據圓明園來帖內稱 五月十五日將寶貝格內安的福子（字？）十一號內 成窯青花白地茶圓二件 配做得安招板隔屨合牌架樣一件 郎中海望呈覽奉旨 照樣著做 欽此</p> <p>於七月十二日做得安招板隔屨架一件 胡常保安在寶貝格上訖（141）</p>

Vol. 4, 152-3	24 September	Packaging workshop	<p>圓明園來帖內稱本月二十三日郎中海望奏稱 四宜堂後配做盛玉器合牌匣子俱已造成 仍有來配匣子磁器等物件 奴才 意欲帶 進京去成做 俟明年呈上駕幸圓明園時 仍在 四宜堂後成做<u>寶貝格物件</u>等語 奏 聞 奉旨 准奏 四宜堂後新做的盛玉器匣子 朕已覽過 其匣子做法甚好 爾查在內做 活計匠役共有幾名 或用總管太監處銀 兩 或用造辦處銀兩 按等次賞給 將賞 給銀兩數目隨便奏聞 欽此</p> <p>郎中海望隨奏稱 奴才 用造辦處銀兩賞 給 奉旨賞胡常保緞一疋 欽此</p> <p>於十一月初五日將賞催總常保官用緞一 疋 匠役十八名 銀五十三兩 摺片一件 奏聞奉旨 知道了 欽此</p>
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IX. Qianlong emperor's order regarding the viewing of some *hua guwan shoujuan* 畫古玩手卷 (handscroll[s] painted with ancient playthings), 9 January in 1737

Vol. 7, 767	9 January	Ruyi guan	<p>初九日司庫劉山久 七品首領薩木哈來 說 太監毛團 胡世傑 高玉傳旨 著將畫古 玩手卷預備呈覽 欽此</p> <p>於本日 司庫劉山久 七品首領薩木哈將 畫古玩手卷持進 交太監毛團 胡世傑 高 玉呈覽 奉旨著照手卷上<u>貼長黃簽古玩</u> 取來 欽此</p> <p>於本月初十日柏唐阿雙柱將古玩手卷持 赴圓明園選古玩訖</p> <p>於本月十一日衣爾西達孫三格照圖樣送 來</p> <p>雍正三年 瑪瑙合符一件 白玉合盃觥一 件 四年 青白玉如意一件 五年 碧玉如意一件 六年 碧玉鸚鵡鑲嵌一件 白玉如意一件</p>
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