EUNJOO JEONG (Academy of Korean Studies)

*The Documentary Paintings and Activities of Court Painters who Accompanied Tributary Embassies to China*

During the Joseon period, foreign relations diplomacy was mostly conducted through diplomatic embassies either dispatched to China in recognition of the tributary relationship between the two countries, or to Japan in order to promote a good neighborly relationship. As the primary vehicle of communication between foreign countries, these embassies represented the only opportunity for cultural exchange between Joseon and the outside world. This paper examines the temporary appointment of painters to the tributary embassies to China and the main activities of painters within the embassy to shed new light on the artistic exchange between Korea and China.

In the first place, the positions assigned to painters accompanying the embassies were usually military positions with a regular stipend of rank seven or higher such as *sagwa* (司果), *busagwa* (副司果), *sajeong* (司正) and *busajeong* (副司正). Sometimes painters were also dispatched as rank six such as *gyosu* (敎授) and *haenggyosu* (行敎授). The primary function of court painters who assisted the tributary embassies to China was to decorate items for diplomatic exchange and execute additional painting related to the process of applying the royal seal to official documents. Court painters who travelled with the embassy had many duties including trading pigments, drawing maps that were restricted by the Chinese government as well as copying famous paintings that were in vogue at the time. There are some works that court painters accompanying the embassy to China produced and several paintings of the scenery along the embassy route. Among extant paintings representing the scenery along the embassy route, *Yeonhaengdopok* was produced by a painter accompanying Yi Deokhyeong’s embassy who went to Beijing through the sea route in 1624 during the period of the Ming-Qing transition.

The court painter Yi Pilseong, who participated in the winter solstice embassy, painted *Simyanggwandocheop* by appointment of King Yeongjo in 1760. The album
Yeonghaengdocheop (燕行圖帖) was produced after 1784 during the winter solstice embassy by one of the so-called “painters-in-waiting at Court” who achieved the highest marks. In addition, the court painter Yi Uiyang who accompanied the winter solstice embassy in 1809, assembled Yisinwonsasaengcheop (季信園寫生帖) in the spring of 1812.

EUNJOO JEONG is a senior researcher in Jangseogak Archives of the Academy of Korean Studies. She has researched on the cultural activities of Korean embassies who were dispatched to China or Japan. In addition, she is interested in topographical and pictorial maps in the Joseon period. She is the author of two books and numerous articles and book chapters on documentary paintings of foreign relations during the Joseon Period. Her first book, Documentary Paintings of Sino-Korean Diplomatic Relations in Joseon Period (2012) was selected by program supporting the selection and distribution of outstanding books of the National Academy of Science, Republic of Korea. Her second book, Joseon literati find a way to broaden cultural horizons in China (2017) is on the cultural exchanges between the Korean embassies and Chinese literati.

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YOONJUNG SEO (Myongji University)

Art, Science, and Exotica: Diplomatic Gifts from China to Korea in the 18th Century

This study examines gifts sent to Korea via the diplomatic channel between Korea and China in the late Joseon dynasty. While introducing many presents conventionally prepared for these discreet encounters in the early era, this paper primarily focuses on Western artifacts given to Joseon envoys by the Jesuit mission as well as the Qing emperor in the eighteenth century. These include the Sino-European world map, scientific apparatus, and engravings and paintings in the European style. The Joseon envoys dispatched in 1789 and 1790 is thoroughly explored with the comparison of the 1631 delegation, both of which marked a watershed in the history and practice of exchanging diplomatic gifts. Along with the analysis of each case, the following questions will be investigated to further research; how the "Western" object served as diplomatic gifts in Sino-Korean relationship and East-West encounters, what sort of objects were cautiously selected as presents for what occasion, who were involved in the process of selection and reception rituals, and how these objects were appreciated and impacted on the recipients’ society.

These objects not only include exotic gifts provided by Jesuit missions stationed in Beijing as a token of friendship but also encompass engravings of war commissioned by Emperor Qianlong as a new emblem of the legitimacy of the Son of Heaven. While the former stimulated the curiosity of Korean intellectuals and drew their eyes onto the world beyond China, the later functioned to enhance the Sino-centric world order based on the traditional
tributary system. Examining the characteristics of Western objects used as a diplomatic gift and tracing their afterlife in Korea, this presentation reveals multiple roles of ambassadorial gifts, the significance of the act of giving in a socio-political context, the symbolic meanings of objects, economic and cultural values they produced throughout their lives.

YOONJUNG SEO PH.D. is an assistant professor of the Art History Department at Myongji University, Korea. Her research interests cover Korean art and visual culture with special emphasis on cultural transmission and intercultural connections reflected in Joseon court art, provenance and cultural biography premodern Korean artifacts. Her recent publications include “A New Way of Seeing: Commercial Paintings and Prints from China and European Painting Techniques in Late Chosŏn Court Painting,” “Lee Ufan’s Collection of Folk Painting in the Musée Guimet: Lee’s Aesthetic Theory of and Approaches to Minhwa,” and “Joseon Court Painting in the Western Collection: Translocation and Provenance of Korean Art.”

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SOOJIN KIM (The Academy of Korean Studies)

Folded Messages to be sent Outside: A Study of Folding Screens of the Joseon Dynasty as Diplomatic Gifts to Foreign Countries

Throughout the Joseon dynasty (1392–1910), folding screens were used as diplomatic gifts for Chinese and Japanese emissaries. From the late 19th century onward, the Joseon court began to face the new political situation and had to adapt itself to the world of international politics when it formed diplomatic relations with its Western counterparts. During this process, however, folding screens did not lose their primary role as diplomatic gifts, even though they were modified according to their counterparts’ particular tastes. The aim of my paper is to examine how the Korean court utilized artworks for their diplomatic purposes, with a focus on folding screens presented as gifts to Western countries from the 1880s to the 1910s by comparing the ones to China or Japan.

For this, I will shed new light on the fact that the Joseon court showed a preference for folding screens as diplomatic gifts for Westerners over other objects—such as hanging scrolls, handscrolls, or albums. Joseon’s preference for folding screens will be understood as one of its attempts to catch up with Japan with an open-door policy and its successful promotion of their own artifacts such as folding screens on the international stage. Along with this, I will investigate why folding screens in polychrome and embroidery constituted the majority of western diplomatic presents, as opposed to monochrome painting or calligraphy presented to Joseon’s immediate neighbors such as Japan and China. In its efforts to emulate Japan, Joseon seems to have had a strong selective sense for themes and
techniques used for folding screens for diplomatic purpose. This shows one aspect of Joseon’s conception of Western countries in its early contacts with them. Finally, I will examine how Joseon established definitions of new concepts such as “arts” (misul), “artifacts” (gongye), and “technique” (giye) when they encountered western counterparts by exchanging their diplomatic presents.

SOOJIN KIM PH.D. is currently a postdoctoral researcher at the Academy of Korean Studies. She received her Ph.D. from the Department of Archeology and Art History at Seoul National University in 2017. Her dissertation, “The Golden Age of Folding Screens: A Study of Screen Painting in Late Joseon Korea” focuses on the history of Joseon’s folding screens and their role as effective media conveying “Neo-Confucianism” and “Rule of Ritual”, two ruling ideologies of the dynasty. Before joining the Academy of Korean Studies, she was a visiting fellow and an associate researcher at the Harvard-Yenching Institute, a Korea Foundation intern at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and a project researcher at the Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies. Currently she is revising her dissertation into a book under the working title "Cultural History of Folding Screens in Korea."

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BURGLIND JUNGMANN (UCLA)

*Patterns of Shared Elite Identity: ‘Literati’ Exchange between Joseon Korea and Edo Japan*

Documentation of the diplomatic exchange between Joseon Korea and Edo has come down to us in an unusually diverse spectrum of material: official reports, travel diaries, forewords to anthologies, personal letters, paintings, prints, and folklore items, such as costumes, votive tablets (ema), figurines, and toys. Within this exchange, the written word not only played an important role as means of communication between diplomats, who were unable to communicate in their colloquial language, but also as a way of artistic expression. In addition, the creation of ink paintings involved more than just the exchange of gifts, because the act of painting itself – its ‘performance’ – became an act of communication. The ways in which textual and visual sources are interlinked allows us to carve out a special mode of diplomacy, based on commonly accepted conventions, on what might be called ‘literati pursuits.’ In fact, through the exchange of poetry, requests for introductory notes to literary anthologies, scholarly discussions in writing (pildan, hitsudan), and impromptu painting both sides assured each other of a shared elite identity and thereby created a basis for their communication and the success of their missions. Interlinking the perspectives of the diverse material this paper will look at meetings between Joseon envoys and members of the Edo elite in the mid-eighteenth century and trace their motivations and personal sentiments of interest, competition, animosity, and admiration.
BURGLIND JUNGMANN PH.D. was Professor of Korean art history at UCLA from 1999 to 2017. From 1999 to 2003 she also served as Adjunct Curator of Korean Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Jungmann studied East Asian art history at Heidelberg University and at Seoul National University and received her Ph.D. (1988) and her second doctorate (Habilitation, 1996) from Heidelberg University. She wrote numerous articles and books on Joseon dynasty art, including Painters as Envoys - Korean Inspiration in Eighteenth Century Japanese Nanga (2004) and Pathways to Korean Culture – Paintings of the Joseon Dynasty (2014). As guest curator of the Fowler Museum at UCLA she organized the exhibition Life in Ceramics – Five Contemporary Ceramics Artists (2010–2011) and wrote the catalogue. Her most recent publications are “Changing Notions of ‘Feminine Spaces’ in Joseon Dynasty Korea: the Forged Image of Sin Saimdang (1504–1551),” Archives of Asian Art (April 2018) and “Identity and Aesthetics: Some Thoughts on the ‘Koreanness’ of Korean Art,” in Misulsahak yeongu 300 (Dec. 2018), 311–322.

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EUNSOON PARK (Duksung Women’s University)

The Visual Power of Gifts exchanged between Korea and Japan in the 18th Century

After the Japanese invasion of 1592, twelve Korean envoys were dispatched to Japan from the 17th to the 19th century. Through this diplomatic relationship initiated by Japan’s request, a lot of human and material exchanges took place.

At the heart of the diplomatic gifts exchanged was the gifts between the King of Joseon and the Japanese Shogun. However, the Korean and Japanese bureaucrats who were involved in the diplomatic process also continuously exchanged official gifts during diplomatic discussions and meetings, and the level, kind, and quantity of gifts were determined according to the official status of the bureaucrats. Fundamentally, official gifts were mostly selected according to the demand and taste of each country, so the items of gifts that Joseon and Japan donated were different from each other. In particular, after the Korean envoys arrived in Japan, the Japanese central government and the local daimyos provided numerous gifts for them. In the case of official gifts, they were given on the intention of showing and raising the Shogun’s authority and political legitimacy. The Korean envoys also received lots of private gifts and sometimes had difficulties handling the excessive private gifts offered by the Japanese. In this study, I shall survey the artistic gifts exchanged in the process of Korean and Japanese relationship centering on the case of Korean envoy sent in 1711. In 1711, the greatest number of people were dispatched, and cultural exchanges were very active between Koreans and Japanese compared to the previous times, and many diplomatic changes, which influenced the content and quantity of the gifts exchanged, were made by the reform leaded by Arai Hakuseki. This study shall conceptualize the relationship between

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the diplomatic gifts in the form of artifacts and their political, social, cultural functions while examining the various aspects of artistic gifts exchanged in this background.

EUNSOON PARK is a Professor at the Department of Art History at Duksung Women’s University in Seoul. Her research interest includes Korean landscape painting focusing on the true-view landscape and the topographical landscape paintings. Recently she is doing researches on the relationship of paintings between Korea and Japan during the Joseon period. Her latest publications include “Representing Literati Meeting and Travel”, Looking at Literati Culture through Paintings, National Institute for Korean History (2008); Gongjae Yun Duseo, A Pioneer of the Literary Painting in the Late Joseon Period (2010); “The true-view Landscape and the Conceptual Landscape of Gang Sehwang in the 18th Century”, Pyoam Gang Sehwang, edited by Art History Association of Korea, Kyeongin Munhwasa (2014).

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KOICHI IGARASHI (Osaka University of Arts)

Diplomatic Message in the Folding Screen: Chinzei Hachiro Folding Screen (1711)

This paper examines a folding screen that the Tokugawa Shogunate presented to the Joseon court in the early eighteenth century. In 1711, the Joseon court dispatched the diplomatic delegation (Tongsinsa/通信使) to Japan to celebrate inauguration of the 6th shogun Tokugawa Ienobu (徳川家宣). In return, the Tokugawa Shogunate presented 20 pairs of painted folding screens to the Joseon court. Fortunately, one of them, the Chinzei Hachirō (鎮西八郎) folding screen, has survived and is preserved in the National Museum of Korea today. Through this luxurious gold-leafed folding screen, it can be assumed that the Tokugawa Shogunate presented the gifts of top quality to the Joseon court. However, they were not just gifts. A diplomatic message was composed and hidden in them by Arai Hakuseki (新井白石), an excellent scholar and a tutor to Tokugawa Ienobu. He had strongly suspected that Joseon people regarded Japanese as “savages in the East” (あらえびす). Then he used this diplomatic mission to disprove the misconception. The author analyzed documents that show Hakuseki’s involvement in selecting the subjects to paint carefully. Therefore, the folding screens can be seen as a medium of diplomatic message and demonstration of Japan’s highly sophisticated culture and Confucian tradition. The author proved this through analysis of records, theme, painter and style of the Chinzei Hachirō folding screen.

KOICHI IGARASHI PH.D. is Professor of Japanese Art History and Vice Director of the University Museum at Osaka University of Arts. He received Ph.D. from University of Tokyo (2007) and is a former curator at the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of History. His field

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**MIYEON JUNG** (National Museum of Korea)

*Diplomacy with Screen Painting: Efforts to Break Down Prejudice against Japan*

The three Japanese gold-leafed folding screens at the National Museum of Korea are gifts presented to the Joseon king by the Tokugawa shogunate after the Japanese Invasion of Korea. The Kanō School, the official painter of the shogunate, created the screens under their order, and thus the sizes and themes were all under the shogunate’s control. Analyzing the themes of the folding screens sent by the Tokugawa shogunate can be helpful in understanding the relation between the two countries, which was in a deadlock after the Japanese Invasion of Korea. Arai Hakuseki, who was in charge of the 8th diplomatic mission and made an unprecedented attempt to attach explanatory notes on the themes of the folding screens on the screens, is at the center of such analysis. As a Confucian scholar and government official, he was unrivaled with his knowledge of Joseon in contemporary Japan. He is the most important figure for future research on “zōchō byōbu,” especially for the analysis of the cultural aspect of the Tokugawa shogunate’s foreign policy towards Joseon. Through the three pieces of zōchō byōbu in the National Museum of Korea, this paper focused on the themes of the gold-leafed folding screens, which were officially sent to Joseon after the Japanese Invasion of Korea, as well as the intentions of their producer, the Tokugawa shogunate. The Confucian value of “loyalty,” reflected in the Tadanobu Folding Screen, and the Chinzei Folding Screen, which reveals the identity of the Tokugawa shogunate as a military power through the episode of Minamoto no Tametomo, a samurai from the Kamakura shogunate, are two key concepts for analyzing the political, diplomatic and cultural messages from the shogunate to Joseon, delivered through gold-leafed folding screens.

MIYEON JUNG is an assistant curator in the Asian Arts Division of the National Museum of Korea. She studied Archeology, Art History and Japanese Art History at the Seoul

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JEONG-HEE LEE-KALISCH (FU Berlin)

*Lotus and Birds: Approaching a Rediscovered Embroidered Silk Screen Panel in Hamburg*

The presentation addresses an embroidered silk screen panel by anonymous maker, rediscovered in the family of the descendants of Consul Meyer in Hamburg in Spring 2019. The panel was part of an embroidered screen, which was one of the royal gifts from King Gojong’s (reigned 1863-1907) family to the family of Heinrich Constantin Eduard Meyer (1841-1926), businessman and head of the company E. Meyer & Co. (Kor. Sechang Yanghaeng), the first and only German company in the Joseon kingdom. The company was located in Jemulpo, a district of modern-day Incheon, from 1883 to the early 20th century. Meyer was appointed by the Joseon government as the first Honorary Consul in Hamburg in 1886. With the aid of the rediscovered documents and photos, this essay demonstrates a cultural-anthropological study on the royal embroidered screen, and its transfer to and afterlife in Germany. The study examines how the embroidered screen was described in the beginning in Korean art history, and how esteemed the screen/panel has been in the Meyer family collection to this day. This essay intends to reveal the gifted artwork’s nearly 125 years of history.

DR. JEONG-HEE LEE-KALISCH (李静姬) is Professor and Chair of the Dept. of East Asian Art History at the Freie Universitaet Berlin. She curated also successful special exhibitions in Europe such as “Korea, the Old Kingdom”, „Ancient China; Peoples and Gods in the Middle Kingdom” and „Tibet – Monasteries Open Their Treasure Chambers”. Her research areas comprise transcultural aspects of East Asian art, especially within the field of literati art and garden, Mahāyāna/Tantrayāna Buddhist art, as well as art along the Silk Roads: For the past three years, she has also headed a project of the collaboration research program “Silk Road Fashion” granted by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. She published various essays, exhibition catalogues and monographs on these topics and is editor of the publication series Studies of East Asian Art History. As a co-editor
and author, she also was in charge of the publication of the *Comprehensive Compilation of Goryeo Paintings. Volume 1. European and US Collections.* (Hangzhou: Zhejiang University Press 2017/18).

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**JOOHYUN LEE** (Myongji University)

*Gift from Joseon Court to Möllendorff: The Art Historical Meaning of the Möllendorff Collection in Grassi Museum Leipzig*

Paul Georg von Möllendorff (1847-1901) had been sent to Korean court at the end of 1882 by the Chinese governor Li Hongzhang. He was supposed to support the King Gojong (reigned 1863-1907) in the task of opening up the country for trade with the West. According to the diary of Möllendorff, King Gojong gave him gifts several times during his stay in Korea. On the New Year’s Day of 1883 King Gojong presented him a Korean official uniform of civil servant packed in a green silk box with silver decoration. We also know that Gojong send him 45 leaves of genre painting of Kisan Kim Jungeun, who worked from the end of the 19th up to the beginning of the 20th century in Busan and Wonsan. 43 pieces of Kisan are now preserved in Folklore Museum Berlin and two of them in Dresden.

During his brief stay in Korea as General Director of Customs from the end of 1882 till 1885 he not only accomplished his principal task, but also collected more than 285 pieces of Korean objects for the Folklore Museum Leipzig. The most part of the Möllendorff collection is ethnological objects, that reflect everyday life of the first half of the 19th century in Korea. The collection is systematically built up corresponding to the “collect plan” of Hermann Obst, the Vice-Chairman of the Museum.

In the collection of Möllendorff we can also find out some artworks that reflect elegant taste of the court painting of Joseon Dynasty. *<A Beautiful Woman>* for example, executed by the court painter Jo Jungmuk (趙重默) is signed in 1883, the second year of Möllendorff’s Korean stay. Although there is not any concrete documents, the refined painting style and the painter’s seal suggest, that the painting could be the gift from the Korean court to him.

**JOOHYUN LEE** is a Professor of Art History at the Myongji University, Seoul. She received her Ph.D. at the Department of East Asian Art History at Heidelberg University, where she also served as lecturer of Chinese art history. Her latest publications include “Wu Changshuo and Modern Korean Painting”, in *Shifting Paradigms in East Asian Visual Culture.* (2012); “Relocation of the Palace Museum’s Treasures to the South and West during the Sino-Japanese War”, in *Inmungwhahak nonchong* vol.51 (2017) and “The
In the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century, Joseon Dynasty Korea began to establish diplomatic relations with American and European countries. The first of these was the United States, with whom Joseon signed the Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce and Navigation in 1882. Then, other European countries such as The United Kingdom and Germany (1883), Russia and Italy (1884), France (1886) and Austria (1892) also established trade treaties with Korea. These agreements officially enabled interchange of personnel as well as exchange of material resources between Korea and Western countries. Europeans and Americans on the Korean peninsula at the time of “Open-port period” gathered Korean artifacts as personal souvenirs or research materials and brought back these collections to their home countries.

Concurrently, foreign envoys to the Joseon royal court were granted gifts from the King and the Queen, just as Joseon representatives convoyed diplomatic gifts to Western countries. For example, during his official visit to Korea, Percival Lawrence Lowell received an embroidered folding screen and a Goryeo Celadon from King Kojong. Queen Myeongseong bestowed a Goryeo Celadon on Lilias Underwood. For the coronation of Emperor Nicholas II and his wife, Empress Alexandra Feodorovna, the Joseon delegation gave two embroidery folding screens, four bamboo window screens, one embroidery mat, one cabinet inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and a nickel incense burner.

This presentation focuses on Korean artifacts as diplomatic gifts and art/ethnographical collections in the late 19\textsuperscript{th} and early 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries, which are on view at American and European museums. What kind of objects were chosen as diplomatic gifts? Did the object selection of the royal court influence the collection practice of Korean artifacts? In the other direction, did the tastes of Western collectors influence this selection? With several examples, I question, from the perspective of translocations, the different values that these gift items were considered to have in Korea and the values added over time in the West.

DR. JI-YOUNG PARK studied art history and French literature at Seoul National University in the Republic of Korea (1998-2003) and acquired 2nd cycle diplomas in museology from the École du Louvre in Paris (2005 and 2007). In Los Angeles, US, she worked as a graduate intern in the museum education department of the J. Paul Getty Museum (2007/8) and joined the Korean gallery reopening project at LACMA as curatorial assistant (2008/9). In 2017, she received her PhD (Dissertation: The National Museum of Korean Art, a device for the
transmission of Korean arts’ values and knowledge: Museological Analysis of Mise en Exposition of Sarangbang in National Museums in the Republic of Korea) from the International doctoral program of the École du Louvre, Université d’Avignon et des Pays de Vaucluse and Université de Québec à Montréal. She joined the Translocations project at TU Berlin (2017-2020) as a postdoctoral fellow. Her translocations case study is “Museographical discourse analysis of the Otani Collection exhibition at the National Museum of Korea (NMK) in Seoul.”

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CHING-LING WANG (Rijksmuseum Amsterdam)

The Dutch Embassy to the Chinese Court in 1667 and the Kangxi Emperor

This essay deals with the Chinese and Dutch pictorial materials documenting the Dutch Embassy to the Chinese Court in 1667 and their impact on both Chinese and European sides. It tells the story of an early encounter between the young Kangxi Emperor and Europeans, namely the Dutch envoy to the Chinese court in 1667 and the effects of the meeting had on both sides. Like a coin, there are two sides to this tale. While the Dutch envoy failed in its mission to obtain official permission for free trade with China, the encounter influenced mutual understanding. How did this encounter affect the young Kangxi Emperor?

DR. CHING-LING WANG is curator of Chinese Art at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. His research interests are: literati painting, Ming and Qing court art, and exchanges of visual and material cultures between Europe and China.

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YU-CHIH LAI (Academica Sinica, Taipei National University)

Joining the Global Court Society: New “Art” of Diplomacy in the Qianlong Court

In the 1760-1770, Catherine the Great (1927-1796), the most renowned and longest-ruling female leader of Russia received a gift from Emperor Qianlong (1711-1799), the also longest reigning ruler in the history of China. This gift was two wood cabinets covered with inscriptions written in Chinese, Manchu, Mongolian, and Uighur Scripts four languages on the tops and also four sides of the cabinets. They contain ancient coins ranging from 2B.C. to 12 A.D. In addition to the actual coins, there also include the catalogues with images of each coin inside the cabinets.
Why did Emperor Qianlong decide to give Catherine the Great two boxes of Chinese ancient coins? Although Chinese antiquarians had been collecting and cataloguing ancient coins in as early as 6th century, assembling collection of coins and metals for a king’s cabinet had also been a very fashionable practice in the contemporary Europe. For example, French king Louis XIV was one of the most representative collectors. Therefore, this paper would like to situate the analysis of these two cabinets of the Chinese ancient coins in the context of both Chinese and European traditions and try to ask, not only why Emperor Qianlong chose this specific gift and what kind of political message he would like to send to Catherine the Great, but also, most importantly, how the visual and material aspects of this gift show Emperor Qianlong’s understanding of the European practice and how these non-verbal forms help reiterate his political agenda.

YU-CHIH LAI received her Ph.D. in the History of Art from Yale University and is an associate researcher in the Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan. Her two fields of research are Chinese visual culture in Shanghai in the 19th century, especially its interactions with Japan, and the globalized visual and material culture of the Manchu Chinese court in the 18th century. She received many important grants, fellowships and visiting positions including member of Institute for Advanced Study (2016-2017), Foreign Researcher of Institute of Advanced Studies on Asia at The University of Tokyo (2011), Heinz Goetze Visiting Professor for Chinese Art History at Heidelberg University (2012), Non-residential Post-doctoral Fellowship J. Paul Getty Center (2006-2007), Jane and Morgan Whitney Art History Fellowship at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (2002-2003), to name a few. Currently she is working on a book manuscript, tentatively entitled “Visual Governance: Art, Knowledge, and Politics in the Qing Court.”

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YING-CHEN PENG (American University)

Medal, Boxes of Food and Her Majesty’s Artworks: Imperial Gifts in Late Qing
Diplomatic Encounters

Gift-giving is an important component of diplomatic encounter. The choice of gift, the ceremony, timing and even place of bestowing a diplomatic gift are carefully planned to avoid any possible misinterpretation because it symbolizes the image of a country and its leadership. While bestowing gifts on foreign envoys had had a long history in China, it went through a conceptual change in the second half of nineteenth century when the recipients were no longer subjects or inferiors of the Celestial Kingdom but representatives of countries that regarded themselves as China’s equal or even more superior powers.

This paper examines the diplomatic gifts that regularly appeared in the late Qing inventories. It gives particular emphasis on what Empress Dowager Cixi (1835-1908) gave out after she
quelled hew nephew the Guangxu emperor’s (r.1875-1908) radical Hundred Days Reform and resumed regency in 1898. Through a close examination of her gifts to the family of Edward Conger, the U.S. minister to China whose wife developed an unusual friendship with the dowager regent, it becomes clear that the Qing regime attempted to keep its tradition while it adopted new practices at the crossroads of modernization. On the one hand, Cixi gave out objects indicating the Qing court’s effort of adjusting to the new diplomatic order such as her photo portraits and medals, a new symbol of honor that Prince Gong Yixin (1833-98) took inspiration from the West. On the other hand, gifts that the previous Qing monarchs bestowed on their guests such as boxes of food, daily accessories and artworks were not abandoned, either. Paintings and calligraphies attributed Cixi especially played a critical role for the matriarch to project an image of a cultured and vigorous ruler.