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Unruly Gems in the Imperial Order: Hat Finials and the Mapping of Gemological Networks of the Qing Dynasty, 1636-1796

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Unruly Gems in the Imperial Order: Hat Finials and the Mapping of Gemological Networks of the Qing Dynasty, 1636-1796

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by

Tongyan Qiu

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Unruly Gems in the Imperial Order: Hat Finials and the Mapping of Gemological Networks of the Qing Dynasty, 1636-1796

by

Tongyan Qiu

Master of Arts in Art History

University of California, Los Angeles, 2023

Professor Bronwen Wilson, Chair

Assembled from un-faceted, polished pieces of gems, hat finials (*maoding* 帽頂 or *guanding* 冠頂), were worn by members of the imperial family and officials of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911). With Manchurian freshwater pearls representing the imperial clan, the nine-rank order of officials manifested itself in gemological terms: ruby for official of the highest rank, followed by sapphire, coral, lapis lazuli, quartz, tridacna shell, gold, and silver for officials of the lowest rank. In this thesis, I examine the hat finials' embeddedness in the production of space, meaning, and hierarchy at the Qing court. Investigating three types of evidence: visual representations, textual records, and extant objects, my thesis demonstrates how the mobility and multivalency of gems conflicted with the Qing court's attempt to impose a universalized sense of order. With their efflorescent shimmer, the gems on hat finials challenged the structures of identification and categorization at the Imperial Workshop, and raised new issues concerning visibility, mobility, and order in the visual world of the Qing.

The thesis of Tongyan Qiu is approved.

Hui-Shu Lee

Miwon Kwon

Bronwen Wilson, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

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Introduction

Dignified, austere, a court official directs his gaze beyond the immediate viewer (Figure 1). Standing with his feet apart, Fuheng (傅恒, 1720-1770) anchors his portrait with his invincible, majestic presence.[1] In the center of the portrait, oceans of blue balanced with the scintillating brilliance of gold evoke the lustrous textures of silk and delicate embroideries on officials' court robes. These embroidered patterns indicate the rank of its wearer as well as the ingenuity of the craftsmen who produced the silk robe and the skill of the painters who transcribed the brilliance of the fabric onto the painted silk scroll. As a product of the highly proficient mechanism of modular production of paintings at the Qing court, the portrait is also a testament to the deliberate choice made by the artists to depict details of the court attire with exacting accuracy.[2] From the array of textures on Fuheng's headwear to the slight opening of the court surcoat (*bufu* 補服) caused by the movement of his hands – showing the light blue inner lining - the artists used these details to create pictorial variations. Among the apparent uniformity of the regulated court attire in the series of "Meritorious Officials of the Hall of Imperial Brilliance (*Ziguangge gongchen xiang* 紫光閣功臣像)," such subtle differences create individualized depictions.[3] Upon closer inspection, attention is drawn

[1] Fuheng was a Manchu official who served as a minister at the court of the Qianlong Emperor (乾隆皇帝, 1771-1799). As the brother of Empress Xiaoxianchun (孝賢純皇后), Fuheng was also the Emperor's brother-in-law.

[2] On modular production, see Lothar Ledderose, *Ten Thousand Things: Module and Mass Production in Chinese Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[3] This portrait belonged to a series of officials who contributed to the Qianlong Emperor's military campaigns. In total, 280 officials were portrayed, including 100 from the Turkestan campaign (1755-1759), 100 from the Jinchuan campaign (1771-1776), 50 from the Taiwan campaign (1786-1788), and 30 from the Gurkha campaign (1790-1792). For each official, there were at least three versions of his portrait. These portraits were known as "Meritorious Officials of the Hall of Imperial Brilliance" because they were displayed in that hall and a banquet was held there in 1762 to celebrate the "Ten Great Campaigns (*shiquan wugong* 十全武功)" of the Qianlong Emperor. Fuheng was awarded a first-rank nobility title of "Loyalty and Valiancy (*zhongyonggong* 忠勇公)" for his leadership in military expeditions to Jinchuan in 1749. On top of the portrait, an inscription written by the Qianlong Emperor himself, praises the contribution of Fuheng and indicates the year in which the inscription was written, 25th year of Qianlong (1760). Nie Chongzheng attributes this series of unsigned portraits to the German-Bohemian Jesuit artist Ignatius Sichelbart (Chinese name: Ai Qimeng 艾啟蒙, 1708-1780), the Chinese court

towards the center of the portrait by Fuheng's hands, which are engaged in the motions of touching, feeling, rubbing, and counting the pink beads of the large chain worn around his neck. From his touch, the elliptical shape of the beads is disrupted. Fuheng's intimate encounter with this chain of round, polished beads made of gems, known as *chaozhu* (朝珠), "court beads", reminds the viewer of the interactive, mobile, and palpable dimensions of what otherwise seem to be static iconographic components of Qing officials (Figure 2). Following the string of pink beads – perhaps tourmaline gemstones – the viewer confronts the visage of Fuheng, which is modelled with light and shadow, and the cluster of objects that adorn his head. These objects, including the large, round winter court hat (*dong chaoguan* 冬朝冠) made of black fur and topped with red animal hair and the peacock feather. The latter, with its pair of "eyes" known as "two-eyed peacock feather (*liangyann hualing* 兩眼花翎)" attached to the hat, expand into the negative space horizontally and into the depth of the pictorial field (Figure 3 and 4). The most notable, however, is the little tower attached to the top of the court hat. Consisting of a colossal piece of ruby supported by a gold filigree base decorated with pearls and red and green gems, the verticality of the hat's design extends Fuheng's figure visually. The artists, who were attentive to the translucent appearance of ruby under light, created a gradation of color from deep pink to white. The hat with its feather rests delicately on Fuheng's head, while the gemstones on top punctuate the crown of the hat with a touch of luxury and brilliance.

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painter Jin Tingbiao (金廷標, ?-1767) and their collaborators: see Nie Chongzheng 聶崇正, '*Niuyue guan "ziguangge gongchen xiang" ji* 紐約觀紫光閣功臣像記 (Viewing the Portraits of Meritorious Officers of Ziguangge in New York)', *Shoucangjia 收藏家*, no. 2 (2002). On this series of portraits, also see: Ka Bo Tsang, 'Portraits of Meritorious Officials: Eight Examples from the First Set Commissioned by the Qianlong Emperor', *Arts Asiatiques* 47 (1992): 69–88; Nie, '*Cong gaoben dao zhengtu de ziguangge gongchen xiang* 叢稿本到正圖的紫光閣功臣像 (From Sketches to the Finished Painting: The Portraits of Meritorious Officials at Ziguangge)', *Forbidden City 紫禁城*, no. 10 (2015): 124–41; Juan Wang 王雋, '*Qianlong nianjian ziguangge gongchen xiang yanjiu* 乾隆年間紫光閣功臣像研究 (A Study of Portraits of Meritorious Officials at Ziguangge during Qianlong's Reign)', *Wenhua yichan 文化遺產*, no. 2 (2016): 68–76.

These decorative devices, known as hat finials (*maoding* 帽頂 or *guanding* 冠頂), were worn by members of the imperial family, court officials, and other important persons related to the Qing court (Figure 5). Assembled from un-faceted, polished pieces of gems, the hat finial served as a visual and material index of the imperial nine-rank hierarchy. These delicate yet sumptuous objects indicated distinctions of rank: uses of different gems corresponded to a prescribed hierarchy. Manchurian freshwater pearls (*dongzhu* 東珠, meaning "East pearl"), which represented the emperor and the imperial clan, positioned them above the officials' ranks. Below the imperial clan, the nine-rank order of officials manifested itself in gemological terms. Ruby (*hongbaoshi* 紅寶石), signifying the highest rank, was followed by sapphire (*lanbaoshi* 藍寶石), coral (*shanhu* 珊瑚), lapis lazuli (*qingjinshi* 青金石), quartz (*shuijing* 水晶), tridacna shell (*chequ* 硨磲), gold (*jin* 金), and finally silver (*yin* 銀), which indicated the nineth and lowest rank. The Qing court also permitted the use of colored glass (*boli* 玻璃) as substitutes for colored gems. Here, I use the term "gem" as an umbrella term to refer to precious stones, semi-precious stones, and biogenic gems in modern categorization, as the word "*bao* (寶)" meaning "gem" or "treasure", was an all-encompassing term used at the Qing court to refer to all of the precious materials used on the hat finial.[4]

[4] I use "gem" throughout this thesis as a translation for "*bao*", which originally meant "a treasure", later "a precious thing". In modern Chinese, the equivalent for "gems" or "gemstone" is "*baoshi* 寶石", which combines the aforementioned "*bao*" with "*shi* 石" meaning "stone". I believe the term "*baoshi* 寶石" is not the most appropriate to describe the materials used on hat finials because even though rubies and sapphires have the suffix "baoshi 寶石" and other materials had "*shi* 石" in their Chinese names used in the Qing dynasty, pearl and coral, on the other hand, were not conceived as stones. Therefore, in English, instead of using "gemstones", "gem" is the preferred term. My preferred term in Chinese is to refer to collective of materials on hat finials is "*zhenbao* 珍寶", which simultaneously denotes "treasure" and "gem" and it does not explicitly connote "stone". "*Zhenbao*" is also closely related to the term "*zhenwan* 珍玩". "*Zhen* 珍", meaning "valuable", "delicate", and "wan 玩" meaning "playthings" as in the word for "antiquity" – "*guwan* 古玩" which literally means "ancient playthings". As the *Rites of Zhou* (*Zhouli* 周禮) listed "eight materials" (*bacai* 八材) in the order of: "pearl, jade, stone, wood, metal, ivory, leather, feather". I conceive gems-*zhenbao* on hat finials not as a fixed, taxonomical construct but a shifting conglomeration of entities that was defined by its association within larger collection of materials while each material being distinguishable from the rest due to its natural characteristics and culturally constructed values.

Fuheng progressed through the nine-rank ladder, from a tridacna shell-wearing Blue Peacock Feather Guard (*lanling shiwei* 藍翎侍衛) of the sixth rank to the ruby-wearing first rank position of the Minister of Revenue (*hubu shangshu* 戶部尚書). He would have been required to change the gems on his hat finial more than five times during the seven years of his rapid rise in position in the imperial ladder between 1740 and 1747. The astonishing variety of precious materials that Fuheng would have encountered, including those gems on his hat finials and on his court beads, was a product of the increasing complexity of sumptuary laws between the early- to mid- Qing dynasty.[5] The variety was also a result of increasing proficiency and mechanisms of the Imperial Workshop (*Neiwufu zaobanchu* 內務府造辦處), changing fashions of jewelry-making at the Qing court that were shaped by new technologies introduced from Europe, as well as the global market of gems and the Qing court's changing relationships with its immediate and distant neighbors.

Rethinking Hat Finials: Being-In/Being-Between Many Histories

Previous scholarship has tended to discuss hat finials as one among the many components of the Qing court attire and has therefore framed the scope of investigation around court costume and rituals, or "ritual paraphernalia"[6] However, the scholar-official Ji Yun (紀昀, 1724-1805)'s account of the fluctuation of market prices of gems has inspired me to reconsider hat finials

[5] For the purpose of this study, I define "Early- to Mid- Qing dynasty" as 1636-1796, that is, from the 1st year of Chongde, which was the year when Hongtaiji (皇太極 1592-1643) declared the "Great Qing" to the end of the 60th year of Qianlong, the last year of Qianlong's reign as emperor. The reign of Qianlong is typically defined as 1736-1795, however, I prefer 1796 as the Qianlong Emperor stepped down as emperor in February 1796.

[6] For general surveys of Qing court costume, see Xibao Zhou 周錫保, *Zhongguo gudai fushi shi* 中國古代服飾史 *（A History of Costume in Imperial China）* (Beijing: Zhongguo xiju chubanshe 中國戲劇出版社, 1984); John Vollmer, *Ruling from the Dragon Throne: Costume of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911)* (Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, 2002); Ruipu Liu 劉瑞璞, *Qing gudian paofu jiegou yu wenzhang guizhi yanjiu* 清古典袍服結構與紋章規制研究 *(A Study of the Structure and Emblems of Classical Qing Robes)* (Beijing: Zhongguo fangzhi chubanshe 中國方志出版社, 2017); Linying Feng 馮林英, *Qingdai gongting fushi* 清代宮廷服飾 *(Court Fashion in the Qing Dynasty)* (Beijing: Xueyuan chubanshe 學苑出版社, 2019).

not only as costume decorations but also as objects of exchange. In *Yuewei caotang biji* 閱微草堂筆記 (*Observing the World from the Miniscule, Written at a Cottage*), Ji Yun wrote: "As I remember when I was young, ginseng, coral, and lapis lazuli were not expensive; now they are getting more expensive every day. Turquoise and tourmaline used to be extremely expensive, now their prices are lower every day. Jadeite from Yunnan was not regarded as jade, just like Lantian and Qianhuang which called jade only out of convenience. Now it is considered as a 'precious plaything', its price is much higher than real jade […] Coral, bright red, like the color of pomegranate used to be the most expensive; now light red coral, like the color of cherries are valued. Some people also see white tridacna as the most valuable. The prices differ so much between fifty or sixty years, what about between a few centuries?"[7]

Ji's close observations of the "luxury commodities" around him remind the reader of the intersection of his two identities both as a court official who was obliged to wear hat finials made of these gems and as a member of the elite who was able to purchase the gems.[8] Ji's reflections encourage me to re-examine hat finials as part of the Qing court's consumption of biogenic gems, concurrent with the consumption of other natural products and "global commodities" including peacock feathers and animal fur.[9] The multi-ethnic Qing elite

[7] Ji Yun, *Yuewei caotang biji* 閱微草堂筆記, 1789, *Juan* 15. Original: "蓋物之輕重，各以其時之好尚，無定準也。記余幼時，人參、珊瑚、青金石，價皆不貴，今則日昂；綠松石、碧鴉犀，價皆至貴，今則日減；雲南翡翠玉，當時不以玉視之，不過如藍田乾黃，强名以玉耳，今則以為珍玩，價遠出真玉上矣 […] 珊瑚舊貴鮮紅如榴花，今則貴淡紅如櫻桃，且有以白類車渠為至貴者。蓋相距五六十年，物價不同已如此，況隔越數百年乎？" Translation by author.

[8] Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2013); Peter McNeil and Giorgio Riello, *Luxury: A Rich History* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2016).

[9] CIBJO (The World Jewelry Confederation) defines "biogenic gem" as gemstones composed of biomineralized substances, such as pearl, mother-of-pearl, shell, coral, amber etc. These materials used to be called "organic gems". More on this categorization see Rui Galopim De Carvalho, 'Biogenic Gem Materials', *The ICA GemLab Journal* 1, no. 3 (n.d.): 21–29; 'Gemstones: Retailers' Reference Guide' (CIBJO, 2017).

On the Qing consumption of fur, see Hui-min Lai 賴慧敏, '*Qianlongchao neiwufu de pihuo maimai yu jingcheng shishang* 乾隆朝內務府的皮貨買賣與京城時尚 (Fur Trade by the Imperial Household Department and Fashion in Beijing during the Qianlong Reign)', *The National Palace Museum Research Quarterly 故宮學術季刊* 21, no. 1 (2003): 101–34; Lai, '*Qing zhongye qi minchu de maopi maoyi yu jingcheng xiaofei* 清中葉迄民初的毛皮貿

imported and absorbed gems from far-flung places of the world and appropriated these exotic goods into "simultaneous expressions" of their multi-layered identities. As officials, and as Manchus, Han Chinese, and Mongols, court elites were interacting in an ever-unfolding world of transregional and transcultural encounters, their jeweled hat finials became material evidence of early modern networks of mercantile and artistic exchanges.[10]

Despite the continuous practice of wearing hat finials during the Qing dynasty and the prevalence of these objects across the Qing empire, hat finials have received scant scholarly attention due to their marginal status as "handicrafts (*gongyi meishu* 工藝美術)" and as wearable objects. Such artefacts lie outside of the "high arts" of calligraphy and painting and also more frequently studied objects of global circulation, such as porcelain.[11] Nevertheless,

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易與京城消費 (Fur Trade and Consumption in Beijing from Middle Qing Dynasty to Early Republic)', *The National Palace Museum Research Quarterly 故宮學術季刊* 31, no. 2 (2013): 139–78. For the global trade of animal products in the early modern period, see for example Martha Chaiklin, Philip Gooding, and Gwyn Campbell, *Animal Trade Histories in the Indian Ocean World*, (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020).

[10] Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology* (Berkeley, CA: Univ. of California Press, 1999). On how the multi-ethnic nature of the Qing empire affected art production at the court see for example: Kristina Kleutghen, *Imperial Illusions: Crossing Pictorial Boundaries in the Qing Palaces* (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2015); Stephen H Whiteman, *Where Dragon Veins Meet: The Kangxi Emperor and His Estate at Rehe* (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2020).

On transcultural encounters during the Qing dynasty see for example: Petra ten-Doesschate Chu and Ning Ding, eds., *Qing Encounters: Artistic Exchanges between China and the West*, Issues & Debates (Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute, 2015); Anna Grasskamp and Monica Juneja, eds., *EurAsian Matters: China, Europe, and the Transcultural Object, 1600-1800*, (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018)

[11] Hat finials are sometimes discussed in surveys of "handicrafts" not with regards to gem polishing but the craft of gold filigree (which was the base of the hat finial): Zibing Tian 田自秉 and Boda Yang 楊伯達, *Zhongguo gongyi meishushi* 中國工藝美術史 *(History of Decorative Arts)* (Taipei: 文津出版社, 1993); Boda Yang, *Yang boda lun yishu wenwu* 楊伯達論藝術文物 *(Yang Boda on Art and Artefacts)* (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe 科學出版社, 2007); Zhonshun Bian 卞宗舜, Xu Zhou 周旭, and Yuzhuo Shi 史玉琢, *Zhongguo gongyi meishushi* 中國工藝美術史 *(History of Chinese Decorative Ars)* (Beijing: 中國輕工業出版社 Zhongguo qinggongye chubanshe, 2008); Jing Zhang 張靜 and Dongfang Qi 齊東方, *Gudai jinyinqi* 古代金銀器 *(Gold and Silver Vessels in Ancient and Imperial China)* (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe 文物出版社, 2008); Taige Qiu 仇泰格, '*Mingdai jinyin shoushi yanjiu* 明代金銀首飾研究 An Investigation on Gold and Silver Jewelry of Ming Dynasty' (Master thesis, Shanghai, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, 2014).

Studies on court jewelry would mention hat finial. However, they were often not the main focus: Jiaqian Zhu 朱家潛 et al., eds., *Gugong bowuyuan cang qingdai houfei shoushi* 故宮博物院藏清代后妃首飾 *(Jewelry from the Imperial Women of Qing Dynasty at the Palace Museum)* (Beijing; Hong Kong: Zijincheng chubanshe 紫禁城出

Liao Bohao's studies on the hat finials at the National Palace Museum and hat finials from archaeological excavations in Taiwan have yielded critical insights about the construction of hat finials and the practice of substituting gems with colored glass.[12] Confronting this diversity of gems in the Qing "objectscape," most of which were recorded to be found in the peripheries of the Qing empire, in an earlier study I examined court beads in relation to imperial portraits. I discussed the cosmological, religious, and political implications of the gem-beads beyond local discourses of symbolism and court attire.[13] The present thesis extends this investigation further. It challenges previous assumptions about the homogeneity of the "nomadic style," the "Manchu-ness" of Qing court attire, and the old discourse of "Sinicization" in the Qing visual order. I also reassess the material culture of the Qing court, finding instead a worldly, eclectic, porous, and all-encompassing formation that was deeply embedded in global circulations of people, objects, images, and knowledge.[14]

版社; Parco Publishing, 1992); Beijing wenwu jiansheng bianweihui 北京文物鑑賞編委會, *Ming qing jin yin shoushi* 明清金銀首飾 *(Gold and Silver Jewelry from the Ming and Qing Dynasties)* (Beijing: Beijing meishu sheying chubanshe 北京美術攝影出版社, 2005); Xinxin Zheng 鄭欣鑫, ed., *Qinggong houfei shoushi tudian* 清宮后妃首飾圖典 *(Illustrated Guide to Imperial Women's Jewelry)* (Beijing: 故宮出版社, 2012).

[12] Bohao Liao, '*Taiwan kaogu chutu yu chuanshi qingdai guanmao yu dingdai yanjiu* 臺灣考古出土與傳世清代官帽與頂戴研究 (Archaeological Excavations in Taiwan and the Study of Qing Dynasty Officials' Hats and Hat Finials)', *Journal for Studies of Everyday Life 庶民文化研究* 11 (March 2015): 1–60; Liao, '*Bao ding zhu guang: cong gugong yuancang jifu guanding tan qingdai maoding liaozhu zhizuo ji yingyong* 寶頂珠光:從故宮院藏吉服冠頂談清代帽頂珠料製作及應用(Investigating the Making and Usage of Hat Finial Beads of Qing Dynasty from the Hat Finial for Jifu at National Palace Museum)', *The National Palace Museum Monthly of Chinese Art 故宮文物月刊* 419 (February 2018): 92–103. Other studies on hat finial: Jiang Wu 吳江, '*Bu bu gao sheng: mantan maoding* 步步高升: 漫談帽頂 (A Discussion on Hat Finials)', *Yishupin 藝術品*, no. 1 (2016): 98–105; Huimin Zhuang 莊惠敏 and Qunshan Wang 王群山, '*Qiantan qingdai guanmao* 淺談清代官帽 (A Brief Discussion on Official Hats of the Qing Dynasty)', *Yishu yu sheji 藝術與設計*, no. 2 (2017): 104–6; Li Li 李理, '*Mingqing gongting guanmao yu maoshi bijiao yanjiu* 明清宮廷官帽與帽飾比較研究 (A Comparative Study of Official Hats and Hat Decorations in Ming and Qing Courts)', *Mingqing luncong 明清論叢* 18 (2018): 54–526.

[13] My undergraduate thesis, completed in 2021.

[14] On the multiple identities of Qing visuality, see for example Patricia Berger, *Empire of Emptiness: Buddhist Art and Political Authority in Qing China* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press, 2003). On studies of global circulations in the early modern world, see for example: Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann et al., eds., *Circulations in the Global History of Art* (Ashgate, 2015); Maxine Berg, ed., *Goods from the East, 1600-1800: Trading Eurasia* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Benjamin Schmidt, *Inventing Exoticism: Geography, Globalism, and Europe's Early Modern World* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2015);

My thesis is inspired by scholarship in three interconnected directions: the material and global turns in studies of Qing court production, global histories of early modern commerce that focus on long distance trade, and "the Eurasian turn in Qing historiography."[15] By placing hat finials at the intersection of art history, micro and global histories, and economic history, I propose a transdisciplinary methodology that seeks to bridge marginalized fields of art historical research such as costumes and everyday objects of the Qing court with recent scholarship in transcultural material histories.[16] The gems on hat finials offer a distinctive vantage point from which to rethink art historical discourses on the

Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello, eds., *The Global Lives of Things: The Material Culture of Connections in the Early Modern World* (London; New York: Routledge, 2016); Zoltán Biedermann, Anne Gerritsen, and Giorgio Riello, eds., *Global Gifts: The Material Culture of Diplomacy in Early Modern Eurasia* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2018); Paula Findlen, *Empires of Knowledge: Scientific Networks in the Early Modern World* (Abingdon, Oxon ; Routledge, 2019); Stacey Sloboda and Michael Elia Yonan, eds., *Eighteenth-Century Art Worlds: Local and Global Geographies of Art* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing Inc, 2019); Paula Findlen, *Early Modern Things: Objects and Their Histories, 1500-1800* (Abingdon, Oxfordshire ; Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2021); Angela Vanhaelen and Bronwen Wilson, eds., *Making Worlds: Global Invention in the Early Modern Period* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 2022).

[15] On the "material turn" and "global turn", see for example: Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things: Material Culture and Social Status in Early Modern China* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991); Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello, eds., *Writing Material Culture History* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2015); Jonathan Hay, *Sensuous Surfaces: The Decorative Object in Early Modern China* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press, 2010); Cheng-hua Wang, 'Whither Art History? A Global Perspective on Eighteenth-Century Chinese Art and Visual Culture', *The Art Bulletin* 96, no. 4 (2014): 379–94; Christine Göttler and Mia M. Mochizuki, eds., *The Nomadic Object: The Challenge of World for Early Modern Religious Art* (Leiden Boston: Brill, 2018); Susanna Burghartz et al., eds., *Materialized Identities in Early Modern Culture, 1450-1750* (Amsterdam Univ. Press, 2021).

On studies of long-distance trade see for example: Andre Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (Berkeley, CA: Univ. of California Press, 1998); Ron Harris, *Going the Distance: Eurasian Trade and the Rise of the Business Corporation, 1400-1700*, (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2019).

The "Eurasian turn in Qing historiography" is termed by William Rowe, which describes historians who venture beyond the paradigm of "New Qing History" and combine methodologies from world history and ecological history to examine transnational factors affecting the Eurasian landmass in a comparative context: William Townsend Rowe, *China's Last Empire: The Great Qing* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap press, 2009); John F. Richards, *The Unending Frontier: An Environmental History of the Early Modern World* (Berkeley, CA: Univ. of California Press, 2005).

[16] On micro history and global histories see for example: Eric Tagliacozzo, Helen F. Siu, and Peter C. Perdue, eds., *Asia Inside Out: Connected Places* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2015); Sebastian Conrad, *What Is Global History?* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2016); Benjamin A. Elman and Chao-Hui Jenny Liu, eds., *The 'Global' and the 'Local' in Early Modern and Modern East Asia* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2017).

Qing court. Scholarly discussion of the use of gems at the Qing court has been limited.[17] Proposing a gem-centered approach to interpreting Qing visual and material culture in this thesis is therefore necessarily partial. In what follows, I examine the embeddedness of hat finials in the production of space, meaning, and hierarchy at the Qing court. Investigating three types of evidence -- visual representations, textual records, extant objects -- my thesis shows how these contribute to and complicate our understanding of gems and hat finials. It suggests how the mobility and multivalency of gems could challenge the legibility of these extra-terranean materials and reveals the difficulty of imposing a universalized sense of order over these diverse materials. Gems themselves become a part of, and a metaphor of the multifaceted, cosmopolitan art and courtly culture of the Qing empire.[18]

Part I: Boundaries of the Court: Moving Efflorescence

A conspicuous component of the Qing court attire, the hat finial was instrumental in defining the shifting temporal and spatial boundaries of the court. In this section, I examine visual representation of hat finials and explore their critical role in forming, organizing, and embodying the Qing visual order. As bodies adorned with gems on hat finials traversed the

[17] The only systematic study of gems at the Qing court is by Chen Xiasheng 陳夏生: *Su gu hua jin tan gugong zhubao* 溯古話今談故宮珠寶 *(Tracing the Past and Present of Jewels at the Palace Museum)* (Taipei: National Palace Museum 國立故宮博物院, 2012); Chen, '*Tan qinggong baoshi yingyong wenhua* 談清宮寶石應用文化 (On the Culture of Using Gems at the Qing Court)', *The National Palace Museum Monthly of Chinese Art 故宮文物月刊* 351 (June 2012): 52–63. Other scholars at the Beijing, Taipei, and Shenyang Palace Museums have also addressed gems but only with regards to specific gems or objects: Huixia Chen, 陳慧霞 '*Dong xi hui ying xia de qingdai gongting zhubao* 東西輝映下的清代宮廷珠寶 (Jewels from the Qing Court in the Context of Exchanges between the East and West)', *The National Palace Museum Monthly of Chinese Art 故宮文物月刊* 315 (June 2012): 10–20; Hengwei Du 杜恆偉, '*Shenyang gugong bowuyuan cang caise baoshi* 沈阳故宫博物院藏彩色宝石 (Colored Gems from Shenyang Palace Museum)', *Shoucang 收藏*, no. 15 (2013): 130–32; Cheng Zeng 曾誠, '*Zhenzhu, hupo yu shanhu: qingdai huangshi guizu de zhubao shihao yu baoshi xiaofei* 珍珠琥珀與珊瑚：清代皇室貴族的珍寶嗜好與寶石消費 (Pearl, Amber and Coral: The Qing Imperial Family and Aristocrats' Love of Jewelry and Their Consumption of Gems', *Forbidden City 紫禁城* 6 (2020): 132–49.

[18] Phillip John Usher, *Exterranean: Extraction in the Humanist Anthropocene* (New York: Fordham Univ. Press, 2019).

city, their movements re-asserted the imperial presence, distinguished between the center and periphery, and re-inscribed the sense of order to physical and pictorial spaces. The stable nature of gemstones was counteracted by their mobility in designs of hat finials; and practices of wearing, displaying, and concealing hat finials, expressed the language of gems: the duality between the physically eternal and the temporally contingent, between the fixed and the moving, that were dimensions of "Qing Formation in World-Historical Time."[19] I explore how gems on hat finials moved through spaces, and how these movements mapped out dynastic time and worldly space of the Qing empire. This section suggests how a material-centered or gem-centered approach could raise new questions concerning visibility, mobility, and order in the visual world of the Qing.

Hat Finials and Performing Courtly Temporality

Fuheng's portrait could contribute to modern misconceptions about Qing officials, suggesting perhaps, through the apparently informal gesture of his hand, that they were always dressed in their full court attire. In fact, having a glimpse of Fuheng's ruby hat finial would have been a rare event. Qing court attire was seasonal and constantly changing based on the formality of the occasion for which a particular ensemble was worn. It was divided into two seasons: winter and summer; then, into three levels of formality. The formal court attire was called *lifu* 礼服 (meaning "ceremonial attire") or *chaofu* 朝服 (meaning "court attire") (Figure 6). The semi-formal attire was called *jifu* 吉服 (meaning "auspicious attire") (Figure 7). The informal attire was called *changfu* 常服 (meaning "quotidian attire") (Figure 8). The formal attire was reserved for the most important state ceremonies, such as the annual state ritual sacrifices performed by the emperor; the semi-formal attire was worn for less important court

[19] Lynn A. Struve, ed., *The Qing Formation in World-Historical Time* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2004).

ceremonies, such as the emperor's birthday, state dinner, important weddings and festive celebrations; the informal attire was what emperors and officials wore to perform their everyday duties.[20] Hats and hat finials were also worn in accordance with the seasons and formality. "Warm hats (*nuanmao* 暖帽)" for winter were smaller in size, with an upturned brim and a round top covered in red-dyed yak, or horsehair (Figure 9). "Cool hats (*liangmao* 涼帽)" for summer hats were larger, conical in shape, and decorated with red floss silk (Figure 10).[21] For officials of every rank, there were two forms of hat finials, both containing gems corresponding to their ranks. The taller form was attached to the formal court hat, and the smaller, single-bead form was used for both semi-formal and informal hats (Compare Figure 1 with Figure 11). Seen in this light, the colossal ruby hat finial wore by Fuheng was used for the most formal attire, which was only worn on a limited number of occasions. His portrait instead asserts permanence, a claim made through visual documentation. It adheres to a category Nie Chongzheng calls "documentary painting at the Qing court"; the rhetoric of realism was inseparable from the imperial ambitions of sustaining a perfectly ordered, legible, eternal structure.[22]

As Richard Vinograd argues, the assumption of realism or authenticity in Chinese portraiture was challenged by practices of creating posthumous portraits for the deceased;

[20] There were also other registers of court attire such as *xingfu* (行服) for expeditions or hunting, *yufu* (雨服) for rainy days. However, they would not be discussed in this thesis. On the different registers of court attire see:Vollmer, *Ruling from the Dragon*; Zhou, *Zhongguo gudai fushi shi*; Feng, *Qingdai gongting fushi.*

[21] Observing court hats dated to early- to mid- Qing dynasty and court hats dated to 19th century or late-Qing dynasty, I believe there had been a gradual change that replaced the yak hair and silk floss with mass-produced "tassels" (*maoying* 帽纓). The use of black fur in winter hats were also replaced by black fabrics and the shape of the winter hats by the late-Qing became narrower. I have not been able to find any existing discussions on this. This thesis focuses on hat finials between 1636-1796 and the example of objects I show are dated to this period. However, it is not impossible that some components of these hats and finials were replaced in later periods. I hope to study the transformation of court hats and hat finials in a longer temporal scope in a future study.

[22] Chongzheng Nie 聶崇正, '*Qingchao gongting jishi huihua* 清宮記實性繪畫 (Documentary Paintings at the Qing Court)', *Forbidden City 紫禁城*, no. 3 (2014): 26–91.

making a new portrait using copies of preexisting portraits instead of direct portrayal; as well as relying on established, standardized types of rulers or officials. "Truth," Vinograd writes, "in Chinese as in other kinds of portraiture, is as much a product of social agreement and cultural convention as of optical matching".[23] The luster of ruby on Fuheng's portrait was both ephemeral and eternal: ephemeral in the sense that his formal court attire, including the hat finial, was probably assembled only for the occasion of sitting for his portrait, or, he might have never been dressed like this and the artists simply took a sketch of his visage and fitted his face into the already composed details of his garments. Meanwhile, the visibility of the ruby hat finial, as an indicator of Fuheng's status and service to the court, was also an eternal gesture that celebrated the Qing conquest of Jinchuan commanded by Fuheng. The Qianlong Emperor's decision to commission the series of portraits depicting officials who contributed to these military conquests inscribed his "Ten Great Campaigns (*shiquan wugong* 十全武功)" in history.[24] It also sealed this short-lived moment of victory in Qianlong's expeditions in the permanent image of his trusted official and his brother-in-law, who died 10 year later in 1770 during the Qing army's failed conquest of Myanmar. Fuheng's hat finial, adorned with ruby that was most likely acquired from Myanmar, was thus implicated in the

[23] Richard Vinograd. *Facing China: Truth and Memory in Portraiture* (London: Reaktion Books, 2022), p. 11. For discourses on Qing portraiture, also see: Richard Ellis Vinograd, *Boundaries of the Self: Chinese Portraits, 1600-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1992); Craig Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China* (London: Reaktion Books, 1997); Jan Stuart and Evelyn S. Rawski, *Worshiping the Ancestors: Chinese Commemorative Portraits* (Washington, D.C; Stanford, CA: Smithsonian Institution, Stanford Univ. Press, 2001); Hung Wu and Katherine R. Tsiang, eds., *Body and Face in Chinese Visual Culture* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2004); Clunas, *Chinese Painting and Its Audiences* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2017).

[24] On the history of the Qing military campaigns, see for example: Nicola Di Cosmo, ed., *Warfare in Inner Asian History: 500-1800* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2002); Pamela Kyle Crossley, Helen F. Siu, and Donald S. Sutton, eds., *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity, and Frontier in Early Modern China* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2006); Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West* (Harvard University Press, 2009); Joanna Waley-Cohen, *The Culture of War in China: Empire and the Military under the Qing Dynasty*, New paperback ed (London: Tauris, 2013); James A. Millward, *Beyond the Pass: Economy, Ethnicity, and Empire in Qing Central Asia, 1759-1864* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2020); James A. Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads: A History of Xinjiang*, (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2022).

creation of a visual program that catalogued the Qing victory over neighboring "tributary states" through the "Potraits".

The visibility of gemstones on hat finials stages a courtly performance of victory, it also gestures towards a point in history when the Qing visual order was imposed onto its conquered peoples. In another series of "Portraits of Meritorious Officials of the Hall of Imperial Brilliance" of busts painted in oil, the last khan of the Dzungar Khanate, Dawachi (達瓦齊, ?-1759) is depicted in the Qing court attire, wearing a summer hat with red glass hat finial (Figure 11).[25] Captured in in Yili in 1755, Dawachi was sent to Beijing as a captive and was later granted a princely title by the Qianlong Emperor under the condition of Dawachi's defeat. Painted in 1755, Dawachi's portrait proclaims the end of the last Oirat Mongolian dynasty as well as the climax of the Qing expansion into Central Asia. To be represented in a same manner as Manchu officials who defeated the Dzungars and displayed alongside them at Ziguangge was, for Dawachi, humiliating; and for the Qianlong Emperor, a celebrated historical moment when the leader of a rival power was accepted and disciplined under the Qing political and visual order.

Embodying a continuation of imperial time in China and the Manchu dynasty identity, the hat finial served as a visual extension of the physical expansion of Qing imperial ambitions. However, as an object representable in pictorial space, the hat finial also enabled artists to express their distance from the court. In a painting by Huang Zeng (黃曾, dates unknown), the separation of this critical piece of court attire from the wearer's body gestured the limits between the time and space of the court and that of private, leisurely domains (Figure 12). Holding a book, a gentleman sits on the rocks of his garden in front of a window-

[25] It is my deliberate choice here to not interpret these portraits based on which rank the material on the hat finial indicated. Such approach, which is common to descriptions of portraits of Qing officials, often tend to fixate on the established symbolisms and ignore other productive possibilities of the portrait as a whole. In the next section of my thesis I focus on how ranks were constructed through different materials.

which served as "a scopic device for seeing".[26] The wide opening of the wall immediately attracts the viewer's surveying gaze toward the interior of the room, where the varying application of red pigments link three objects together: the bright red summer court hat with a green glass bead finial, the chain of red court beads making two loops on top the folded dark blue robe, and the conical container for the hat on top of the shelf (see Detail of Figure 12). While the title of the painting, "*A Retired Gentleman Seeking Pleasure*" (*Tui shi xun le tu juan* 退仕尋樂圖卷) suggests a retirement or retreat from the court, the artist deliberately exhibits various components of court attire in order to demonstrate the gentleman's withdrawal of himself from politics. Caught in this indeterminate state, the court hat precariously rested on the books reveals the tensions between the potential of dressing, that is, returning to courtly formality and time, and the simultaneous possibility of undressing, that is, removing oneself from the courtly space. On this painting, the presence of the glass hat finial and the red court beads become a statement on one's (a)political aspirations and the indelible imprints of one's past career as a member of the court.

Hat Finials and the Streets of Beijing

While such portraits are selective indicators of historical reality, what made visual depictions more problematic as sources for understanding the embeddedness of hat finials in the Qing court culture was that there were barely any other visual depictions of hat finials during the Qing dynasty outside of imperial portraits or ancestral portraits. With their aims of re-enacting or "reinventing the past", the portraits seal the hat finials in a fictive present.[27] Whereas in practice, hat finials were highly restricted, conditionally visible, and movable

[26] Jennifer Purtle, 'Scopic Frames: Devices for Seeing China c. 1640', *Art History* 33, no. 1 (2010): 54–73.
[27] Wu Hung, ed., *Reinventing the Past: Archaism and Antiquarianism in Chinese Art and Visual Culture* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2010).

objects in time and space. As objects of exchange, the mobile trajectories of hat finials also charted the changing spatial boundaries of the Qing court.

As a rare example, an illustrated book printed in French, *Rues de Pékin* (*Streets of Beijing*), depicts a merchant holding a feather duster in one hand while picking up a red hat finial in another hand (Figure 13).[28] On the table next to him, a collection of hat finials, both the taller type for formal court hat and the single-bead type for semi-formal and informal hats gleam on the page in a variety of colors: red, blue, and white. Adding prominent touches of white to the center of the gems or colored glass represented, the artists emphasized the reflexive, "sensuous surfaces" of these precious materials. Meanwhile, modelling with light and shadow, the artists represented hat finials with materials of the same color in different textures and opacities (compare the two white hat finials). Below this display of hat finials, belt buckles are presented in boxed containers.[29] On the left of the illustration a description reads: "Merchant of Mandarin Buttons. As the main streets of Beijing are wider than the street that goes to [Palais du] Luxembourg, the small merchants spread out there on small tables as in the past on the sides of the Pont Neuf. The streets leading to the great gates of the first enclosure of the Palace are those where there are the most of them." (Figure 14) The wide street may likely have referred to the street in front of Zhengyangmen 正陽門, the gate connecting the Inner City (*neicheng* 內城) of Beijing with the Outer City (*waicheng* 外城). Located in close proximity to the Imperial City (*huangcheng* 皇城), Zhengyangmen Street

[28] This book, which was in two volumes, was not attributed to any author on the Bibliothèque nationale's website. I have not found any publications on this book. It seems to be a collection "export paintings" produced in China for a foreign market. The Chinese labels next to each illustration is written by individuals who were very familiar with Chinese writing. The French descriptions, however, were sometimes astonishingly accurate. There were also corrections in ink that seem to be added from a later period.

[29] The hierarchal system in the Qing court attire was not restricted to gems on hat finials and court beads, but also in the grading of peacock feathers, the use of gems on belt buckles, the embroidered patterns on officials' surcoats, the fur coats, and many others. Given the scope of this thesis, I am only addressing hat finials. Since belt buckles were also decorated with gems and are very much understudied, I hope to work on them in a future project.

(正陽門大街) was a thriving commercial district in the capital of the Qing (Figure 15).[30] Following the depiction of the merchant selling hat finial, there is an illustration of a merchant selling both summer and winter hats (Figure 16). Representing hats in both the finished form covered in red silk floss and in the unfished form of white bases, the illustration not only draws attention to the process of making, but also to the potential of diversification of goods and customization based on the consumer's preferences. Next to the table, the pile of cylindric boxes which are containers for hats hint at the portability of the hats, the temporally contingent nature of the wearing of these hats, as well as the mobility of the merchant and his temporary stall (Figure 17).[31] On one level, the depiction of commercial activities related to different components of the Qing court costume in *Rues de Pékin* draws attention to the process of piecing together a full assemblage of official's attire in the Qing – a repetitive process performed by both portrait painters on silk or paper and by officials

[30] On the commercial history of Zhengyangmen Street, see Shu Yi 舒乙, ed., *Shanghai chenfu:* 商海沉浮 *(The Story of the Business World of Beijing)* (Beijing: *Beijing chubanshe* 北京出版社, 2000);Qi Dazhi 齊大芝, ed., *Beijing shangye shi* 北京商業史 *(The Commercial History of Beijing)* (Beijing: *Renmin chubanshe* 人民出版社, 2011); Chen Hongnian 陳鴻年, *Beiping fengwu* 北平風物 *(The Scenery of Beiping)* (Beijing: *Jiuzhou chubanshe* 九州出版社, 2015).Gao Fumei 高福美, *Beijing jingji shi* 北京經濟史 *(The Economic History of Beijing)* (Beijing: *Renmin chubanshe* 人民出版社, 2019). On the urban planning of Qing dynasty Beijing, see for example Susan Naquin, *Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400-1900* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2000); Pingfang Xu 徐蘋芳, *Mingqing Beijing chengtu* 明清北京城圖 *(Maps of the City of Beijing in the Ming and the Qing Dynasties)* (Shanghai: Shanghai Classics Publishing House 上海古籍出版社, 2012); Song Xiaojing 宋筱靜, '*Qiantan zhongguo gudai ducheng guihua* 浅谈中国古代都城规划 (A Brief Discussion on Urban Planning of the Capitals in Imperial China)', *Shangye Gushi* 商业故事, no. 12 (2016): 83–85.

[31] In a survey of commercial history of Beijing, Zhou Xiaoxiang and others have categorized merchants in Qing dynasty Beijing to three categories: *zuoshang* 坐商, *xingshang* 行商, and *tanshang* 攤商. The first category, *zuoshang*, "seated merchants", run their business on a fixed address with a brand name (the hat shop in Figure 17 is an example of this). *Xingshang*, "moving merchants" or peddlers, offered services to residents of different parts of the city as they transversed the streets. The aforementioned merchants from *Rues de Pekin* were *tanshang*, "stall merchants", who mainly sold commodities and participated in temple fairs. Zhou Xiaoxiang 周小翔 et al., *jiadao yanyun: gudu beijing de shangye wenhua* 賈道燕蘊: 古都北京的商業文化 *(The Commercial Culture of the Ancient Capital Beijing)* (Beijing: *Zhonghua shuju* 中華書局, 2015).

The container for court hats in the Qing is a rich topic its own right. See Zhongwen Yu 喻仲文 and Xinli Liu 劉心立, *Qingdai guanmaohe xingzhi suyuan yanjiu* 清代 "官帽盒"形制溯源研究 (A Study on the Origins of the Form of "Official Hat Boxes" in Qing Dynasty)', *Yishu yu sheji 藝術與設計*, no. 2 (2022): 138–40.

themselves in their everyday life; on another level, the structure of the book itself, as an assemblage of discrete sketches of urban life in Beijing parallels with the diffusion of goods into the imperial Capital, aggregating, accumulating, in the innermost interior of the empire.[32]

Curiously, the French description of the scene "賣帽頂 (selling hat finials)" is the only instance in *Rues de Pékin* where a specific location is mentioned. Zhengyangmen Street, located at the interstitial space between the Inner and Outer Cities of Beijing, was the center of commercial activities and entertainment in the Qing Capital, as well as the urban backdrop for constructing a courtly vision of prosperity.[33] The depiction of hat merchants in *Rues de Pékin* recalls the details of hat shops on a scroll painted by the court artist Xu Yang (徐揚 1712-1779), titled "*Ceremony of the Offering of War Captives of Emperor Qianlong's Conquest of Western Territories*" (Figure 18).[34] Commemorating the pacification of Dzungaria and the suppression of the Revolt of Altishahr Khojas by 1759, this monumental scroll captures the moment of anticipation before the symbolic ceremony of the "Offering of War Captives" began. Thousands of figures are depicted in the actions of entering the Imperial Palace: court officials in their formal attire, as well as ambassadors of various kingdoms marching into the city on horseback, carrying gifts for the Qing emperor. At the meantime, imperial guards, dressed in red, are already stationed in place, awaiting the arrival of the participants of the ceremony. On the right end of the scroll, a hat shop located at the

[32] Peter Sloterdijk and Wieland Hoban, *In the World Interior of Capital: For a Philosophical Theory of Globalization* (Cambridge; Malden, MA: Polity, 2013).

[33] The binary of the Inner and Outer Cities was caused by the Ming emperors' decision to surround the Temple of Heaven and the Temple of Agriculture to the South of the Capital with city walls, thereby creating the Outer City. In the Qing dynasty, the two Cities were a visible marker of segregation ethnic groups imposed by the Manchu rulers: the Inner City was reserved for Manchus, while Han Chinese and merchants had to live in the Outer City.

[34] Xu Yang was active during Qianlong's reign (1736-1796). The exact years of his birth and death were not known. On the background of this painting, see Chongzheng Nie, '*Guan xuyang hua pingding xiyu xianfuli tujuan* 觀徐揚畫平定西域獻俘禮圖卷 (Vieweing Xu Yang's Ceremony of the Offering of War Captives of Emperor Qianlong's Conquest of Western Territories)', in *Qinggong huihua yu huajia 清宮繪畫與畫家 (Painting and Painters at the Qing Court)* (Beijing: Zijincheng chubanshe 紫禁城出版社, 2019), 334–45.

vicinity of Daqingmen opens to the street, where officials and ambassadors are joint with civilians looking at these guests from afar in awe and conversing among themselves. The banners hung on top of the entrance of the shop advertise a variety of models it sells: winter and summer court hats, formal and informal, with winter hats made of different types of fur. Inside the hat shop, four assistants are depicted discussing, presenting hats to customers. Stored and sold in containers tailored to their shapes, the hats are also displayed on hat stands (Figure 18.2 and Figure 19).[35]

Specialized hat shops located near Zhengyangmen are also depicted by Xu Yang on another monumental painting of the city, *Scene Illustrating the Qianlong Emperor's Poem "Spring Comes to the Capital"* (Figure 20). In an alley to the east of Zhengyangmen Street, a small hat shop displays several hats with their containers (Figure 20.1). Adjacent to the outer gate (*jianhou* 箭樓) of Zhengyangmen, another hat shop is visible through its banners (Figure 20.2). Its position in the represented topography of Beijing on Xu Yang's painting coincides the position of a street called "Hat Alley (Maoxiang 帽巷)" on a map of Beijing printed in 1750 (Figure 21.1).[36] As Beijing was also the capital of the Yuan (1279-1368) and Ming (1368-1644) dynasties, the names of its streets were often names of markets that existed in some point in history.[37] Xu Yang, I argue, as a painter popular at Qianlong's court and a resident of the city himself, deliberately engages with the layered histories of Beijing, collapsing the semantic construct of markets – past and present – through names of the

[35] Meifeng 吳美鳳 Wu, '*Yongzheng maojia zhi duoshao: cong huojidang kan yongzheng huangdi de maojia chuangyi* 雍正帽架知多少：從《活計檔》看雍正皇帝的帽架創意 (Examining the Yongzheng Emperor's Innovation in Hat Stand from the Imperial Workshop Archives)', *Forbidden City 紫禁城*, no. 2 (2018): 78–99.

[36] This map was found in 1930s inside and Forbidden City and was likely produced in the court.

[37] For studies on the historic street names of Beijing, see for example, Jianguo Yang 楊建國, *Wenhua yuyanxue shiyu xia de beijing diming yanjiu* 文化語言學視域下的北京地名研究 *A Study of Place Names in Beijing from Cultural Linguistic Perspective* (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe 北京大學出版社, 2018).

streets, with his painterly reinvention of the city's marketplaces.[38] In the middle of Zhengyangmen Street, hats were also sold at a stall for second-hand goods (Figure 20.3). Further away from the street, a sign advertizing "*chaoyi bufu* 朝衣補服 (court robes and official's surcoats)" is displayed right next to another shop selling silk and textiles. Xu Yang's meticulous attention in depicting the details of urban life in Beijing not only reflects a Late Imperial tradition of idealized cityscapes, his paintings of the "prosperous world" (*shengsh*i 盛世) are also valuable sources for studying the circulation of court attire – as an assemblage of signs, and as a collection of exchangeable and wearable commodities.[39]

Despite the repeated depictions of hat merchants on these two paintings, one may wonder, where were hat finials or gems traded? While a merchant selling court beads and gems is represented in *Rues de Pékin*, no descriptions were given with regards to his location (Figure 22). Nevertheless, two textural sources yield information on the embeddedness of gems in the commercial history of Beijing. In Yu Jiao (俞蛟, 1751-?)'s literary description of Beijing in *Chunming congshuo* 春明叢說 (*Tales of the Spring),* the "jewelry market" was described to be "at the intersection in front of Zhengyangmen, spanning two or three *li* to each direction. They were all rich merchants with their stores selling gold, silk, pearl, and jade, as well as food products. The plethora of goods accumulated like mountains […] such

[38] A problem in studying the markets of Late Imperial Beijing is that even though the street names are often names of a specialized market, the market existed in different dynasties, yet the name remained in use undistinguishably. In some cases, such as Huashi 花市, "flower market", the product indicated in the name of the area, flower (artificial flower in fact), was still being traded during the Qing dynasty. In other cases, there was no relation between the name of the street and the function of that area by mid- to late- Qing dynasty.

[39] For studies on urban paintings and the courtly rhetoric of "prosperity", see Cheng-Hua Wang 王正華, '*Guoyan fanhua: wanming chengshitu chengshiguan yu wenhua xiaofei de yanjiu* 過眼繁華：晚明城市圖、城市觀與文化消費的研究 (Seeing Prosperity: Urban Paintings, Urban Perspectives and Cultural Consumption in Late Ming Dynasty)', in *Zhongguo de chengshi shenghuo 中國的城市生活 (Urban Life in China)* (Beijing: Xinxing chubanshe 新星出版社, 2006); Wang, *Yishu quanli yu xiaofei zhongguo yishushi yanjiu de yige mianxiang 藝術權利與消費：中國藝術史研究的一個面向 (Art, Power, and Consumption: One Perspective on the History of Chinese Art)* (Hangzhou: Zhongguo meishu xueyuan chubanshe 中國美術學院出版社, 2011); also see Yue Meng, *Shanghai and the Edges of Empires* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2006).

was the most prosperous place in the Capital."[40] In Pan Rongbi (潘榮陛, active in 18th century)'s account of the customs for celebrating Lunar New Year in Beijing, *Dijing suishi jisheng* 帝京歲時紀盛 (*Documenting the Prosperity in the Imperial Capital during the New Year*), an exact location of the shops for "coral and pearl" was given: "Langfang xiangkou (廊坊巷口)."[41] On the map from 1750, "jewelry market" is represented at the intersection outside of Zhengyangmen, with "Langfang (廊坊)" adjacent to it, further to the South (Figure 21.1). However, *Scene Illustrating the Qianlong Emperor's Poem "Spring Comes to the Capital"*, there is no depiction of jewelry market, nor merchants selling gems or hat finials. There is one depiction of what seems to be pawn shop or a shop selling precious metals (Figure 20.4) However, its location is further southward from the "jewelry market' (see Figure 21.1). These rich pictorial representations and textural descriptions of commercial activities integral to the making and assembling of hat finials – in the streets of Beijing and on two-dimensional media, coupled with the conundrum of the omnipresence of hats and the unstable visibility of hat finials constantly resist my attempt to assign these small, portable objects a fixed locality.

Hat Finial and the Construction of a Courtly Vision

Approaching the representations of hat finials from another side of Xu Yang's paintings, not from the marketplaces in the Outer City but from the innermost quarter of the imperial palace, the courtyard in front of the Hall of Supreme Harmony (Taihedian 太和殿), the viewer is confronted with a profusion of bodies adorned with red hats and golden finials

[40] Jiao Yu 俞蛟, *Chunming congshuo 春明叢說*, n.d. Original: "珠市，當正陽門之沖。前後左右，計二三里，皆殷商巨賈，列肆開廛；凡金綺珠玉，以及食貨，如山積。酒樹歌樓，歡呼酣飲，恆日暮不休，京師之最繁華處也。" Translation by author.

[41] Pan Rongbi entered the court in 1731. The exact years of his birth and death were not known.

(Figure 20.5). As officials moved through the various enclosures of the imperial palace, their bodies became the visible markers of authority-in-motion (Figure 20.6). Xu Yang's depiction of the orderly diffusion of gems into the physical and symbolic core of the Qing power – the Hall of Supreme Harmony courtyard where court assemblies were held – could be interpreted as a visual proclamation of the "effortless governance" of the Qianlong Emperor. Depicting the emperor in the middle of greeting the Dowager Empress on the first day of the Lunar New Year, Xu Yang also enables his viewer, through the bird's eye view, to appreciate the sense of order –within the boundaries of the court, and in the prosperity of the marketplaces outside the court.

Hat finials' simultaneous engagement with the spaces inside and outside the court, I would argue, reflects, to some extent, William Skinner's "two hierarchies": one representing the centrally administered order of the court, and the other embodying the logic of the market.[42] On one hand, the hybrid production of hats and hat finials – as components of the officials' attire required by the court yet not entirely centrally manufactured by the court – reflect these objects' contingent positions between the court and the market. For example, in the 5th Year of Yongzheng (1727), the Yongzheng Emperor (1678-1735) asked the artisans at the Imperial Workshop to produce "39 ruby hat finials, 59 coral hat finials, and 216 engraved coral hat finials".[43] In most of the other orders in the Imperial Workshop Archive however, the number of hat finials the artisans were asked to did not correspond with the total number of officials that were required to wear hat finials. From my examination of entries in the

[42] G. William Skinner, ed., *The City in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1977).

[43] First Historical Archives of China and Chinese University of Hong Kong, eds., *Qinggong Neiwufu Zaobanchu Dangan Zonghui* 清宮內務府造辦處檔案總匯 *(Archives from the Workshops of Imperial Household Department of the Qing Court)*, 55 vols (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe 人民出版社, 2005). 雍正五年各作成做活計清檔: "奉上諭，着給王公大臣官員等做帽頂，欽此。據來文內議得，王以下，八分公以上，紅寶石帽頂三十九個；末入八分公，以下一品以上，素珊瑚帽頂五十九個；輔國將軍以下，三品以上，起花珊瑚帽頂二百一十六個。以上三樣共三百一十四個記此。"

Workshop Archive between 1723-1796 pertaining to hat finials, it seems that the hat finials produced in the court were mainly for higher-ranking officials. Most lower-ranking officials, I infer, would have had to privately source their hat finials.[44] On the other hand, the Skinnerian hierarchies also manifest in the pictorial order constructed by Xu Yang. On *Ceremony of the Offering of War Captives of Emperor Qianlong's Conquest of Xiyu,* people from various parts of the world, real or imagined, pass through the gates of the Imperial City as they become visible and legible to the eyes of the Qing emperor. While staging the imaginary encounters between Qing officials and foreign ambassadors, Xu Yang created, I believe, one the most evident articulations of the materiality of gems on the hat finial among all "documentary paintings" of the Qing court (Figure 18.3). On the painting celebrating the Ceremony of the Offering of War Captive, a re-enactment of the Qing conquest of others, Xu Yang framed the ruby and sapphire shining brightly on top of the two official's hats in the process of delineating the Self and the Other, the center and the periphery, the familiar and the unfamiliar. As the people around the world become identifiable through the stylized representations of their costumes, the costumes of the Qing officials too, participate in the construction of this ideologically charged, encyclopedic order of the court.

Visually and symbolically inhabiting a liminal space, the hat finials, on a material level, occupied a unique position in the interstices between the two Skinnerian hierarchies. The discussion on hat finials cannot be separated from "administrative-bureaucratic hierarchy": the increased centralization of power of the court by Yongzheng' reign and the codification of ritual and court attire by Qianlong's reign; nor can it be divorced from the "economic-commercial hierarchy of places": of the flourishing of economic in the Jiangnan region in the 18th century which provided the material foundation for the purchasing power of

[44] I have not found any branded merchandise in Beijing specializing on hat finials as branded merchandize only became more prevalent on Zhengyangmen Street after 1800. Majuyuan 馬聚源, for example, is a famous hat shop established in 1817 that served officials who commissioned court hats from it. See Shu, ed., *Shanghai chenfu*.

the Qing elite. Seen from this light, instead of being dismissed as decorative objects, hat finials demonstrated the mobility of commodities in the Qing capital and were critical constituents of an idealized spatial organization of the court. The osmotic flow of red hats with golden finials into the innermost space of the court evokes the word "efflorescence" which Jack Goldstone preferred as an alternative to "Golden Age".[45] Born out of culturally contingent visions of truth, luxury, and power, the efflorescence on hat finials not only embodied the visuality of the High Qing, but also exerted pressure on the nature of representation and visibility through the multifaceted "social lives" of gems.

Part II: Visualizing Hierarchy: The Language of Gems

If we examine Ji Yun's discussion of the fluctuations of prices of gems vis-à-vis the illustration of the merchant selling gems and court beads from *Rues de Pékin*, one question immediately arises: why were particular gems valued by the Qing elite and not others? To understand the cultural construction of values surrounding different gems and the importance of gems in the material culture of the Qing court, this section focuses on the interactions between the materials on the hat finial and their complex relations with textual descriptions. Investigating three types of evidence that contribute to our understanding of hat finials: the types of hat finials prescribed by sumptuary regulations in *The Collected Statutes of the Qing Dynasty* (*Daqing huidian* 大清會典) and the *Precedents and Regulations of the Collected Statutes* (*Daqing huidian zeli* 大清會典則例), the documentation of the commissioning, making, repairing, and repurposing of hat finials from the Imperial Workshop Archive *(Neiwufu zaobanchu huojidang* 內務府造辦處活計檔), and the extant objects, I explore how the Qing court constructed a hierarchy of materials. The language of gems on hat finials not

[45] Jack A. Goldstone, 'Efflorescences and Economic Growth in World History: Rethinking the "Rise of the West" and the Industrial Revolution', *Journal of World History* 13, no. 2 (2002): 323–89.

only entailed social distinction, they also reflected how the Qing court appropriated resources from far-flung places of the empire and how these gems transgressed and redefined the "order of things" at the Imperial Workshop and beyond.

Hat Finials and the Codification of Imperial Order

While most scholarship on hat finials have only described the associated ranks of each gem by quoting from the *Collected Statutes* without further analysis nor description, what was more problematic was that they often used one version of the *Collected Statutes* for reference and seldom addressed the frequent changes to regulations on hat finials in the early Qing dynasty. There were five versions of *Collected Statutes*, compiled in the reigns of Kangxi (reigned 1661-1620), Yongzheng (reigned 1722-1735), Qianlong (reigned 1736-1796), Jiaqing (reigned 1796-1820), and Guangxu (1875-1908). Some of these versions included *Precedents and Regulations* and *Illustrations* as supplements to the *Statutes*. As it was customary practice for each compilation of the *Collected Statutes* to cite decrees from previous emperors, the *Kangxi Statutes*, compiled between 1680-1690 cited decrees from Emperor Hongtaiji (reigned 1626-1643) and the Shunzhi Emperor (reigned 1643-1661), which were not codified into this form in their reigns. Using different versions of the *Collected Statutes*, I was able to compare and analyze changes to sumptuary regulations on the gems used on hat finials in the early- to mid- Qing dynasty (1636-1796).[46]

[46] In the following discussion, I focus exclusively on the hat finials for officials in the nine-rank system. The hat finials for various ranks for members of the imperial family (there were around 40 levels of ranks in total), in fact, underwent more modifications than the hat finials for court officials. I have also observed that decrees from previous emperors were sometimes formulated differently in the *Veritable Records* (Shilu 實錄) of each emperor and in texts such as *Qingshigao* 清史稿 and *Guochaogongshi* 國朝宮史. Initially, I have attempted to extract all the information on regulations on hat finial from different texts and generate comparisons (such as comparing the hat finials for official of the second rank under the reigns of different emperors), however, I came to realize that the massive amount of text one needs to process and transcribe is beyond this scope of this thesis. However, I hope that with the assistance of digital tools, I will be able to comprehensively examine them in a future project.

The first articulation of hat finials was in the 1st year of Chongde (1636). Ruby was used for the highest-ranking officials, followed by sapphire for officials of a lower rank, then quartz and gold in a descending order.[47] By the 2nd year of Shunzhi (1645), as the Manchus settled in Beijing after the fall of the Ming dynasty, the regulation on hat finials, together with various other administrative policies, were further developed and adapted to the Chinese system. This was manifested through deployment of regulation on hat finials for all officials in the nine-rank system: "for officials of the first rank, they wore an engraved gold finial with ruby on top, decorated with one East pearl in the middle; officials of the second rank wore an engraved gold finial with ruby on top, decorated with a small ruby in the middle; officials of the third rank had ruby on top, with a small sapphire in the middle; officials of the fourth rank had sapphire on top, with a small sapphire in the middle; officials of the fifth rank had quartz on top, with a small sapphire in the middle; officials of the sixth rank had quartz on top; officials of the seventh rank had engraved gold finial, decorated with a small sapphire in the middle; officials of the eighth rank had engraved gold finial; and officials of the ninth rank had engraved silver finial."[48] Therefore, we know that by 1645, the preference if gems based their color, in the order from red to blue to white, was already established. Developing from

[47] Yuntao 允陶, Fuheng 傅恒, and Tingyu Zhang 張廷玉, *Qianlongchao daqing huidian zeli* 乾隆朝大清會典則例 *(Precedents and Regulations of the Collected Statutes of the Great Qing Dynasty: Qianlong Reign)*, 1747-1764, Volume 65. The nine-rank system was not employed here, instead, the decree listed the titles of all officials that would fall into each level of finials: "崇德元年定都統尚書冠頂上銜紅寶石; 帶用金圓版四，飾紅寶石四。 內大臣大學士副都統護軍統領前鋒統領侍郎冠頂上銜藍寶石; 帶用金圓版四，一等侍衞護銜叅領前鋒叅領學士滿啟心郎郎中冠頂上郎水晶; 帶用鍛金鐵版四。 二等三等侍衞護衞佐領漢啟心郎員外郎冠用金頂; 帶用钶金圓鐵版四。 護軍校主事冠用金頂; 帶用鍛金圓鐵版二。"

[48] *Qianlongchao daqing huidian zeli*, Volume 65: "順治二年定：一品官冠用鏤花金頂上銜紅寶石中飾東珠一; 帶用金方玉版四，各飾紅寶石一。 二品官冠用鏤花金頂上銜紅寶石中飾小紅寶石; 帶用鏤花金圓版四，各飾紅寶石一。 三品官冠用鏤花金頂上銜紅寶石中飾小藍寶石; 帶用鏤花金圓版四。四品官冠用鏤花金頂上銜藍寶石中飾小藍寶石，帶用銀瓖鏤花金圓版四。 五品官冠用鏤花金頂上銜水晶中飾小藍寶石，帶用銀瓖素金圓版四。 六品官冠用鏤花金頂上銜水晶，帶用銀瓖玳瑁圓版四。 七品官冠用鏤花金頂中飾小藍寶石，帶用素銀圓版四。 八品官冠用鏤花金頂，帶用銀瓖明羊角圓版四。 九品官冠用鏤花銀頂，帶用銀瓖烏角圓版四。"

the earlier articulation in Chongde's reign where single material (ruby, sapphire, quartz) was used discretely for hat finials, the 1645 decree set the precedent for the structure of having one main material on top of the finial, decorated with a smaller gem in the middle (Figure 23). The color the smaller gem, however, did not correspond to the color of the main gem. Instead, they were chosen based on the same hierarchy of color: from red to blue.

While there was no changes to the materials on hat finials during Kangxi's reign, in the 8th Year of Yongzheng (1730), hat finials undergone another stage of modification: "officials of the first rank wore hat finials made of ruby, decorated with one East pearl in the middle; officials of the second rank wore hat finials made of engraved coral, with a small ruby; officials of the third rank: sapphire or transparent blue glass, with a small ruby in the middle; officials of the fourth rank: lapis lazuli or opaque blue glass, with a small sapphire in the middle; officials of the fifth rank: quartz or transparent white glass, with a small sapphire in the middle; officials of the sixth rank: tridacna shell or opaque white glass, with a small sapphire in the middle; officials of the seventh rank: unengraved gold finial, with quartz in the middle; for officials of the eighth rank: engraved gold finial; and finally for officials of the nineth rank: engraved silver finial."[49] From this structure, we can infer the following: first, that the gems on the hat finial were ordered based on color – with red ruby and coral for the highest-ranking officials, followed by blue (sapphire and lapis lazuli), then followed by white (quartz and tridacna shell), then metal (gold and silver). Secondly, the main materials for hat finial for officials from the first to the sixth rank were ordered in the structure of one

[49]Yuntao 允陶, Fuheng 傅恒, and Tingyu Zhang 張廷玉, *Qianlongchao daqing huidian* 乾隆朝大清會典 *(The Collected Statutes of the Great Qing Dynasty: Qianlong Reign)*, 1747-1764, Volume 65:"雍正八年議准：二品官朝冠頂上銜鏤花珊瑚中飾小紅寶石，三品官上銜藍寶石或藍色明玻璃中飾小紅寶石，四品官上銜青金石或藍色涅玻璃中飾小藍寶石，五品官上銜水晶或白色明玻璃中飾小藍寶石， 六品官上銜硨磲或白色涅玻璃中飾小藍寶石，七品官用素金頂中飾小水晶，八品官用鏤花金頂，九品官用鏤花銀頂，未入流與九品同。 候補候選與見任同若在部學習行走之生監視八品筆帖式九品之讀祝讚禮鳴贊序班均視八品各府州縣學教職皆照出身用金頂。" Translation by author.

translucent or transparent gem (in this case, coral, sapphire, and quartz and equivalent transparent glass of the same colors) followed by an opaque gem of the same color (therefore, coral following ruby, lapis lazuli following sapphire, tridacna shell following quartz). Thirdly, glass, was a legitimized substitute for various gems (Figure 24).[50] Lastly, the patterned engraving on materials did not increase their position the hierarchy, instead, engraved gold finial, for example, was positioned one rank lower than unengraved gold.

Comparing the regulations from the 2nd Year of Shunzhi and the 8th Year of Yongzheng, I made the following observations. Firstly, while ruby was used for officials of the first, second, and third ranks in Shunzhi's reign, by the 8th Year of Yongzheng, engraved coral replaced ruby for officials of the second rank. Secondly, by placing sapphire and transparent blue glass on the third rank and lapis lazuli and opaque blue glass on the fourth rank, the regulations in Yongzheng's reign established a color-coded ladder in which every two ranks were represented in the same color. Thirdly, for officials of the fifth and sixth ranks, the tridacna shell was introduced in Yongzheng's reign to create a distinction from the fifth rank. The similarity between both regulations was that there seemed to be a limited interest in establishing consistency in color between the main gem on the top and the smaller gem in the middle. While such consistency was achieved for some ranks, such as the second and the fourth; for other ranks it was disregarded. For officials of the third rank, red was paired with blue; for the sixth rank, white was paired with blue. Examining the development of hat finials in the early- to mid- Qing dynasty, the meticulous detail in each revision of the *Statutes* reflects each emperor's scrupulous attention to the materials on hat finials.

[50] For the production of glass at the Imperial Workshop, see for example Rong 張榮 Zhang, *Guang Ning Qiu Shui Qinggong Zaobanchu Boliqi 光凝秋水：清宮造辦處玻璃器 (Luster of Autumn Water: Glass of the Qing Imperial Workshop)* (Beijing: Zijincheng chubanshe 紫禁城出版社, 2005). However, most discussions of glass focus on vessels and seldom address these hat finials. Also see Boda 楊伯達 Yang, ed., *Zhongguo jinyin boli falang qi quanji 中國金銀玻璃琺瑯器全集 (Catalogue of Gold, Silver, Glass, and Enamel Vessels in China)*, vol. 3,4, 6 vols (Shijiazhuang: Hebei meishu chubanshe 河北美術出版社, 2004).

Nevertheless, these regulations cannot inform us why particular gems were chosen. Nor could they reveal why the order of red-blue-white was preferred. Did the Qing emperors prioritize the diversity of colors over harmony? In addition to color, transparency, texture, and market price, what were the other factors that shaped the cultural construction of value regarding these gems and eventually resulted in the articulation of a courtly order through the hierarchy of gems on hat finials?

Hat Finials and the Qing Dynastic Identity

To address these questions, we must examine the hat finials of the Qing dynasty in a broader temporal and spatial scope and re-situate our discussion in trans-regional, trans-cultural, practice of adorning, living with gems. Hat finials were first introduced to China by the Mongols who established the Yuan dynasty.[51] The portraits of Yuan emperors reveal that the structure of hat finials: with one large colored gem on top, supported by a gold base decorated with pearls is very similar with hat finials in the Qing dynasty (Figure 25). The Mongol practice of adorning hats with finials was continued in the first half of the Ming dynasty. The *Portrait of Emperor Xuanzong of Ming Dynasty* and the hat finials excavated from the Tomb of King Liangzhuang demonstrate a formal continuity between the hat finials

[51] On Mongol hats and hat finials, see Wei Luo 羅瑋, '*Han shi hu feng: mingdai shehui zhong de mengyuan fushi yicun chutan* 漢世胡風：明代社會中的蒙元服飾遺存初探 (A Preliminary Investigation into the Remnants of Mongolian Yuan Dynasty Costume in Ming Society)', *Chung-Hsing Journal of History 興大歷史學報* 22 (February 2010): 21–56; Wenyue Xu 徐文躍, '*Meng yuan de fushi* 蒙元的服飾 (The Costume of the Mongol Yuan Dynasty)', *Forbidden City 紫禁城*, no. 8 (2013): 51–73; Jia Zhang 張佳, '*Shenyan humao: yizhong nüzhen maoshi shengshuai bianyi beihou de zuqun yu wenhua bianqian* 深簷胡帽：一種女真帽式盛衰變異背後的族群與文化變遷("Barbarian Hats with Deep Brims": The Transformation in Society and Culture of the Jurchen People Reflected in the Popularity, Decline, and Mutation in the Usage of a Particular Type of Hat)', *Palace Museum Journal 故宮博物院院刊* 202, no. 2 (2019): 21–39; Danning Su 苏丹寧, '*Gudai mengguzu guanmao xingzhi ji shenmei yanjiu* 古代蒙古族冠帽形制及審美研究 (A Study on The Form and Aesthetics of Ancient Mongolian Hats)' (Master thesis, Hohhot, Inner Mongolia Normal University, 2022).

in the Yuan, and Ming, and the Qing dynasties (Figure 26 and Figure 27).[52] The codification of hat finials by the Qing emperors, therefore, could be interpreted as their attempts to translate the Mongol legacy configured the Qing in a succession of non-sedentary populations that conquered China from the North.[53] By rejecting the Yuan practice of using jade on hat finials and using hat finials exclusively of colored gems and glass, the Qing emperors also declared a unique Manchu identity and expressed an aesthetics in precious gems distinct from their Mongol and Han Chinese subjects.[54] To explore the construction of dynastic identity through the use of gems on hat finials, the following discussion uses the Manchurian freshwater pearl as an example to illustrate how power was constructed, displayed, and codified through the Qing lexicon of gems.

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[52] On hats and hat finials in the Ming dynasty see Xixing Lu 陸錫興, '*Ming liangzhuangwang maoding zhi yanjiu: jianlun yuan ming shidai damao he maoding* 明梁莊王墓帽頂之研究：兼論元明時代大帽和帽頂 (A Study on Hat Finials from the Tomb of Kingliangzhuang and the Hats and Hat Finials in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties)', *Nanfang Wenwu 南方文物*, no. 4 (2012): 96–100; Bingbin Xu 許冰彬, '*Shixi mingdai gongting fushi yu minjian fengshang de hudong* 試析明代宮廷服飾與民間風尚的互動 (The Interaction between Court Fashion and Popular Fashion in the Ming Dynasty)', *Journal of Gugong Studies 故宮學刊*, 2014, 280–88; Jin Dong 董進, '*Mingdai de maoding maozhu yu maoying* 明代的帽頂帽珠與帽纓 (Hat Finial, Hat Beads, and Hat Tassel in the Ming Dynasty)', *Wenwu Tianti 文物天地*, no. 8 (2020): 62–69;

[53] On the continuity of court costume between Yuan, Ming and Qing, see Wenying Piao 朴文英, '*Qingdai fushi xingcheng yinsu yu chengxing linian tansuo* 清代服飾形成因素與成行理念探索（An Investigation on the Factors and Beliefs That Shaped the Formation of Fashion in Qing Dynasty)', *Liaoningsheng Bowuguan Guankan 遼寧省博物館館刊*, no. 2007 (n.d.): 400–412.

[54] Even though jade was appreciated by Qing emperors, curiously, it was not used on hat finials in the Qing dynasty. Jade hat finials were used in the Yuan dynasty and became a collectible object that were repurposed into finials on the lid of vessels. See Weihua 王蔚華 Wang, 'Mingdai de Yu Luding 明代的玉爐頂 (Jade Vessel Finial in Ming Dynasty)', *Shoucangjie 收藏界*, no. 4 (2010): 51–53; Guihua 鄧桂花 Deng and Shuhua 張淑華 Zhang, 'Qiantan Loudiao Yu Luding Yu Yumaoding 淺談鏤雕玉爐頂與玉帽頂 (A Brief Discussion on Hollow Carved Jade Vessel Finial and Jade Hat Finial)', *Dongbei Shidi 東北史地*, no. 4 (2012). On the Qing emperor's collection of jade, see for example Shuping Teng 鄧淑蘋, '*Shi li qian kun, shi li qianlong: yuqi shiwen suojian qianlongdi san yang qing* 詩裡乾坤 詩裡乾隆：玉器詩文所見乾隆帝的三樣情 (From Poetic Inscriptions on Jade to the Qianlong Emperor's Three Types of Passions)', *The National Palace Museum Monthly of Chinese Art 故宮文物月刊* 429 (2018): 49–61; Teng, *Qianlong huangdi de zhi yu mei: yuzhishi zhong de diwang guyuguan 乾隆皇帝的智與昧：御製詩中的帝王古玉觀（Emperor Qianlong's Wisdom and the Lack of It: The Emperor's Perspectives on Ancient Jade from His Poems)* (Taipei: National Palace Museum 國立故宮博物院, 2019).

Dongzhu 東珠 (literally means "East pearl"), the material exclusive to hat finials of the emperor, the empress, and important members of the imperial clan, were fished in the rivers of Manchuria. These freshwater pearls were closely associate with the mythologies related to the origins of the Jurchens.[55] In *Manzhou yuanliu kao* 滿洲源流考 (*Study on the Origin of the Manchus*), the official Agui 阿桂 (1717-1797) wrote, "East pearls are produced from the Huntong river and the many rivers of Ula and Ningguta. The pearls are well-proportioned, round, iridescent, and bright. They could be as large as half *cun*, as small as a pea. They are used to decorate the finials of kings and dukes: their hierarchy is distinguished by the number of pearls adorned with".[56] *Manzhou shilu* 滿洲實錄 (*The Veritable Records of Manchuria*) which narrates the history of the rise of the Aisin Gioro clan to become the ruling house, the pearls were mentioned in the opening lines: "Changbai Mountain is about 200 *li* high and has a circumference of about 1000 *li*. On this mountain, there is a lake named Tamen with a circumference of about 80 *li*. The rivers Yalu, Huntong, and Aihu all flow from this mountain […] These three rivers all produce pearls and jewels".[57] As the story later describes the

[55] Jurchen was the previous name of the Manchu before the latter was adopted by Emperor Hongtaiji.

[56] Agui 阿桂, *Manzhou yuanliu kao* 滿洲源流考 *(Origins of the Manchus)*, 1777, *Juan* 19： "東珠出混同江及烏拉寧古塔諸河中,勻圓瑩白,大可半寸,小者亦如菽顆。王公等冠頂飾之，以多少分等秩，昭寶貴焉。" The places of origins of the East pearl identified by Agui, in modern terms, are dispersed on the on the Amur or Heilongjiang river basin, including Sunggari or Songhua river, Ussuri river, Tumen and Yalu rivers.

[57] *Manzhou shilu* 滿洲實錄 *(Veritable Records of the Manchus)*, n.d., *Juan* 1: "長白山高約二百里，周圍約千里。此山之上有一潭名闥門，周圍約八十里。鴨綠、混同、愛滹三江俱從此山流出 […] 此三江中每出珠寶。" The *Veritable Records* documenting the spoken words of Nurhaci, the founding khan of the Later Jin dynasty (whose successor Hongtaiji declared the Qing dynasty), also recorded a similar story narrated by Nurhaci. Interestingly, in his version, instead of using the generic "*zhubao* 珠寶" which simultaneously mean "jewel" or "pearls and gems", Nurhaci explicitly mentioned that the rivers produced "zhu ji zhen bei 珠璣珍貝" which explicitly connoted "pearls and shells". In Jonathan Schlesinger's pioneering study of the ecological intervention of the Qing court to extract natural products in Manchuria such as East pearls, fur, and ginseng, he has identified the possible pearl mussel species use by the Qing, *Margaritifera dahurica*, a freshwater pearl mussel. Jonathan Schlesinger, 'The Qing Invention of Nature: Environment and Identity in Northeast China and Mongolia, 1750-1850' (PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 2012); Schlesinger, *A World Trimmed with Fur: Wild Things, Pristine Places, and the Natural Fringes of Qing* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2017).

mythical origins of the Manchus near the Changbai Mountain, East pearls, the most prized natural product of Manchuria, was thus connected to the sacred site for the Manchus.[58]

From the 1st Year of Chongde (1636), the Qing court was concerned with creating a hierarchal order within the imperial family through assigning its members specific number of East pearls they were allowed to adorn their hats finials with to indicate their ranks.[59] The Qing court also developed a complex grading system for the pearl being collected: based on weight, luminescence, and quality.[60] The sumptuary regulations on the use of East pearls on hat finials also inform us an important shift in the Qing emperors' conception of this particular gem: the choice of gems on the emperor's finials changed, in 1683, from an unspecified combination of pearl and gems to finials exclusively composed of East pearls and one large marine pearl on the top (Figure 28).[61] Marine pearls (*zhengzhu* 正珠 or *zhenzhu* 珍珠) were also called "Southern pearls" (Nanzhu 南珠 because of their places of origin, most famously Lianzhou 廉州 and Leizhou 雷州 in Guangxi.[62] This practice of combining marine pearls with Manchurian freshwater pearls not only was an aesthetic choice (since freshwater pearls were smaller than

[58] On the early history of the Manchus, see Mark C. Elliott, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2001).

[59] See Yisanga 伊桑阿, *Daqing huidian 大清會典 (Collected Statutes of the Great Qing), Kangxi Reign*, 1690。

[60] Regulations on pearl fishing in the *Collected Statutes* used terms such as "pearl of the top tier 頭等珍珠", "pearl of the second tier 二等珍珠", "luminous pearl 有光珍珠", and "dull pearl 無光珍珠".

[61] *Qianlongchao daqing huidian,* "崇德元年定：冠用東珠寶石飾頂 […] 康熙二十二年定：凡大典禮及祭壇廟，冠用大珍珠東珠飾。"

[62] In dynasties preceding the Qing, the Southern Seas were the predominant source of pearl fishing. The fishing of marine pearls in the Qing dynasty has not been extensively researched. Chen Xiasheng's monograph on the Qing court's consumption of gems includes a section on marine pearls. For marine pearls in China prior to the Qing, see: Gao Cui 高翠. '*Tangdai zhenzhu kaolue* 唐代真珠考略 (Pearls of Tang Dynasty)'. *Journal of National Museum of China* 中國國家博物館館刊 153, no. 4 (2016): 98–108; Thomas T. Allsen, *The Steppe and the Sea: Pearls in the Mongol Empire*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019; Liu Yi 劉毅. '*Fengguan yu caizhu* 鳳冠與采珠 (The Empress' Phoenix Crown and Pearl Fishing)'. *Forbidden City 紫禁城*, 1994, 44–45.

certain marine pearls) it was also a visible proclamation of the Qing court's ability to acquire natural resources from the very north and the very south of its territories.[63]

The use of pearls on hat finials also celebrated the court's mobilization of labor to extract resources from the fringes of the empire.[64] When the Qianlong Emperor recounted his inspection of the pearl fisheries in Manchuria, impressed by the enthusiasm and skills of the pearl fishers, as well as by the iridescence of the pearl nacre, he wrote: "They dived into the water and carried the mussels to me, / Cutting open the mussel shells: each gleamed like silver. / Sometimes there are iridescent ones, / One in a hundred times can you find such a treasure!" The emperor not only repeatedly mentioned that the pearl fishers were paid by the court and were not "petty fishermen,", he also questioned at the end of his poem: "Why did Yuan Zhen

[63]The Qing practice of combining the use of East pearls and marine pearls requires further scholarly attention, however, among the few historians who addressed the extraction of East pearls, courtly material culture was not their main concern. However, Thomas Allsen's study on the fishing and trade of pearls in the Mongol Empire, Molly Warsh's study on pearls in the Spanish Americas, together with Schlesinger's example of incorporating environmental and ecological history in conjunction of social and political histories have inspired me to situate the Qing consumption of pearls in the global history of pearl consumption and in the Late Imperial Chinese tradition of this practice. Warsh, *American Baroque: Pearls and the Nature of Empire, 1492-1700* (Williamsburg, VA: Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 2018). I am also inspired by R. A. Donkin, *Beyond Price: Pearls and Pearl-Fishing : Origins to the Age of Discoveries* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1998); Natasha Eaton, 'In Search of Pearlescence: Pearls, Empire and Obsolescence in South Asia', *Journal of Material Culture* 21, no. 1 (2016): 29–58.

[64] For Qing court's control over the fishing of freshwater pearls in Manchuria, see: Wang Yunying 王雲英. '*Qingdai dui dongzhu de shiyong he caibu zhidu* 清代對東珠的使用與采捕制度 (The Qing Regulations on the Use and Fishing of East Pearls)'. *Shixue yuekan* 史學月刊, no. 6 (1985): 47–53; Wang Binling 汪玢玲 and Tao Jin 陶金. '*Dasheng wula gongzhu yu dongzhu gushi* 打牲烏拉貢珠與東珠故事 (The Pearl Tributes of Butha Ula and the Tales of the East Pearl)'. *Shehui kexue zhanxian* 社會科學戰線, no. 4 (1989): 334–40; Jonathan Schlesinger. 'The Qing Invention of Nature: Environment and Identity in Northeast China and Mongolia, 1750-1850'. PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 2012; Jiang Hanli 江漢力 and Jiemin Jiang 姜劼敏. '*Dasheng wula zongguan* 打牲烏拉總管 (The Directors of Butha Ula)'. *Manzu yanjiu* 滿族研究 122, no. 1 (2016): 49–57; Schlesinger, Jonathan. *A World Trimmed with Fur: Wild Things, Pristine Places, and the Natural Fringes of Qing*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2017; Li Xinyu 李新宇. '*Qianxi qingchao dui dongzhu de shiyong: yi kangxichao heitudang yifen manwen dangan yishi wei zhongjin* 淺析清朝對東珠的使用——以《康熙朝黑圖檔》一份滿文檔案譯釋為中心 (Investigating the Use of East Pearls by the Qing Dynasty: Centering on the Translation and Interpretation of a Manchu Document "Heitu Archive in Kangxi Reign")'. *Journal of Jilin Normal University* 吉林師範大學學報, no. 6 (2021): 15–22. Also see Chen *Su gu hua jin tan gugong zhubao.*

even mention the god of sea?".[65] The poet Yuan Zhen 元稹 (779-831) provided a bleaker view: "pearl divers, risking their lives […] This year, the God of Sea is the harvester of pearls / Collected by the God of Sea, the pearls are perished […] When Gods collect pearls, how could humans attempt?"[66] The ambition of the Qing court with regards to collecting pearls is not restricted to the boundaries of its empire. In *Zhi gong tu* 職貢圖, a male figure from Sulu (part of modern day Philippines) is depicted holding a string of pearls as a tribute for the Qing while a female figure presents a string of gems (Figures 29). Coexisting with the Qing court's desire to view its neighbors as deposits of gems, another poem by the Qianlong Emperor underlines the anxiety and tension in the ambition to acquire precious materials from the expanding territories of an all-encompassing empire, and the desire to present the Qing empire as a self-sufficient one: "Are they the tears of mermaids? / They are not obtained from foreign lands. / The gracious land has many magnificent products; / The virtue of the water shapes the round streams."[67] As pearls were separated from mussel shells, sorted, graded, assigned value, and assembled into hat finials, the distance between their places of origin and the Qing court were transformed – and condensed into a nacreous iridescence –declaring the extension of the Qing power through their irresistible beauty and unspeakable cruelty.

[65] Qianlong Emperor, *Yuzhi shi erji* 御製詩二集 (*Poems by the Emperor: Volume II*), Zhejiang University Library, *Juan* 52, "採珠行" : "旗丁泅採世其業，授餐支餉居虞村。我來各欲獻其技 ，水寒冰肌非所論。賜酒向火令一試，精神踴躍超常倫 […]入水取蚌載以至，刨劃片片光如銀。三色七采亦時有，百難獲一稱奇珍。命罷旋教行賞嘖；不覽安識真艱辛! 世僕執役非蟄户；元慎何關譬海神?" Translation by author.

[66] Yuan Zhen, "採珠行": "海波無底珠沉海，採珠之人判死採 […] 年年採珠珠避人。今年採珠由海神。海神采珠珠盡死。死盡明珠空海水。珠為海物海屬神，神今自採何況人？ " Translation by author.

[67] Qianlong Emperor, *Yuzhi shi erji* 御製詩二集 (*Poems by the Emperor: Volume II*, *Juan* 52, "再題東珠六韻": "詎是鮫人泣，並非外域求。地靈多瑰产，水德正圓流。龍吐豈无谓，鸡衔亦可侔" Translation by author.

Unruly Gems and the Transcendence of Order

The nacreous pearls adorning hat finials were only one example that reveal the entanglement between the material culture of the Qing court and the concurrent histories of expansion, commerce, and environmental exploitation. Each of the materials that entered into the Qing lexicon of gems: ruby, sapphire, coral, lapis lazuli, quartz, and tridacna shells embodied a temporality beyond the chronology of the court and experienced a spatial trajectory far beyond the borders of the Qing empire.[68] Given the limited length of this thesis, instead of expanding on each of these gems, I will instead devote the last section of this chapter to the issues of categorization. If one were to compare the choices of gems on the hat finials with existing cosmological, religious systems, one would soon realize that the range of gems does not fit neatly into any system of categorization. Neither the five colors of Tibetan Buddhism (white, blue, yellow, red, green), the Chinese Five Agents (metal, wood, water, fire, earth), nor the symbols of the Chinese Four Cardinal Directions (Azure Dragon, White Tiger, Vermillion Bird, and Black Tortoise) correspond perfectly with the Qing choice of gems. What might be an exception, were the colors of the Eight Banners of the Manchus (Yellow Banner, Border Yellow, White Banner, Border White, Blue Banner, Border Blue, Red Banner, Border Red).

[68] Among these gems, the trade of coral is relatively more researched. Lai Huimin 賴慧敏's study shows that Mediterranean coral arrived in China through both the maritime and overland trade routes: Lai, '*Shanhu yu qingdai de chaogong maoyi* 珊瑚與清代的朝貢貿易 (Corals and the Tribute Trade of Qing Dynasty)', *The National Palace Museum Monthly of Chinese Art 故宮文物月刊* 409 (April 2017): 18–29. Also see Cheng Zeng 曾誠, '*Zhenzhu, hupo yu shanhu: qingdai huangshi guizu de zhubao shihao yu baoshi xiaofei* 珍珠琥珀與珊瑚：清代皇室貴族的珍寶嗜好與寶石消費 (Pearl, Amber and Coral: The Qing Imperial Family and Aristocrats' Love of Jewelry and Their Consumption of Gems', *Forbidden City 紫禁城* 6 (2020): 132–49. The trade of coral and diamonds between the Mediterranean to India has been more studied than how these coral arrived in China: Gedalia Yogev, *Diamonds and Coral: Anglo-Dutch Jews and Eighteenth-Century Trade* (New York: Leicester University Press, 1978); Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009). Sona Tajiryan, 'The Early Modern Global Trade of Diamonds and Gems: An Armenian Family Firm on the Crossroads of Caravan and Maritime Trade (ca. 1670-1730)' (UCLA, 2020).

However, the hierarchy of color among the Banners and the hierarchy of the gems (white pearls -red gems – blue gems – white gems – metals) are also not parallel with each other.[69]

While the storage inventory of the Imperial Workshop may provide a glimpse into how gems were sorted, what further exacerbates the problem of trying to conceive the gems on the hat finial within a stable taxonomy, was the Qing emperor's interventions in commissioning hat finials that did not align with the sumptuary regulations drafted by themselves. Analyzing the entries in the Imperial Workshop Archive, I observed the following ways in which the gems on the hat finials transgressed the prescribed structure. Firstly, the use of artificial gems: as early as in the 6th Year of Yongzheng (1728), the emperor commissioned "20 hat finials made of artificial ruby, 20 made of coral, and 20 made of engraved coral".[70] Even though the use of artificial gems as substitutes were common practice at the Imperial Workshop, the *Collected Statues* did not mention gems in regulating hat finials. Secondly, the practice of repurposing and re-using gems further encouraged creative endeavors to alter the hat finials: in the 20th year of Qianlong (1755), 100 ruby hat finials were decomposed and repurposed. Some rubies were made into court beads; the gold and silver bases were molten, and the rest of the hat finials were replaced with bases made of bronze with gilded gold. [71] On the other hand, many of the extant hat finials in the collection of the National Palace Museum do not fit into the prescribed structure: for instance, one elaborate hat finial made during Qianlong's reign combined coral,

[69] There might be connections between the choice of gems and colors on Qing hat finials and the traditions of Tibetan and Mongolian jewellery making. However, due to the lack of textual evidence on pre-1636 Jurchen costume, this is only the author's speculation.

[70] *Qinggong neiwufu zaobanchu dangan zonghui,* 雍正六年各作成做活計清檔 玉作: "怡親王諭：着將假紅宝石、素珊瑚、起花珊瑚帽頂每樣做二十個，遵此。"

[71] *Ibid*., 乾隆二十年各作成做活計清檔 玉作 "初八日，員外郎白世秀來說，奏事總管王常貴交紅寶石帽頂一百個（各隨托），傳旨將頂托認看：是金歸金，是銀歸銀，鎔化另換銅鍍金座，如是銅座即不必換，欽此 […]其紅石珠堪可做數珠者，挑出呈覽，欽此。於本月十二日，員外郎白世秀、副催總舒文將挑得紅寶石八塊足做數珠用，持進交太監胡世傑呈覽。奉旨着看紅寶石數珠上有不及的換用，欽此。於本月十三日員外郎白世秀將紅寶石八塊挑得好些的六塊換做數珠用，并紅寶石數珠"一盤持進，交首領張玉太監胡世傑呈覽。奉旨準換做數珠六個，其餘紅寶石二塊仍配托做帽頂用，欽此。

turquoise, and amber (Figure 30). Another hat finial took an unusual shape, with a small piece of pink gemstones decorating the base of a large piece of sapphire elevated from a wide gold base (Figure 31). These are only a few examples among the numerous instances where the creativity and artistic decisions of the emperors, members of the court, and artisans at the Imperial Workshop negotiated with the strict structure of the sumptuary laws and resulted in ingenuous transcendence of the imperial order.

Collectively, the gems at the Imperial Workshops challenged taxonomical systems through their variety and their transformative potential. As individual gems, the gems also proved a challenge for categorization due to the ambiguity between the object and the languages used to describe, compare, and understand these materials of diverse origins. One of the early works by the father of modern geology in China, Zhang Hongzhao 章鴻釗, was Shi Ya 石雅 (The Elegance of Stones), in which he sought to delineate different historical names of gems and sort them into identifiable categories.[72] Zhang noted that due to the long history of trade and the mobility of gems, they assumed multiple identities linguistically as the same materials were being translated and re-translated between languages. Therefore, the inquiry into the Chinese conception of gems cannot be independent of a philological inquiry. Through the interactions between the transportable material, the changing perception, and the evolving languages to describe that gem, the gems on the hat finial, like other *zhenwan* 珍玩 ("treasure-playthings") or objects of curiosities, acquired their alluring ambiguity as they existed between categories, places, and structures. Perhaps, if the cut, multifaceted diamonds dominating the court of 18th century Europe produced a type of vision – what Christine Buci-Glucksmann refers to as "an inventory of multiples, a repetition of ordered profusion," the gems at the Qing court, such as a ruby carved into the shape of the Buddha's hands, embodies

[72] Hongzhao Zhang 章鴻釗, *Shi Ya (The Elegance of Stones)*, 1927, National Central Library.

a different operational logic (Figures 32 and 33).[73] While contemporary European writing in gemology and mineralogy sought to distinguish between variations of the same material and delineate them into narrower taxonomies, the Chinese attitude to gems, I argue, was embrace the ontological complexity and the metamorphic potential of nature. The gems at the Qing court, unlike its European counterparts that were associated with the interest in natural history, was instead deposits of poetics, signs, metaphors, and all that is multivalent, unspeakable, and not easily sorted into structure.

Conclusion: Untranslatable Shimmer

If we return to Xu Yang's scroll celebrating the conquer of Central Asian peoples, with the imagined ambassadors and their entourage arriving in Beijing from all around the world, detail depicting a man with a turban ornament resembles a bejeweled Mughal or Ottoman turban ornament at National Palace Museum (Compare Figures 18.4 and 34). The gems on the hat finials not only participated in the definition of identities, performing the temporal order of the court and expanding its spatial boundaries, the gems also remind us of the Intra-Asian connection between the Qing and its Asian counterparts that took place simultaneously with the increasing European involvement in the maritime trading networks between these Asian empires. As the Qing court represented and absorbed other peoples into its own visual language and political dominion, the hat finials worn by Qing imperial family and officials were also represented, interpreted, translated, and sometimes misunderstood, as the images of the "mandarin hat" with "mandarin hat button (the term in *Rues de Pékin* to refer to hat finials)" travelled across cultures, and between media. From fanciful *chinoiserie* to the caricatures of the mandarin by the turn of the 20th century, the form of hat finials inspired

[73] Christine Buci-Glucksmann, *The Madness of Vision: On Baroque Aesthetics*, trans. Dorothy Z. Baker (Ohio Univ. Press, 2014), p. 3.

various creative interpretations (Figures 35). While the “hat buttons” eventually became absent in these European representations, by the turn of the 20th century, as officials’ costume became obsolete after the fall of the Qing in 1911, the gems were separated from hat finials, became tradable raw materials again, ready to be absorbed into necklaces, bracelets etc. (Figure 36). All that is left, outside of the few extant hat finials at museums, is the untranslatable shimmer on the paintings of Xu Yang, on the portrait of Fuheng, and in the poetic imagination of the Qianlong Emperor.

In this thesis I have embarked on a journey, oscillating between pictorial representations of hat finials, textual descriptions, and the objects themselves. As gems were incorporated into structures of identification, categorization, and stratification as they were made into hat finials, the very form of the hat finial also became the definition of such structures - a two-layered hierarchy of non-perfect alignment: between the world of fixed regulations by the court and liquidity on the market; between mapping the all-encompassing logic of an expanding empire and its visual, physical, and symbolic extensions into time and space and the potential to transform and outgrow a particular identity, abandon its form and linguistic field and flourish like the hats worn by the figures the Chinese Pavilion in Sanssouci (Figure 37). With their efflorescent shimmer, gems on the hat finials transcended the imperial order and connected early modern imaginations in their multifaceted manifestations and reincarnations.

Figures

Figure 1. Anonymous court artists. *Portrait of Fuheng, Grand Secretariat, Duke of Loyalty and Valiancy of the First Rank*, dated 1760. Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk; 155 x 95 cm. Private Collection.

Figure 2. Tourmaline court beads. Shunzhi reign (1644-1661). Other materials not identified by the museum (possibly ruby, jadeite); dimensions unknown. Palace Museum, Beijing. Gu00010077.

Figure 3. Winter court hat. Yongzheng reign (1723-35). Materials not identified by the museum; dimensions unknown. Palace Museum, Beijing. Gu00059720

Figure 4. A two-eyed peacock feather plume, yellow paper wrapper, jadeite plume fastener and wood case, 19th century. Plume: 34.3 cm long. Private collection.

Figure 5. Gold hat finial inlaid with pearls; Qing dynasty (1644-1911). Gold filigree, ruby, East pearls. 14.2 x 4.5 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing.

Figure 6. Anonymous court artists. *Portrait of the Qianlong Emperor in Court Attire*, 1736. Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 271 x 142 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing.

This is an example of formal court attire for winter.

Figure 7. Anonymous court artists. *Portrait of the Yongzheng Emperor Reading*, Qing dynasty (1644-1911). Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 171.3 x 156.5 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing.

This is an example of semi-formal court attire for winter.

Figure 8. Anonymous court artists. *Portrait of the Kangxi Emperor Reading*, Qing dynasty ca.1699-1704. Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 137 x 106 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing.

This is an example of informal court attire for summer.

Figure 9. Winter court hat with blue glass finial and red yak hair, Qing dynasty (1644-1911). Other materials not identified by the museum; dimensions unknown. Palace Museum, Beijing. Gu00060086.

This is an example of a formal winter court hat.

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 10. Summer court hat with pink glass finial, Qing dynasty (1644-1911). Silk, glass, peacock feather; 20.95 x 31.11 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

This is an example of semi-formal or informal summer court hat.

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 11. Jean-Denis Attiret, *Portrait of Dawachi*, c. 1755. Oil on paper; 70.5 x 55.1 cm. Ethnologisches Museum, Berlin. ID 22242.

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 12. Detail of Huang Zeng, "*A Retired Gentleman Seeking Pleasure*" (*Tui shi xun le tu juan*), Qing dynasty (1644-1911). Ink and colour on silk; 51 x 124 cm. From '*Miao he shen xing*' exhibition, 2020, National Museum of China.

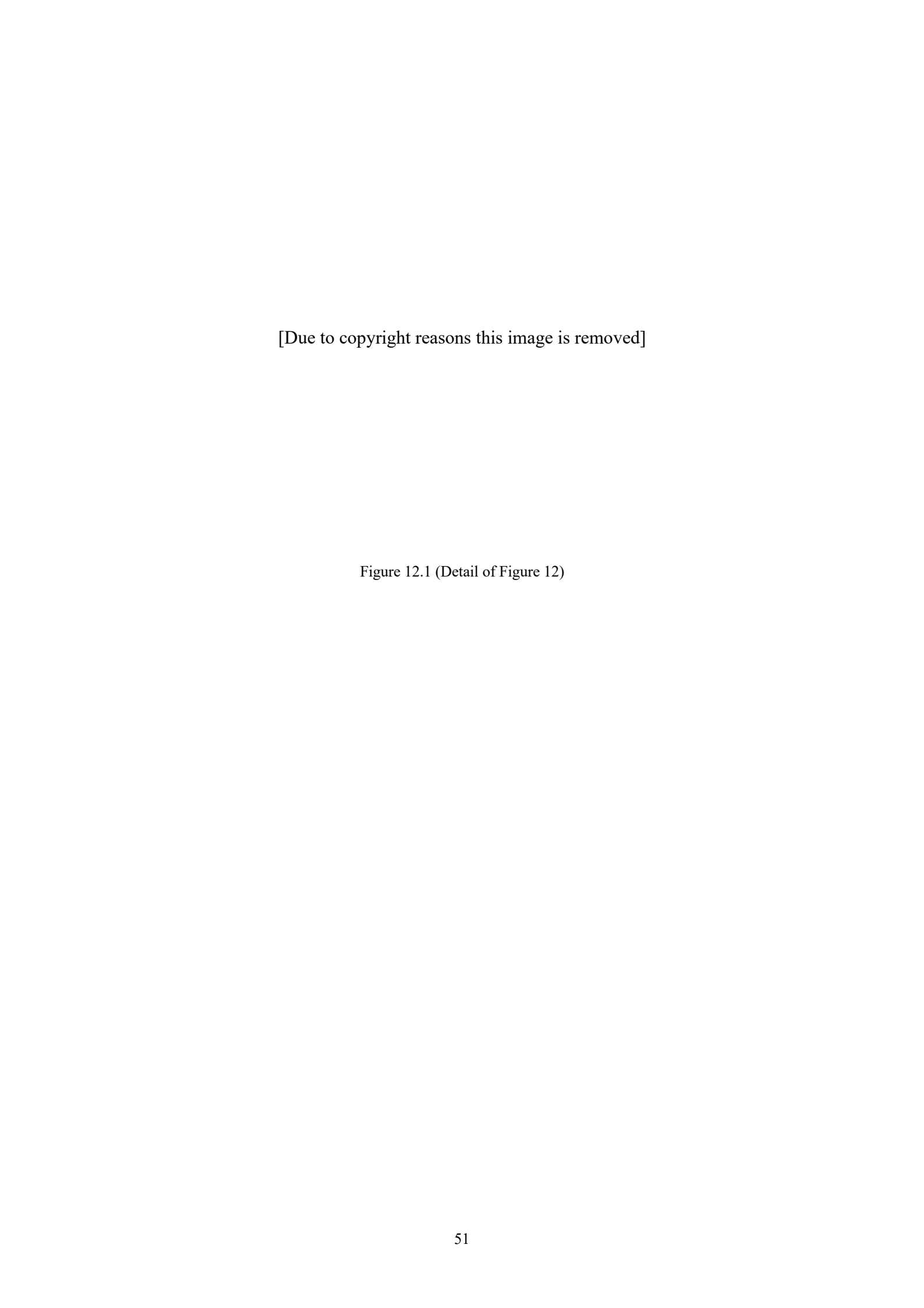

Figure 12.1 (Detail of Figure 12)

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 13. ‘Rues de Pékin’, Bibliothèque nationale de France. Ark:/12148/btv1b8452126n. Volume 1, 145r.

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 14. ‘Rues de Pékin’, Bibliothèque nationale de France. Ark:/12148/btv1b8452126n. Volume 1, 144v.

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 15. *Jingcheng neiwai shoushan quantu*, 19th century. Princeton University Library, C0744.07.

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 15.1 (Detail of Figure 15) The circled area is Zhengyangmen Street.

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 16. ‘Rues de Pékin’, Bibliothèque nationale de France. Ark:/12148/btv1b8452126n. Volume 1, 154r.

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 17. Hat box with stylized chi dragons, 18th century. Polychrome lacquer with filled-in and engraved gold decoration; diameter 37 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 18. Xu Yang, *Ceremony of the Offering of War Captives of Emperor Qianlong's Conquest of Western Territories*, Qianlong period (1736-1795). Color and ink on silk, 43 x 1865 cm. Private Collection.

The circled area is the hat shop.

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 18.1 (Detail of Figure 18)

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 18.2 (Detail of Figure 18) The circled object is a hat on a hat stand.

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 18.3 (Detail of Figure 18)

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 18.4 (Detail of Figure 18)

Figure 19. Left: Hat stand, Qianlong period (1736-95). Rosewood, jade; diameter: 15.8 cm, height: 30.5 cm. British Museum, London. Right: Hat stand, Qianlong period (1736-95). Lacquer; diameter: 1height: 28.9cm. British Museum, London.

Figure 20. Xu Yang, *Scene Illustrating the Qianlong Emperor's Poem "Spring Comes to the Capital"*, 1767. Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk; 256 x 233.5 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing.

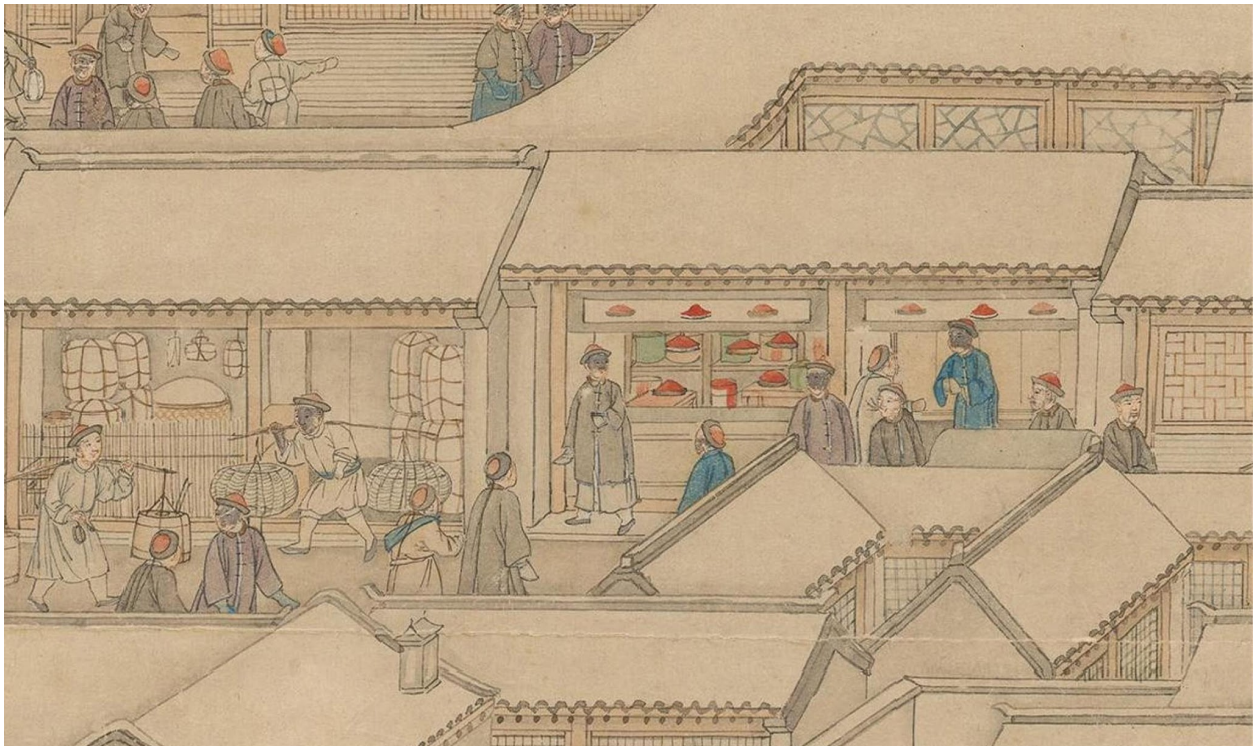

Figure 20.1 (Detail of Figure 20)

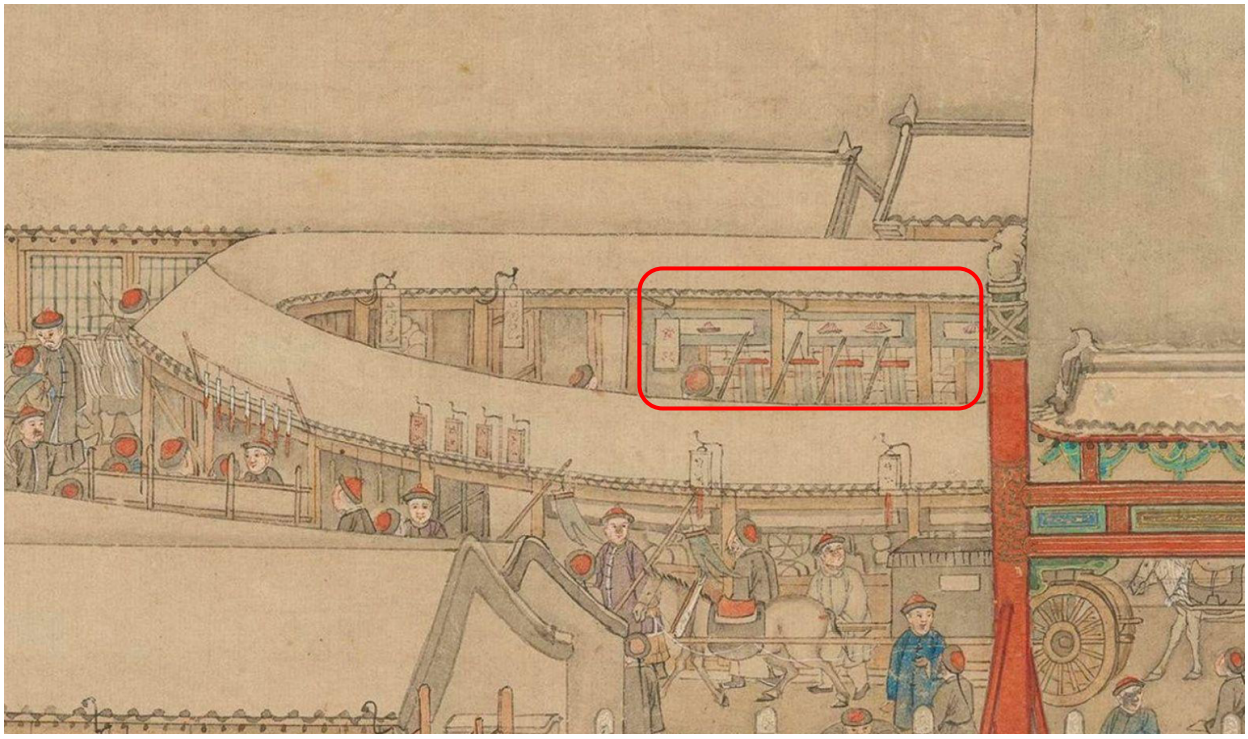

Figure 20.2 (Detail of Figure 20)

Figure 20.3 (Detail of Figure 20)

The sign on the left is “silk and textiles”; on the right is “court robes and officials’ surcoats”

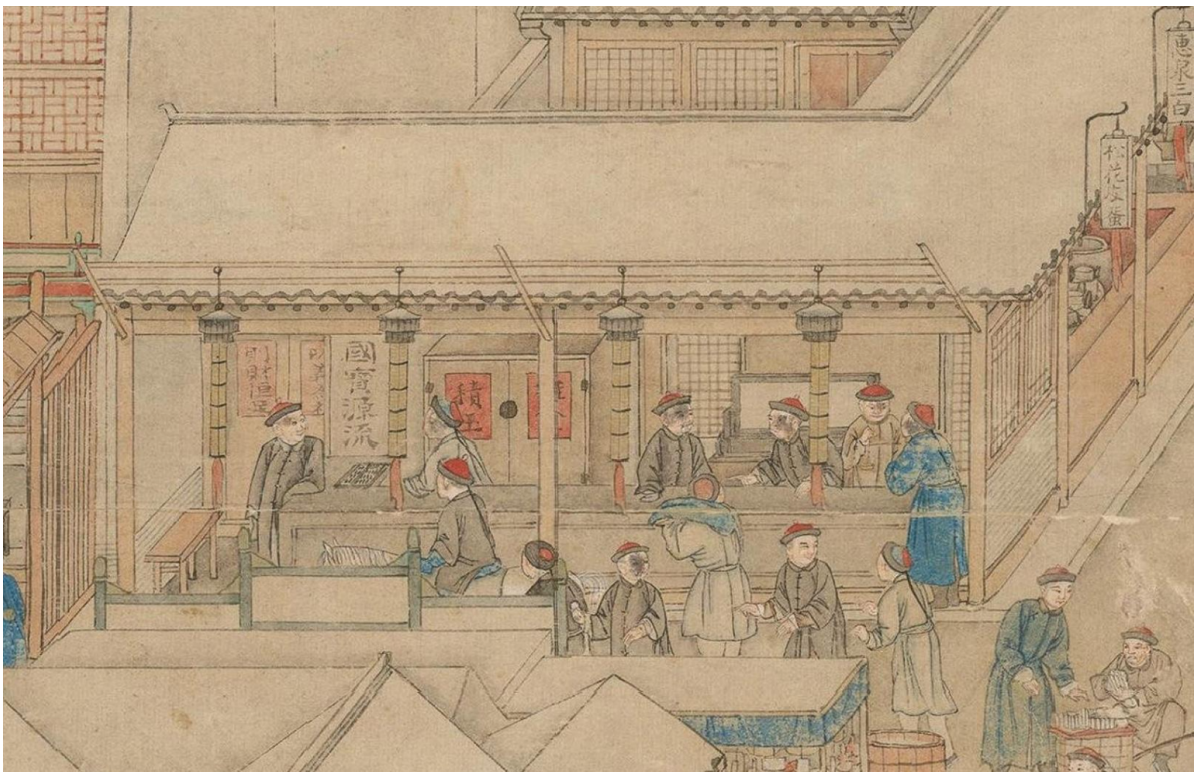

Figure 20.4

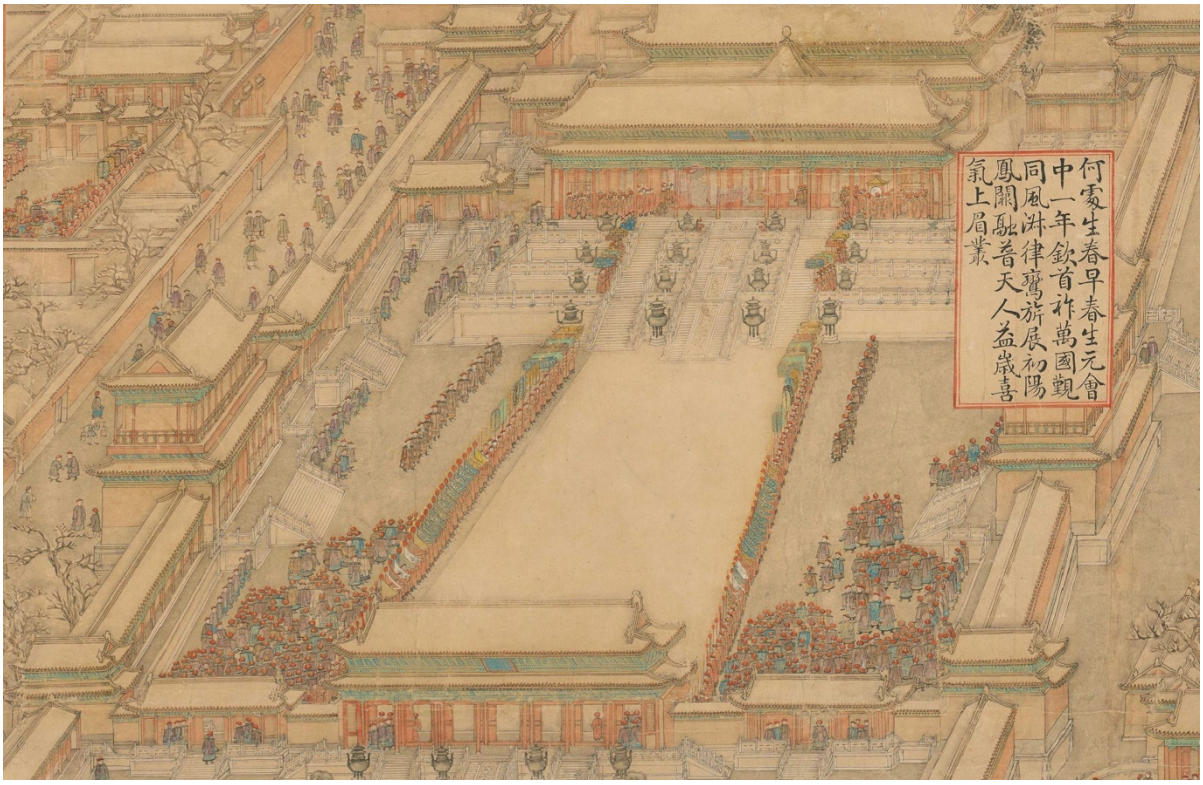

Figure 20.5 (Detail of Figure 20)

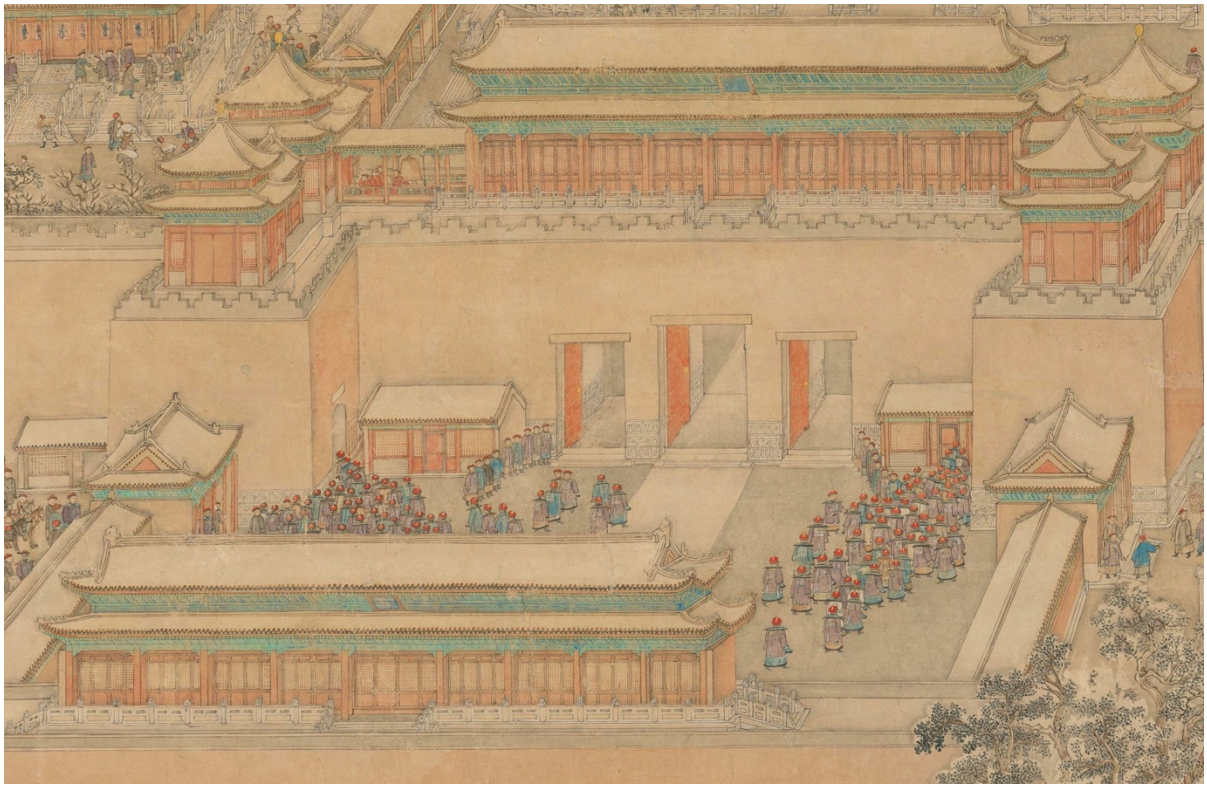

Figure 20.6 (Detail of Figure 20)

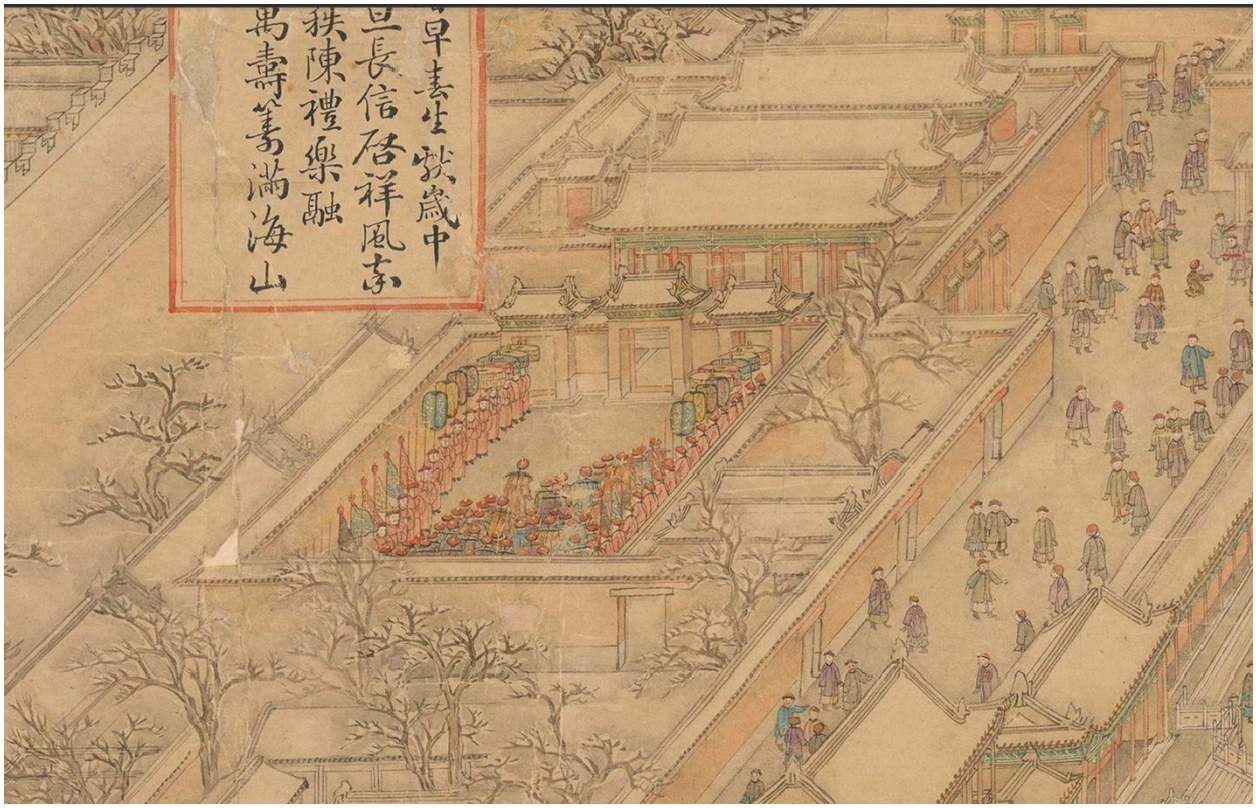

Figure 20.7 (Detail of Figure 20)

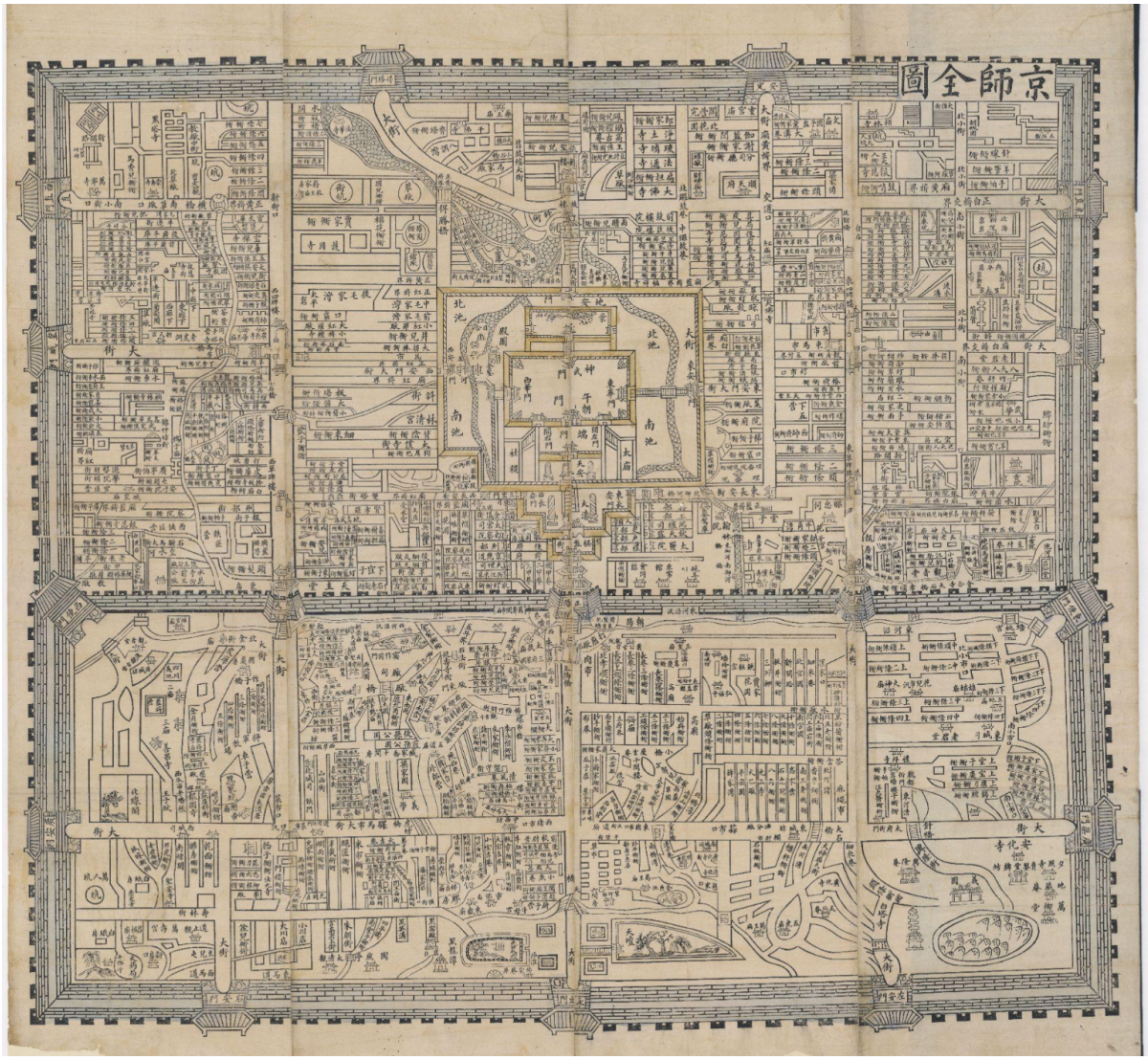

Figure 21. *Jingshi quantu,* 1750. 14.1 x 13.5m. Palace Museum, Beijing.

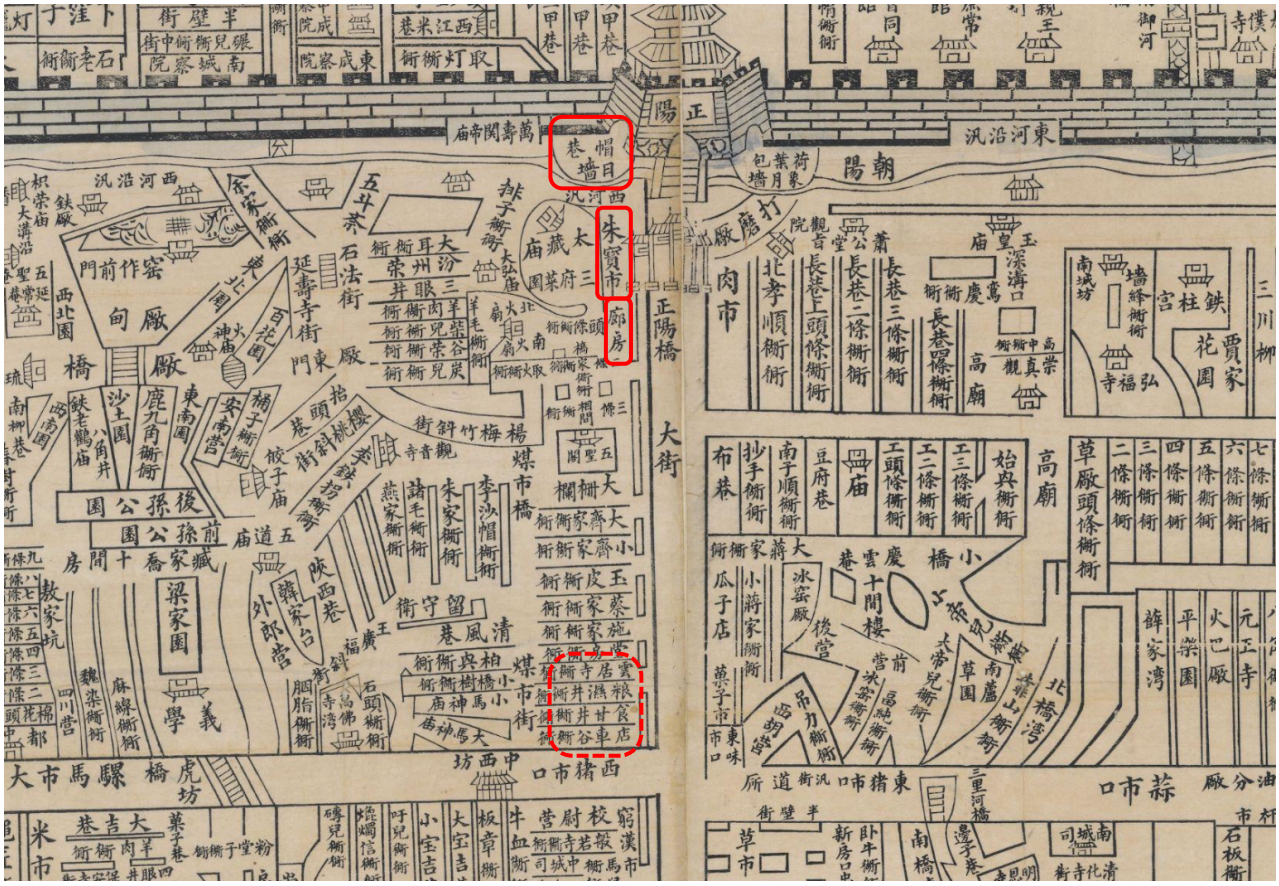

Figure 21.1 (Detail of Figure 21)

The circled street on the top is “Hat Alley”, below that is “Jewelry Market”, further below that is “Langfang”.The dotted circle is the location of the pawn shop in Xu Yang’s painting.

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 22. ‘Rues de Pékin’, Bibliothèque nationale de France. Ark:/12148/btv1b8452126n. Volume 1, 146r.

Figure 23. Gilt silver court hat finial inlaid with a red gemstone, Qianlong period (1736-1795). Spinel, metal, kingfisher feather; height: 14.4 cm, diameter: 4.36 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei.

Figure 24. Glass hat finial for semi-formal attire. Qing dynasty (1644-1911) Opaque glass, bronze; height: 3.5 cm, bead diameter: 2.5 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei.

The yellow strip was a label added by the Imperial Workshop.

Figure 25. Anonymous, *Portrait of Emperor Chengzong of Yuan Dynasty*. Ink and color on silk; 59.2 x 47.3 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei.

Figure 26. Detail of Anonymous, *Portrait of Emperor Xuanzong of Ming Dynasty on Horseback*. Ink and color on silk; 81.1 x 68.1 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei.

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 27. Hat finial inlaid with gemstones, Ming dynasty (1368-1644).
Excavated from the Tomb of King Liangzhuang. Hubei Provincial Museum, Wuhan.

Figure 28. Hat finial with Manchurian Freshwater Pearls, Kangxi period (1662-1722).
Gold filigree, pearls; height: 12.8 cm, base diameter: 6.8 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei.

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 29.1 *Zhi gong tu*, 1751-1761. Ink and color on silk; 38.8 x 34 cm. Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Figure 29.2 *Zhi gong tu*, 1751-1761. Ink and color on silk; 38.8 x 34 cm. Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Figure 30. Silver hat finial with coral, amber, and turquoise inlay. Qianlong period (1736-1796). Height: 7.1 cm, diameter: 4.1 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei.

Figure 31. Gold hat finial inlaid with gemstones. Qing dynasty (1644-1911) Other materials not identified by the museum (possibly sapphire, ruby or tourmaline); height: 5.4 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei.

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 32 Diderot, Denis, Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, and Pierre Mouchon. *Recueil de planches, sur les sciences, les arts libéraux, et les arts méchaniques* .Vol. 8. Paris, 1762. Smithsonian Libraries.

Figure 33. Ruby in the shape of the Buddha's hands, Shunzhi era (1644-1661).
Dimensions unknown. Palace Museum, Beijing.

Figure 34. Gold-foiled aigrette with pearl inlay, ca.,1801-1830. Length: 34 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei.

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 35. Vase. Meissen Porcelain Factory. 1714-1754. Painted decoration attributed to Adam Friedrich von Löwenfinck. Hard paste porcelain. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 35.1 (Detail of Figure 35)

[Due to copyright reasons this image is removed]

Figure 36. Anonymous, *Flower Street, Peking*, c. 1928-1933. Photograph. University of Bristol, Historical Photographs of China.

The sign on the right says:
“E CH’ENG HSA
To sell JADE, AGATE AMBER, CORAL.
ALL KINDS OF RING, AND NECKLACES, BRACELETS, CHOKERS AND ETC.
No175 TM LEE's SHOP”

Figure 37. Chinese Pavillion, Sanssouci Palace, Potsdam.

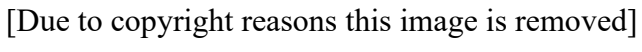

Figure 37.1 (Figures at the entrance of the Pavilion)

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